

ANGUS COUNCIL

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY COMMITTEE

29 AUGUST 2002

SUBJECT: TRAVEL CONCESSION SCHEMES

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

Abstract: Local Authorities throughout Scotland are to introduce free travel for senior citizens and disabled persons from 30 September 2002. This report outlines the Travel Concession arrangements published by Angus Council. Details are also given of the continuation of the Scottish National Free Travel Arrangement for Blind Persons.

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee -

1. note the contents of this report and the Travel Concession Schemes as published by Angus Council.
2. agree that the Director of Planning and Transport in consultation with the Director of Finance be given delegated authority to put in place at short notice any further measures necessary to remedy any identified detrimental impacts on the existing local bus network arising directly from the revised Travel Concession Scheme arrangements. Any measures introduced will be reported back to a subsequent meeting of this Committee.
3. agree to the purchase of Transform - Ticket Inspector software to facilitate the analysis of bus company ticket issue information to identify the impacts of the revised travel concession arrangements.
4. agree that under the Scottish National Travel Concession arrangement for Blind and partially sighted persons, passes should be issued for 5 years, after which time they must be renewed.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 At the meeting of this Committee on 22 November 2001, details of the free Travel Concession Scheme for senior citizens and disabled persons, which is to be introduced from 30 September 2002, were presented to Committee (Report 1340/01 refers). Members agreed at that meeting the area of coverage of the scheme and the validity of the passes.
- 2.2 A further report was presented to this Committee on 24 January 2002, when Members were advised of the basis of the reimbursement arrangements being pursued with operators (Report 138/02 refers). Negotiations with Strathtay Scottish Ltd., the major local bus service operator, in Angus have recently been concluded and the Scheme has been formally published.

3 ANGUS COUNCIL'S TRAVEL CONCESSION SCHEME

- 3.1 The Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 requires, as a minimum, that free travel is available within the local authority area for senior citizens and disabled persons on all local bus services in the off-peak period. This Committee agreed at its meeting on 22 November 2001 (Report 1340/01 refers) that free travel should be available **at all times** to senior citizens and disabled persons (i.e. there will be no restrictions on travel before 09:30). Travel concession passholders will be entitled to free travel within the Angus Council boundary. In addition, as under the current scheme, the travel concession arrangements are to be extended to apply to local bus services operating between Angus and Alyth, Blairgowrie, Coupar Angus and Dundee. Within Dundee travel will be permitted on all local bus services operating to/from Ninewells Hospital and between Downfield and Dundee.
- 3.2 In order to implement the free travel arrangements for senior citizens and disabled persons Angus Council is required to vary the published details of the Travel Concession Schemes of 1 July 1996. Under the terms of the Transport Act 1985 the Council must give operators 28 days notice of the changes to the Scheme and allow them a further 28 days to inform the Council should they decide not to participate voluntarily. It is hoped that all operators will participate voluntarily, however the Council will be prepared to issue compulsory participation notices, in accordance with the powers granted to local authorities under the Act, to any operator should they choose not to do so.
- 3.3 Angus Council formally notified operators of the changes to the Travel Concession Schemes and circulated the varied details on 2 August 2002. A copy of the revised scheme which will come into effect from 30 September 2002 is attached in Appendix 1 for information.

4 REIMBURSEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 The Travel Concession Scheme Regulations 1986 require the Council to adopt reimbursement arrangements which should be formulated so that the costs to operators of providing concessions are met by the payments made by the local authority to the operators. The objective being that "operators should be no better and no worse off" as a result of their participation in the Scheme.
- 4.2 If free travel is calculated on the basis of the current Angus Council travel concession calculation method using a 10% fare as a substitute for a free fare, this produces a generation factor of 1.9953 on a fare elasticity of -0.3. Using this method the payment that operators would receive including payment for imputed on-bus (farebox revenue) and off-bus (concessions revenue) would, in the improbable event that no additional on-bus patronage is generated, be less than the farebox and concessionary revenue operators received in the last financial year. It is not until passenger numbers increase by 29% that a breakeven point is reached.
- 4.3 In order to satisfy the objective that operators are "no better and no worse off" following the implementation of the free travel arrangements, Angus Council is undertaking to guarantee no reduction in the payment operators previously received taking into account **both** on-bus (farebox) and off-bus (concessionary) revenue. This guaranteed payment is based on actual payments companies have received for the services they operated for the 2001 - 2002 financial period and which will be continuing to operate from 30 September 2002. Should a fares increase be

