

## **ABOUT HUMANISTS UK**

At Humanists UK, we want a tolerant world where rational thinking and kindness prevail. We work to support lasting change for a better society, championing ideas for the one life we have. Since 1896, our work has been helping people be happier and more fulfilled. By bringing non-religious people together we help them develop their own views and an understanding of the world around them. Together with our partners Humanist Society Scotland, we speak for 150,000 members and supporters and around 120 members of the All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group. Through our ceremonies, pastoral support, education services, and campaigning work, we advance free thinking and freedom of choice so everyone can live in a fair and equal society.

## **In what capacity are you responding to the consultation? (please select one)**

Other - charity

## **For each statement below, please select the extent to which you agree or disagree.**

**The current discretionary faith-based transport arrangements should continue without change. (Indicative cost to the council: £7.25-£7.5 million over six years)**

Strongly disagree

**Discretionary faith-based transport should be withdrawn from September 2027. (Indicative cost to the council: £2.25-£2.5 million over six years)**

Strongly agree

**A decision to withdraw discretionary faith-based transport should be made this year but withdrawn when the new intake in September 2026 have finished Year 11 (e.g. from September 2031). This would mean that the last new intake to benefit from the scheme would be in 2030 and they would be able to benefit from it for one year until it's withdrawn. (Indicative cost to the council: £5.5-£5.75 million over six years)**

Disagree

**Discretionary faith-based transport should continue but with substantially increased parental contributions to match unsubsidised school travel pass prices. (Indicative cost to the council: £7-£7.25 million over six years)**

Disagree



## **Do you have any further comments you would like to make about discretionary faith-based home to school transport?**

We support withdrawing discretionary faith-based home to school transport from September 2027.

The current policy of Nottinghamshire County Council privileges families who choose faith schools on religious grounds, while offering no equivalent support to families who choose to send their children to schools of no religious character. That is unfair and discriminatory in effect.

Nor do we believe that public money should be used to subsidise a preference for a faith school. It should instead be allocated according to objective need. By its own account, Nottinghamshire County Council is under significant financial pressure, and continuing the current discretionary faith-based scheme would cost substantially more than withdrawing it. In our view, public funds should be focused on statutory entitlements and support based on need, such as distance, safety, disability, and low income.

We do not support any option that includes retaining the current scheme, delaying withdrawal of the scheme until 2031, or simply increasing parental contributions. Those options continue to preserve a faith-based discretionary entitlement that is not available on equal terms to all families. The fairest approach is to withdraw the discretionary faith-based element from September 2027 while preserving all statutory home to school transport protections.

**For more details, information, and evidence, contact Humanists UK:**

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