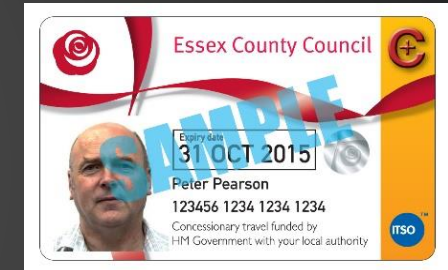
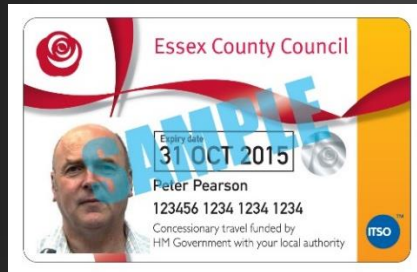


CONCESSIONARY FARES ON PARK AND RIDE



SESSION



- 1. Presentation on the consultation**
- 2. Next steps**
- 3. Questions**

(This session is not about the Concessionary Fares paper coming to Cabinet next week which simply sets out our negotiation strategy for the overall scheme; nor is it the separate discussion on P&R pricing and fare structure which you were going to invite us and Cllr B to in due course)

BACKGROUND

- Concessionary Travel (free at point of use and funded by the taxpayer) is available to pass holders who are statutory retirement age;
- or have a qualifying disability (sensory, physical, medical or learning difficulty)
- It costs ECC taxpayers £18m annually. Around a third of journeys on the bus network are concessionary
- The terms of the scheme are set in legislation It is not means tested and must be offered free of any charge
- The statutory minimum offer is to allow free travel on local bus services between 9.30am and 11pm on weekdays and at all times at weekends and on public holidays. Local authorities must compensate operators for the revenue they lose.

DISCRETIONARY ELEMENTS

- ECC allow three discretionary elements to the scheme:
 - Travel from 9am rather than 9.30am and until midnight rather than 11pm on weekdays
 - A companion pass for people with very severe disabilities who regularly need someone to travel with them to allow them use the bus.
 - We did not consult on changing either of these)
 - Travel on our Park and Ride schemes (bus services with an amenity element like parking and facilities are exempt under the legislation and many other local authorities do this).
 - We are consulting on the P&R element – it costs taxpayers around £0.5m annually

WHAT WAS THE PROPOSAL?

- That we replace free travel after 9am for older people's pass holders with a £1.50 fare at all times
- That disabled pass holders pay a £1.50 fare before 9am (they currently pay full fare before 9am) and continue to travel free afterwards
- That the changes happen from 1 April 2020
- It includes the Broomfield Hospital shuttle from Chelmer Valley Park and Ride

WHAT DID WE ASK?

- Do you agree with the proposal?
 - If so, why?
 - If not, why not?
- Do you use the services with your pass?
 - Which ones do you use?
- Would you continue to use the service if you had to pay £1.50?
 - If not, what would you do instead?
- Do you have any other suggestions?

WHAT WERE THE MAIN RESPONSES?

- 1494 people responded
- 26% of people agreed with the proposal because: it's fairer for everyone, all users should contribute to the service, if you can afford to run a car you should contribute
- 74% of people disagreed with the proposal because; older people should receive taxpayer funded transport, it supports independent living and prevents isolation, older people use it to access healthcare

WHAT DID PEOPLE SAY THEY WOULD DO?

- 34% would continue to use the service
- 66% would move to a combination of the following:
 - Park elsewhere 45%
 - Go shopping elsewhere 49%
 - Switch to bus 6%

WHAT CAN WE DO TO MANAGE THIS?

- A £1.50 fare is still a great value price for the convenience and quality of the service
- Introductory ticketing offer e.g. two for £2
- Work with businesses to retain customers
- Publicise the air quality, carbon reduction and accident reduction benefits of P&R

WHERE ELSE COULD WE MAKE A £0.5M SAVING?

- The vast majority of the portfolio is statutory spend
- The choices on a saving therefore fall to: reducing local bus services, reducing grant funding to Community Transport or significantly reducing Colchester Park and Ride services for everyone
- Of these options removing the discretion to allow concessionary pass use on Park and Ride has the lesser impact on vulnerable groups, the environment (air quality and carbon), congestion

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Decision December Cabinet

QUESTIONS

