



Evaluation Activity Title: School Transport Policy Consultation
Dates this evaluation covers: 19 October – 4 December 2022
Related objective and programme: Transport Services, Communities

<p>Communications Objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AWARENESS: To raise awareness of the School Transport Policy Consultation amongst the target audience • ENGAGEMENT: To maximise participation in the consultation survey and events by parents and stakeholders (Last year: 11 participants) • REPUTATION: To demonstrate that the council is interested in the views of parents and pupils who use the service – and making our policies as fair as we can
<p>Audience</p>	<p>Buckinghamshire residents, parents, guardians, and students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing users of the Home to School Transport Service • Existing users of the Spare Seats Scheme • Parents of school children within Bucks (or attending Buckinghamshire schools) • Parents of children with SEND within Buckinghamshire • Persons who will be of sixth form age at the time of the Post 16 Transport Policy Statement and their parents/carers <p>Schools and FE institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governing bodies of schools and FE institutions including Headteachers • Other bodies including education and training providers; higher education institutions, transport companies and authorities operating in the locality; public sector bodies; community groups; voluntary organisations and groups/organisations with an interest in disability issues should also be consulted where appropriate <p>Internal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council staff • Members <p>Transport authorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The appropriate transport administration body for the area: • Any other local authorities considered appropriate (e.g., cross border transport)

Key Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of responses to the H2S Transport Consultation • Reach numbers on social media to gauge awareness of consultation • Engagement numbers on social media
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1. Inputs - activities planned

Media	<p>Press releases issued by Buckinghamshire Council: Have your say on the School Transport Policy Consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising awareness of the School Transport Policy Consultation - Encouraging local parents/guardians, students, schools & further education (FE) settings to take part - Promoting the online consultation events (SEND and Spare Seats) <p>Town and Parish newsletter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising awareness of the School Transport Policy Consultation - Encouraging local parents/guardians, students, schools & FE settings to take part - Promoting the online consultation events (SEND and Spare Seats) <p>Resident newsletter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising awareness of the School Transport Policy Consultation - Encouraging local parents/guardians, students, schools & FE settings to take part - Promoting the online consultation events (SEND and Spare Seats)
Digital	<p>Partner digital newsletters: Draft copy to share with partners for inclusion in digital newsletters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bucks Family Information Service (BFIS) newsletter - Bucks SENDIAS Service newsletter - Integrated SEND (iSEND) Service newsletter - Families and Carers Together in Buckinghamshire (FACT Bucks) newsletter <p>Schools bulletin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusion in the schools bulletin targeting parents/guardians of students and students themselves (secondary and primary: yr 5&6) <p>Headteacher schools bulletin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct communication to Headteachers to cascade information to schools and school governors <p>Digital communications (email)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emails to existing clients (parents/guardians) - Emails to existing clients (FE settings and institutions)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emails to neighbouring local authorities <p>Webpage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultation to be made available online at YourVoiceBucks <p>Social media campaign (organic):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media campaign to run throughout the consultation activity (5 weeks) on @bucks council corporate channels. - Share content with key stakeholders to reach more of the target audience – external partners FACT Bucks and Bucks Home to School Transport Facebook group - Share content with council service partners to reach more of the target audience – BFIS, SENDIAS, iSEND - DESIGN: Animation creation to explain difficult / new parts of the consultation - DESIGN: Familiar social media graphics and artwork <p>Digital screen advertising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BFIS digi screens - Bus stop screens (solent)
Print (inc. advertising)	N/A
PR (inc. events)	<p>Consultation events: MS Teams Live</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultation events to allow open discussion between residents/service users and the service for more information around the Spare Seats Scheme and proposed SEND Transport Policy updates.
Internal	<p>Member Briefing: MS Teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Led by Cllr Steve Broadbent, portfolio holder and Transport Services Director <p>Together Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include details of the consultation in the Together Update to raise awareness with internal colleagues

2. Outputs – activities delivered

Media	<p>Press releases issued by Buckinghamshire Council:</p> <p>Have your say on the Home to School Transport Consultation (19 Oct)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sent to 504, opened by 190 (Open rate: 37.7%) • Link clicked 25 times. • Local media coverage: Bucks Free Press (23 Oct)
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Town and Parish newsletter:

- 27 Oct – sent to 518, opened by 340 (*Open rate: 65.6%*)
- Link clicked 7 times.

