

Statement from Cllr Jefferies - Item 6 Cabinet Agenda December 5th.

As a long standing member of the Children and Adult Services Appeals Committee and am concerned to read item 6 on the Cabinet Agenda for December 5th. I am afraid I will be unable to attend Cabinet as I am attending the Fostering Panel on Wednesday December 5th.

Although I understand the sentiments behind this initiative I feel it is a step too far.

I am particularly concerned about the Primary School age children. 0.75 miles is too far for a younger child to travel to a pick up point. Walking 0.75 miles to the safe haven of a school is one thing, but a pick up point does not qualify as a safe haven and can be far from a safe place for a child with difficulties. It will also mean that the child will need to be accompanied by an adult, probably a parent, who needs to wait until the transport arrives. The adult/parent will in many cases have other children at home which will make things logistically very difficult indeed. Stress at the beginning of the day is to be avoided where possible, living with a child with difficulties can be stressful enough without extra problems, getting children calmly into school and a place of education can be critical, as any teacher will tell you. It is important for all children to attend school regularly and on time.

Many children with difficulties have a real problem with a pick up point, they can wander off, feel intimidated, and feel very insecure, which starts the day off badly, and ends it badly as well when they are dropped off a distance from home.

I would reluctantly, agree to trailing this initiative with the secondary age children, which is suspect will be the larger cohort anyway, so should achieve reasonable savings.

Yours, Susan Jefferies

November 30th 2018