

# Agenda Supplement



Meeting: Cabinet

Time: 10.00 am

Date: 5 December 2018

Venue: Committee Room 1, County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1XJ

**Debbie Ward**  
Chief Executive

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6. **Amendment to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Transport Policy** 3 - 10

To consider a report from the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, Education, Learning and Skills.

9. **Recommendations from Committees**

To consider the following recommendations:

Regulatory Committee - 181018

Recommendation 58 **Proposed speed limit reduction on part of Preston Road, Weymouth**

a) **Regulatory Committee 181018**

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# Agenda Item 6

Item 6 Cabinet Agenda December 5<sup>th</sup>.

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 5<sup>th</sup>. I am afraid I will be unable to attend Cabinet as I am attending the Fostering Panel on Wednesday December 5<sup>th</sup>.

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 30<sup>th</sup> 2018

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## Statement from Mrs Patterson

Hello,

I hope you don't mind my email I'd like to submit a statement for Wednesday about SEN travel cut's

My son George contracted meningitis at 11 months old. He was left brain damaged, with cerebral palsy, deaf, hydrocephalus, severe scoliosis, dislocated hips, epileptic, non-verbal and having to be peg fed by a gastrostomy peg - this peg is what keeps him alive. He requires 24/7 care. Sadly his life was turned upside down by a dreadful illness and through no fault of his own.

Despite his problems he's a very happy boy who's constantly smiling and enjoys being around others, especially his teachers and class friends at Mount Joy School in Beaminster. It's a very stressful time in the mornings getting George ready for school as he has so many different medications and fully depends on his parents to get him ready. His morning involves being hoisted and wearing pads as he is incontinent. Some mornings things run smoothly other mornings things can become a little difficult.

George may have a seizure or his gastrostomy button may come out of his tummy. I am trained to treat both situations, on many occasions George's button has come away right before transport has arrived, when this happens we have 20 minutes to put this button back in before the hole in his tummy closes over, if this does not happen George will find himself in Southampton hospital. When this happens just before the taxi arrives as it has on many occasions, the PA and driver has always been understanding and will wait for me to attach it so he can then get on the transport for school. If George had to go to a pick up point on mornings like this we would constantly be missing transport and we would then find ourselves having to explain to social care as to why our son has missed so much school.

I also have two other children who attended schools in Dorchester and I do not drive, so getting George to school in Beaminster is impossible as bus services are cut and the buses from Bridport to Beaminster do not carry wheelchairs. I found it very patronising reading the Dorset Echo, to see that you want to introduce independent living to children like mine by making them go to a nearest pick up point. I've explained how George sadly has no independence as this was ripped away from him aged 11 months by an illness, it clearly shows this proposal has been carried out by someone with no medical knowledge whatsoever. I then spoke to my son's consultant who had many concerns and I know he's written to Nick Jarman to state his concerns not just about my son's situation but many other children's situations. This shows the medical teams, teachers, parents and myself, have not been consulted at all and can be very damaging to everyone involved. The report in the Echo even states that Nick Jarman knows this as he'd be prepared for parents to take out legal action and expects judicial reviews from this outcome.

I do not understand why a council would be prepared to use tax payers money to fight parents through judicial reviews as this can cost a lot of money to everyone. Surely the best way to go about this is to vote this proposal down and work with parents, health professionals and teachers to find a better outcome in which can save money rather than causing a high level of anxiety to parents who are already struggling on a daily basis just to get their children to school. Parents like myself would love nothing more than to see our children be independent as possible and going off to school by themselves or even leading a normal life like other children, but sadly this is not to be. Why are they being punished for having medical conditions and disabilities? Please can we ask that the council officers and councillors be reasonable in their decision making of this issue.

Best wishes

Naomi Patterson a SEN parent

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## **Statement from Ms Sorin**

I'd like to submit the following statement to the Cabinet meeting on 5 December 2018. I'm unable to attend the meeting in person so can I ask that it be read to the meeting.

### **Amendment to the SEND Transport Policy**

As someone who has worked with pupils with SEND for many years, I'm asking you to vote against the amendment to the SEND Transport Policy.

I'm shocked that there has been no consultation with parents, schools or medical staff. The head of Children's Services is quite right in saying there will be hardship for families as a result of this amendment but at the same time he's trying to dress these cuts up as a way to promote independence. Many children with SEND are only able to do the ordinary things like attending school because they have access to trusted and well trained support and efficient transport services. The Personal Transport Budget will not be adequate for these families and will leave them struggling to give their child the support he or she needs in order to achieve their potential.

