

**Appendix D****Summary of consultation concerns submitted online, by e-mail or by letter.**

Respondents disagreed with the new proposals suggesting that they are too restrictive for at least one of the following reasons (officer responses are given to these comments):

	<b>Consultation comment</b>	<b>Officer response</b>
1.	Traditional catchment areas should be maintained to ensure continuity for pupils and to capitalise on the proven working relationships between feeder schools and high schools.	Traditional catchment areas no longer exist where academies have changed their admissions areas and/or age ranges.
2.	The impact on faith schools.	These proposals do not directly affect transport provision to faith schools where a decision has previously been made by the Council to phase out the provision of this discretionary service.
3.	Society should invest in school transport now so that pupils could maximise their potential and so benefit society later.	None
4.	Parental choice would be curtailed. Parents expressed a desire to send their child to the school that they perceived to be the best rather than the nearest school without incurring a cost to do so.	Parental choice does not exist – parents can express a preference for a particular school but this does not guarantee a place at that school nor does legislation give an automatic right to free home to school transport based on that expressed preference.
5.	The impact on the road network and environment of parents having to transport their own children.	Parents have other options for sustainable transport and many schools are already providing or considering additional school buses that are/will be provided outside Local Authority funding.

6.	The safety of the child. Some high schools were within the three mile statutory walking distance but were not accessible by public footpaths or were only accessible along busy main roads.	Legislation requires the Council to have a policy of providing free home to school transport for children who do not have an available walking route to their nearest school when it is under 3 miles. This will continue to be the case under the new proposals.
7.	The new proposals were seen as unfair because they did not offer the same level of provision to all pupils/families.	It is neither logical nor financially possible to offer free transport to all pupils. The new proposals offer the statutory legal minimum to all pupils who qualify. In addition, transport is offered above the minimum level in response to concerns received in the first consultation about some specific school arrangements and the offer of transport to the nearest Leicestershire school for Leicestershire residents.
8.	The new proposals were deemed unclear. Some parents remained uncertain as to whether pupils would be able to choose their nearest Leicestershire School now and/or would be able to do so in the future.	<p>The proposals are that any new policy approved would only take effect for pupils entering school for the first time or transferring their secondary schooling from September 2015.</p> <p>The new proposals provide for free transport, over the relevant distances, to the nearest school and in addition the nearest Leicestershire school (these may be the same school).</p> <p>Where schools have not changed their admission catchment or age range since May 2012 then the traditional transport arrangements in place at that time are frozen until there are changes to admission catchments or age ranges.</p> <p>If the proposals are approved,</p>

		detailed work will be undertaken on developing the policy and associated guidance to ensure that it is comprehensible to users.
9.	Students now have to continue in some form of education or training until they are 18 years old therefore the government should also legislate so that post 16 transport provision matches that of secondary schools.	This is required by statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education. At the current time there is no requirement to provide free transport and transport can be provided and a charge can be made for this transport.
10.	The proposal will impact on a student's choice of career as not all courses are offered at all colleges.	Students are free to apply to whichever college for whichever course they prefer, but assisted transport will only be granted to those attending their nearest school/college. There are a number of commercially available school buses and season tickets that offer good value transport options for many Post 16 students.
11.	Students in full-time education receive no benefits and do not work therefore they cannot afford to pay for transport.	Post 16 students from low income families are exempt from transport charges and/or can apply for bursary funding that can be used towards travel costs.
12.	The policy remains ambiguous	The policy proposals detail the rules of entitlement to free home to school transport and as stated above will be subject to detailed further guidance if approved.
13.	If students wish to continue in the 6th form of the same school they already attend they should not have to pay. To change school would be detrimental to their progress and impact attainment levels.	The requirement to make savings due to lack of government funding means that the Council cannot afford to provide free transport for post 16 students and decided to recover the full cost of this provision from September 2014.

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