

## Cabinet

### Tuesday, 14th June, 2016 2.00 pm

#### **Minutes:**

Cabinet considered a report on a review of available walking routes to school.

A small number of routes had been assessed as available under the Council's current published policy but free transport was currently provided. There was therefore a need to regularise the position for all families across Cheshire East to ensure that where routes had been assessed as available to walk the Council's policy was implemented consistently. It was also proposed that other routes in the Borough be improved, which would result in further routes being classified as available with the consequence that free school transport for those improved routes would subsequently be withdrawn.

National and local policy specified that parents should be given a minimum of 12 weeks' notice in writing where a route that was previously unavailable became available and home to school transport was to be withdrawn. To ensure that schools and parents had an opportunity to comment on possible changes and to consider their future transport arrangements, it was proposed that information on the proposed changes would be made available to schools and parents in the summer term of 2016 for a period of at least 12 weeks (excluding August) with a proposal that free transport be withdrawn from the start of April 2017.

The report outlined the appeal processes available for anyone who felt dissatisfied with an assessed route or who may suffer hardship as a result of the withdrawal of free transport.

A number of members spoke on this matter and the Chairman thanked them for their contributions to the debate. The Chairman also added the views of Edward Timpson, Crewe and Nantwich MP, in his constituency role.

#### **RESOLVED**

That Cabinet

1. notes the reclassification of routes that have been re-assessed as available walking routes to school and agrees that free school transport for those routes be withdrawn from April 2017; and
2. authorises the Executive Director – People to spend £150,000 from the Local Transport Plan budget allocation for 2016/17 to improve further walking routes to school to bring them up to required standard so that free school transport for those improved routes may be subsequently withdrawn.