Resident newsletter:

- No inclusion – priority content superseded

Digital

Partner digital newsletters:

- **Bucks SEND IAS newsletter**
20 Oct: Sent to over 1000 service users
- **iSEND Service newsletter**
20 Oct: Sent to service users
- **FACT Bucks newsletter**
20 Oct: Sent to service users
- **BFIS newsletter**
Sent to service users

Schools bulletin:

- 28 Oct: Information sent to all secondary schools in Buckinghamshire
- 28 Oct: Information sent to all primary schools in Buckinghamshire (with note for relevance to parents of students in years 5 & 6)

Headteachers bulletin/newsletter:

- 31 Oct: Email via Schools Team to all Headteachers of schools using Buckinghamshire Council’s Home to School Transport service

Digital communications (email):

- Email to Further Education settings (11 Nov)
- Email to existing Spare Seats Scheme customers (21 Oct)

Webpage:

- Consultation live (19 Oct): <https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/schools/home-to-school-2022/>

Social media campaign (organic):

- WEEK ONE: Summary of social media posts’ performance

Twitter (19th October)

- Impressions = 1,502
- Engagements = 32
- Engagement rate = **2.1%**

Facebook (20th & 23rd October)

- Impressions = 3,823
- Engagements = 152
- Engagement rate = **4%**

Instagram (20th October)

- Engagements = 0 (**NB:** *could be due to it being 1 of 4 posts that went out on this channel on that day, or timing (3pm)*)
- Engagement rate = **0%**

Combined engagement rate = **3.5%**

(Context: less than 1% = poor, 2% to 5% = good, above 5% to 7% = very good, above 7% = excellent)

- FULL CAMPAIGN: Summary of social media posts' performance
19th October to 4th December 2022

	Total number of posts	Total number of impressions	Overall Engagements (inc. link clicks)	Engagement rate
Facebook	10	13,693	588	4.3%
Twitter	6	17,486	103	0.6%
Instagram	3	4,002	96	2.4%
Nextdoor	2	8,123	6	0.1%
Combined	21	43,304	793	1.8%

Engagement Rate performance vs sector benchmarks: **Good** **Satisfactory** **Poor**

Analysis

Facebook: The campaign performed well on Facebook achieving an engagement rate of 4.3% and most engagements were link clicks, so we know the call to action was strong and effective.

Twitter: The campaign did not perform well on Twitter, achieving an engagement rate of 0.6%. Our followers on Twitter are likely not the right audience for this campaign.

Instagram: We published three posts on Instagram as part of this campaign, but other than the first one, which achieved 89% of the total engagement, an overall engagement rate of 2.4% was achieved.

Nextdoor: Engagement on Nextdoor is usually low and this campaign achieved a rate of 0.1%.

Summary: Facebook was the primary platform used for this campaign and generally it has performed well, achieving an overall engagement rate of 1.8%. The call to action was effective, as demonstrated by the strong engagement to link clicks ratio. In future, the service may want to consider utilising paid-for advertising as well as organic posts.



Have your say!



Share your views

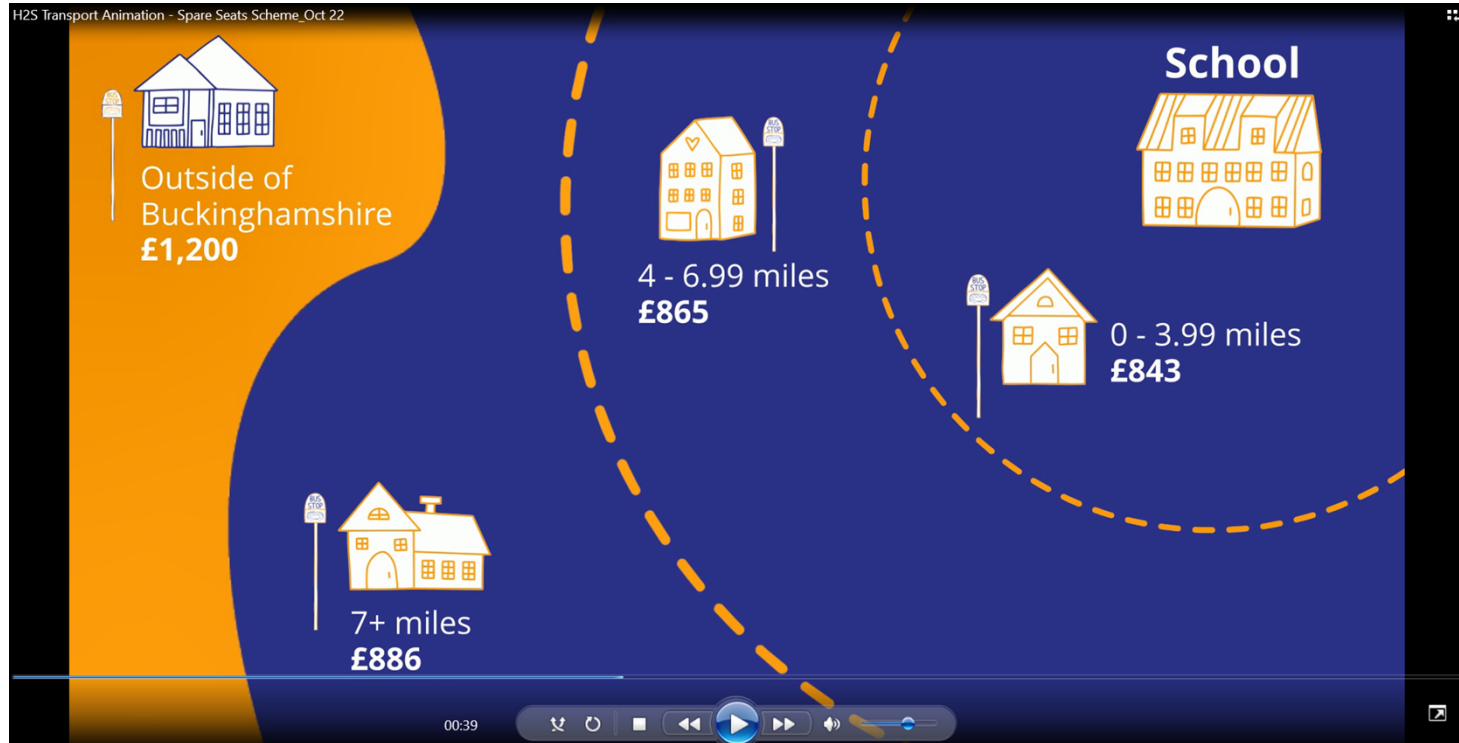


Share your views



Have your say!

