

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT (2)

Meeting: Cabinet
Place: Council Chamber - Council Offices, Bradley Road, Trowbridge,
BA14 0RD
Date: Tuesday 13 September 2011
Time: 10.30 am

The Agenda for the above meeting was published on 5 September 2011. Additional items of public participation and reports are now available and are attached to this agenda supplement. Copies will be available at the meeting.

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This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk


5. **Public participation** (Pages 1 - 2)

Responses attached to the following:
Question from Chippenham Vision Board
Question from Mr John Bowley

6. **Denominational Home to School Transport** (Pages 3 - 28)

 The report of the Rapid Scrutiny meeting held on 8 September 2011 is attached together with additional questions and statements received.

7. **11-19 Commissioning Strategy** (Pages 29 - 34)

 The report of the Rapid Scrutiny meeting held on 9 September 2011 is attached.

Date published: 12 September 2011

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

13 September 2011

Item 5 Public Participation (on items not on the agenda)

Question from Chippenham Vision Board

'If the patronage of the town's car park is reduced, what is the Cabinet's view on the damage to retail in the town, and whether the increase in car parking charges should be reviewed'

Response from Councillor Dick Tonge, Cabinet member for Highways and Transport

A report to Cabinet currently scheduled for 18 October and full Council on 8 November will analyse the countywide economic, social and environmental impacts of the current car parking charges.

Question from Mr John Bowley

'In referring to reported remarks of Councillor Fleur de Rhe-Philippe "that Westbury was holding up Wiltshire with the lack of a bypass and the next inspector might have different findings" asks whether these broadcast remarks represent the view of the Wiltshire Council Cabinet?'

Response from Councillor Fleur de Rhe-Philippe, Cabinet member for Strategic Planning, Economic Development and Tourism

Mr Bowley is quoting - inaccurately - from something I said during a half hour interview on BBC Wiltshire in respect of the Core Strategy. I said that, in my personal opinion, Westbury did need a bypass which would also benefit the whole A350 corridor - or words to that effect. I categorically stated that it was a personal opinion and I definitely did not say that "Westbury was holding up Wiltshire".

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

13 September 2011

**Public Participation
Item No. 6 - Denominational Home to School Transport**

Statement from St Patrick's School Governing Body

The Rapid Scrutiny Exercise on 8th September demonstrated to the public participants that there were no concrete figures associated with this proposal in terms of current pupils having to migrate schools. The Admissions Forum could not be definitive on answers as numbers were not known. The disruption to education for children was noted to have not been properly researched. No definitive costing could be given for future scenarios. Assumption is the mother of all mistakes.

All we can do at this point is to appeal to the Cabinet to please not vote to go ahead with this action, in any of its proposed options.

St Patrick's is a small school, and upwards of 30 pupils currently rely on this travel. To lose those pupils should they have to move elsewhere, and to lose future pupils, will result in a 40% drop of the denominational children attending our school. This action means that the school built for their needs becomes inaccessible, and the fabric of the school itself is shaken. Fundamentally, Faith schools need denominational childrens' attendance to survive. The Faith community cannot support a school if it is not serving its purpose. Financially our school's viability is at stake as well; if we lose these children, and should the school not survive, you as a council will have not just 30 children to place at other schools as could happen in 2012, but the other 170 St Patrick's pupils living in Corsham.

Should you accept option 3 of this proposal we also do not have the expertise, staff and funds to cope with travel arrangements ourselves. The council has offered to help us with travel, and we have already starting making enquiries to travel operators as suggested by the Transport Team. The prohibitive cost of any arrangement makes this an impossible situation in our case, with an annual fee of £36,000 to be spread across some 30 children on average; we are looking at £1200 per child, a sum I am sure you agree is extortionate. We are prepared to ask parents to contribute more via an inflation-based percentage to the current costs, but how can we ask them to pay more than double? There is no public transport available for our children as an alternative. The congestion in Corsham is already at dangerous levels at school run times, so more cars would exacerbate the problems, if there are enough parents who can transport their children. It is a no win situation for our school.

We have mentioned before the worries we have that this is a pre-determined decision. Cllr Gamble assured us at the Rapid Scrutiny meeting that it was not. Maybe it is caution on the Council's part, or maybe it is pre-determination, but our school has already been removed from the School Transport Team's list for travel assistance in 2012. The Council's letter to parents sent on 5th May which started this process, repeatedly stated it was withdrawing transport. There was no offer of consultation in that letter, and what has followed has not adhered to due process and has been hastily patched together.

I would urge you to please think of the long term consequences of this proposal which indicate higher & unfathomed costs to the Schools, Education and Travel departments. We are all aware and sympathise with the cost cutting exercises necessary across the Council, and that to reject this action will be to 'rob Peter to pay Paul' for your departments. But the wider implications that we see for the future of Faith Schools and the children who attend them if this action goes ahead, are far more detrimental and expensive to the Council and Children than the saving of £170,000.

To honour the children and your own motto 'Where Everybody Matters' this must not be a political decision in any form, but a humanist one. To break a traditional arrangement that is so successful and cause such disruption for the sake of £170,000, is a real catastrophe. This country's constitution and fabric is supposed to be based on Christianity and Faith; we swear an oath in court in God's name... assistance on the daily practicing of faith in a Christian country will be taken away from the children by not helping them have access to their schools,. Not just that, but taken away by the people constitutionally charged to nurture them.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

13 September 2011

**Public Participation
Item No. 6 - Denominational Home to School Transport**

Statement from Francis White

Statement for the meeting of the Council on Tuesday 13 September 2011

As late as last Thursday there had been **no developed and reasoned educational argument** in any of the council's papers for depriving children who attend and are due to attend faith schools of the means of getting to them.

On the figures shown in the document, *Current denominational transport policy; background information*, 76% of the pupils in Wiltshire affected by this proposal attend either Corsham St Patrick's Primary School or Trowbridge St Augustine's comprehensive school. Everyone can see that whereas a number of primary and secondary faith schools will be affected, the brunt of this savage and discriminatory move is bearing down on St Patrick's and St Augustine's in Trowbridge, a school which after the 2 grammar schools has led the way in Wiltshire for year after year in terms of that often quoted measure of achievement of 5 or more GCSE grades at A* to C including English and maths. On present figures approx 150 pupils travel to St Augustine's on school organised buses from the Devizes area, 73 travel on service buses from the Melksham area and 66 on service buses from the Warminster area. I hope this will help to focus some minds on the number of individuals whose stated principles and prospects you will disregard and whose lives you will turn upside down if you press ahead with the withdrawal of the subsidy for denominational transport.

