

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Record

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| Decision Maker: | Director of Economy, Transport and Environment |
| Date: | 20 January 2021 |
| Title: | Temporary Change to Concessionary Travel Scheme |
| Report From: | Community Transport and Contracts Manager |

Contact name:

Tel: 0370 779 2621

Email: Kevin.ings@hants.gov.uk

1. The decision:

- 1.1 That a temporary change to the Concessionary Travel Scheme administered by Hampshire County Council be approved permitting the use of the Older Person's Bus Pass on eligible services on all days and at all times to facilitate the response to the Covid pandemic and to remain in place for such period of time as is considered necessary in relation to such response.

2. Reason(s) for the decision:

- 2.1 The proposal will allow people with an Older Person's Bus Pass to use this on eligible services to travel to early morning vaccination appointments before 9.30am. It would also support any journeys they make for essential food shopping before 9.30am. The decision will contribute to the strategic objective of the County Council by helping older people to live safe, healthy and independent lives.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

- 3.1 Option 1: The scheme use criteria could remain unchanged. People with an Older Person's Bus Pass would not be able to use this on eligible services for journeys which they make before 9.30am to vaccination appointments or other essential journeys such as food shopping.

4. Conflicts of interest:

- 4.1 Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker:

5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: none.

6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.

7. Statement from the Decision Maker:

Approved by:



Date:

22 January 2021

**Director of Economy, Transport and Environment
Stuart Jarvis**

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek a temporary change to the Concessionary Travel Scheme which the County Council administers which would allow the use of the Older Person's Bus Pass on eligible services before 9.30am. This temporary change to the scheme is expected to remain in place until the schools fully re-open.

Recommendation(s)

2. That a temporary change to the Concessionary Travel Scheme administered by Hampshire County Council be approved permitting the use of the Older Person's Bus Pass on eligible services on all days and at all times to facilitate the response to the Covid pandemic and to remain in place for such period of time as is considered necessary in relation to such response.

Executive Summary

3. The report seeks approval for a temporary change to the Concessionary Travel Scheme administered by Hampshire County which would allow the use of the Older Person's Bus Pass on eligible services on all days and at all times. Primarily this will allow people with an Older Person's Bus Pass to use this for travel before 9.30am on eligible services to vaccination appointments. It will also allow people to use their passes for other essential journeys such as food shopping. This temporary change to the scheme is expected to remain in place until the schools fully reopen.

Contextual Information

4. Hampshire County Council acquired responsibility for the Concessionary Travel in Scheme in April 2011. The statutory scheme which the County Council is required to offer provides for free off-peak travel on local bus

services for eligible older and disabled persons. Off-peak is defined as between 09:30 and 23:00 on Monday to Friday, and at all times at weekends and on Bank Holidays.

5. Since it commenced on 1 April 2011, the Hampshire scheme has incorporated a number of discretionary enhancements for those with disabilities including the introduction of all day travel for people with a Disabled Person's Bus Pass, Companion Pass and the use of concessions on some community transport and other approved services.
6. As part of its response to Covid-19, during the first lockdown, the County Council temporarily extended the hours of operation of the Hampshire scheme to all days and all times from 20 March to 15 June 2020. This allowed those people with an Older Person's Bus Pass to access special 'older peoples' early opening hours both to reduce social contact and obtain high demand products.
7. A similar temporary measure is now proposed which will allow those people who need to use local bus services before 9.30am to attend a vaccination appointment to use their Older Person's Bus Pass when doing so. It will also allow people to use these passes for other essential journeys such as food shopping before 9.30am. This temporary change will apply to all eligible services under the scheme including community transport services.
8. The temporary change will take effect from Monday 25 January 2021 and is expected to remain in place until the schools fully reopen. This change will be kept under regular review with the actual length of the change being determined by latest government guidance and messaging and any capacity pressures being faced by local bus operators.
9. Making this temporary change will be consistent with what a number of other local authorities are doing and the corporate guidance on the Council doing what it can to support the vaccination programme.
10. There should be no immediate cost implications to this temporary change given that operators are still being reimbursed for journeys at pre Covid-19 levels with current passenger levels being much lower than they previously were.

Consultation and Equalities

11. The proposal in this report has 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 proposal will provide a temporary extension of the use of the Older Person's Bus Pass to all days and at all times. The use of the Disabled Person's Bus Pass, which is already all day, remains unchanged. There should therefore be a positive impact upon those with protected characteristics as a result of this action.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

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| Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity: | no |
| People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives: | yes |
| People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment: | no |
| People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities: | no |

Other Significant Links

| Links to previous Member decisions: | |
|---|----------------|
| <u>Title</u> | <u>Date</u> |
| Publication of the Concessionary Travel Scheme 2021-2022 Reports to Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment | 8 October 2020 |
| Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives | |
| <u>Title</u> | <u>Date</u> |
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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.)

Document

Location

None