

## **Information Circulated After the Meeting**

### **EV Action Plan**

- We currently have no plans to install additional EV chargepoints in the legacy Wycombe Council (Queen Victoria Road) office car park. However, High Wycombe-based Buckinghamshire Council staff are able to park at the nearby Easton Street car park free-of-charge, after registering for a permit, and make use of the BP Pulse chargepoints there. Normal charges for use of the BP Pulse chargepoints still apply.

### **School Transport**

#### **1. What is the benchmark definition of a low-income family?**

Home to school travel and transport is set out in national law in accordance with [statutory guidance](#) issued by the Department for Education (DfE). The Council's Home to School Transport Policy sets out how we apply the law in Buckinghamshire.

The DfE statutory guidance states that under "Extended rights eligibility", for children of statutory school age (5 – 16 years) the local authority is required to:

- *"provide free transport where pupils are entitled to free school meals or their parents are in receipt of maximum Working Tax Credit if:*
  - *the nearest suitable school is beyond 2 miles (for children over the age of 8 and under 11);*
  - *the school is between 2 and 6 miles (if aged 11-16 and there are not three or more suitable nearer schools);*
  - *the school is between 2 and 15 miles and is the nearest school preferred on the grounds of religion or belief (aged 11-16)."*

The Buckinghamshire Council [Home to School Transport Policy at Section 3.5](#) states:

#### ***"Extended rights for pupils from low income families***

*A pupil may be eligible for extended rights under the 'low income' provisions. The Council defines low income families as those where a child receives free school meals because their parents or carers receive at least one of the benefits listed below:*

- *Income Support*
- *Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance*
- *Income-related Employment and Support Allowance*
- *Child Tax Credit – provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190*
- *Universal Credit - with an annual earned income of £7,400 or less (after tax and not including any benefits you get)*
- *The guaranteed element of Pension Credit*
- *Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999*

*If you are not entitled to free school meals, another benefit that is accepted is entitlement to the maximum level of Working Tax Credits. This means that there is no reduction due to*

*income in the Working Tax Credits elements section of your HM Revenue & Customs award notice for the current tax year and your annual income is no more than £16,190. Where extended rights apply, pupils aged 8 to 10 from low income families who live more than 2 miles (rather than 3) from their nearest suitable school become eligible for funded home to school transport from the Council.*

*Secondary school age pupils from low income families who attend schools between 2 and 6 miles from their home will be eligible for Council funded home to school transport even if the school they attend is not their nearest suitable school, providing it is one of the three nearest schools which the pupil is qualified to attend (e.g. a mainstream pupil is not qualified to attend a special school even if it is one of the 3 nearest schools and therefore it would be discounted).*

*Secondary school age pupils from low income families who attend a school between 2 miles and 15 miles away from home will be entitled to Council funded home to school transport if their parents/carers have expressed a wish for them to be educated at that particular school based on the parents/carer's religion or belief and, having regard to that wish, there is no nearer suitable school. This applies to parents/carers with a particular religious or philosophical belief, including those with a lack of religion or lack of belief."*

2. What percentage of the overall number of young people who are eligible for Council-funded transport assistance meet the definition of low income?

School transport eligibility is based on the information provided by families at the time their child’s school application is made. This data does not include information on the family’s financial circumstances; therefore a separate application is required for Council-funded school transport on low income grounds. Supporting evidence is required of being in receipt of the previously named benefits.

A child from a low-income family may also be eligible for Council-funded school transport on the grounds of distance, unsafe walking, and/or their SEND i.e. they are eligible under more than one criterion. If a child is eligible for transport under distance, unsafe walking and/or SEND, then a separate low-income application is not required.

The number of children over the past 3 years who have been eligible for Council-funded school transport on low-income grounds is as follows:

School year	Pupils aged 5 to 16 eligible under low-income criteria	Percentage increase on previous school year	Low-income eligibility as a percentage of the total no. of pupils (5 to 16 years) who are eligible for Council-funded transport
2020 – 2021	79	-	1%
2021 – 2022	82	3.8%	1.1%
2022 – 2023	86	4.9%	1.2%

3. How much of an increase are we seeing in low income and what sort of budgetary pressures are we seeing as a result?

As shown in the table above, there has been a 3.8% increase between 2020-21 and 2021-22, and a 4.9% increase between 2022-23 and 2021-22 in the number of pupils eligible on low-income grounds.

Local authorities receive funding from the Government to spend on home to school travel for children from low-income families, and in Buckinghamshire this funding is held centrally. The allocations for extended rights to free travel and general duty to promote sustainable travel from 2019 to 2023 are available on [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

The allocations for Buckinghamshire were as follows:

Local authority name	2019 to 2020 ER allocations	2020 to 2021 ER allocations	2021 to 2022 ER allocations	2022 to 2023 ER allocations
Buckinghamshire	£196,500	£310,000	£433,300	£559,800