We warmly applaud all schools in the county who are making progress but the standards consistently set at S Augustine's, year after year, and by St Joseph's in Salisbury in recent times have won plaudits from every quarter. The principal sponsors of this iniquitous proposal have failed to explain why they are so determined to wipe out the transport subsidy for the families concerned beyond stating that this was a discretionary payment and they had to find the money somewhere.

I am fostering a hope, even at this late stage, that those professionally best placed to argue for the protection of standards in education in Wiltshire, and those we hitherto looked upon as friends and professional colleagues, may find it in them to alert the cabinet to the negative consequences of removing the transport for faith schools.

Have we got to resort to that old, sad cliché of knowing the cost of everything and the value of nothing? It does, unfortunately, seem to fit perfectly with the proposal under discussion.

It is simply not good enough, as happened last Thursday, for one influential councillor to warn those who would scrutinise the merits of our argument that if the rapid scrutiny group were to put obstacles in the way of this proposal they just lay themselves open to having to face other groups of 'disgruntled' people on other issues. I think it was at that point that some people almost lost the will to live because they feared that this would turn out to have been a sham after all and, in spite of a claim to the contrary, minds had been made up among those with the most influence. Whereas support by Wiltshire County Council for transport to the voluntary aided schools had been deemed right for decades, suddenly, on no educational grounds whatsoever, it's apparently wrong to subsidise transport for pupils to the voluntary aided state schools of Wiltshire. Sorry about this, faith schools, no hard feelings, but you are the easy target.

I heard one of the council's spokesmen last week deny any discrimination, any vendetta against the faith schools. Why should anyone believe that? If all schools have to suffer some sort of pain as a result of the financial mess, will someone please tell us today what penalties are being applied to all the other schools which will have comparable negative implications for their futures? If there is no-one who can do that convincingly today, those who are desperate to drive this measure through will continue to face the accusation of discrimination.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

13 September 2011

**Public Participation
Item No. 6 - Denominational Home to School Transport**

Statement from Elizabeth Sian Bredif

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing in response to the subsidised transport to faith schools.

I would just like to add that for us as a family it would really affect us financially if you take away funding.

Both my husband and I work, and would not fall in the category of receiving any help, so we would have to fund the transport ourselves.

This would be a real hardship for us as we do not earn a fabulous wage, I'm sure we are like most people just keeping our heads above the water at the moment.

I have two daughters who attend St Joseph RC primary school in Devizes. Daniele my eldest is currently in year six now, and I have to choose a secondary school for her this month.

I am so wanting for her to go to St Augustine's Collage as does she.

I feel she would flourish in a school that promotes and teaches in our practicing faith, as she has done in her primary school.

While I may struggle to pay for transport for one, I may not being able to fund my youngest daughter in 2 years time.

I am anxious about the safety of my daughter if she has to catch the early morning public transport, as she will have to still walk a bit to get to school. While this may not be a problem say for a year 9 upwards, I feel for a new pupil not familiar to the town it would be frightening.

I am presuming you will be providing some kind of service to transport the children from Devizes to Trowbridge.

Will you have enough seats to transport everybody, as I imagine there will be people catching the same bus for their work.

Please, please, reconsider, this is our children's future, and more personally my children's future who I want to do the very best by.

Yours Sincerely, Mrs E Sian Bredif.

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

13 September 2011

**Public Participation
Item No. 6 - Denominational Home to School Transport**

Question from Jayne Keogh

Last week I came across the following response by a parent to an article in the Guardian newspaper entitled:

"Cuts to school buses force pupils onto roads".

"My children have transport provided (by Wilts council) to their catchment comprehensive school, 5 miles away as do most of the rural pupils. The school and town would be in chaos if every parent had to drive the children to school.

This village has been allocated a taxi for the 7 resident pupils as the council deem it too dangerous to walk up 1.5 miles up a country lane to the bus-stop (unlit, no footpaths, no speed limit) and the lanes are too small to take a bus. I am quite happy to walk the lane, as it is so narrow that drivers have to go slowly, and are easy to avoid. My children have walked it alone (in daylight) since the age of 8 to the village primary.

I was expecting the taxi to be pulled this year, but it continues - Wiltshire are targetting denominational transport instead. I think I get my money's worth from my council tax bill."

Can the council please explain to parents of pupils attending denominational schools how it can continue to pay 100% of the cost of a taxi fare to transport 7 rural pupils to a bus stop when it is seeking to make 100% cuts to denominational funding? Is the welfare, safety and continuity of education of the pupils who receive the denominational transport subsidy deemed by the council to be less important than that of pupils attending other state schools?

Thanks for your help.

Regards

Jayne Keogh

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Public Participation

Item No. 6 - Denominational Home to School Transport

**Additional Statement following publication of Report of Rapid Scrutiny
from Father Jean-Patrice Coulon
Parish Priest for Catholic Parish of Devizes**

The final publication of the minutes of the Rapid Scrutiny Task Group was on Monday afternoon at 3.45pm. While the recommendation of Option 3 with an increased parental contribution of 10% showed some appreciation of the impact of continuity of education, I am concerned that the equalities impact of the proposal of the Council to withdraw subsidised transport for faith schools is still not being addressed.

According to the definition on the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) website, this proposal constitutes indirect discrimination against a religious group: that is to say, when “an organisation has policies, criteria or processes that put you at a disadvantage because of your religious or philosophical beliefs.” The Commission goes on to say that “in some circumstances, indirect discrimination on grounds of religion or belief may be justifiable. But only if it is considered to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. For someone to justify indirect discrimination, they would need to show that there is a genuine business need for a policy that is a particular disadvantage to a certain religion or belief, and that there is no alternative to it.”

It would go without saying that the Council would say that its dire financial circumstances are the need requiring this discrimination. This is acknowledged, but it is hard to believe that there is no alternative given that denominational transport only represents less than 5% of the total for all home to school transport, and that the annual costs of less than £170,000 are miniscule compared to the total annual budget of close to a billion pounds of the Council.

The EHRC have recently made a submission to the European Court of Human Rights regarding whether the concept of reasonable accommodation has any useful practical application in cases concerning the manifestation of religion or belief. It explained how this might work in practice: “A situation may arise where someone believes they are being put at a disadvantage because of rules or practices that do not take into account their right to manifest their religion or belief. We believe that – where possible – ways should be found within the law of promoting the resolution of such disputes at an early stage, without protracted, costly, complex legal proceedings that irretrievably damage relations between the parties. Reasonable

accommodation would allow people to explore what might be done to overcome or reduce any disadvantage; and if any of those options were or were not reasonable.”

The EHRC invited interested parties to submit views regarding this submission. The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales responded in saying that “reasonable accommodation” should be applied to all areas of discrimination. They were concerned about the correct application of Article 9 of the European Convention of Human Rights which states that “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance. Freedom to manifest one’s religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.”

