

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Highways Operations
Date:	12 May 2022
Title:	Concessionary Fares Reimbursement 2022/23 Update
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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1. The decision:

- 1.1. That the Executive Member for Highways Operations approves a revised approach to concessionary fares reimbursement for local bus operators from 1 April 2022 until 31 March 2023, where reimbursement levels are based on the percentage of pre-COVID bus network an operator provides in line with the most recent Department for Transport (DfT) guidance.

2. Reasons for the decision:

- 2.1. This decision is proposed in light of revised guidance from the DfT and the impact of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 and the corresponding Plan B restrictions on bus patronage in Hampshire.
- 2.2. This decision is proposed to better support the bus industry in Hampshire and minimise the risk of immediate service reductions whilst being fully within the existing Concessionary Fares budgetary allocation.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

- 3.1. To continue with the approach which was approved by the Executive Member for Highways Operations on 27 January 2022. This approach was devised following DfT guidance at the time before the impact of the Omicron variant was known.
- 3.2. Proposing to revert to reimbursing local bus operators for the use of concessionary bus passes based on the actual number of concessionary pass holders travel. This is not a preferred option as projected passenger recovery levels at this time would leave operators with a shortfall in their operational budgets which it is anticipated would lead to an immediate reduction in service levels.
- 3.3. Following the DfT's Alternative Recovery Strategy as detailed in paragraphs 9 (section 3) & 14 of the supporting report. This option has been rejected as it does not provide sufficient financial security to reduce the risk of widespread

service reductions in light of the emerging impact of Omicron and slower than forecast recovery of patronage levels of concessionary pass holders.

4. Conflicts of interest:

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

4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted:

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:

12 May 2022

**Executive Member for Highways Operations
Councillor Russell Oppenheimer**