implemented or services significantly amended then adjustments will be made to these figures to take this into account. Where new services are introduced payments will be made on a negotiated basis, these payments being calculated back to the 2001/2002 base.

- 4.4 In addition, a payment will be made to operators for additional operating costs associated with the free travel concession scheme. This payment will be based on each percentage increase in patronage to cover for extra outlays for fuel, lubricants, servicing, cleaning, tyres etc. Payments will be triggered at 10%, 15%, 20%, 25% and 29% intervals. These additional operating costs will be reviewed in six months from the commencement of the revised scheme or when the 29% additional patronage threshold (see 4.2 above) is exceeded whichever comes first. The reimbursement methods are explained in the copy of the Travel Concession Schemes (Appendix 1) attached.

5 MONITORING

- 5.1 The effects of the introduction of free travel for senior citizens and disabled persons on bus usage cannot be easily predicted. Where services are already at full capacity then arrangements are currently being put in place for additional or larger vehicles to operate or for standby vehicles to be available. The details of these will be reported to this Committee in due course.
- 5.2 Once the revised scheme is operational it may be that other services require additional capacity or alternatively that measures need to be taken to alleviate any detrimental impacts that the carriage of additional passengers is having for example on timekeeping of the services. Swift action will be required in order to remedy these types of operational difficulties in order to minimise disruption to both passengers and the bus companies. Accordingly delegated authority is sought for the Director of Planning and Transport in consultation with the Director of Finance to take action as required and report this back to subsequent meetings of this Committee.
- 5.3 In order to closely monitor usage of the services and identify any overload situations or timekeeping issues it is proposed that Angus Council purchase Transform Ticket Inspector software. This will enable interrogation of "Wayfarer" the bus companies ticketing software that records journey times, tickets issued and usage by fare stage for Strathtay Scottish Ltd., Travel Dundee and M W Nicoll. The purchase of this software will save extensive surveys being undertaken to validate claims by the bus companies. The software licence costs £7,500 and covers Angus Council and all bus companies that the Council is obtaining information from. The annual support and maintenance licence is £1312 per annum and installation/training projected to be over 2 days at £500 per day totalling £1,000.

6 PUBLICITY AND ADMINISTRATION

- 6.1 The Scottish Executive is producing standardised publicity into which each local authority will input details of their own Scheme and use as press adverts. This will be part of a National Advertising campaign that will commence shortly.
- 6.2 Senior Citizens Travel Concession passes for Angus residents are issued via the Post Office. Currently there is a 59% uptake of these passes, however it is expected with the introduction of free travel that this figure will significantly increase. New application forms are being drawn up for distribution to Post Offices detailing the free

travel arrangements. An additional supply of Senior Citizens travel passes are also being made available to Post Offices.

7 AGE EQUALISATION

- 7.1 A further variation will be made to Angus Council's published Travel Concession Scheme early next year to take into account a proposed legislative change in respect of age equalisation. From 1 April 2003 men aged 60 - 64 will be included in the free travel arrangements. Additional funding will be made available from the Scottish Executive towards meeting the extra costs of implementing this change.

8 SCOTTISH NATIONAL TRAVEL CONCESSION ARRANGEMENT FOR BLIND PERSONS

- 8.1 Members will recall that free travel throughout Scotland was introduced for Blind Persons from 1 December 1999 as part of a voluntary agreement with local bus operators and train companies (Report 1042/99 refers). This voluntary agreement is due to end on 30 November 2002.
- 8.2 All interested parties have been consulted and agreement has been reached between the Scottish Executive, CoSLA, the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) and the Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers (ATCO) for the continuation of the voluntary agreement indefinitely. In view of the long term continuation of this arrangement it is proposed that travel concession passes should be issued to eligible applicants for 5 years after which time they should be renewed.