The Bishops are of the mind that “reasonable accommodation” can be achieved simply by service providers acting in a responsible and proportionate manner regarding serving people of religion. This would be a two way process which would thus avoid litigation and bad feeling through common sense and mutual give and take.

It should be clear that the right to manifest religion in our country has for many years meant the right to educate a child in a school of one’s religion. This right would be impeded if transport costs were too high to make this possible. School transport has been provided to Voluntary Aided religious schools since the 1944 Education Act (incidentally, also a time of great financial austerity) for a distance of up to 15 miles. It can be argued that reasonable accommodation was already made when the Council moved from a system of 100% payment to 50% subsidy in 2006. For some parents, this meant sacrificing a 100% subsidy because their local designated school was more than three miles away, to having to pay up to 50% because they wanted their children to go to a faith school.

Wiltshire Council must think very carefully if it is to accept any of the three options proposed which all amount to indirect discrimination against parents of faith. As I have stated before, I do not believe that Paragraph 15 of the Report published by the Department for Neighbourhood and Planning represents a full discussion of the equalities impact – there is certainly no idea of any proportionality towards a group that represents a “protected characteristic” under the Equalities Act 2010. People of religion are simply treated the same as those who choose schools for educational preference. The Local Government Ombudsman has a power of intervening if it is felt that equalities legislation is not being observed. However, in this appeal to the Cabinet Councillors, surely common sense can prevail in simply rejecting this proposal? However, in a spirit of reasonableness, it might be useful to have a discussion of increasing the parental contribution by a sum of 10% which would indicate the goodwill of the faith schools community.

Father Jean-Patrice Coulon MSFS
Parish Priest
Our Lady, the Immaculate Conception, Devizes

**Final Report of the Rapid Scrutiny Exercise:
Denominational Home-to-School Transport**

Purpose

1. To present the conclusions and recommendations of the Denominational Home-to-School Transport rapid scrutiny exercise established by the Children's Services Select Committee. The exercise relates to a report of the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood and Planning, seeking Cabinet approval for a change to the Council's Education Transport Policy in respect of denominational home-to-school transport, which is included in the Cabinet Agenda pack (pages 17-36) at Item 6.

Background

2. On 22nd July 2011, the Children's Services Select Committee received a report from the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood and Planning containing proposals to Cabinet to change the funding of Denominational Home-to-School Transport in Wiltshire. Having discussed the report, the Committee resolved to undertake a rapid scrutiny exercise at a later date in order to give members more time with the information provided. Members also asked that further analyses of the anticipated savings and potential risks of the proposals be provided prior to the rapid scrutiny meeting. It was agreed that the exercise would include an opportunity for public participation.
3. Prior to the meeting, requests for additional information were submitted by members of the Rapid Scrutiny Group. All further information provided in response was circulated to members and considered alongside the report of the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood and Planning. The information used for the meeting was published in advance on the Council website and is appended to this report.
4. The Rapid Scrutiny Exercise was held on 8th September 2011, at 6.30pm to make it easier for members of the public to attend. The following members of the Children's Services Select Committee comprised the Rapid Scrutiny Group (a full list of members and officers who attended is included at Appendix B):

Cllr Peter Davis	Councillor
Cllr Mark Griffiths	Councillor
Cllr Jon Hubbard	Councillor

Cllr Jacqui Lay	Councillor
Mr Neil Owen	Co-opted Secondary Parent Governor Representative on the Children's Services Select Committee
Mrs Rosheen Ryan	Co-opted Primary Parent Governor Representative on the Children's Services Select Committee
Cllr Carole Soden	Councillor (Lead Member for the Rapid Scrutiny Exercise and Chairman of the Children's Services Select Committee)
Dr Mike Thompson	Clifton Diocese Co-opted Member of the Children's Services Select Committee

- Members of the public were invited to submit questions and statements by 12pm two days in advance of the meeting, replicating Cabinet timescales for representations from the public.

Procedure followed for the Rapid Scrutiny Exercise

- The Chairman welcomed all present and described the procedure to be followed for the meeting. The powers and processes of rapid scrutiny exercises were summarised and reference was made to a report circulated describing these in greater detail.
- Members of the public who wished to make statements or ask questions were invited to do so. A list of those who spoke is included at Appendix C.
- Following this, Cllr Gamble responded to points raised by members of the public and introduced the report of the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood and Planning containing proposals to Cabinet to change the funding of Denominational Home-to-School Transport in Wiltshire.
- Members of the Rapid Scrutiny Group asked questions of the executive members, officers and members of the public.
- The Chairman thanked all present for attending and answering members' questions. Members of the Rapid Scrutiny Group then went into a closed meeting to agree their final conclusions and recommendations based on the evidence considered.

Summary of discussions

- The Portfolio Holder for Public Transport described the arrangements currently in place for providing financial assistance for denominational home-to-school transport, noting that the Council's average contribution is approximately £400 per pupil. He disagreed that the proposal to remove such assistance was 'discriminatory' against faith schools. He also reported that the decision on the matter had not already been taken.
- The Cabinet Member for Children's Services stated that a comparison between financial assistance for denominational home-to-school transport and

financial assistance for post-16 educational transport was not a valid one; post-16 educational transport was 'universal' in that there was no alternative educational provision, whereas those attending denominational schools had the option of attending alternative schools. The Corporate Director for Children and Education added that decreasing financial assistance for those in post-16 education would hit some of the most vulnerable in society hardest.

13. It was reported that all faiths were represented on the Council's Admissions Forum and none of them had made a request for denominational home-to-school transport to be included on a meeting agenda.
14. It was noted that the Council's responsibilities with respect to denominational home-to-school transport were the same for academies as for maintained schools.
15. It was noted that the Council has certain legal obligations with respect to providing denominational home-to-school transport to pupils entitled to free school meals. Following a member query, it was reported that the number of pupils to whom this currently applied was around 10. Others who were not entitled to free school meals would be able to share any transport provided for these pupils, but the low numbers involved meant that it would have little impact on costs.
16. It was noted that the last review of denominational home-to-school transport took place in 2006/7 and that the arrangements agreed then were subject to a further review after they had been in place for two years in preparation for the 2010-11 budget. The Rapid Scrutiny Group asked those present what had been communicated to parents by both the faith schools and the Council regarding the continuance of financial assistance once this time period elapsed. Members of the public present indicated that there had been little or no communication on this matter. Representatives from faith schools indicated that, because the review scheduled for 2010 had not transpired, it was assumed that the present arrangement would continue. The Portfolio Holder for Public Transport responded that the Cabinet did not perceive the current review as a review of the 2007 position – rather, it was a separate review that had been necessitated by the cuts in Government funding experienced in 2010.
17. Following a member query, the Portfolio Holder for Public Transport stated that although it may be reasonable to expect the current level of financial assistance for home-to-school transport to continue for pupils' time at their current school (Option 3 in the Cabinet report), the financial reality meant that this was not the recommended option.

