

APPENDIX 1B

Summary of main points raised in consultation responses

<i>Issues identified</i>	<i>supporting / additional comments</i>	<i>number of times mentioned</i>	<i>Officer response</i>
Relating to post 16 transport proposals			
Unfair to charge for transport now that young people are required to stay in education or training to age 18	Council or government should provide free transport for post 16 education now that is compulsory for young people to stay in education or training	31	noted - council is raising this as a concern with central government; despite the raising of the participation age to require young people to stay in education or work-based training until age 18, there has been no change in the legislation regarding transport, and no funding has been made available to allow authorities to provide transport
	Government should fund post 16 transport including where have to attend a more distant school or college (example - has to travel from Chippenham to Trowbridge because no bricklaying course at Chippenham College)	2	
Impact on family budgets	will impact on hard working 'middle income' families who don't receive benefits or qualify for reduced rate pass	4	noted in Equality Assessment and report
	will impact particularly on those living in rural areas	3	
	Current charges already too high	3	
	unfair to charge more to high earning families who pay higher taxes and where both parents are working so can not provide transport	1	
Impact on students	will deter young people from going into post 16 education, and encourage more to become 'NEET' (not in employment, education or training)	4	noted in Equality Assessment and report
Impact on environment and safety	will cause more traffic and congestion in peak periods, air pollution and CO2 emissions. Will encourage more use of cars and walking to school, with higher risk of accidents on route and around the schools	6	noted in report
Impact on achievement of council objectives	will not deliver council priorities of protecting vulnerable, boosting economy and bringing communities together	1	noted

	council should be supporting young people's education	2	noted
	proposals will not save money as buses will still need to run but with fewer people carried	1	the savings will come from a combination of higher income, and reduced cost where transport is provided by purchasing a pass to travel on a public service bus
Suggested changes to proposals	a small increase would be acceptable, but not an increase of nearly 50%	3	considered as options but rejected as would not deliver sufficient saving
	charge should be increased gradually over 3-4 years not all in one go	1	
	should be a range of charging levels depending on ability to pay (to help middle income families above threshold for reduced rate pass)	2	
	should be NO reduction for low income families - why should those receiving high benefits pay less than those who work?	1	noted. The responses to the consultation indicated support for maintaining a reduced rate for low income families
	if charges are increased, council should signpost students to charities that may be able to help with transport costs	1	noted
	should set up a car sharing website linking parents / carers with others at same school or college, to share transport	1	the council has a car sharing website (https://wiltshire.liftshare.com) which could be used by groups of parents
Other comments	council needs to provide a more reliable transport infrastructure for rural communities - transport to school is already difficult and relies increasingly on parents having to drive	1	noted
	Wilts & Dorset won't accept Stagecoach Unirider tickets despite both companies operating on same route (Activ8, Tidworth)	1	
	has to pay full rate for post 16 pass even though only uses bus 50% of time - should be reduced rates for part time users	1	noted, but selling part time seats would lead to capacity issues on some routes and would be expensive to administer

Relating to grammar school transport proposals			
Support proposed introduction of charging	council should only pay for transport of children attending the catchment school - parents choosing to send children to grammar school should pay the costs. The current situation where council funds travel to the grammar schools but not to other parental choice schools is inequitable	8	noted. The proposal will put grammar school transport onto the same basis as other parental choice schools

	pays to send son to grammar school from outside catchment, despite not being well off, and is angry that other richer parents get free transport from other side of Salisbury (in the catchment). If choose to send children to grammar school should pay for transport wherever you live.	1	
	supports charging for transport where school is attended through parental choice, but thinks that should be support for children from low income families	3	
Pupils for whom grammar school is their nearest school	uncertain and concerned whether children for whom the grammar school is their nearest school would lose free transport	3	for pupils of age under 16 it is a statutory requirement for free transport to be provided to the nearest suitable and available school where the walking distance is over 3 miles
Proposals discriminate against grammar school pupils	Discriminatory to end free transport for children living in the catchment area of the grammar schools / the grammar schools are an accepted part of the Salisbury education system and should not be treated differently from other schools / Unfair to pick on the grammar schools and treat them differently / this is a divisive policy / grammar schools are state schools and should be treated the same as others	55	noted. However, elsewhere in Wiltshire the council does not subsidise or provide transport for pupils attending schools other than the nearest or 'transport designated' school, and this proposal will bring Salsibury into line with the situation that already applies in other parts of the county
	discriminatory not to provide transport to the grammar schools when would provide transport to the nearest school (sometimes on the same bus)	18	
	choice of grammar school education should not be denied to able children as a result of family income. Discriminates against those who have worked hard and achieved academically - should be supported to achieve regardless of family income (Every Child Matters and Equality Act)	60	

