
Report to Council

Date: 3 June 2010

Subject: Home to School Transport Policy (Glenochil)

Report by: Interim Head of Education

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. This report brings forward actions which it is proposed should be taken in relation to the provision of home to school transport from and to Glenochil Village and Coalsnaughton. The proposed actions are consistent with the Council's current Home to School Transport Policy (2004).

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that the actions outlined in this paper are approved and their implications for the provision of home school transport noted.

3.0 Considerations

- 3.1. In December 2004, Clackmannanshire Council approved a new Home to School Transport Policy; this was implemented in August 2005.

- 3.2. Generally, pupils become entitled to free home to school transport if:

a) they live a long way from their catchment area school i.e. are distance entitled, or

b) have additional support needs.

The detail of distance entitlement is included in Appendix A.

- 3.3. However, pupils who are not distance entitled may be awarded free home to school transport if there is no suitable walking route between their home and their catchment school or between their home and a normal designated transport pick-up point.

- 3.4. Clackmannanshire Council and its various partners have invested considerable sums of money in improving walking and cycling routes throughout the County, to the benefit of the whole community. Furthermore, considerable areas of land are now in residential use, with walking routes

within them, more than was the case when the Home to School Transport Policy was approved at the end of 2004.

- 3.5. Taking these developments into account, an annual programme of review of school transport routes previously deemed to have been unsuitable was introduced in June 2007.
- 3.6. In June 2007, the Team Leader, Travel and Transport, assisted by the School Travel Co-ordinator and the Principal Transport Planner, carried out an assessment of all walking routes which the Council had previously deemed unsuitable. The assessment criteria used are wholly consistent with current RoSPA guidance.
- 3.7. Following the completion of the assessment exercise, the Team Leader, Travel and Transport has indicated that the walking route between Glenochil and Tullibody (St. Serf's PS, St. Bernadette's PS and Lornshill Academy, and the St. Modan's link transport) is now suitable.
- 3.8. There are four schools that are served by the Glenochil Village to Tullibody route:

Contract Ref C05/206 - St Serf's PS: under the Council's policy, pupils aged under 8 attending St Serf's PS from Glenochil are distance entitled. In the 2009/10 school session, there are 4 St Serf's pupils receiving free home to school transport at an annual cost of £4,560. Records show that no pupils will qualify for transport at the start of the 2010/11 session.

Contract Ref C05/304 - St Bernadette's RCPS: under the Council's policy, pupils aged under 8 attending St Bernadette's RCPS from Glenochil are distance entitled. Currently two pupils receive transport at an annual cost of around £1,000. Records show that no pupils qualify for transport at the start of the 2010/11 session.

Contract Ref C05/203 - Lornshill Academy: the Muirside housing development provides a suitable walking route from Glenochil to Lornshill Academy that is less than 2 miles in length, so no pupils are distance entitled to free home to school transport. Currently, there are 16 pupils receiving free transport at an annual cost of £19,000.

Contract Ref C05/302 - St Modan's HS: currently, pupils attending St Modan's HS are provided with free link transport from Glenochil to Tullibody Cross, which is the nearest designated pick up point for the contract transport to/from St Modan's High School. The walking route is less than 2 miles so there is no distance entitlement. In this school session, only one pupil will receive this service at a cost of £1,900 per year.

Contract Ref C05/303 - St Modan's HS: as above. There are no records as to why this transport is provided because it has always been a suitable walking route of less than 2 miles. There are currently no pupils receiving transport.

3.9 The following actions are proposed:

- St Serf's PS - parents are informed of the review and the implications i.e. that those not distance entitled may receive a concessionary place
- St Bernadette's PS - as St Serf's Primary School.
- Lornshill Academy - parents are informed of the review and the implications i.e. that there is no entitlement to free home to school transport but that it will be provided for the remainder of this academic session
- St Modan's High School, Link Transport to Tullibody Cross - as Lornshill Academy
- St Modan's High School, Link Transport to Devonside - free link transport from Coalsnaughton is withdrawn.

It is proposed, in effect, that all of these contracts should be discontinued from the end of the current school session.

