

Re-Seatbelts and School Transport

Thank you for your letter of response in relation to the above.

I am however somewhat dismayed by the arguments presented. I have initiated both a petition and a small scale campaign in my local area for seatbelted buses for transporting school children because I believe in this day and age it should be every local authority's aspiration to provide the safest possible means of transport for our school children. However this response makes it patently clear that no change is envisaged to enable this.

It is clear to me from all the responses I have received from both the Scottish Parliament and from Fife Council that both believe they are already doing everything in their power to facilitate 'school child road safety'.

The fact that no further change is foreseen in legislation to ensure seatbelted school buses demonstrates to me that resourcing is prohibitive and therefore local level conscience on the matter remains the preferred strategy.

I continue to be inspired by local authorities such as Moray Council and Aberdeenshire Council who have shown themselves as leaders on this issue (Moray Council have stated to Bus Companies that if they wish to supply buses for School Transport, then their buses MUST have seatbelts. Aberdeenshire seem to be taking a proactive approach by seriously looking into improving school bus signage and hazard lights ). I am disappointed that more Councils, Fife included, cannot also adopt such positive approaches.

I have tried to take this matter as far as I can because I believe it's an important issue. Buses without seat-belts feels like settling for second best when a minority of local authorities can and have facilitated this.

I still believe the most responsive, proactive approach is seatbelts as a national standard. It is unfortunate that, as evidenced by council and parliamentary feedback, this seems a laudable pipedream that will remain a largely unachievable aspiration without legislative backing.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Lynn Merrifield