

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Environment and Transport
Date:	3 November 2016
Title:	Publication of the Hampshire Concessionary Travel Scheme 2017-18
Reference:	7833
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

Contact name: Kevin Ings

Tel: 01962 846986

Email: kevin.ings@hants.gov.uk

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 2017/2018.
- 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 2017/2018. It also proposes changes to the renewal arrangements for the Older Person's Concessionary Pass.

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 2017/2018 by 1 December 2016. The final details of the scheme have to be published by 3 March 2017, 28 days prior to implementation on 1 April 2017. This report seeks approval from the Executive Member for Environment and Transport 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 for Environment on 19 November 2010.
- 2.5. On 24 February 2011, the County Council approved an extension from 0930 to 0900 for older persons based on responses to a consultation. The extension from 0930 to 0900 for older people was removed from 1 April 2015 with the exception of listed “infrequent services”. This reflected the priorities of respondents to consultation as part of the Bus Subsidy Review in 2014.
- 2.6. The enhancements to the statutory scheme are as follows:
- **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.
- 2.7. Older Person’s Concessionary Passes are initially awarded for up to five years after which time they are subject to automatic renewal. Prior to renewal a number of safeguarding checks are undertaken to try to ensure that the County Council does not incur the cost of issuing passes to people who have either died or moved away from the area. Despite these checks a significant number of re-issued passes are still returned to the council.
- 2.8. In order to reduce the unnecessary cost of passes which are no longer being used, it is proposed that if an Older Person’s Concessionary Pass has not been used in the six months prior to its renewal then a new pass will no longer be issued automatically. This will not affect a person’s entitlement to a pass and should someone in this situation contact the Council to say that they have not received their new pass, one will be issued. This change would come into effect for renewals after 1 January 2017.

3. Administration of the Hampshire Concessionary Fares Scheme

- 3.1. The County Council employs a contractor to manage the overall administration of the Hampshire Concessionary Fares Scheme on a day to day basis for the authority. A key role of the contractor is to manage the reimbursement arrangements to operators and to assist in negotiations between transport operators, the County Council and other interested parties including appeals processes to settle operator's claims for re-imbursement. A tendering exercise has recently been undertaken, with consultants MCL being appointed on a four year contract from 1 September 2016 for a total cost of £164,000. This represents a total saving of £57,400 over the four year term when compared to the previous contract award for this function.

4. Finance

- 4.1. The overall size of the budget is £13.6m. The proposal in this report is to continue the current scheme, and there will be no impact on the budget other than modest administrative savings of around £20,000.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1. That the Hampshire Concessionary Travel Scheme for 2017/2018 maintains the range of concessions currently provided and that this forms the basis of the draft scheme published on 1 December 2016.
- 5.1. That Older Person's Concessionary Passes which have not been used in the six months prior to their renewal should no longer be subject to automatic renewal but should be renewed on request.
- 5.2. That the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment be given the delegated authority to make any variations to the final scheme from April 2017 that may be required in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment and Transport.

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

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

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
Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment Agenda Item 5: Contract for the Administration of the Hampshire Concessionary Fares Scheme	8808	21 April 2015
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.)

DocumentLocation

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

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. As the proposals will not amend existing eligibility, there should be no impact upon those groups with protected characteristics.

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.