Management of home-to-school transport

18. Following a member query, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport reported that the Council would seek to work closely with schools to assist them in taking over the management of home-to-school transport, and this would include the passing over of funds. Members were referred to the

additional information provided detailing the kinds of support the Council would be able to provide (included in Appendix A). The Portfolio Holder for Public Transport stated that some of the faith schools, such as St Augustine's, already provide home-to-school transport to some degree.

19. Following a member query, the Portfolio Holder for Public Transport reported that calculating and implementing any necessary adjustments to existing transport timetables and routes was a technical skill that the Council's Passenger Transport Unit (PTU) had significant expertise in. In response, members questioned why it was proposed to handover such a specialised task to schools when the Council employed experts in this field.
20. Members questioned whether it was feasible for the smaller schools affected to take over the management of home-to-school transport. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport replied that in such cases the schools and affected parents could work together to provide alternative transport in conjunction with other parents, for example through car-sharing.
21. Members commented that traffic levels around some schools were already an issue and questioned whether the impact of the proposals on congestion and air quality had been fully considered.

Educational impact of the proposals

22. Members questioned whether the educational impact on pupils who might change schools as a result of the proposals had been fully considered. They also noted that the member request for further information on this issue had not been met. The Corporate Director for Children and Education responded that it was not possible to make precise predictions of the impact of changing schools on individual pupils and so the request for this information had not been a reasonable one. She added that Wiltshire had a high proportion of children from military families who regularly transitioned between schools and the Council had been praised by Ofsted for its work in supporting such transitions. Members commented that if children changing schools required specialised support then this suggested there would indeed be an educational impact. The Corporate Director responded that the support referred to was for children who changed schools on a very regular basis.
23. Members questioned why the cost of providing transport for pupils transferring to another school were predicted to decrease annually in the projections provided. In response, it was reported that a pupil who no longer travelled to a denominational school would have the standard legal entitlement to a local school place. Their taking up this place might prevent other pupils with less entitlement from attending that school, but there are enough places within the Wiltshire school system to meet the consequent ripple of demand. The Portfolio Holder for Public Transport clarified that the figures referred to related only to transport costs.

Conclusions

24. The Rapid Scrutiny Group have concerns that affected schools, particularly small ones, would experience significant difficulty taking over the management of home-to-school transport for its pupils given the complexity and specialised nature of the task and the limited resources and technical expertise at their disposal.
25. The Rapid Scrutiny Group have concerns at the potentially negative educational impact on pupils needing to change schools as a result of the removal of financial assistance for home-to-school transport. Members feel it is reasonable that parents already receiving financial assistance would expect it to continue for the remainder of pupils' time at their current schools. However, members did not think it reasonable for the financial assistance to 'follow' the pupil to their next school (i.e. when moving from primary to secondary education), or to continue in post-16 education.
26. The Rapid Scrutiny Group recognises the challenging financial circumstances in which the Council is working and the consequent need to make savings. However, the Group notes that the financial impact on the Council of providing transitional provisions for all those pupils already in receipt of transport (as laid out in Option 3) compared to the financial impact of providing such assistance only for pupils entering their final year of GCSE studies in September 2012 (as in Option 2) is relatively insignificant in terms of the Council's overall budget: £277K over a seven year period (see Table 1 below). The financial impact on affected parents, however, and the educational impact on pupils needing to change schools as a result of the proposals in Option 2 could be very significant indeed.

Table 1 – Projected savings from implementing options outlined in the report to Cabinet

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Totals
Option 2	£132,000	£159,000	£160,000	£161,000	£162,000	£162,000	£162,000	£1.098M
Option 3	£38,000	£69,000	£100,000	£134,000	£158,000	£160,000	£162,000	£821,000
Difference	£94,000	£90,000	£60,000	£27,000	£4,000	£2,000	£0	£277,000

27. Given the challenging financial circumstances in which the Council is operating and the need to make savings in the provision of discretionary services, the Rapid Scrutiny Group feels it appropriate that the parental contribution toward denominational home-to-school transport increase by a small percentage and the Group suggests the amount of 10%. This would further decrease the comparative financial impact on the Council of implementing Option 3 over Option 2.

Recommendations

28. Members of the Rapid Scrutiny Exercise recommend that Cabinet adopt the following option:

Withdraw discretionary denominational assistance with effect from September 2012, but:

- The current level of assistance to continue for all pupils already in receipt of transport, minus the amount saved through implementing a 10% increase to the parental contribution for each pupil;
- For this assistance to continue for the remainder of the pupils' time at their current school (but not for post-16 education);
- Transport to continue to be arranged by the Council, except where schools are willing to take over this responsibility.

**Cllr Carole Soden – Lead Member for the Rapid Scrutiny Exercise; and
Chairman of the Children's Services Select Committee**

Paul Kelly – Designated Scrutiny Officer

Report author: Henry Powell – Senior Scrutiny Officer

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Background documents

Denominational Home-to-School Transport – report of the Director of Neighbourhood & Planning, to Cabinet on 13th September

Appendices

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| Appendix A | Additional Information provided for the Rapid Scrutiny Exercise (except the relevant 2006 Cabinet report, which is available at the following link:
http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?Committeeld=685&MeetingId=1092&DF=05%2f09%2f2006&Ver=2) |
| Appendix B | Other members and officers attending the Rapid Scrutiny Exercise |
| Appendix C | Public participation at the Rapid Scrutiny Exercise |

Denominational Home-to-School Transport – rapid scrutiny exercise
(Children’s Services Select Committee)

8th September 2011

Additional information provided for the rapid scrutiny meeting

Note: The information included below is in addition to that contained within the report to Cabinet, which is included elsewhere in this Agenda. References to the appropriate paragraph within the Cabinet report are included below where possible.

1. Financial implications

Further information has been requested about the figures and assumptions used in the calculation of the estimated savings for the three options shown in the ‘Financial Implications’ section of the report (paragraphs 25-26).

