

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

<b>Name or Brief Description of Proposal</b>	CONCESSIONARY FARES SCHEME 2021/22
<b>Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)</b>	
<p>A mandatory bus concession for older and disabled people has been in place nationally since 2001. The concession has gradually been extended since its introduction and since April 2008 has provided free off-peak local bus travel to eligible older and disabled people anywhere in England. Southampton City Council (SCC), as the Travel Concession Authority (TCA), has a statutory requirement to administer the Concessionary Travel Scheme ensuring bus operators are reimbursed for every concessionary traveller that uses the buses in Southampton.</p> <p>On average, there are approximately 275,000 passenger trips (pre-Covid) per month within the SCC travel concession area that travel using the older person bus pass issued by SCC. The number of trips fluctuates across the seasons. There are 28,000 Southampton residents that have a concessionary bus pass.</p> <p>In addition to those travelling specifically using the older person bus pass, there are approximately 21 million bus passenger journeys that take place across the city per year (2019 pre-Covid).</p> <p>Residents of Southampton who meet any of the following criteria will be eligible for a free concessionary fare pass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men and women who have reached the female state pension age (you can calculate if you are eligible here: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/state-pension-age/y">https://www.gov.uk/state-pension-age/y</a>)</li> <li>• people who are blind or partially sighted;</li> <li>• people who are profoundly or severely deaf;</li> </ul>	

- people without speech (in any language);
- people with a disability, or who have suffered an injury, which, in the opinion of a qualified medical practitioner, seriously impairs their ability to walk;
- people without the use of both arms;
- people with a learning difficulty;
- people who would be refused the grant of a driving licence to drive a motor vehicle under Section 92 of Part III the Road Traffic Act 1988;
- people with a long term mental health problem; and
- travelling companions/escorts of people with a disability.

For those under the female state pension age, applicants must provide confirmation that:

- i. They are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (higher mobility component); or
- ii. They have been awarded 8 or more points Personnel Independent Payment for Moving Around or Communicating verbally
- iii. They are in receipt of War Pensions Mobility Supplement; or
- iv. They have a valid registration card for their disability; or
- v. Certification of Vision impairment; or
- vi. Have learning difficulties and attend Southampton Day Services or registered with Southampton Learning Disabilities team; or
- vii. They have a signed form (MQ14) from their doctor confirming eligibility.

#### **Summary of Impact and Issues**

This Cabinet decision is to agree to reimburse bus operators in line with the Department for Transport Concessionary Fares Guidance and the calculation methodology. This ensures bus operators should be no better or no worse off as a result to the calculation methodology that SCC uses for reimbursement for every concessionary bus pass holder they transport. This ensures bus operators can manage and maintain their local bus networks as part of the wider commercial bus network.

In addition, the Cabinet decision is to agree the local enhancements above the statutory minimum, which is to allow concessionary travel from 0900 rather than 0930 and between 2300 and 0030 for Southampton residents. This proposed local enhancement, which has been in place for over 5 years, provides more flexibility for concessionary travellers in terms of when they can travel but is timed so as not to impact on the peak commuter journey times.

SCC will continue to engage constructively with the Bus Operators during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic as further Government guidance is issued regarding the National Bus Strategy and Recovery Partnerships and in relation to the administration of the 2021/22 Concessionary Fares Scheme, which this Cabinet report relates to.

#### **Potential Positive Impacts**

Southampton City Council will be reimbursing bus operators in 2021/22 as per

the contractual terms of the Concessionary Fares Scheme and DfT guidance.

Southampton City Council will be applying a discretionary local enhancement that allows concessionary travel from 0900 rather than 0930 and between 2300 and 0030 for Southampton residents only.

<b>Responsible Service Manager</b>	Pete Boustred Head of Green City & Infrastructure
<b>Date</b>	26 February 2021
<b>Approved by Senior Manager</b>	Kate Martin Executive Director Place
<b>Date</b>	

### Potential Impact

<b>Impact Assessment</b>	<b>Details of Impact</b>	<b>Possible Solutions &amp; Mitigating Actions</b>
<b>Age</b>	Eligible residents will positively benefit from the local enhancement that allows concessionary travel from 0900 rather than 0930 and between 2300 and 0030 for Southampton residents only	Information will be communicated on the local enhancement, so Southampton residents are aware of the timings, eligibility and benefits.
<b>Disability</b>	Eligible residents will positively benefit from the local enhancement that allows concessionary travel from 0900 rather than 0930 and between 2300 and 0030 for Southampton residents only	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	No identified impact	N/A
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	No identified impact	N/A
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	No identified impact	N/A
<b>Race</b>	No identified impact	N/A
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	No identified impact	N/A
<b>Sex</b>	No identified impact	N/A

<b>Impact Assessment</b>	<b>Details of Impact</b>	<b>Possible Solutions &amp; Mitigating Actions</b>
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	No identified impact	N/A
<b>Community Safety</b>	No identified impact	N/A
<b>Poverty</b>	The Concessionary Fare Scheme and local enhancement supports eligible residents with free travel and so reducing overall travel costs.	Information will be communicated on the local enhancement, so Southampton residents are aware of the timings, eligibility and benefits.
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>	The Concessionary Fare Scheme and local enhancement supports improvements in people's overall accessibility, social interactions and access to key shops, healthcare and support services.	
<b>Other Significant Impacts</b>	No identified impact	N/A