

REPORT OF THE
EXECUTIVE MEMBER
Environment
PART II

137. CONCESSIONARY FARES TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

1. On 31 March 2010 Parliament approved responsibility for concessionary fares moving to upper tier authorities, such as Hampshire County Council, with effect from April 2011.

2. The deadline for publishing a local scheme was December 2010. In Hampshire this followed 12 weeks of consultation with the public and outside bodies.

3. The consultation included specially arranged Passenger Transport Forums, engagement with Older People's and Learning Disability Forums, Adult Services, Children's Services, community groups, district, parish and neighbouring authorities, transport operators, direct mailings to a sample of current users and a public consultation exercise through Corporate Communications with extensive local media coverage encouraging contact by telephone, internet or post and using a standard consultation response form.

4. At the same time an Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) was developed to ensure compliance with all necessary equalities and discrimination guidelines.

5. A series of proposed options were put together for the scheme. The cost of the options ranged from £12.5 million to £17.08 million per annum, including administration costs of between £500,000 and £870,000 per annum to recognise, in particular, the greater costs involved in the issue and reimbursement of tokens. This compared to the current estimated total costs of £15.1 million per annum which also included administration costs.

6. At the Decision Day on 19 November 2010 the Executive Member for Environment approved 'Option 3' in the concessionary fares report, which included the statutory scheme plus selected additions to meet the needs of disabled users at a cost of £13.275 million per annum.

7. As well as the statutory scheme, Option 3 also offered Companion Passes, "All Day" time discretion and some token/travel vouchers and community transport. This enabled the Council to fully comply with the Equality Act 2010 and also offer some additional services, without the risk of falling drastically short if the funding fell below what was anticipated.

8. Hampshire County Council looks forward to a seamless transfer of systems and continued high levels of customer care in April 2011 when the scheme is implemented.

9. This report arises from consideration of the report by the Executive Member for Environment on 19 November 2010 which is on Hantsweb at:

http://www3.hants.gov.uk/councilmeetings/meetingssummary.htm?sta=0¤tpage=1&tab=1&date_ID=588

COUNCILLOR MEL KENDAL
Executive Member for Environment