9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The budget allocated by the Scottish Executive for the implementation of free travel for senior citizens and disabled persons in Angus is £582,000 for 2002 - 2003 and £1,051,000 for the full financial year 2003 – 2004 (Report 506/02, Planning and Transport Policy Committee 2 May 2002 refers). This is in addition to Angus Council's budget provision of £535,000 for Concessionary Travel in 2002 - 2003.
- 9.2 The full costs of the implementation of free travel will not be known with certainty until the Scheme is operational and has been monitored. A number of operators have previously not claimed concessionary revenue from Angus Council. Claims are now being received from some of these operators and these will form a basis for payments when the new free travel scheme becomes operational. Negotiations are still ongoing with operators with regard to costs for additional capacity requirements and these will be reported to Committee in due course. It is however expected that the extra costs of implementing free travel and the set-up cost of the Transform Ticket Inspector Software of approximately £10,000 can be fully met from the additional financial settlement from the Scottish Executive up to March 2004. No financial commitment has been given by the Scottish Executive beyond that date.

10 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Director of Law & Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

11 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no Human Rights implications arising from this report.

12 CONCLUSION

12.1 Progress continues to be made towards the implementation of free travel on local bus service for Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons. Negotiations are continuing with operators and Members will be updated on further progress in due course.

12.2 The continuation of the Scottish National Free Travel Arrangement for Blind Persons is welcomed and it is recommended that passes valid for 5 years are issued to eligible applicants.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

AA/LEM/IAL
20 August 2002

Alex Anderson
Director of Planning and Transport

ANGUS COUNCIL

TRAVEL

CONCESSION

SCHEMES



2 August 2002

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INTRODUCTION

This document outlines Angus Council's Travel Concession Schemes. For further information please contact:-

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SENIOR CITIZENS TRAVEL CONCESSION SCHEME

1. ELIGIBILITY

To qualify for a concession, applicants must be permanently resident in Angus, be a man aged 65 years or over, or a woman aged 60 years or over. (The state retirement ages as defined in the Transport Act 1985).

2. EVIDENCE OF ELIGIBILITY

The following will be accepted as documentary evidence of eligibility:

Proof of Age	i.e.	Birth Certificate Medical Card Pension Book Photo Driving Licence
Proof of Residence	i.e.	Utilities Bill * Bank Statement * Letter from Benefits Agency * Benefits Agency Allowance Book

* Official letters must be less than three months old.

3. IDENTIFICATION

All persons who qualify will be issued with a suitably worded pass issued by Angus Council or its agents. The pass will be valid for a maximum of five years, after which a re-application must be made.

4. AVAILABILITY

Angus Council intend that this travel concession should be available on all local bus and train services within Angus and to/from designated destinations outwith Angus at all times (see Appendix A for details).

Angus Council hope that all operators of local bus services will participate voluntarily in the Travel Concession Schemes but will be prepared to issue Participation Notices to any operators who do not do so in accordance with the powers granted to Local Authorities under the Transport Act 1985.

5. FARES

Holders of this concession will be entitled to free travel on all local bus services. Travel on train services will be based on one-quarter of the adult fare, but to simplify transactions the concession fare scale will have 5 pence increments rounded up to the nearest 5 pence from the mid-point. All concession fares below the 5 pence multiple mid point will be rounded down (see Appendix B for the indicative farescale).

6. REIMBURSEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Reimbursement arrangements, dates of entry to the Travel Concession Schemes, periods of notice and the arrangements for payments to operators are detailed on pages 8, 9 and 10.