	Grammar schools are not 'parental choice' in the same way as elsewhere in the county - as Salisbury has an 'opt-in' selective system (supported by the council), this deprives the other secondary schools of their brightest pupils and means they are less able to provide a challenging environment for academically able children. Parents of such children are therefore forced (sometimes against their will) to send their children to the grammar schools in order to give them an education that meets their needs. In this context the grammar school is in effect the "nearest suitable school" for these children. Legislation around school selection says pupils should be able to attend schools which meet their academic needs - proposals therefore discriminate against grammar school pupils	13	it is the council's view that all secondary schools in the county are able to provide a suitable education for pupils of all abilities
	Nearest school is Bishop Wordsworth but does not admit girls - so proposals discriminate on grounds of gender of child	1	
	Discriminatory to charge for pupils aiming to start at grammar schools in September 2015 - they will already have studied for the 11+ and applied for a place	1	It is considered that to give 12 months notice (from the start of the consultation) is adequate to allow parents to consider their options
Unfair to charge grammar school pupils unless apply a similar charge to other pupils	unfair to charge grammar school pupils unless apply a similar policy to all other children who are not attending the nearest school	4	Elsewhere in the county a similar policy already applies; the council does not subsidise (and accepts no responsibility for making transport available for) pupils who do not attend the designated local school
	families in Marshfield already have to pay to send children to parental choice schools in Chippenham. Should talk to them as there are similarities with the proposed charge for grammar school pupils	1	
	unfair to charge grammar school pupils unless make a similar charge for all pupils attending other state schools	7	It would not be legal to make a charge for pupils attending their nearest school who live more than 3 miles from it
	the state should provide free transport to all state schools including grammar schools	2	noted
proposed charges for sixth form pupils at the grammar schools are unfair and discriminatory	charges should not apply to pupils already at school when they move into the 6th form - were not aware of charge when they first went to the school. (including one case where claimed that moving school would cause psychological harm - child is from a difficult background)	5	The proposals have been amended so that the post 16 policy and charges (including the reduced rate for low income families) will apply to students

	Discriminatory to charge post 16 students at grammar schools more than post 16 students at other establishments (especially when college students often travel longer distances). There are two issues here; (a) that the proposed charge for grammar schools of £676 is higher than the £625 post 16 charge applying to those entitled to assistance under the post 16 transport scheme, and (b) that there is a reduced rate charge of £156 under the post 16 transport scheme, but no reduction for low income families attending the grammar schools	15	attending the grammar school sixth forms
Impact on family budgets	Would cause hardship for hard working low and middle income families and discriminates against them - would have to make sacrifices, or may not be able to afford to send children to grammar schools	21	noted in Equality Assessment and report
	Would have a severe impact on families with more than one child attending school - either financial hardship or may not be able to afford to send children to grammar schools (including for example a disabled parent with 2 children at the grammar schools, unable to work and could not afford transport costs for both)	31	
	penalises those living in rural areas	8	
	difficult for families where both parents are working so can't easily transport own children	3	
Impact on environment, safety and viability of bus services	Would lead to more traffic and congestion at peak periods, traffic hazards around the schools, and more air pollution and CO2 emissions	15	noted in report
	Would lead to reduced use of buses, reduce their viability and lead to fare rises and service cuts which would affect the quality of life of vulnerable groups who use them	2	noted
	concern about safety of her child if could not prove they had paid on the bus and did not have money for a fare	1	noted. Many other children across the county who are not entitled to free transport already pay for their transport and travel either with a season ticket / pass or pay fares
Impact on grammar schools	Charging for transport would make the grammar schools more elitist / only more wealthy families could send their children there, and this would undermine their reason for existence as state schools - to give less well off families the opportunity to receive an education they could not afford in the private sector and encourage social mobility	17	noted
	Grammar schools are the 'jewel in Wiltshire' crown' ; proposals would restrict access by those who would benefit from it most	5	noted

	the council should not ask grammar schools to pick up the cost of supporting transport for low income families' pupils when school budgets are already under pressure and would be at the expense of education; are other schools expected to support pupils attending from outside their catchment?	7	noted. Yes, there are several schools in other parts of the county who already provide their own transport for children attending from outside their catchment
	should be encouraging, not discouraging, more pupils from outside the city to attend the grammar schools , in order to increase competition for places and maintain standards	3	noted
	Higher charge for post 16 students at grammar schools (compared to standard post 16 charge applying to other establishments) is discriminatory and could have serious impact on grammar school sixth forms; are currently up to 160 students a year who move from other schools into the grammar schools when they start 6th form. The difference in charge could deter some of these - especially those who would qualify for the reduced rate charge at other establishments but would not get a reduced rate at the grammar schools	1	The proposals have been amended so that the post 16 policy and charges (including the reduced rate for low income families) will apply to students attending the grammar school sixth forms
impact on local economy	families will be worse off and this will impact on spending with local businesses, house prices etc	1	noted
	grammar school pupils are the future leaders of industry and the economy, and should be encouraged to achieve	1	noted
other comments	charge of £676 seems excessive (compared to cost of bus fares from where he lives; should at least be cheaper than cost of driving to school; generally too high;are the council seeking to make a profit?)	4	£676 is based on the average cost per head of providing transport; for some this will be higher and for others lower than the cost of paying individual bus fares
	savings likely to be negligible as for many, grammar school is the nearest	1	the costings take into account that some children will continue to receive free transport as the grammar school is their nearest
	savings likely to be negligible as if children attend local school instead, council will need to provide more buses	4	this would depend on the number who change school
	is even more important to allow children from faith schools to benefit from transport	1	noted - faith transport was withdrawn in 2011 due to the need to reduce spending; but the schools now provide their own transport
suggested changes to proposals	fairer to charge all pupils who receive school transport a smaller amount rather than imposing a very high charge for grammar school pupils	6	It would not be legal to make a charge for pupils attending their nearest school who live more than 3 miles from it
	should introduce means testing for all school transport so that can provide assistance for pupils from low income families to attend the grammar schools if they pass the exam	1	

