

SUBJECT: RECIEPT OF PETITONS: Mathern Community Area and St Arvan's Village Area - Home-to-school transport Policy

MEETING: People Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 22nd July 2025

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

1.1 To advise the People Scrutiny Committee that three petitions have been received as follows:

- Mathern Community Area - Home to School Transport Policy (an online petition and a separate petition)
- St Arvan's Village Area - Home-to-school transport Policy

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That the People Scrutiny Committee receives the petitions and agrees a suitable course of action, as per the options that are available to the Committee:

- a) Full Council for a debate on the matter
- b) The relevant Cabinet Member with a request to respond in writing to the Scrutiny Committee and the Lead Petitioner within 6 weeks.
- c) A relevant working group, committee, or joint committee with an appropriate term of reference to address the matter or incorporate the views into their work
- d) A relevant senior officer for inclusion in an ongoing piece of work, consultation or project.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Petitions can be submitted as e-petitions or as written documents. They are received by Democratic Services who ascertain their validity in accordance with the constitution. If the petition is deemed valid, it is 'made live' and if it is deemed invalid, the petitioner is notified, with reasons given for its rejection.

3.2 Valid petitions with over 25 signatories are tabled to the relevant Scrutiny Committee at its next available meeting. The Councillor who is the petition sponsor (usually the Local Ward Member) will be asked to outline the request within 3 minutes. Their role is to present it to the Scrutiny Committee for them to determine a course of action.

3.3 The Scrutiny Committee may decide to enhance the petition in their referral, by adding recommendations. They may also decide to scrutinise the topic in the future, by including it in their forward work programme. The Scrutiny Committee may also decide to take no further action.

- 3.4 Neither the Cabinet nor Chief Officers are expected to respond to the petition at the Scrutiny Meeting at which the petition is presented ~ this would pre-empt the outcome of the Scrutiny Committee's consideration. The outcome of the committee's consideration will be formally conveyed to the Executive and Senior Officers and the Lead Petitioner following the meeting.
- 3.5 If option (b), 'Referral to the Cabinet Member' is agreed by the Scrutiny Committee, the Cabinet Member is required to prepare a response for the Scrutiny Committee within 6 weeks. The Cabinet Member will be responsible for responding in writing to the Lead Petitioner on the actions, if any, they will be taking in response to the petition. The Cabinet Member will be assisted in doing the above by the relevant service area officers.
- 3.6 Mathern Community Area Petition - Home to School Transport Policy

At the point of agenda despatch for this committee meeting, the e-petition has received 39 signatories. A separate paper petition has been completed by residents and has received 183 signatories, so 222 in total. The petitions are asking the Council to:

"We the undersigned petition the Monmouthshire County Council to Retail free home to school transport to the Dell Primary School and to the Chepstow Comprehensive School for the pupils from the Mathern Community Council Area (Mathern, Mounton, Pwllmeyric & Haysgate), as the route to school is unsafe and hazardous, as evidenced by the double white lines from Parkwall roundabout to Highbeech Roundabout. There is no safe crossing point for pupils to cross the main A48. The volume and speed of traffic on the A48 are a risk. There is insufficient width to the footpaths to walk safely from Mathern to both schools.

- Expecting children from as young as 4 years old to walk up to 2 miles each way daily to The Dell Primary School and for children of 11 years old to walk up to 3 miles each way daily to The Chepstow Comprehensive School in all weathers, carrying school equipment and study material, not allowed to wear outer clothing and storing it to dry during the day at school is not safe, it is emotionally stressful, effects their mental and physical health due to effects of weather and walking in close proximity to a major traffic route, and is a major concern for the parents of said children to ensure they are safe at all times".

3.7 St Arvan's Village Area - Home-to-school transport Policy

At the point of agenda despatch for this committee meeting, the e-petition has received 209 signatories and reads as follows:

"We the undersigned, petition the Monmouthshire County Council to reinstate the fully funded home-school-transport for all the primary aged children who attend The Dell School in St Arvan's. The speed and volume of traffic which the children will be exposed to is a risk, the road crossing is not safe, and the footpath is hazardous.

- Children attending The Dell School from the age of 4 are expected to walk up to 2 miles each way.
- The emotional and physical stress of this walk, in all weathers, will negatively impact their mental health, physical health and ability to effectively engage with their learning when in school.
- There are major safety concerns from the children and parents around the safety of the road crossing and footpath, they are expected to walk. The crossing is not suitably lit and wide enough. The path is unlit, uneven and extremely narrow in parts with the close proximity to a high number of cars. In the case of an emergency there is a section of the footpath, which is obscured from view, from the road with no easy way to access it, if needed.
- The children and parents have safety concerns with regards to walking past the racecourse on race day and the days following”.

3.8 The Committee is requested to consider an appropriate course of action for the petitions, in line with the options available to them, as outlined in the Recommendations section of the report (paragraph 2.1).

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

4.1 There are no direct considerations for this report.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

5.1 Not applicable.

6. REASONS:

6.1 To fulfil the constitutional requirements of the Scrutiny Committee’s consideration of a route for petitions (if deemed valid).

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

7.1 There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.

8. CONSULTEES:

None.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Petitions received:

- Mathern Community Area - Home to School Transport Policy
- St Arvan’s Village Area - Home-to-school transport Policy

10. AUTHOR:

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11. CONTACT DETAILS:

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