DISABLED PERSONS TRAVEL CONCESSION SCHEME

1. ELIBILITY

To qualify for a concession, applicants must be permanently resident in Angus, be at least five years of age and satisfy one of the undernoted criteria:

- (a) be a person with moderate learning difficulties; or
- (b) be profoundly deaf and without speech; or
- (c) have a permanent and substantial disability which causes considerable difficulty in walking to the extent that the degree of disability should not fall far short of that required to qualify for the higher rate of the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance; or
- (d) be a person with mental health problems and attending hospital on a day patient basis for the purposes of treatment, such attendance to be at least once per week; or
- (e) be profoundly deaf; or
- (f) have been refused a driving licence, or have had such a licence revoked on medical grounds under Section 92 of the Road Traffic Act 1988; or
- (g) would have been refused a driving licence on medical grounds under Section 92 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 if they had applied to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA); or
- (h) have Myalgic Encephalomyelitis which causes considerable difficulty in walking to the extent that the degree of disability should not fall far short of that required to qualify for the higher rate of the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance.

2. EVIDENCE OF ELIGIBILITY

Applications must be accompanied by medical evidence acceptable to the Council that the applicant is considered to be a suitable candidate for inclusion in the scheme.

Applications from persons who have been refused a driving licence, or have had such a licence revoked, on medical grounds under Section 92 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, will have to be accompanied by documentary evidence issued by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

Applications from persons who would be refused a driving licence on medical grounds under Section 92 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, if they were to apply to the DVLA, will be assessed by an independent medical examiner appointed by the Council.

3. IDENTIFICATION

All persons who qualify will be issued with a suitably worded pass issued by Angus Council or its agents.

4. AVAILABILITY

Angus Council intend that this Travel Concession Scheme should be available on all local bus and train services within Angus and to/from designated destinations outwith Angus at all times (see Appendix A for details).

Angus Council hope that all operators of local bus services will participate voluntarily in the Travel Concession Schemes but will be prepared to issue Participation Notices to any operators who do not do so in accordance with the powers granted to Local Authorities under the Act.

5. FARES

Holders of this concession will be entitled to free travel on all local bus services and train services.

6. OTHER ARRANGEMENTS

Reimbursement arrangements, dates of entry to the Travel Concession Schemes, periods of notice and the arrangements for payments to operators are detailed on pages 8, 9 and 10.

BLIND PERSONS TRAVEL CONCESSION SCHEME

1. ELIGIBILITY

To qualify for a concession, applicants must be permanently resident in Angus, a registered blind or partially sighted person and be at least five years of age.

2. EVIDENCE OF ELIGIBILITY

Registered blind and partially sighted persons should have their applications processed through Forfarshire Society for the Blind.

3. IDENTIFICATION

All persons who qualify will be issued with a Scottish Blind Persons Travel Card with an Angus Council local identifier issued by the Council or its agents.

4. SCOTTISH NATIONAL BLIND PERSONS TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Under a voluntary agreement determined jointly by the Scottish Executive, the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) and Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) a Scottish Blind Persons travel arrangement is in place. Details of the availability of this arrangement are given in Appendix C. Should an operator not agree to voluntary participation in this National Agreement then Angus Council's Blind Persons Travel Concession Scheme arrangements shall apply.

Please note that the Scottish Blind Persons travel arrangements are separate from Angus Council's Concession Schemes and do not form part of this published document.

5. AVAILABILITY

Angus Council intend that this concession will be available on all local bus and train services within Angus and to/from designated destinations outwith Angus at all times. The Council hope that all operators of local bus services will participate voluntarily in the Travel Concession Schemes, but will be prepared to issue Participation Notices to any operators who do not do so in accordance with the powers granted to Local Authorities under the Act.

6. FARES

This is a free travel concession.

7. OTHER ARRANGEMENTS

Reimbursement arrangements, dates of entry to the Travel Concession Schemes, periods of notice and the arrangements for payments to operators are detailed on pages 8, 9 and 10.

OTHER ARRANGEMENTS APPLICABLE TO ALL TRAVEL CONCESSION SCHEMES FOR LOCAL BUS SERVICE PROVISION

1. REIMBURSEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

“The Travel Concession Schemes Regulations 1986” require that the Council adopt reimbursement arrangements which should be so formulated that the costs to operators of providing concessions are met by the payments made by the Local Authority to the operators with the objective being that operators should be “no better and no worse off” as a result of their participation in the Scheme.