	charge should vary according to difference in distance between the chosen and nearest schools - so that those living nearer to school do not subsidise those living further away, and the council still contributes what it would have cost for transport to the local school	9	in many cases the cost of transport does not relate directly to distance, but to the cost of hiring a vehicle and the numbers travelling in it. It would be very difficult to administer a scheme of this nature, and also not affordable in the current financial situation
	should provide an allowance per child based on cost of transport to nearest school, and let parents spend it as they wish. Bus companies would have to provide attractive fares to attract custom	1	
	would be acceptable to introduce a charge at a much lower level	4	considered as options but rejected as would not deliver sufficient saving
	should be special arrangements for families with more than one child attending	2	
	should be a reduced rate charge or exemption for lower income families (and not just very low) so that they are not denied opportunity to attend grammar school / should be an exemption for those receiving free school meals	5	
	should be a reduced rate charge for lower income families, applying to all parental choice schools (some suggest based on the difference between cost of transport to chosen school and to nearest school)	3	it would not be affordable for the council to begin subsidising transport for pupils attending parental choice schools
	better to work with the schools and look at how transport provision might be addressed collectively	1	the schools were asked earlier in the year whether they would be able to share the cost of transport assistance but were unable to agree
	reduce transport costs by finding more cost effective methods - better contract deals from bus companies, other means of transport than expensive taxis	2	considerable effort and expertise is already put into finding the most cost effective transport
	go back to system had before when all journeys had to start and end in Wiltshire	1	free transport is currently only provided from within a defined area
	put limit (suggestions include 10 miles; or 25 minutes; or from within Wiltshire only) on catchment area from which get free travel to exclude long expensive journeys eg from Winchester or Andover	5	
	If charge is so expensive should also include free travel at weekends	1	noted. The charge would have to be higher still to cover the additional cost of weekend travel
	Use transport savings to provide local schools that are capable of giving education that would allow children to reach their potential	1	noted
	Would be fairer to apply charge to all grammar school pupils including those already at the schools - could then charge a lower rate for all	1	considered that this would not be fair as parents will have made the decision to attend the schools before knowing about the charge

Relating to continuity transport proposals		
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Support proposed withdrawal of continuity assistance	parents who choose to move house should pay for transport costs	3	noted.
Should continue to support low income families	should be provision to assist low income families who have to move to get a job or due to cuts in housing benefit	2	families with exceptional circumstances will still be able to make their case and be granted assistance on appeal
Should not change the current policy	Upheaval caused by moving school in exam year can impact enormously on a young person's future; often fail to complete curriculum resulting in negative impact on their long term opportunities. Families may be forced to move by financial or housing circumstances. Is important to provide assistance to minimise disruption and improve outcomes in the small number of cases funded each year.	1	
	needs to be considered on an individual basis - like the current Fair Access Panels	1	

General points relating to all proposals			
Should find savings from other areas	examples include councillors' allowances, senior officers pay increases, charging OAPs for bus pass travel, county hall refurbishment, skate parks, disposal of underused property, Market Place project, art projects, Park & Ride	17	noted in the report
	should make savings in less damaging ways / from services that do not contribute to the wealth of the nation (e.g. libraries, free bus travel for OAPs, community funds), rather than from our childrens' education	6	
Should save money from other school transport	All children should walk to nearest bus stop, not get a taxi if stop is only 5-10 minutes walk away / should have to walk up to 3 miles to bus stop	2	noted. In some cases transport has to be provided if the route is unsafe to walk.
	Suggests replace flat rate charges with an 'allowance' (£400?) which parents would then have to top up to match cost of their transport - so that those living further away would pay more	1	the cost of transport varies greatly depending on circumstances and often does not relate directly to distance but to the cost of hiring a vehicle and the number of pupils using it
complaints about way consultation was conducted	should have written direct to all affected families / should have written direct to feeder primary schools so they could inform parents considering sending children to grammar schools; was not mentioned in 'Choosing a school' brochure	11	it was considered that writing to the affected schools and colleges would be the best way of spreading the word to those who might be affected. The consultation has also been reported in the press.
	some of questions were unfairly posed / weighted	3	noted