The calculations in respect of **Option 1** are shown in the table below:

1	Gross annual cost of provision (2010/11 costs)	£349,000	
2	Estimated income by 2013/14 (when phased introduction of charging begun in 2007 will be complete)	£166,000	2010/11 income of £137,000, plus estimated additional income of £30,000 from new starters in 2011/12 - 2013/14
3	Estimated net saving from withdrawing transport (on top of savings already expected from full introduction of 2007 charging policy)	£183,000	Line 1 minus line 2
4	Less adjustment for net cost of continuing to provide transport for denominational post 16s under ‘same cost’ policy (most denominational post 16 students currently receiving transport will continue to be eligible for transport assistance under the terms of the Council’s post 16 transport policy, providing that the cost to the Council is no greater than the cost of transport to the designated sixth form school or FE college for their address)	£11,000	Assumed that all 41 denominational post 16 students continue to receive transport, at a net cost of £268 per head (cost of season ticket on the public bus, less income from post16 charge)
5	Less estimated cost of providing transport for entitled children from low income families	£10,000	In 2010/11 were only 5 children receiving free transport. Assumed that

Sensitivity analysis

It is very difficult to predict the additional costs that might be incurred by the Council in providing additional transport where denominational pupils seek to transfer to the local school and the year group at the local school is full (line 6 in the option 1 calculation table above). The actual costs incurred will depend on many factors, including:

- The number of pupils who seek to transfer, which will depend on the individual decisions made by parents when it is known what alternative transport arrangements will be available, and at what cost;
- What spaces are available in each year group at the alternative local schools at the time;
- Whether (particularly for primary schools) the local school will agree to take 'over numbers';
- What type of transport is required and what price can be secured through tendering or negotiation.

The estimated savings in the report are based on an assumption that 25% of children currently receiving transport will seek to transfer. A '**worst case scenario**' has also been worked through to estimate the possible cost implication if all of the children currently receiving transport seek to transfer to the local school:

Additional transport needed;	Estimated cost (£);				
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Secondary					
Bradford – Trowbridge (2 season tickets)	1200	1200	1200	0	0
Chippenham area villages – Abbeyfield (use existing school bus)	0	0	0	0	0
Corsham – Abbeyfield (7 season tickets)	4200	2400	0	0	0
Melksham – Trowbridge (1 season ticket)	600	600	600	0	0
Lavington and Devizes – Melksham (bus for 21 current year 9 pupils)	29,000	0	0	0	0
Lavington – Devizes (large taxi for 7 children)	6,000	6,000	0	0	0
Primary					
4 rural primary schools (Cherhill, Lacock, Gt Cheverell, Shaw) each requiring a taxi for 1 child (<i>may be reduced if schools agree to take over numbers</i>)	24,000	18,000	18,000	12,000	0
TOTAL	65,000	28,200	19,800	12,000	0

within the schools budget. Only pupil movements associated with the changes to denominational transport are shown and it is important to note that these are unlikely to be the only pupil movements from year to year. The model for secondary schools shows an increase in the overall number of pupils in Wiltshire schools because of the movement of pupils from schools in Bath and Swindon back to Wiltshire.

The analysis reflects Age Weighted Pupil Unit costs from the Wiltshire funding formula and therefore treats all of the schools as if they are maintained schools. A number of schools have converted to Academy status or are expected to convert prior to the implementation of any changes to transport arrangements. Academies are currently funded by the Young Person's Learning Agency (YPLA) and per pupil amounts for these schools are not known to the local authority. Academies are funded on an academic year basis and therefore any changes to pupil numbers are reflected at the start of the academic year.

For maintained schools changes to pupil numbers in September are reflected in the budget for the following financial year, however, should a school experience a significant increase in numbers on roll within a financial year, i.e., sufficient numbers to generate the need for an additional class, there is a mechanism within the funding formula to reflect the increased cost in year. Subject to the appropriate criteria being satisfied, as laid out in the local authority's funding scheme, this cost is met from the contingency held within the delegated schools budget. Based on the figures presented in the attached analysis it is possible that 1 secondary school could require additional funding in year if all pupils in years 7-9 who currently access transport were to move to their home community school.

Maintained schools are required to submit 3-year budgets to the local authority with years 2 and 3 based on estimated pupil numbers. If an individual school is forecasting a financial deficit as a result of reduced pupil numbers then the LA will work with that school to develop a financial recovery plan. For academies, any recovery plan would need to be agreed with the Young Person's Learning Agency (YPLA) who currently fund academies. Each school is considered on a case-by-case basis. Depending on the level of deficit forecast it is possible that schools would need to make reductions in staffing however it is not possible to estimate the likely cost of redundancies until pupil movements are known. If it is agreed that staffing reductions are necessary for financial recovery then redundancy costs are met from the centrally held Dedicated Schools Grant and are therefore a cost to the overall schools budget.

3. Admissions to other schools

Inter-year admissions and outside normal admissions rounds

The LA Admissions Team recognise that if all pupils attending faith schools reapply to their local school they would need careful planning and placement. Until the actual numbers and individuals are known the Admission Team is unable to gauge the difficulties that might ensue in re-allocating places.

It is not possible to be definitive in relation to the impact on a particular school in terms of a drop in the number on roll; much would depend on the exact number. As the recommended option allows for a phased approach it is unlikely that any planned key stage 4 courses will need to reduce. Likewise the impact on individual students is difficult to assess and will depend on individual circumstances.

- how many will seek to reduce the cost and inconvenience of a daily car journey by setting up formal or informal car sharing arrangements.

The worst case scenario (in traffic terms) would be that no alternative transport arrangements are made; no children transfer to other schools; no car sharing takes place; and that all children currently at the school continue to attend and are taken to school alone by car. This would be a very unlikely outcome. For the reasons given above, it is very difficult to identify what the actual outcome would be, but the following scenario is given as an example;

Assumptions; 50% of pupils use alternative transport arrangements 25% transfer to other schools 25% travel by car Of these, 50% share with one other pupil			
	St Augustine's	St Gregory's	St Patrick's
Pupils receiving transport in 2010/11	302	69	30
Possible number travelling by car in future	76	18	8
Possible number of additional cars	57	14	6

5. What support the Council would be able to offer to schools to make alternative transport arrangements

A request has been made for more information about what support Council officers would be able to provide to schools to make alternative arrangements, to reduce the additional burden this would place on them (particularly for the primary schools for whom organising transport may be a significant burden) (please see paragraphs .

Officers in the Council's Passenger Transport Unit (PTU) have well established working relationships with the schools with the largest transport provision, and have already attended meetings at which possible future transport arrangements have been discussed. Support could be provided for the schools in a number of ways, including for example;

- Arranging for existing transport contract arrangements to be taken over by the school, or a 'parents club';
- Discussing with local transport operators whether they would be prepared to run a fare paying service on a commercial basis;
- Providing advice and assistance in designing the most cost effective transport routings, including whether it would be possible to reduce the cost by linking these with other Council transport contracts;
- Advising on the availability of suitable existing public transport services or of spare seats on other Council transport contracts in the area;
- Providing advice on tendering or negotiation with transport operators;

Shared sites: Students whose designated schools are in Trowbridge, Chippenham and Salisbury can receive transport to an alternative school where their local school is on the same 'campus'.

