

Please find below our comments on the consultation.

FACT Bucks has concerns about the current review of home-to-school transport arrangements.

- 1) FACT Bucks were not formally involved in the drawing up of options for this consultation. While brief informal conversations were had about limited charging, we were not involved or kept informed about the project planning and the options under consideration. We did not have chance to comment on or even see the draft Home to School Transport Policy, the Needs Analysis, an updated Post-16 Transport Policy Statement or proposed Assessment Matrix ahead of the consultation launch, despite repeated requests.
- 2) More broadly the users and other stakeholders of the service were not given the opportunity to contribute to the options for the consultation.
- 3) Co-production in this project may have led to other proposals which could have either saved money, improved the service, or both. This is a missed opportunity.
- 4) The draft Home to School Transport policy referenced in the consultation is not fit for purpose in many ways, as was accepted readily by the council. More recent (non-public) drafts shared with FACT Bucks vary significantly from the consultation draft.
- 5) The Needs Analysis published in connection with the consultation relies in material ways upon out-of-date statistics which could have been updated.
- 6) The published Needs Analysis contradicts the substance of the consultation, in particular saying in the section “SEN Post-16 Provision”,

“For students with specific personalised transport requirements for reasons related to their SEND, for example students requiring a Passenger Assistant, sole transport, wheelchair accessible taxi, tail lift adapted vehicle, there will be no impact as their transport needs will continue to be met.”

This is not what is proposed. Furthermore it says:

“For [post 16 SEN students], all parents would be expected to make a contribution but to mitigate this then they can apply for a bursary from the college or school attended to offset the cost.”

It is not at all certain that such arrangements will be in place.

- 7) Drafts provided on a confidential basis to FACT Bucks of “The Post 16 Transport Policy Statement” and the “Home to School Transport. Assessment Matrix: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities” further modify and contradict the published draft Home to School Transport Policy in material ways. These drafts need to be conformed before a decision can be made on whether the current consultation adequately reflects the future provision.