

By: Andrew Ballard – Principal Democratic Services Officer

To: Regulation Committee – 21 January 2025

Subject: Home to School Transport Appeals update

Classification: Unrestricted

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Summary: To provide Members with an overview on Home to School Transport appeal statistics for the period between 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 and a brief comparison with transport appeals statistics from 2010 to 2023.

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## **1. Home to School Transport Appeal Statistics 2024**

(1.1) For the period between 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 a total of 137 individual appeals were considered by Members of the Transport Appeal Panels of this Committee. 29% were upheld at least in part (e.g: time limited assistance) and a breakdown of these appeals on a month by month basis is set out in Appendix A along with a comparison with appeals held in 2010 to 2023.

(1.2) The approximate cost to the Council in supplying transport for those successful appeals for the period mentioned above totals: **£58,078.13**. This compared to 2023 with total costings of £396,176.00

(1.3) An additional 20 appeals were received/scheduled but were not heard due to them being either reassessed by the Transport Team or withdrawn by the parent.

(1.4) There are a further 11 appeals that are still waiting to be heard which are scheduled for January/February 2025.

(1.5) Appeals are successful due to a variety of reasons and can include:

- Financial hardship
- Health & medical need
- No cost to the Council
- Temporary accommodation
- Family circumstances
- Circumstances of the child
- Childs safety
- Review cases

## **2. Options available to parents as to how their appeal can be heard**

(2.1) Following Covid, revised arrangements were made in order to facilitate appeals and these have now become standard practice. Parents are provided with three options as to how they wished their appeal to be heard. These options are, face to face appeals which are held at Sessions House, Maidstone, virtual appeals via video conference on Microsoft Teams; and finally, paper-based appeals where Members considered the case based on the written submissions only.

(2.2) The following table provides Members with a breakdown of how appeals were facilitated during 2024 and the percentage of those being successful.

	Appeals heard	% Upheld
Paper Based Appeals	40	29%
Virtual Appeals	66	48%
Face to Face	32	23%

### **3. Transport Appeal Statistics – 2023**

(3.1) For the period between 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023 a total of 142 appeals were considered by Transport Appeal Panels. 56% were upheld at least in part (e.g. time-limited assistance).

### **4. Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman**

(4.1) If parents remain dissatisfied and believe that they have suffered injustice as a result of maladministration by the Panel, they are advised of their rights to pursue their complaint with the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). This is not a right of appeal and has to relate to issues such as failure to follow correct procedures or failure to act independently and fairly, rather than just that the person making the complaint believes the decision to be wrong.

(4.2) During the last year, eight complaints were received, with two cases still waiting a final decision. The LGSCO provide a breakdown of their findings at <https://www.lgo.org.uk>

<b>5. Recommendation</b> Members are asked to note this report.
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Appendix A – Home to School Transport appeal table

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**TABLE 1**  
**HOME TO SCHOOL**  
**TRANSPORT APPEALS -1 JANUARY – 31 December 2024**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Total Scheduled</b>	<b>Total Heard</b>	<b>Upheld</b>	<b>Not Upheld</b>	<b>% Upheld</b>	<b>Approx Cost of transport</b>
January	14	11	3	8	27%	£5,160.00
February	9	8	0	8	0%	£0
March	9	8	0	8	0%	£0
April	4	2	0	2	0%	£0
May	10	10	4	6	40%	£24,144.80
June	12	11	5	6	45%	£1,263.60
July	19	17	5	12	29%	£3,567.24
August	20	19	6	13	31%	£2,550.00
September	16	11	2	9	18%	£3,078.21
October	18	15	5	10	33%	£0
November	14	13	5	8	38%	£13,040.00
December	12	12	5	7	42%	£5,274.28
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>£58,078.13</b>

**TABLE 2**  
**HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEALS - 2010-2023**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Upheld</b>	<b>Not Upheld</b>	<b>Total Heard</b>	<b>% Upheld</b>
2010	38	46	84	45%
2011	23	43	66	35%
2012	26	80	106	24%
2013	33	76	109	30%
2014	76	72	148	51%
2015	67	57	124	54%
2016	72	65	137	52%
2017	102	89	191	53%
2018	87	78	165	53%

2019	89	77	166	54%
2020	76	42	118	64%
2021	75	42	118	60%
2022	50	54	104	48%
2023	80	62	142	56%