

HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT - Correction to Report dated 30th May 2025.

I would like to correct one figure contained in my report of 30th May 2025. I stated that the, 'The figures for Home to School Transport costs for the coming year starting in September 2025 are now showing a saving of over £3 million'.

This should of course have said that the savings are showing a potential of £3 million over the next 3 years ie. 2025 to 2028. My apologies for this error.

I have clarified with Gary Fielding, the section 151 officer (chief accountant) of North Yorkshire Council that he has included in the Council's MTFS (Medium term financial strategy) a figure of savings of £2.59 million. The MTFS covers the 3 years 2025 to 28. He goes on to say, ' In fact they (the savings) may well come in higher if experience of year 1 continues into the next 6 years.' Hence the figure of circa £2.9 million.

The expected figure for savings in the first year commencing this September is now given as £532K.

I would also like to say that I have accepted an invitation from the Governors of Richmond School to see round the School and have a meeting with the Head and Governors. This I not only welcome with open arms but I am really looking forward to.

I have said to Judy Hooton, the chair of Governors, 'I look forwards to seeing the school, resolving the issues and moving forwards'.

I fully appreciate the frustrations of many parents and indeed the STAG Group (School Transport Action Group) with whom I have considerable sympathies, but as I said 2 weeks ago, 'Now is not the time to change the policy. It would be utter chaos with just 13 weeks to go to the start of the new term.'

To achieve a real solution, we need considerably more funding than we are currently getting from Central Government. It is true to say that the last Government cut our funding, right from 2010, but the present Government has not only dramatically cut our funding, but has greatly increased our running costs. The increase in employer's NI contribution cost us £12 million per annum. Not only that but there have been cuts in grants like The Rural Services Grant which has meant the loss of millions of pounds overnight.

We should know more about funding on 11th June when the Governments Financial Review is due. We will also hear about the A66 upgrade.

Angus Thompson.

6th June 2025.

E & OE.