

Formal Council Questions and Responses

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1 **Question to the Cabinet Member for City Services : 2021/9 - Air Quality and School Transport**

Councillor J Watkins Asked:

Given the serious concerns around the Nitrous Oxide levels and Air Quality in Caerleon, together with the fact that the Charles Williams Primary School sits on the one way system affected, and given also the substantial increase in traffic at the start and end of the school day caused by parents and carers picking up children, would the Cabinet member consider the following proposal.

Working with the Celtic Manor I believe arrangements could be made to transport children safely to school and back using an extended Park and ride plan.

I am aware arrangements are in place for the transport of some children from out of area on a daily basis already and my plan would see this extended.

My proposal is this: there is considerable parking available at the Catsash entry to the Celtic Manor, with their agreement (negotiations would be needed on the grounds of their support for the Community, which I am sure they would be happy with). Parents could be able to park there, whilst dropping off children who could be picked up by waiting buses and transported safely to school; that would include all three schools in the area.

This would substantially improve the traffic situation at the afore mentioned times, a situation which currently sees traffic backed up Belmont Hill and choking the one way system.

Traffic of the volumes seen, together with the stop starting, impact heavily on the Health and Wellbeing of everyone but particularly the vulnerable youngsters attending Charles Williams Primary School.

Clearly, there would need to be negotiations with Bus companies and as already mentioned the Celtic Manor, but it is my contention this proposal if implemented would substantially reduce the risk of air pollution and therefore the risk to our children's health.

Councillor R Jeavons (Deputy Leader) responded:

I would draw your attention to the Councils Sustainable Travel Strategy (Part G), which states that schools, the Council and parents all have responsibilities in the reduction of unsustainable travel and its associated pollutants.

A recent analysis shows that, of the families who have children attending Charles Williams Primary and Caerleon Comprehensive, 90% and 70% respectively were within the recognised walking distances of their school. As such, a park and ride site at Catsash Road would serve very little or no purpose in intercepting school traffic from major routes into

Caerleon, but would most likely introduce additional school run mileage through and around Caerleon, further negatively impacting on air quality issues.

Additionally, New Road and its junction with Caerleon Road already experiences peak time congestion, which would be further impacted by additional traffic, should a Catsash Park and Ride be considered.