

Notice of Motion – submitted by Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson

Making Schools Accessible to All

Flintshire County Council Notes:

1. that the current school transport eligibility policy leaves some learners unable to access their school, and leaves some communities divided;
2. the public questions tabled to Flintshire County Council on this issue;
3. the cabinet member's response to those questions;
4. that this matter has also been raised at the education, youth and culture overview and scrutiny committee;
5. the financial constraints that the council operates under, and
6. the petition calling on the council to adopt a fairer policy.

Flintshire County Council Believes:

1. that it is reasonable for the council to review its policies from time to time, and that it is appropriate to review this policy;
2. that the current policy, while well intentioned, is not necessarily the optimal position for the council to take, and
3. that the council should, in principle, offer as wide an eligibility criteria as possible.

Flintshire County Council Resolves:

1. to commission a review of the existing policy by the education, youth and culture overview and scrutiny committee;
2. that that review shall consider the options of (a) leaving the policy unchanged, (b) moving to a policy of eligibility based on potentially overlapping geographic areas, taking into account which high schools serve as hubs for which primary schools and ending the division of communities, (c) a policy retains the existing rules as a core group entitled to free transport, and as a second group entitles learners who have no safe route to any high school to a free school transport place to any school, where this does not require additional transport to be commissioned, with excess places after the core group have been awarded places offered to the second group on a first come, first served basis, and (d) any other option that the committee may wish;
3. that as part of this exercise, the public should be invited to submit their views;
4. that the committee should rank the options in the above paragraph in order of preference and report back to Cabinet, and
5. that this report should be received no later than the 30th June 2025.