

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

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| Decision Maker: | Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment |
| Date: | 5 November 2013 |
| Title: | Publication of the Hampshire Concessionary Travel Scheme 2014/15 |
| Reference: | 5290 |
| Report From: | Director of Economy, Transport and Environment |

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to seek approval to continue the current range of concessions contained within the Hampshire Concessionary Travel Scheme for 2014/2015.
- 1.2. This paper seeks to set out the background to the scheme, considers the impact on the budget, including the current operator appeals, and proposes the scheme for 2014/2015.

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. Hampshire County Council acquired responsibility for the administration of concessionary travel in April 2011.
- 2.2. The published scheme is updated annually and the County Council is required to publish details of its draft Concessionary Travel Scheme for 2014/2015 by 1 December 2013. The final details of the scheme have to be published by 3 March 2014, 28 days prior to implementation on 1 April 2014. This report seeks approval from the Executive Member to continue the current range of concessions.
- 2.3. The statutory scheme provides for free travel between 0930 and 2300 on Monday to Friday, and at all times on weekends and on Bank Holidays, for eligible older and disabled persons. The County Council has not been notified of any changes. Reimbursement rates are calculated by the retained consultants based on Department for Transport (DfT) guidance.
- 2.4. Since it commenced on 1 April 2011, the Hampshire scheme has incorporated a number of enhancements for those with disabilities. This followed a detailed

Equalities Impact Assessment. These were included in the scheme which was approved by the Executive Member on 19 November 2010. On 24 February 2011, the County Council approved the extension from 0930 to 0900 for older persons based on responses to consultation.

2.5. The enhancements to the statutory scheme are as follows:

- **FREE travel from 0900** on Monday to Friday for Hampshire Pass holders on journeys commencing in Hampshire to destinations in England;
- **FREE travel at all times for Disabled Hampshire Pass holders** on journeys commencing in Hampshire to destinations in England;
- **COMPANION TRAVEL** – The Scheme will allow certain Hampshire pass holders who have been issued with a ‘Companion pass’ to be accompanied by a companion who is eligible for the same free travel benefits as the pass holder. The companion may be anyone whom the pass holder considers appropriate to provide assistance;
- **Half Fare Travel** on Community Transport Services such as Dial-a-Ride and Call&Go providing that the pass holder meets all relevant eligibility criteria; and
- **ALTERNATIVE DISCRETIONS** - Travel vouchers worth £32 are offered as an alternative concession for those entitled to a disabled person’s pass. These are only valid on participating taxis, voluntary car schemes, Dial-a-Ride and Call&Go.

3. Finance

- 3.1. The cost of the Hampshire scheme for 2013/2014, including pass issue, administration and reimbursement costs, was within the budget provided and it is anticipated that costs for 2014/2015 will also be within the budget available.
- 3.2. Operators are allowed to lodge an appeal if they believe that they have not been fairly reimbursed for participating in the scheme and may claim for additional capacity costs incurred.
- 3.3. Stagecoach lodged an appeal against the Hampshire scheme for 2012/2013 in respect of one of the key elements of the DfT formula used for reimbursement, and has commissioned some academic research in support of this. In its determination of the Stagecoach appeal, the DfT has agreed a revised service frequency elasticity figure for that year and for that operator only. This has the effect of increasing the value of the Marginal Capacity Costs due the operator. The route analysis and service option choices which underpin this are being discussed by the County Council and the operator before the final value of the appeal can be known. The outcome will be a higher cost to the authority but it is anticipated that the cost can be met within the budget available.

- 3.4. Stagecoach has lodged an appeal against the Hampshire scheme for 2013/2014.
- 3.5. Concessionary travel is a demand-led service in which costs are determined by the number of journeys made. Government funding is based on population and has been decreasing. In view of the funding environment going forward, discretionary enhancements which extend beyond the statutory scheme will need to be reviewed. No changes are proposed for the 2014/2015 scheme which is the subject of this report.

4. Future direction

- 4.1. It is proposed that the current range of concessions is retained for 2014/2015. In view of the future funding environment, discretionary concessions will need to be reviewed in future years alongside other service areas.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1. That the Hampshire Concessionary Travel Scheme for 2014/2015 maintains the range of concessions currently provided and that this forms the basis of the draft scheme published on 1 December 2013.
- 5.2. That, if any variation to the final scheme from April 2014 is required, the decision on this will be taken by the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment in consultation with the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

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| Hampshire safer and more secure for all: | no |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |
| Maximising well-being: | yes |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |
| Enhancing our quality of place: | no |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |

Other Significant Links

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| Links to previous Member decisions: | | |
| <u>Title</u> Executive Member – Environment Agenda item 1: Concessionary Fares | <u>Reference</u> 1866 | <u>Date</u> 19 November 2010 |
| Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives | | |
| <u>Title</u> Transport Act 2000 as amended by the Concessionary Bus Travel Act 2007 | | <u>Date</u> 2000, 2007 |

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

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| <u>Document</u> | <u>Location</u> |
| None | |

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1 The proposals in this report have been developed with due regard to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Council's equality objectives. The website contains a summary [assessment of the impacts](#) on Safe and Efficient Transport Systems in Hampshire.
- 1.2 It is considered that the issues covered by this report will not have impacts requiring further specific actions by the Council above those already established in its existing policies and working procedures.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. It is considered that the decision will have no impact on crime and disorder.

3. Climate Change:

- 3.1. How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

The concessionary scheme enables eligible residents to use public transport as an alternative to the private car.

- 3.2. How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

The concessionary scheme supports use of public transport which minimises carbon emissions.