



Environment and Transport Select Committee  
8 November 2012

## Review of Surrey Concessionary Travel Scheme

### **Purpose of the report:** Policy Development and Review

Surrey County Council is responsible for the administration of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) within the county boundary. This report reviews the existing scheme and sets out Surrey concessionary travel scheme for residents aged 60+ and disabled residents for 2013/14.

### **Introduction:**

1. From 1 April 2011 Surrey Country Council has been responsible for the administration of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS). This was previously undertaken by the District and Borough Councils. ENCTS offers free off peak bus travel to pass holders aged 60 and over (rising incrementally to 65 by 2020), and disabled people.
2. The DfT provide guidance to Transport Concession Authorities on the different data that can be collected from residents during the concessionary pass application process. Prior to 1 April 2011 the information collected by the eleven district/boroughs varied. Consequently the data inherited by the county council from the boroughs/districts requires a “cleansing” process to ensure consistency of data and to improve the quality of this data.

### **Current Surrey Concessionary Travel Scheme**

3. The ENCTS statutory minimum scheme provides for a start time of 0930 hrs and a finish time of 2300hrs Monday to Friday. Travel must be free all day on weekends and on public holidays. This applies to both people aged 60 and over (rising incrementally to 65 by 2020), and disabled people.
4. The Surrey County Council scheme currently provides the statutory minimum for Surrey residents aged 60 and over. An enhanced scheme is offered to disabled pass holders where there is no time restriction to free travel.

5. There are 188,000 active ENCTS pass holders in Surrey, including 10,046 disabled pass holders. A further 3,250 companion cards are in circulation, made up of 2,900 disabled companion passes and 350 older persons companion passes. Total pass numbers have increased by over 10,000 since 1 April 2011, approximately 6%. This can in part be explained by the general trend towards an aging population with more residents meeting the criteria. The number of disabled passes has also increased.
6. Approximately 29 million passenger trips were made on the Surrey local bus network during 2011/12, of which almost 8 million were made by concessionary pass holders.
7. To qualify for a disabled person's bus pass one must be a resident of Surrey, 5 years of age or older and be registered disabled, which means either:
  - being sight impaired
  - being profoundly or severely deaf
  - being without speech
  - having a permanent disability or injury which adversely affects your ability to walk
  - being without the use of both arms
  - having a learning disability as defined in the Transport Act 2000
  - having been refused or likely to be refused a driving licence on medical grounds
8. The following documents are accepted as proof:
  - Receipt of Attendance Allowance
  - Receipt of Disability Living Allowance
  - Exemption from road tax
  - Participation in the motability scheme
  - Receipt of War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement
  - Registration card from SAVI
  - Registration card from SALDR
  - Disabled person's parking permit (Blue Badge)
  - Certificate of Visual Impairment
  - Audiologists report
  - Evidence in writing from a physiotherapist
  - Evidence in writing from a prosthetics clinic
  - Evidence in writing from a rehabilitation centre
  - Refusal of a driving licence
9. Companion passes are issued to Surrey permit holders should they experience difficulty travelling. This requires a letter from Social Services stating the assistance requirements. This provides free travel for the companion within the authority of Surrey.
10. Concessionary fares reimbursement to the bus operators is calculated using the Department for Transport cost calculator. This offers a toolbox approach whereby local economic circumstances can be taken account

within the model. The reimbursement rate for 2012/13 is 53.04%. Bus operators are reimbursed on the principle of being no better / no worse off should the scheme not exist.

#### **ENCTS Scheme for 2013/14**

11. At this stage there is no indication that the Department for Transport will issue a revised cost calculator for 2013/14. On this basis the existing cost calculator will be used to calculate the reimbursement rate.
12. With respect to the offer to residents, the statutory minimum scheme must be delivered by this Council. The two additional enhancements, i.e. no time restrictions on disabled pass holders and companion passes for those people who cannot travel independently, will be subject to a decision by Cabinet. The cost of these enhancements is approximately £250,000 per annum.

#### **Conclusions:**

13. This Council must deliver the statutory minimum scheme and must publish details of the 2013/14 scheme by 1 December 2012.

#### **Financial and value for money implications**

14. For the 2011/12 financial year the cost of the ENCTS scheme to Surrey was £7.587 million. Of this some £250,000 can be attributed towards the enhanced scheme offered by Surrey, i.e. no time restrictions on disabled pass holders and companion passes for those people who cannot travel independently.

#### **Equalities Implications**

15. An EIA for the ENCTS was completed for the current scheme. This included consultation with the Surrey Coalition of Disabled People, local Empowerment Boards, External Equalities Groups and Carers Forums.

#### **Risk Management Implications**

16. This is a statutory obligation for the Council and the costs of the scheme cannot be capped as operators must be reimbursed for revenue foregone. Therefore if pass holder numbers rise and bus use by pass holders increase, then there will be an increase in administration costs and in reimbursement to bus operators.

#### **Implications for the Council's Priorities or Community Strategy**

17. The concessionary fares scheme assists with meeting the council priorities. Any decision to change the enhanced concessions to the statutory minimum would impact upon the EIA.

<b>Recommendations:</b>
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18. To consider the 2013/14 scheme offer to Surrey residents and pass the views of the Select Committee to Cabinet at its meeting to be held on 27 November 2012.
19. To review Surrey's offer for the 2014/15 ENCTS enhanced scheme provision including the criteria and documentation required for a Disabled Persons and Companion Pass, and the time restrictions. A report will be presented to Cabinet during Summer 2013.

<b>Next steps:</b>
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Cabinet will agree the Surrey element of the ENCTS scheme for 2013/14 at the meeting to be held on 27 November 2012. The scheme will be published on 1 December 2012.

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**Sources/background papers:**  
1. Concessionary Bus Travel Act 2007  
2. Report to Cabinet, 30 November 2010 - Item 12, English National Concessionary Bus Travel Scheme