

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting8th January 2009

1. Title of Item/Report

Review of Operation of English National Concessionary Travel Scheme

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that advised Cabinet of the progress of the introduction of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) since its introduction on 1st April, to seek approval for changes in the administration of the scheme locally and to advise of the financial implications of operation of the scheme for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

Cabinet was reminded that, within Stockton on Tees, operation of ENCTS contained a local enhancement that removed all restrictions on the time of travel.

Bus operators and Tees Valley Authorities wished to keep the operation of ENCTS under close review and it was suggested that any agreement only be for a maximum of two years from 1st April 2009.

It was explained that the Government was currently reviewing the operation of ENCTS, but any outcomes from this was not expected until after 2009. In view of this it was suggested that any changes recommended to the ENCTS by the Government or local authorities be the subject of a further report to Cabinet.

Members were provided with details relating to the number of passes issued to Borough residents and noted the issues arising from the first year of operation. Issues included:-

- * Lost passes and replacement costs
- * Qualification on the grounds of disability.
- * Companions travelling with people with disabilities.
- * Extending opportunities for people to apply for passes in libraries and other outlets.

Members were provided with financial information relating to the operation of the scheme.

RESOLVED that:-

1. Approval be given to seeking continuing participation in the Tees Valley wide enhancement to the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) offering free travel within and between the areas covered by Stockton-on-Tees, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland Borough Councils at any time of day. Continuation of the any time of day enhancement to be subject to the participation of other Tees Valley authorities and available budgets.
2. It be noted that negotiation would be based upon a two year deal but the final duration of any arrangement would be subject to the agreement of all parties.
3. Any agreed continuation of the any time of day enhancement, enabling travel at any time, operates for a one-year period commencing on 1st April 2009.
4. A charge of £5 for replacing a first lost pass and £10 for replacing subsequent lost passes be introduced, together with delegated authority to waive the fee under exceptional circumstances to be given to the Head of Technical Services.
5. A further report be presented to Cabinet recommending the best means by which the Department for Transport's recommendations on the use of occupational therapists or physiotherapists for carrying out eligibility assessments could be achieved.
6. The issue of whether to operate a local enhancement, enabling companions of disabled pass holders to travel free of charge, be deferred until the recommendations of the national working party on funding and concessions are known.
7. No further local enhancements be approved at this stage.
8. Members note that access to the ENCTS is to be improved by extending the ability to apply for passes to libraries and other outlets as appropriate.
9. The operation of the scheme be kept under review and any further proposed changes to the ENCTS recommended either locally or by the working parties set up by the Department for Transport be the subject of a further report to Cabinet.

3. Reasons for the Decision

The decision of Cabinet to consider a report reviewing the operation of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) six months after the commencement of its operation.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillors Lupton, Beaumont, Cook, Laing, Nelson and Mrs Womphrey declared a personal non prejudicial interests due to knowing someone that benefited from the National Concessionary Travel Scheme.

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Not later than Midnight on Friday, 16th January 2009

Proper Officer
12 January 2009