Artwork examples



Spare Seats Scheme animation (83 views on YouTube)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUZXRdqLyU>

Digital screen advertising (example artwork - below):

- Bus stop screens (solent): live w/c 28 Nov
- Bus station screens: live w/c 28 Nov

Have your say on proposed changes to our Home to School Transport policies and council-run school bus charges (Spare Seats Scheme)!

Deadline: midnight on Sunday 4 December
[buckinghamshire.gov.uk/school-transport-consultation](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/school-transport-consultation)



Audience reached through different channels*:

Most effective

- Email from your child’s school/education setting: 30.49%
- Email from Buckinghamshire Council: 26.83%
- Social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn or Twitter): 19.51%

Option	Total	Percent
Local media (newspaper, radio or TV)	4	4.88%
Social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn or Twitter)	16	19.51%
Nextdoor	2	2.44%
Buckinghamshire Council website or Your Voice Bucks website	1	1.22%
Buckinghamshire Council newsletter	1	1.22%
Email from Buckinghamshire Council	22	26.83%
From Buckinghamshire Council staff	3	3.66%
Through working at Buckinghamshire Council	2	2.44%
Email from a local partner organisation or SEND setting	1	1.22%
Email from your child’s school / education setting	25	30.49%
Word of mouth	2	2.44%
Local Community Board	0	0.00%
Local Councillor	1	1.22%
Local Parish / Town Council	0	0.00%
Other (please give details below):	4	4.88%
Not Answered	2	2.44%

**Data from YourVoiceBucks consultation summary report*

Print (inc. advertising)

N/A

PR (inc. events)

Consultation events: MS Teams Live

- 10 November: Spare Seats policy **CANCELLED** due to no uptake
- 16 November: SEND/Post-16 policy updates **CANCELLED** due to low uptake

Internal

Member Briefing: MS Teams

- Mon 17 Oct | 10am – (led by Cabinet Member for Transport). Session recorded.

Together Update

- Included in ‘In the news’ section of Together Update
- 26 Oct – sent to 4,216, opened by 2,957 (**Open rate: 70.1%**)
- 12 link clicks

3. Outtakes - response to content

Media	Neutral/positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited coverage from local media outlets other than Bucks Free Press 32 link clicks from issuing of press release and Town & Parish newsletter No coverage in the resident newsletter as content not deemed priority by the Leader (often due to content not being all-inclusive of residents)
Digital	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well received and engaged emails and newsletters Positive reception and satisfactory engagement on social media - 793 overall engagements (likes/shares/comments and incl. link clicks) Praise for the animation (internal and external)
Print (inc. advertising)	N/A
PR (inc. events)	Neutral Consultation events: MS Teams Live <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 November: Spare Seats policy CANCELLED due to no uptake 16 November: SEND/Post-16 policy updates CANCELLED due to low uptake This could be due to low interest in this as a subject matter, or a feeling that additional conversation around the consultation was unnecessary.
Internal	Neutral/ positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good feedback from Member Brief with lots of information shared. Low engagement with audiences through Together Update

4. Outcomes

- Total number of responses to the School Transport Policy Consultation 2022; **82**
- 745%** increase on 2021 consultation participation (**2021: 11, 2022: 82**)
- Reach numbers on social media to gauge awareness of consultation; **43,304** impressions (combined from all platforms)
- Engagement numbers on social media; **793**

The campaign to promote the consultation ran successfully across the platforms available to us with no budget. The target of achieving more responses than the previous year's consultation was surpassed by 745%, although this cannot be credited solely to the promotion and marketing campaign as there was also a new and high-interest subject matter in the consultation (Spare Seats Scheme).

Lessons learned

- Greater value in doing direct and targeted communications over generalised county-wide communications (although still important to catch new clients and those not already engaged with the service).

- Excellent contribution and value from partners including BFIS, SENDIAS, iSEND and FACT Bucks to communicate with harder to reach audiences and demographics. Essential in reaching and communicating with SEND students and their parents / guardians.
- The use of the schools bulletin and the direct bulletin to headteachers proved very valuable to help spread the word from multiple authoritative figures (council and local school).
- The animation provided a more dynamic visual for the consultation and clearly demonstrated the three options proposed for the Spare Seats Scheme in a more readily digestible way. If possible, exploring more ways to turn key consultation details into 'bitesize' animations could help boost engagement and participation in future consultations.