

**Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills, Executive Director, Development Services**

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|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Report to:          | <b>Councillor William Webb</b>     |
| Date:               | <b>16 November 2010</b>            |
| Subject:            | <b>Concessionary Travel Scheme</b> |
| Decision Reference: | <b>01798</b>                       |
| Key decision?       | <b>Yes</b>                         |

**Summary:**

Following recent changes to legislation the administration of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme will transfer from District Councils to the County Council on 1 April 2011. This decision is to confirm the proposed way forward along with the recommendations in the attached report and that the reimbursement rate will be set based on the Department for Transport's reimbursement calculation tool, published in September 2010.

**Recommendation(s):**

To approve the following as the County Council's policy for administering the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme within Lincolnshire:-

There will be only 1 site for making face to face applications for Concessionary Travel Passes (CTP) which will be City Hall Lincoln. All other applications to be made by post or online.

For the residents of Lincolnshire the CTP will be valid on public bus services before 0930.

There will be no other discretionary elements provided by the County Council such as railcards or taxi tokens.

There will not be free companion travel passes issued however this will be reviewed in 12 months time.

The reimbursement to operators will be based on the DfT's reimbursement calculation tool published in 2010.

**Alternatives Considered:**

1. Issue railcards and/or taxi tokens as an alternative to the CTP and issue CTPs for companions.
2. Have agreements with the District Councils to maintain there pass facilities around the County at considerable expense.

3. Set a reimbursement rate that has no relation to the reimbursement calculation tool at considerable cost to the County Council.

**Reasons for Recommendation:**

- Centralising the Concessionary Travel Pass application process will provide some of the savings that the government is looking for.
- The provision of pre 0930 free travel for the residents of Lincolnshire will give benefits and fairness particularly for rural communities.
- Removal of other inequitable discretionary elements.
- Setting a reimbursement level that is fair and affordable.
- Appointment of consultants to help where necessary will provide necessary expertise.
- Move to postal and online applications with just one call in point at Lincoln will harmonise the existing systems and give some efficiencies.
- Production of passes in house will deliver some savings

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCT) has been in force for two years and has been administered at District Council level in two tier authorities. Recent changes in the legislation will transfer the administration to the upper tier authorities from 1 April 2011.

**2. Conclusion**

- 2.1 We need to publish a draft scheme that sets out what additional discretionary elements we are including and the method of reimbursement to the bus operators. There needs to be an Executive decision on these elements in order for the draft scheme to be legal.

**3. Legal Comments:**

This decision is lawful because of the change in legislation under the Concessionary Bus Travel Act 2007 that will be operative from 1 April 2011, transferring the statutory duty to administer the ENCT Scheme to the County Council. It is also within the remit of the Executive Councillor provided he has the delegated authority of the Leader.

**4. Resource Comments:**

This report approves the Council's policy on the Concessionary Fares Scheme; this scheme is a new service to the County Council and was previously carried out by District Councils. The County Council will receive the government funding that was previously provided to District Councils, however, the Government has announced in the recent comprehensive spending review that it intends to make some reductions in the overall levels of concessionary fare funding, because of this and at this time it is unclear exactly how much the Council will actually receive.

The mechanism to which operators are reimbursed is based on that provided by the DfT, there is a potential risk that operator reimbursement may exceed the Government funding provided, if this is the case then the County Council will be expected to pick up any shortfall, unfortunately there is no current budget

provision for this should this situation arise.

## 5. Consultation

### a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

n/a

### b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

Yes

### c) Scrutiny Comments

On 25 October the Highways, Transport and Technology Scrutiny Committee approved the recommendations for the Executive Councillor to make the decision in accordance with this report.

### d) Policy Proofing Actions Required

None

## 6. Appendices

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|---|---|
| These are listed below and attached at the back of the report |   |
| Appendix A  | English National Concessionary fares Scheme, Report to Executive Councillor |

## 7. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Chris Briggs, who can be contacted on 01522 553050 or [chris.briggs@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:chris.briggs@lincolnshire.gov.uk).