While these actions can release Council resources there are other significant and positive outcomes for the Council and the pupils affected by these proposed changes:

- Pupils will realise the health and other benefits of walking to school. The Council already invests substantial amounts of money in promoting active travel and lifestyles and walking and cycling to school.
- The vehicles used to service the redundant contracts will be released into the local pool of vehicles available to service other home to school transport contracts, in particular those associated with additional support needs. There are currently insufficient vehicles available to provide any competition for contracts, and in some cases, providing any service is problematic.
- The proposals promote the Council's core values of equity and fairness in the application of the Council's Home to School Transport policy.

3.10 Officers are conducting a wider review of the current Home to School Transport Policy, and further reports on this will be presented to Council.

4.0 Sustainability Implications

- #### 4.1.
- There are no direct and significant implications for sustainability although the overall carbon footprint of the Council may be reduced slightly by the withdrawal of this provision.

5.0 Resource Implications

5.1. Financial Details

The changes to the provision of school transport proposed in this paper would result in a full year saving of approximately £26,560.

5.2. Staffing

5.3. The report has no staffing implications

6.0 Exempt Reports

6.1. Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) Our Priorities 2008 - 2011 (Please tick)

- The area has a positive image and attracts people and businesses
- Our communities are more cohesive and inclusive
- People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and employment
- Our communities are safer
- Vulnerable people and families are supported
- Substance misuse and its effects are reduced
- Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing
- The environment is protected and enhanced for all
- The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence

(2) Council Policies (Please detail)

8.0 Equalities Impact

8.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

Yes No

9.0 Legality

9.1 In adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

10.0 Appendices

10.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

None

11.0 Background Papers

11.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)

Yes (please list the documents below) No

Home to School Transport Policy; Clackmannanshire Council 2004

Author(s)

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Clackmannanshire Council shall provide free home to school transport in the following circumstances

5 Eligibility Criteria for Distance Entitlement

5.1 Free home to school transport will be provided for: -

Primary

- a) Any child under the age of 8 years in full-time education who lives more than one mile from his/her catchment area school, or from the nearest designated transport pick-up point, by the shortest suitable walking route.

Any child in these circumstances who reaches the age of 8 years during a school session will continue to receive free transport until the end of the school session.

- b) Any child who is aged 8 years or over in full-time education who lives more than two miles from his/her catchment area school, or from the nearest designated transport pick-up point, by the shortest suitable walking route.

Secondary

- a) Alloa Academy: any pupil resident in the catchment areas of the school's associated primary schools and whose residence is over two miles from the school by the shortest suitable walking route.
- b) Alva Academy: any pupil resident in the catchment areas of Menstrie PS, Tillicoultry PS, Strathdevon PS, Muckhart PS and Coalsnaughton PS.
- c) Lornshill Academy: any pupil resident in the catchment area of Clackmannan PS, Craigbank PS, Fishcross PS or Deerpark PS; or who is resident in the catchment areas of Abercromby PS, Banchory PS or St. Serfs PS and his/her residence is over two miles from the school, or from the nearest designated transport pick-up point, by the shortest suitable walking route. Pupils resident in Cambus will also receive free home to school transport.

5.2 Assessment of Walking Routes

It is the responsibility of Clackmannanshire Council, as the Education Authority, to determine whether or not a route is suitable as a walking route. The Travel and Transport Team in association with the Roads Department is responsible for determining distance entitlement in accordance with the following criteria for walking routes: -

- a) The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 (as amended) requires Education Authorities to "have regard for the safety of pupils". When assessing a walking route, Clackmannanshire Council expects that parents/carers will take responsibility for accompanying their child to school (or for making other suitable arrangements for ensuring their child is accompanied). Accordingly, the shortest walking route will be the shortest route

along a road, footpath or right of way suitable for a child accompanied by an adult, from their home gateway nearest to the school to the nearest designated school gate/gates. Clackmannanshire Council has in place a process for the assessment of walking routes that complies with RoSPA guidance.

- b) If there is no home gateway, then the measurement for the distance entitled criteria will be taken from the bottom step of the main entrance of the house/block of flats. In the case of farm tracks/private roads, refer to section 15.
- c) A school gate or gates is designated as suitable for children's use by the headteacher in conjunction with advice from the Team Leader, Travel and Transport Team.
- d) If the shortest available walking route is deemed unsafe, then the next shortest walking route that is safe will be used in the calculation of distance entitlement.