



Mr Stephen Chandler
Interim Chief Executive
Oxfordshire County Council
County Hall
New Road
Oxford
OX1 1ND

19 January 2023

Dear Stephen,

I am writing on behalf of a number of concerned parents from my constituency who have contacted me about the Council's unexpected decision to withdraw the 1-WA17 school bus service at the end of the summer term.

I understand the route serves the villages of Middle Barton, The Astons and Duns Tew. It is a vital link for children attending The Warriner School in Bloxham. Parents have expressed their dismay about the decision. While I appreciate that Heyford Park School is the closest secondary option, the villages are within the catchment of The Warriner – which has been the preference for many parents given its links with local primary schools. Heyford Park also has a significantly smaller secondary intake.

Parents are worried that they will need to reduce work hours or change to roles which would allow them the time to drive their children to and from school. The decision is contrary to the Council's own environmental ambitions, and the promise to reduce car journeys by 1-in-4 this decade. The Council's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan itself states that the school run "significantly increases traffic congestion and exposes children to increased road safety hazards", resulting in "long-term health impacts".

There seems to be an increasing divide in terms of service provision between Oxford and the rural areas in my North Oxfordshire constituency. There is real transport poverty experienced by the county's rural population. While I recognise that the Council does not have a statutory duty to provide free transport for every child, I feel strongly that this decision needs to be reconsidered.

I would be grateful if you were able to meet me to discuss this in greater detail.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Victoria Prentis".

Rt Hon Victoria Prentis KC MP

Westminster Office

House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA
Tel: 020 7219 8756

Constituency Office

Orchard House
Hopcraft Lane
Deddington OX15 0TD
Tel: 01869 233 685

Online

victoria.prentis.mp@parliament.uk
www.victoriaprentis.com
[@victoriaprentis](https://www.facebook.com/victoriaprentis)
www.facebook.com/victoriaprentis