This policy is a backwards step when it comes to inclusion and is an unfair penalty on the most vulnerable in our community. Children with SEND and their families are faced with a constant battle to get the support they need and often face extremely challenging circumstances in their day to day lives.

The report, Amendment to the SEND Transport Policy, is vague on numbers of children who will be affected by these cuts but I fear that children with SEND who really need this support to get to and from school will be negatively impacted for what might be a relatively small financial saving for the council.

This cannot be right or fair. Please vote against the amendment.

I'd be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this email.

Kind regards

Claudia Sorin

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## **Statement from Mr & Mrs Evans**

We are writing to complain about the planned changes to cut to taxis and transport for children with special educational needs.

We have a child that is on transport from Wareham to Dorchester every day and is transported in his manual chair which he can't self-propel very far, he has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy and is mobile but requires wheelchair for some of the day especially at the end when he absolutely shattered.

The first thing we would like to point out is that at no point where we informed by either the travel or SEN team at Dorset County Council. We only found out by chance seeing something on social media.

This is absolutely disgusting, it could affect us directly and we haven't been given any consultation.

We have since read the Dorset Echo article dated 30<sup>th</sup> November and see that you want to introduce independence to children like ours by making them go to a nearest pick up point, with possible taxis to and from bus point. What a waste of money and quite frankly narrow minded. How will this enable independent living if you can't get yourself to a bus stop without help? Or if you need a taxi to a bus stop then a bus, how will this save money, what about the PA? Will they all lose their jobs? How can we trust our child in a taxi on their own to a bus stop? Surely there is safeguarding issues?

How about asking the parents who know their children how to enable independent living?

Or the fact it will make even longer travelling time to already vulnerable children who tire easily.

Also and we quote from echo that Nick Jarman thinks:

"There will undoubtedly be real impact on children and their families. They will perceive this initiative as an unnecessary reduction in the service offered by the Council. It may cause hardship for those with more than one child (in terms of getting one to the pick-up point whilst the other stays in the home) but it will level the playing field and, will in many cases, be an important step towards independent living. It is, however, important to note that independent travel training will be a key element of the offer to any family affected by these changes."

How absolutely disgusting and utterly patronising of Nick Jarman, of course it will cause hardship! How are we meant to be in two places at once if you need to get one child to bus and others to other schools? Especially if you don't have transport and need to walk children to another school which is in the opposite direction to designated bus stop?

Can we ask what 'level the playing field' actually means? We didn't realise that our children were in competition or being used as Pawns in the council need to recover money that it's over spent .

Medical teams, teachers, parents and ourselves or the children, have not been consulted at all and can be very damaging to everyone involved. The report in the Echo even states that

Nick Jarman knows this as he'd be prepared for parents to take out legal action and expects judicial reviews from this outcome.

We do not understand why a council would be prepared to use tax payers money to fight parents through judicial reviews as this can cost a lot of money to everyone. Surly the best way to go about this is to vote this proposal down and work with parents, health professionals and teachers to find a better outcome in which can save money rather than causing a high level of anxiety to parents who are already struggling on a daily basis just to get their children to school. Parents like us would love nothing more than to see our children be independent as possible and going off to school by themselves or even leading a normal life like other children, but sadly this is not to be. Why are they being punished for having medical conditions and disabilities? Please can we ask that the council officers and Councillors be reasonable in their decision making of this issue.

Mr and Mrs Evans

## **Statement from Mr Penny**

The chairman of the Regulatory Committee said that any recommendation would be evidence based. However, the evidence presented was not detailed and was not examined by the committee.

The speed limit on the beach road has been 50mph for nearly 30 years. No evidence has been presented that motorists driving at 50mph are causing an increased frequency of accidents.

The Preston Beach road is identical in character with many off the 50mph roads leading into Weymouth where accidents have also happened but where no changes to the speed limits have been proposed.

I request that the cabinet reject the recommendation.

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### **Statement from Mrs Grace Dursley**

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am here today to ask you to seriously consider ratifying the proposal to reduce the speed limit on Preston Beach Road from 50 mph to 40 mph, which was approved by the Committee at an earlier meeting.

Whatever you decide it will be too late for my husband, who was killed by a speeding motorcyclist on that road three years ago.

It will be too late for me, as I was with my husband at the time. The memory of watching the man to whom I had been married for sixty-one years lying in the middle of the road, fighting for his life and dying an agonising death will go with me to my grave.

It will be too late for our family and friends who had to cope with the awful shock of my husband's sudden and tragic death.

But I hope that, if the speed limit is reduced, it may help to prevent another family having to suffer as we have done.

Thank you.

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