Any other individual circumstances: The Council has a responsibility to consider any individual circumstances presented for purposes of considering transport entitlement and to determine whether these warrant an exception to normal policy.

7. **Pupils living in isolated areas** *Paragraph 13, Bullet Point 4 in the Cabinet report*

The Cabinet report refers to "Families living in areas where it is not possible to arrange alternative transport..."

In 2010/11 there were 26 pupils living in areas which meant they required transport other than by school/service bus. These were transported mainly by taxi (18) but some were taken by parental car (8) and claimed an allowance towards motor fuel costs. In 2011/12 this number falls to 13 as many of them transfer from primary to secondary or leave compulsory education.

If denominational transport support is removed, all of these children could attend their local school and get there by walking, as this is in the same town or village. Thus, there will be no cost incurred in providing free transport to the local school.

8. **The consultation process** *See Paragraphs 4-7 in the Cabinet report*

Letters were sent to parents of all children currently receiving assistance, headteachers of those schools affected and the RC diocese on 5th May 2011, giving notice of the proposal to withdraw assistance at Cabinet on 26th July, inviting comments by 13th July.

- A second letter was sent to same groups inviting comments on the proposals and providing details of the Cabinet meeting.
- CE diocese were consulted
- Individual responses were recorded and acknowledged
- Cabinet members met with selected headteachers and the RC diocese on 8th August
- Cabinet's consideration of the proposals was postponed from 26th July to 13th September in order to allow greater participation during term time.
- A report containing the proposals was taken to the Children's Services Select Committee on 22nd July.

Modelling of Financial Implications for Secondary Schools Budgets of Changes to Denominational Transport

	AWPU Value 2011/12
Year 7	£ 3,229.93
Year 8	£ 3,229.93
Year 9	£ 3,229.93

AWPU = Age Weighted Pupil Unit

School	NOR Jan 2011	School Budget Share 2011/12	Potential Pupil Movement if all pupils return to "home" school			Total	Associated Movement in AWPU Funding in following financial year if ALL Yr 7-9 Pupils Move			Trigger Increase in Year?	Assume 25% from St Augustines and St Gregory's move £
			Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9		Yr 7 £	Yr 8 £	Yr 9 £		
1	730	3,612,773	0	0	1	0	0	0	3,230	3,230	0
2	1200	5,717,491	1	1	3	3,230	3,230	3,230	9,690	9,690	2,422
3	1427	6,551,621	10	0	0	32,299	0	0	32,299	32,299	8,075
4	1312	5,924,623	0	4	2	0	12,920	0	6,460	19,380	4,845
5	874	4,534,878	5	8	6	16,150	25,839	19,380	61,369	116,278	15,342
6	1203	5,688,603	14	19	3	45,219	61,369	9,690	116,278	116,278	29,069
7	1114	5,379,037	16	10	30	51,679	32,299	96,898	180,876	180,876	45,219
8	359	1,910,678	0	0	1	0	0	0	3,230	3,230	0
9	394	2,092,154	0	0	(1)	(1)	0	0	(3,230)	(3,230)	0
10	1218	5,968,940	3	1	3	9,690	3,230	9,690	22,610	22,610	5,652
11	972	4,507,602	(55)	(53)	(56)	(177,646)	(171,187)	(180,876)	(529,709)	(529,709)	(132,427)
12	1506	6,982,072	8	9	12	25,839	29,069	38,759	93,668	93,668	23,417
13	1081	5,067,608	9	9	5	29,069	29,069	16,150	74,289	74,289	18,572
14	1423	6,813,810	0	0	1	0	0	0	3,230	3,230	0
			11	8	8	35,529	25,839	25,839	87,208	87,208	20,187

Notes

- Figures used are those provided by Admissions Service in separate briefing note - assumes all pupils in year 7-9 return to "home" school. As yet no indication that this would be the situation. 25% movement of pupils from St Augustine's and St Gregory's (Bath) also shown.
- Only movements in pupil numbers associated with changes in transport are shown - this would not be the only pupil movement from year to year
- Overall increase in cost because assumes pupils return to Wiltshire from St Gregory's (Bath) and St Joseph's (Swindon) this increase would be funded in the overall DSG settlement for the following financial year
- Assumes all schools are maintained by the LA - some are, or will have, converted to academy status before the date of implementation and will be funded by the YPLA
- Increases/decreases in pupil numbers are reflected in the budget for each maintained school in the following financial year, changes for academies are reflected immediately as schools are funded on an academic year basis and reflect pupil numbers in the September at the start of the financial year
- 1 school may receive an in year increase in funding as a result of a significant increase in pupil numbers
- 25% movement assumes reduction equally spread across year groups

Sheet A – Primary Denominational Transport
 Places required. This shows the number of pupils
 in each school and each year group who are
 wishing to access denominational transport. The
 horizontal column with numbers is the year group
 e.g. Year 6 through to year 1 pupils.

SCHOOL	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
BOWERHILL PRIMARY	1	1		2	1	1	2
BRINKWORTH EARL DANBY			1				
BROUGHTON GIFFORD PRIMARY	1			1			
CHERHILL PRIMARY		1		1	1		1
COLERNE PRIMARY	1				1	1	
CRUDWELL	1						
DILTON MARSH		1					
DINTON PRIMARY		2	1				1
DONHEAD PRIMARY		2					
GT CHEVERELL	1						
LACOCK				1			
LYNEHAM PRIMARY	1	2		1	1		
MELKSHAM PRIMARY	2	3	2	1	1	1	2
SALISBURY PRIMARY	1						
SHAW PRIMARY		3			1		
SOMERFORD WALTER POWELL			1				
STANTON ST QUINTIN		1	1				
TIDWORTH PRIMARY						1	
TISBURY PRIMARY	2	1					
WARMINSTER MINSTER		1					
WILTON PRIMARY	1		1				
WYLYE VALLEY PRIMARY		1					

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
AMESBURY STONEHENG	1									
BRADFORD ST LAURENCE	2	4	2							
CALNE JOHN BENTLEY	1	1	1							
CHIPPENHAM SECONDARY	3	4	5							
CORSHAM	2	6	10							
DEVIZES	22	15	14							
MELKSHAM THE OAK	8	10	17							
MKT LAVINGTON	3	4	3							
LAVERSTOCK SECONDARY	1									
SHAFTESBURY			2							
TROWBRIDGE SECONDARY	3	1	1							
WARMINSTER KINGDOWN	12	9	8							
WESTBURY MATRAVERS	5	9	9							
WOOTTON BASSETT	1									
CHIPPENHAM SCHOOLS										
HARDENHUISH SCHOOL										
ABBAYFIELD										
SHELDON										
LAVERSTOCK SECONDARY										
ST EDMUND'S										
WYVERN										
ST JOSEPHS										