In this context, the costs to operators of providing concessions is defined as the aggregate of:-

- (a) the revenue by way of fares which the Authority calculate that the operator has foregone or estimate that he will forego in consequence of the provision of the concessions in question; and
- (b) any costs additional to basic operating costs which the Authority calculate that the operator has necessarily incurred or estimate that he will necessarily incur in connection with providing concessions, less any reduction in basic operating costs which they estimate that he has achieved or will achieve by reason of the availability of the concessions.

The standard method of “calculating the reimbursement due to operators of eligible services” will be based on the previous payment for the 2001-02 financial year plus the on-bus fares revenue attributable to the services operated. This payment will be amended where necessary to take account of any fares increases or service adjustments.

Where services are introduced payments will be made on a negotiated basis, these payments being calculated back to the 2001/2002 base.

In addition, a payment will be made to operators for additional operating costs associated with the free travel concession scheme. This payment will be based on each percentage increase in patronage to cover for extra outlays for fuel, lubricants, servicing, cleaning, tyres etc. Payments will be triggered at 10%, 15%, 20%, 25% and 29% intervals. These additional operating costs will be reviewed in six months from the commencement of the revised scheme or when the 29% additional patronage threshold is exceeded whichever comes first. The 29% patronage increase represents a break even position under a “no better and no worse off payment” when calculating reimbursement on a -0.3 arc elasticity basis where a 10% fare is deemed to be equivalent to a free fare.

Operators must record concession tickets issued and their full adult fare value. If necessary, the Council may require access to these records for substantiation of any claim for reimbursement. Where an operator uses electronic ticketing equipment, the data produced by the equipment may be acceptable to Angus Council as a basis for the reimbursement calculation for that operator on the local services so equipped.

Angus Council will require that operators participating in the scheme will allow the Council's Officers, Servants or Agents, to have access to the vehicle of the operator (including the right to travel free of charge) on which concessions are available for the purpose of:-

- (c) surveying or counting or estimating the number of passengers (whether generally or of any particular description) and the fares paid by those passengers; and
- (d) obtaining information on other matters relating to the journeys made by passengers who are eligible to receive concessions and necessary to the calculation by the Authority of reimbursement payments.

The regulations also indicate that due allowance is to be made for traffic generated by Travel Concession Schemes (i.e. those who would not travel if they had to pay the full fare). Scottish Development Department Circular 5/86 states that Local Authorities will wish to form their own views as to the generation factor applicable in their area.

The amount of generated travel is assumed to vary in proportion to the discount represented by the fare paid or the imputed fare assumed to be paid by the concessionary passenger when a free travel scheme is in operation. This ratio of the percentage of generated travel to the percentage discount shall be determined by Angus Council from time to time on the basis of available information.

2. DATES OF ENTRY TO THE SCHEMES AND PERIODS OF NOTICE

Angus Council does not intend to define standard admission dates. Operators of eligible local bus services wishing to participate voluntarily in the schemes will be required to give 28 days notice of their intention to the Council and will then be admitted to the schemes either:-

- (a) on the expiration of the 28 days notice; or
- (b) the date when the service begins;

whichever is the later.

An operator wishing to withdraw from voluntary participation will be required to give 42 days notice of his intention.

3. PAYMENTS

The payment periods will, in any year be:-

- 1 January to 31 March
- 1 April to 30 June
- 1 July to 30 September
- 1 October to 31 December

Angus Council will make payments to operators participating in the scheme in accordance with the Regulations, which generally stipulate that 85% of the amount estimated by the Local Authority to be due to the operator in respect of any payment

period (this includes payment in respect of both previous on bus (fare-box) and off-bus (concessionary) revenue) is to be paid to the operator not later than the day which is half-way between the first and last days of the payment period. The balance due to operators in respect of each period together with any additional operating costs will be paid, subject to any adjustments shown to be necessary in the light of information available to Angus Council, not later than three months after the end of the relevant payment period.

