

## Appendix 3

### Minute from the Cabinet meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2006

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#### **(c) Denominational School Transport Consultation**

The Cabinet considered the joint report of the Director of Environmental Services and Director, Department for Children and Education which reported on the public consultation exercise commissioned by Cabinet and which made proposals for charging to effect savings in this service area from September 2007.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Development reported that the consultation exercise revealed that there were strong views on this matter. The Council had listened to those views and in liaison with representatives of the Catholic community, developed an alternative proposal which effected phased savings from September 2007.

Mr Brendan Wall, the Headteacher of St Augustines, spoke on behalf of that school and acknowledged the difficulties that the County Council faced. He accepted the requirement within the revised proposal for there to be some confirmation that parents were adhering to and practising members of the religious denomination stated but expressed his concern that he felt the proposals were a departure from the historic agreement between local government and the Catholic community.

Mr David Byrne from the Clifton Diocese also expressed the view that the proposals were contrary to that agreement and stressed that for Catholic parents the denominational schools were the designated schools.

Mr Osborn and Mrs White both spoke and asked questions as local Members affected by the proposals.

**Resolved:** *To endorse the alternative proposal with the features as set out below, to effect phased savings from September 2007 in this service area:-*

- (i) Confirmation that parents are 'adherents to and practising members of the religious denomination stated' would be reviewed annually by a Panel of representatives of the local church(es) and the school(s). An LEA representative would be invited to observe the working of the Panels.*
- (ii) Three levels of charging are proposed:*
  - primary pupils would be charged at £45 per term (six term year, ie £270 per annum) subject to living the minimum qualifying distance from the school*

*Secondary pupils would be charged £45 per term (£270 per annum) if living between 3 and 5.99 miles from school*

- £55 per term (£330 per annum) if living between 6 and 9.99 miles from school and*
- £60 per term (£360 per annum) above that distance, providing the pupil is attending the designated denominational school.*

- (iii) A facility for payment by standing order in eight instalments (August to March) for the total annual charge and for payments by credit card or cheque would be made available.*
- (iv) The charges would apply only to those commencing Year R or Year 7 (as applicable) from September 2007 onwards ie the charges will not be applicable to those already attending.*
- (v) These charges would rise annually in line with transport inflation costs but no higher than this.*
- (vi) Families on lower income levels would be able to receive free passes, subject to the qualifying clauses to be specified in the Education and Inspections Act (anticipated at the end of this year).*
- (vii) Free transport would also be available for those who qualify under the general school transport policy i.e. on opted grounds, shared site etc.*
- (viii) The new arrangements would be reviewed after they have been in place for two years, in preparation for the 2010-11 budget.*