NOR Yr 7	NOR Yr 8	NOR Yr 9	NOR Yr 10	NOR Yr 11	TOTAL NOR
130	128	142	150	153	703
230	223	216	211	210	1090
159	217	193	220	192	981
See below					
222	212	239	248	215	1136
187	206	194	220	215	1022
240	214	193	261	209	1117
146	137	138	137	134	692
See below					
None Wilts					
See below					
246	226	260	249	253	1234
162	186	198	186	174	906
260	241	209	244	216	1170
247	251	254	282	271	1306
141	114	166	150	153	724
284	282	278	286	282	1412
182	160	173	143	131	789
46	74	71	73	62	326
100	86	73	85	74	418

Wiltshire Council

**Denominational Home-to-School Transport – rapid scrutiny exercise
(Children’s Services Select Committee)**

8th September 2011

Additional Information provided for the rapid scrutiny meeting (#2)

1. Estimated savings from “cost increase” option

The following is an estimate of the savings that would be generated by an increase in the charges for denominational transport by 10% and 20%. These include an estimate of the extra income generated by the increase, offset by a reduction in income if the increase results in a reduction in the number of children travelling.

	10% increase	20% increase	
1. Extra income (£)	16,600	33,200	<i>Assume 10% / 20% of the estimated total income expected in 2013/14</i>
2. Less reduced income if takeup reduced by 2.5%	4,600	5,000	<i>2.5% x total no of pupils (450) x average charge at new rate (£372 + 10% or 20%)</i>
3. Overall saving if takeup reduced by 2.5%	12,000	28,200	<i>= Line 1 less line 2</i>
4. Less reduced income if takeup reduced by 5%	9,200	10,000	<i>5% x total no of pupils (450) x average charge at new rate (£372 + 10% or 20%)</i>
5. Overall saving if takeup reduced by 5%	7,400	23,200	<i>= Line 1 less line 4</i>
6. Less reduced income if takeup reduced by 7.5%	13,800	15,100	<i>7.5% x total no of pupils (450) x average charge at new rate (£372 + 10% or 20%)</i>
7. Overall saving if takeup reduced by 7.5%	2,800	18,100	<i>= Line 1 less line 6</i>

Revised version of transport provisions and budgets table

(Section 6 of Additional Information report – ████████ of the Agenda)

Includes net as well as gross cost, and with some corrections.

Note:

- All figures are for 2011/12 financial / academic year
- Pupil numbers may increase further as a result of late applications

	Gross cost (£m)	Net cost (£m)	No. students
<i>Mainstream home to school</i>			
Under 16 (excl. denominational)	7.12	7.00	7754
Denominational	0.35	0.21	396
Post 16	1.73	1.14	1446
<i>SEN</i>	4.40	4.40	760

Appendix B

Other members and officers attending the rapid scrutiny exercise

Cllr Tony Deane	Councillor (observing)
Cllr Richard Gamble	Portfolio Holder for Transport
Cllr Lionel Grundy OBE	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cllr Dick Tonge	Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
Mark Boden	Corporate Director, Neighbourhood and Planning
Julie Cathcart	Head of School Improvement
Phil Cooch	Manager, Schools Accounting and Budgets
Stephanie Denovan	Service Director, Schools and Learning
Nick Glass	Manager, Schools, Buildings and Places
Carolyn Godfrey	Corporate Director, Children and Education
Parvis Khansari	Service Director, Strategic Services
Henry Powell	Senior Scrutiny Officer
Sharon Smith	Democratic Services Officer
Tazril Tamin	Educational Transport Entitlement Manager
Ian White	Head of Service, Passenger Transport

Appendix C

Public participation at the rapid scrutiny exercise

Emma Kayne	Parent Governor, St Patrick's Primary School, Corsham
Lena Pheby	Parent, St Patrick's Primary School, Corsham
Father Jean-Patrice Coulon	Parish Priest, Our Lady the Immaculate Conception, Devizes
Michael Stevenson	Chair of Governors at St Augustine's Catholic College
Francis White	Governor at St Augustine's Catholic College
Alistair Urdizane	

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Wiltshire Council

**Cabinet
13 September 2011**

Final Report of the Rapid Scrutiny Exercise: 11 to 19 Commissioning Strategy

Purpose

1. To present the conclusions and recommendations of the 11 to 19 Commissioning Strategy rapid scrutiny exercise established by the Children's Services Select Committee. The exercise relates to a report of the Corporate Director for Children and Education, presenting the 11 to 19 Commissioning Strategy and proposing its adoption by Cabinet, included in the Cabinet Agenda pack at Item 7 (pages 37-78).

Background

2. In June 2011, the Children's Services Select Committee established a rapid scrutiny exercise to respond to the 13-19 Commissioning Strategy consultation. The consultation response drafted by that group was subsequently endorsed (with a few amendments) by the Select Committee on 22nd July and submitted to the appropriate department.
3. The rapid scrutiny report to the Select Committee raised a number of concerns about the consultation process followed and recommended that further scrutiny be undertaken. The Select Committee therefore established a further rapid scrutiny exercise to consider two matters:
 - a) the consultation process followed for developing the commissioning strategy, and;
 - b) the report of the Corporate Director for Children and Education presenting final proposals for the commissioning strategy to Cabinet.
4. The Rapid Scrutiny Exercise was held on 9th September 2011 with the following members and officers in attendance:

Cllr Peter Davis

Councillor

Cllr Jon Hubbard

Councillor (Lead Member)

