

## **DECISION NOTICE OF AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBER OF GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET**

**DATE OF DECISION** 22 September 2016

**DATE DECISION PUBLISHED** 23 September 2016

**DATE DECISION WILL COME INTO FORCE** and implemented,  
unless the decision is called in, in accordance with section 7.25 of  
the Gwynedd Council Constitution. **30 September 2016**

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### **NAME AND TITLE OF CABINET MEMBER**

Councillor Gareth Thomas, Cabinet Member for Education

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### **SUBJECT**

Schools Transport Policy Update 2017-18 update

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### **DECISION**

Adopt 'Schools Transport Policy — 2017-18 update' (see Appendix 1) to be enabled in accordance to the statutory timetable and give notice of the change according to the requirements of legislation.

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### **REASON WHY THE DECISION IS NEEDED**

Following the decision to establish an all-through, multi-site school in the Dolgellau area, it was seen that the wording of the current transport policy was not suitable to describe the new school's situation. Please see attached report for more information.

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### **DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND ANY RELEVANT DISPENSATIONS APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL'S STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

None

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### **ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO MAKING THE DECISION**

Consultation with -  
Gwynedd Council Statutory Officers

The results of the consultations are reported upon in the attached report

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**DECISION NOTICE OF AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBER OF GWYNEDD COUNCIL  
CABINET – OFFICER REPORT**

Name and title of Cabinet Member/s:	Cllr. Gareth Thomas Cabinet Member for Education
Name and title of Report Author :	Mr Owen Owens Senior Manager Education Resources Service
Date of Decision :	22 Medi 2016
Signature of Cabinet Member/s :	

**Subject :**

Update Schools Transport Policy to include situations of all-through schools and multi-site schools

**Recommendation for the Decision :**

Adopt 'Schools Transport Policy – 2017-18 update' (see Appendix 1) to be enabled in accordance to the statutory timetable and give notice of the change according to the requirements of legislation.

**Reason why Decision is needed :**

Following the decision to establish an all-through, multi-site school in the Dolgellau area, it was seen that the wording of the current transport policy was not suitable to describe the new school's situation.

The current transport policy refers to 'primary schools' and 'secondary schools'. This terminology would not be suitable/correct in the situation of an all-through school, where a single school provides both primary and secondary education. This terminology would also not be suitable/correct in the situation of a multi-site school.

Similarly, the current policy refers to 'primary school pupils' and 'secondary school pupils'. This terminology would not be suitable for an all-through school.

The update to the current policy addresses the above points by adding a specific section for multi-site schools, and by referring to 'learners receiving primary education' and 'learners receiving secondary education' rather than 'primary school

pupils' and 'secondary school pupils'.

**Reason and justification behind the Decision :**

There are no changes to the basic principles of the current transport policy, only a change in terminology in order to be able to refer correctly to the situation regarding transport to all-through schools and/or multi-site schools.

The update also refers to 'learners' rather than 'pupils' which brings the wording of the policy closer to the terminology used in the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008.

**Declarations of personal interest by any Cabinet Member consulted with and any relevant dispensations approved by the Standards Committee:**

None.

**Any consultations undertaken prior to making the decision :**

**Chief Executive** – Nothing to add.

**Head of Finance** – Nothing to add from the perspective of financial propriety, since I understand that there is no substantial change to the basic principles of the current transport policy, and therefore the revised transport policy should not incur any additional financial obligations.

**Monitoring Officer** – The proposed decision involves amending the policy to address the new types of schools which are being developed but on the basis of the current framework. This is a logical and timely update. No further comments from a propriety perspective.

**Local Member/s** - Not applicable.

## SCHOOLS' TRANSPORT POLICY – 2017-18 update

### Who is eligible for free school transport?

Gwynedd Council provide free transport to learners who live in the County and who have registered in a school maintained by the Council under the following circumstances:

#### (i) Single Site Schools:

- **Learners receiving primary education**- for learners who live 2 miles or more from the school in their catchment area, or the nearest school (does not include nursery class pupils).
- **Learners receiving secondary education**- for learners under 16 years old who live 3 miles or more from the school in their catchment area, or the nearest school.
- **Learners with additional learning needs or disabilities under 16years old** in accordance with the recommendations of the Special Educational Needs Joint Committee.

