

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment
Date:	26 February 2021
Title:	Reversal of a 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 the temporary change to the Concessionary Travel Scheme administered by Hampshire County Council, which allowed the use of the Older Person's Bus Pass on eligible services on all days and at all times, be reversed from Monday 8 March 2021 due to the changing response to the covid pandemic.

2. Reason(s) for the decision:

- 2.1 Following a recent government announcement schools are expected to fully reopen on Monday 8 March 2021. The proposal will ensure that operators have sufficient capacity to meet the requirement for journeys to educational establishments. The proposal will return the Concessionary Travel Scheme for users of an Older Person's Bus Pass to the scheme offer prior to the change. The statutory scheme which the County Council is required to offer provides for free off-peak travel on local bus services for eligible older people. 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. The use of the pass by older people under the statutory scheme will still 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 temporary change could remain in place. This could result in bus operators not having sufficient capacity to meet the demand for journeys to educational establishments when the schools fully reopen for journeys before 9.30am.

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:

26 February 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 reverse the temporary change to the Concessionary Travel Scheme which the County Council administers which has allowed the use of the Older Person's Bus Pass on eligible services before 9.30am.

Recommendation(s)

2. That the temporary change to the Concessionary Travel Scheme administered by Hampshire County Council, which allowed the use of the Older Person's Bus Pass on eligible services on all days and at all times, be reversed from Monday 8 March 2021 due to the changing response to the covid pandemic.

Executive Summary

3. The report seeks approval to reverse the temporary change to the Concessionary Travel Scheme administered by Hampshire County Council which allowed the use of the Older Person's Bus Pass on eligible services on all days and at all times. Following the recent government announcement that schools are expected to fully reopen on Monday 8 March 2021 the reversal of the temporary change will ensure that operators have sufficient capacity to meet the requirements for journeys to educational establishments from this date.

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. As part of its response to Covid-19 a temporary change to the scheme was introduced from Monday 25 January 2021 which allowed people with an Older Person's Bus Pass to use this on local bus services before 9.30am to attend a vaccination appointment or undertake other essential journeys such as food shopping. This temporary change applied to all eligible services under the scheme including community transport services and was expected to remain in place until the schools fully reopened.
6. Following the recent government announcement that schools are expected to fully reopen on Monday 8 March 2021 the reversal of this temporary change is now proposed from this date to ensure that operators have sufficient capacity to meet the requirements for journeys to educational establishments.
7. The temporary change allowed 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. All those over state pension age have now been offered their first vaccination, therefore the need for access to vaccination appointments has now significantly reduced.
8. The temporary change also allowed people to use these passes for other essential journeys such as food shopping before 9.30am to reduce social contact. As schools return using bus services prior to 9.30am will no longer serve to facilitate a reduction of social contact.
9. There should be no cost implications to this reversal given that operators are still being reimbursed for journeys at pre Covid-19 levels.
10. There is no impact on people who have a Disabled Person's Bus Pass, as they continue to be able to use this on all days and at all times.

Consultation and Equalities

7. 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 reverse a previous decision to temporarily extend the use of the Older Person's Bus Pass and revert this back to the previous offer for using the scheme prior to 25 January 2021. Travelling during the morning peak will no longer be facilitated by this decision but such travel no longer offers reduced social contact and could pose an increased risk of infection. Therefore, although the initial decision had a positive impact on older people, the reversal of the decision is considered to be neutral as it returns the scheme to its original state, whilst the positive impacts of previous changes no longer stand. Older people will still be able to use bus services before 9.30am but they would not

be able to use their pass when doing this. The use of the Disabled Person's Bus Pass, which is already all day, remains unchanged.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

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

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.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
Temporary Change to Concessionary Travel Scheme, Director of Economy, Transport and Environment Decision Record, 22 January 2021.	Decision - Temporary Change to Concessionary Travel Scheme About the Council Hampshire County Council (hants.gov.uk)