Cllr Jacqui Lay

Councillor

Cllr Helen Osborn

Councillor

Cllr Lionel Grundy OBE

Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Cllr Richard Clewer

Portfolio Holder for Youth Skills

Julie Cramp
Henry Powell

Joint Director, Commissioning & Performance
Senior Scrutiny Officer

Summary of Discussions

a) Discussion of the consultation process

5. Following a member query, it was reported that the consultation results were analysed by the Voice and Influence team and these, plus the eventual outcomes, would be fed back to consultees.
6. It was reported that the age range of the Commissioning Strategy has been extended from 13 to 19, to 11 to 19, to mirror the age range of secondary (and further) education. Members expressed concern that not enough activities were available for 11 and 12 year olds as youth work tended to be aimed at 13 to 19 year olds. However, it was acknowledged that involving very young people in youth activities could discourage older teens from taking part. It was also noted that those younger than 13 are sometimes permitted to participate in youth activities and that local discretion around this would remain.
7. Members expressed concern that the Corporate Research Team had not been fully involved in designing the consultation process and drafting all of the consultation questions. Members felt that the questions included in the 'Commissioning Strategy – draft for consultation' were worded in a way that was inaccessible and uninviting to the average person and would not, therefore, have encouraged maximum response. It was noted that 31 seemed a disappointing number of written responses to a consultation in a large county. In response, officers and the Cabinet Member reported that the questions included in this consultation document were aimed at professionals involved with youth work and it was therefore appropriate and necessary for them to be of a technical nature. The consultation questions included on the Sparksite website, however, were intended for young people and were worded accordingly. Also, some of the 31 written responses were from large organisations, such as the Police Authority, rather than individuals. The Cabinet Member noted that simple, 'tick box' consultation questions requesting yes's or no's would probably have prompted a larger response, but would have achieved very little.
8. It was reported that two Area Boards had held special meetings to consider the consultation document and others received briefings at their regular meetings. Members expressed concern that some Area Boards had chosen only to have a Chairman's announcement on the consultation.
9. Members expressed concern that it had not been made clear within the consultation process that new campus developments would not necessarily be available (or include youth work) in all areas of Wiltshire. Members questioned how much relevance localised plans such as campus developments had to a county-wide strategy. Members also had concerns regarding the relevance of the campus programme to this consultation, given

the disparity between the timescales for making savings and the projected timescales for the campus projects. The Portfolio Holder for Youth Skills responded that the consultation was an invitation to young people to express how they wanted youth work to be delivered in the future and so it was essential to include the campus plans within that context. It was also reported that it was made clear in consultation sessions with young people that youth work provision in campuses was not a certainty everywhere.

Discussion of the proposals to Cabinet

10. The Director for Commissioning and Performance introduced the Cabinet report and summarised the proposed Wiltshire Youth Work Offer for members.
11. It was reported that in some local authorities youth work was now exclusively provided by volunteers whereas Wiltshire Council was able to retain paid youth work staff, while working increasingly closely with the voluntary and community sector. The Council's comparatively strong financial situation had also allowed the delay of the necessary cuts for one year while an in-depth review and consultation on services for 13-19 year olds took place.
12. It was reported that any subscriptions for access to youth work were likely to be a nominal amount and members were reassured that no young person would be refused access on the basis of their ability to pay. It was noted that paying small subscriptions can actually increase young people's sense of ownership over their youth centres and activities. Other methods of income generation such as corporate sponsorship and projects run by young people (e.g. smoothie bars) would also be explored.
13. Members expressed concern that there is the potential for the proposed Youth Advisory Groups' role to overlap with existing bodies, such as CAYPIGs (Community Area Young People's Issues Groups). It was reported that CAYPIGs were run entirely by Youth Services, whereas Youth Advisory Groups would be of a more over-arching nature. Each Youth Advisory Group would reflect the unique circumstances and requirements of its local area and that existing groups and bodies, such as CAYPIGs, would be involved in their development. The primary role of young people in planning and shaping services would be ensured by requiring each Youth Advisory Group to elect a chairman under the age of twenty-five and also for more than 50% of their members to be under that age. Members might also include councillors and community area managers.
14. The Director for Commissioning and Performance reported that the move towards focusing more resources on one-to-one work with young people engaging in risky behaviours could involve changes to the role of the Youth Development Service Team Leaders. However, this, and other decisions around staffing such as the precise mix of full-time and sessional staff and volunteers would depend on local circumstances. There would be voluntary opportunities across all areas of the service and all would receive appropriate

training and supervision. The framework for using those volunteers would reflect the Council's Volunteering Strategy.

15. It was clarified that each community area as a whole was expected to generate an average of £2,500 income, so areas of higher deprivation where income generation was more challenging could be 'supported' by more affluent parts of the same community area. Each area would also decide if and how to manage generating income from subscriptions.
16. The Lead Member thanked the officers and executive members for attending and answering the Rapid Scrutiny Group's questions.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. **The Rapid Scrutiny Group regrets that 11 to 12 year olds were not involved in the consultation until a late stage and fear that, as a consequence, their views may not have influenced the development of the Strategy.**
2. **It is noted that the Council's Consultation Strategy requires all consultations of this nature to be cleared through the Corporate Research Team and that, following a recommendation from the Children's Services Select Committee in 2010, assurances were given this would happen in future.**

The Rapid Scrutiny Group regrets that the Corporate Research Team were not fully involved in designing the consultation process and that the consultation document was consequently not hosted on the Council website.

3. **The Rapid Scrutiny Group notes that one set of consultation questions were aimed at young people (those included on the Sparksite website) and another set were aimed at professionals from the youth work sector (those questions included in the consultation document).**

The Group is therefore concerned that there were no equivalent questions designed for adult, lay people, and feel this may have partly led to the low number of written consultation responses received.

4. **The Rapid Scrutiny Group is concerned that it was not made clear in the consultation document that all the suggestions outlined for the future of a local youth work offer (for example, those including campus developments) would not be available in all areas of Wiltshire within the timeframe of the Strategy.**
5. **The Rapid Scrutiny Group is concerned that some Area Boards' participation in the consultation amounted only to a chairman announcement.**

6. The Rapid Scrutiny Group welcomes in principle the idea of Youth Advisory Groups, particularly the emphasis on involving young people in planning and shaping local services. However, the Group recommends that existing groups and bodies within the local area (such as CAYPIGs) are involved in the formation of any new groups to prevent duplication, and that recognition is given to each local area's unique circumstances and requirements.
7. With reference to the proposed use of subscriptions for income generation, the Rapid Scrutiny Group welcomes the reassurance provided that no young person will be excluded from youth activities on the basis of their ability to pay. The Group also welcomes the proposal that other forms of income generation will be investigated.
8. Although 11 to 12 year olds are sometimes allowed to participate in youth services activities, the Rapid Scrutiny Group is concerned that there is no dedicated youth work provision for this age group.
9. The Rapid Scrutiny Group regrets the necessity to lose any staff in order to balance budgets, but also recognises the constraints under which the report was written. However, the Group does have concerns that replacing paid staff with potentially untrained volunteers could have a negative impact on the quality of provision.

Cllr Jon Hubbard – Lead Member for the Rapid Scrutiny Exercise

Paul Kelly – Designated Scrutiny Officer

Report author: Henry Powell – Senior Scrutiny Officer

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Appendices

None

Background documents

- A report on the Process for Developing and Consulting on the 13-19 Commissioning Strategy
- Commissioning Strategy for Young People aged 13 to 19 – April 2012 to 2015 (draft for consultation – May 2011)
- 13 to 19 Commissioning Strategy – Summary of Young People's Consultation Responses
- 11 to 19 Commissioning Strategy (report to Cabinet 13th September 2011)
- Commissioning Strategy for Young People Aged 11 to 19 April 2012 to 2015 (an appendix to the above)

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