#### (ii) Multi-site schools:

- **Learners receiving primary education**- for learners who live 2 miles or more from the nearest school site in their catchment area, or the nearest school site (does not include nursery class pupils ).  
**[Every school site (in a multi-site school) will have a specific catchment area.]**
- **Learners receiving secondary education**- for learners under 16 years old who live 3 miles or more from the nearest school site in their catchment area, or the nearest school site.  
**[Every school site (in a multi-site school) will have a specific catchment area.]**
- **Learners with additional learning needs or disabilities under 16years old** in accordance with the recommendations of the Special Educational Needs Joint Committee.

All secondary pupils and pupils who have disabilities or special educational needs **who are over 16 years old** who wish to take advantage of school or college transport will have to pay £100 per term towards transport costs (you can get a tickets by calling Galw Gwynedd on 01766 771000 ).

It is expected for learners who receive primary or secondary education (except those with additional learning needs or disabilities) to walk up to 2 miles to meet any transport provided by Gwynedd Council.

In order to receive free transport, the parents of learners receiving primary or secondary education are expected to complete a free transport application form and return it to **Transport and Street Care Service, Regulatory Department, Gwynedd Council,**

**Caernarfon, LL55 1SH. (You can make contact by phoning Galw Gwynedd on 01766 771000.)**

Receiving free transport is subject to the learners' compliance with the code of conduct for school transport. It is the parents/guardian's responsibility to ensure compliance with the code of conduct. Failure to comply can result in losing the right to free transport from home to school. Should the right to free transport be lost, it is the parents/guardians' responsibility to shoulder the cost of transport from the home to the school.

Learners who attend a school (or a school site) other than the school (or school site) in the catchment area or nearest school (or nearest school site) are required to make their own travel arrangements and pay the cost for that transport.

### **Can I take advantage of empty seats on the Council's vehicles?**

Learners receiving primary education who live less than 2 miles from the catchment area school (or school site), or learners receiving secondary education who live less than 3 miles from the catchment area school (or school site), who are not entitled to free transport, can conditionally take advantage of any empty seats in the Council's contracted vehicles. Taking advantage of the scheme is subject to:-

- the availability of empty seats
- the vehicle not having to divert from its usual route
- no additional costs to the Council
- the current fee for vacant seats being paid

The Council is willing to consider applications from learners who attend a school (or school site) other than the catchment area school (or school site) to take advantage of any empty seats on contracted vehicles by paying the current out of catchment area fee.

(The vacant seat scheme is not available on contracts that are provided by using public service buses.)

### **What help is available if walking routes are dangerous?**

When learners receiving primary education live less than 2 miles from the catchment area school (or school site), or learners receiving secondary education live less than 3 miles from the catchment area school (or school site), and, therefore, are not entitled to free transport, but travel to school along a road that is considered by the Council to be especially dangerous, free transport is offered. A dangerous road is defined whereby the nature of the road (which includes public footpaths) means that it is not reasonable to expect learners (considering their age and with an escort as needed) to be able to walk in a comparatively safe manner. In assessing the comparable safety of a road, the Council will undertake an assessment of the risks a learner could face along the determined road (including, for example, rivers, ditches, traffic speed along the nearby road, history of accidents, overhanging trees or branches that could impair the ability of pedestrians or drivers to see, etc). The assessment would be held at the time of day and days of the week that learners would be expected to use the road.

The shortest route available is the route which is not deemed by the Council to be especially dangerous, after assessing the other routes available for the journey.

**Is there help available to learners who change address during an examination course?**

The Council will contribute towards the travel costs of a learner who has moved into a new catchment area during an external examination year, or previous year, e.g. GCSE course, and who wishes to complete the course in the same school (or school site) that serves their former home, by means of one of the following methods:-

- Offering free transport when it is possible to arrange transport without an additional cost to the Council.
- Offering to pay an amount up to a maximum of the equivalent to 20 miles of daily travel according to the current local government national public transport allowance scale.

Any payment will be made at the end of every term for every day the learner has been noted as being present on the school's register.