

Children and Young People Committee: 17 May 2022

Item 5: Home to School Transport to After School Clubs (SEND)

Public speakers

	Name	Question or comment
1.	Mayor Dr Nik Johnson	<p>As the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, I am pleased to see the report and recommendations from the County Council officers as laid out before you today.</p> <p>I wish to commend the officers for their hard work in undertaking the consultation and for showing a real understanding of the problem and a willingness to listen to the concerns of the large number of people who responded.</p> <p>I would like to acknowledge the campaigning and advocacy work of Nadia Bowes – along with her daughter Chloe – who were inspiring in their ability to highlight the importance of this transport service for a small but very important group of children in our community. I would also like to thank the thousands of people who signed the petition years ago who also put the huge weight of public support behind Nadia's campaign.</p> <p>It is to the credit of the previous chair of the Committee, Cllr Simon Bywater, who was willing to reconsider the decision to reduce the service and continue its funding whilst this consultation was undertaken.</p> <p>The review of the proposals and a consultation with a willingness to listen to the children and their families means we are here today in a much more positive position.</p> <p>My personal involvement started a long time ago in my role as both Chloe's doctor and a local district councillor. However, now as a Mayor I acutely recognise the challenges we now</p>

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		<p>have in local government with challenging and finite financial resources, but I trust you will do the right thing.</p> <p>In trying to make these proposals work for the children and their families I am keen to offer you the support of the Combined Authority in helping explore innovative, collaborative solutions to ensure that the provision of the transport service continues long into the future, and it remains accessible and affordable to as many children as possible.</p> <p>The 3 Cs are in action here - Thank you for showing your “compassion”, thank you for your willingness to “cooperate” and thank you for helping these children in your “community”.</p>
2.	Nadia Bowes	<p>I welcome and am very grateful for the recommendation to continue the after-school transport provision for a further 12 months. Currently I think families with children with disabilities are incredibly anxious regarding the cost-of-living crisis and maintaining the already compromised quality of life for their children. It is well documented in research that poverty and disability are interlinked. While understandable that the Local Authority is wanting to consider means testing in the future, it may be fitting to investigate this further, following the coming winter months as I believe families’ financial situations may change dramatically owing to the continued rising costs. While a rational idea going forward, I am not confident whether means testing and consequent contributions to transport from families will do much to lighten the costs to the Local Authority.</p> <p>On a side note, this consultation was carried out under the premise of equality. Your arguments of the transport for 54 children costing £1,734.93 per year per child may benefit from further analysis into how often a child uses the transportation service. This was not questioned during the consultation. For example there will be a child that attends after-school club once a week and others that may attend five days a week – so your numbers, may need further work.</p>