For operators whose annual concessionary fares reimbursement payments total less than £50,000 the Council offers operators the following alternative method of payment. A payment equivalent to 85% of the total monthly/four weekly period will be made at the mid-point of the period. Thereafter operators should submit actual waybills and audit rolls, or electronic printouts from ticket machines on a monthly/four weekly basis. The residual 15% and any payment for additional operating costs will then be calculated and the operators advised accordingly. Operators will then invoice the Council for the balance of monies owing. The Council will endeavour to advise operators of the residual payment within 21 days of receipt of the appropriate documentation.

APPENDIX A**AVAILABILITY OF CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL OUTWITH THE
ANGUS COUNCIL BOUNDARY**

Angus Council travel concession passes shall be available for travel at all times on all local bus and train services operating within Angus.

In addition, passes will be valid on local bus services starting/finishing in Angus, to or from places outwith the Council area (including points en-route) as follows:-

- Alyth
- Blairgowrie
- Coupar Angus
- Dundee

Within Dundee travel is permitted on all services operating to/from Ninewells Hospital and between Downfield and Dundee.

Angus Council travel concession passes will also be valid on rail journeys starting or finishing in Angus, to/from Broughty Ferry or Dundee.

APPENDIX B

**CONCESSIONARY SCHEMES INDICATIVE FARESCALE
RAIL SERVICES ONLY**

Adult Fare	Concession Fare	Adult Fare	Concession Fare
0.50	0.15	2.75	0.70
0.55	0.15	2.80	0.70
0.60	0.15	2.85	0.70
0.65	0.15	2.90	0.75
0.70	0.20	2.95	0.75
0.75	0.20	3.00	0.75
0.80	0.20	3.05	0.75
0.85	0.20	3.10	0.80
0.90	0.25	3.15	0.80
0.95	0.25	3.20	0.80
1.00	0.25	3.25	0.80
1.05	0.25	3.30	0.85
1.10	0.30	3.35	0.85
1.15	0.30	3.40	0.85
1.20	0.30	3.45	0.85
1.25	0.30	3.50	0.90
1.30	0.35	3.55	0.90
1.35	0.35	3.60	0.90
1.40	0.35	3.65	0.90
1.45	0.35	3.70	0.95
1.50	0.40	3.75	0.95
1.55	0.40	3.80	0.95
1.60	0.40	3.85	0.95
1.65	0.40	3.90	1.00
1.70	0.45	3.95	1.00
1.75	0.45	4.05	1.00
1.80	0.45	4.10	1.05
1.85	0.45	4.15	1.05
1.90	0.50	4.20	1.05
1.95	0.50	4.25	1.05
2.00	0.50	4.30	1.10
2.05	0.50	4.35	1.10
2.10	0.55	4.40	1.10
2.15	0.55	4.45	1.10
2.20	0.55	4.50	1.15
2.25	0.55	4.55	1.15
2.30	0.60	4.60	1.15
2.35	0.60	4.65	1.15
2.40	0.60	4.70	1.20
2.45	0.60	4.75	1.20
2.50	0.65	4.80	1.20
2.55	0.65	4.85	1.20
2.60	0.65	4.95	1.00
2.65	0.65	5.00	1.25
2.70	0.70		

Notes:

The above shows the method for calculating fare levels under the Concessionary Fares Scheme. All fares are rounded up to the next 5 pence increment from the mid point onwards.

APPENDIX C**AVAILABILITY OF SCOTTISH BLIND PERSONS
TRAVEL CARD**

The Scottish Blind Persons Travel Card is available for travel at all times as follows on:-

- any local bus service operating wholly within Scotland (but not excursions or tours);
- any Scottish Citylink or National Express service operating wholly within Scotland;
- any Scottish Citylink or National Express service operating between Scotland and either Berwick or Carlisle;
- any rail journey operating within Scotland;
- any rail journey operated by ScotRail or Northern Spirit between Scotland and Carlisle;
- any Glasgow underground journey;
- any scheduled ferry services in Scotland (but not excursions or tours).