

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL SCHEME

1. CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL SCHEME

- 1.1 This Scheme may be cited as the Vale of Glamorgan Concessionary Travel Scheme which has been established with reference to the following legislation, including associated regulations and guidance: -
- The Transport Act 1985
 - The Transport Act 2000
 - The Travel Concessions (Extension of Entitlement) (Wales) Order 2001
 - The Mandatory Travel Concessions (Reimbursement Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2001

2. COMMENCEMENT DATE OF THE SCHEME

- 2.1 The revised Travel Scheme comes into effect on 1st April 2003 and replaces the previous concessionary travel scheme introduced by The Vale of Glamorgan Council in 2002. Operators that already participate in the Scheme do not need to reapply.

3. PRINCIPAL AREA OF THE SCHEME

- 3.1 The administrative area of The Vale of Glamorgan Council.

4. PLACES IN THE VICINITY OF THE SCHEME

- 4.1 Journeys from the Principal Area to and from points on any eligible local bus services in any County/County Borough area adjacent to the Principal Area, provided no change of vehicle is involved.
- 4.2 Notwithstanding the above, it is intended that passes issued by this Council will be valid for concessionary travel on local bus services throughout Wales under the 'Cerdyn Cymru' pass inter-availability scheme and the Travel Concessions (Extension of Entitlement) (Wales) Order 2001.

5. CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBLE SERVICE

5.1 Eligible services will include all local bus services in the Principal Area provided by operators participating in the scheme, plus local services from the Principal Area to places in the vicinity (as defined above), with the following exclusions:

- (i) Certain local services, especially those operated to schools and places of work, may be excluded by agreement between operators and the local authorities.
- (ii) In particular, rail services, bus/rail feeder services charging rail-based fares, taxi services (other than when operating registered local bus services), services provided under an Agreement where a railway service has been temporarily interrupted, contract services, excursions and tours and any other services not qualifying for Bus Services Operators Grant (BSOG) are excluded.
- (iii) Any services, e.g. express coach services, which do not or would not currently qualify for BSOG over any part of their length will not be included in the free travel scheme. The commercial agreement regarding half fare concessions and entitlement to BSOG, that may be introduced in the future, will apply to such services.
- (iv) Any services where it appears to the Council that fares include a special amenity element, e.g. local tour rates, will be excluded.

6. CONCESSIONS TO BE OFFERED

6.1 Pass holders shall be entitled to free-travel on all eligible services provided by operators participating in the Scheme.

6.2 Pass holders in possession of a pass produced in accordance with the design approved by the Welsh Assembly Government shall be entitled to free travel on all eligible services, irrespective of which authority in Wales issued the pass.

7. TIME RESTRICTIONS

7.1 Concessionary passes are valid at all times of the day on any day of any week.

8. CATEGORIES OF PERSON ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE A PASS

8.1 Residents of the Principal Area who appear to the Council to be:-

- (i) Persons who are over the age of sixty years, or
- (ii) Persons who are blind or partially sighted, or

- (iii) Persons who are profoundly or severely deaf, or
- (iv) Persons who are without speech, or
- (v) Persons who have a disability, or have suffered an injury, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to walk, or
- (vi) Persons who do not have arms or have long-term loss of the use of both arms, or
- (vii) Persons who have a learning disability, that is, a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind which includes significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning, or
- (viii) Persons who would, if they applied for the grant of a licence to drive a motor vehicle under Part III of the Road Traffic Act 1988, have their applications refused pursuant to Section 92 of that Act (physical fitness) otherwise than on the grounds of persistent misuse of drugs or alcohol.

8.2 In addition, a pass issued to a person by virtue of categories (ii) to (viii) inclusive and who, in the opinion of the Council, requires the assistance of a companion in order to travel on eligible services, will be marked accordingly. Such passes will allow the passholder to travel with a companion, whose purpose is to assist the passholder, and both the passholder and the companion will be entitled to travel at the concessionary rate.

8.3 In determining whether any applicant is entitled to a concessionary pass, the Council will refer to any guidance issued by the Welsh Assembly Government or any other relevant organisation, such as the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee or the Welsh Local Government Association.

9. ISSUE OF PASSES

9.1 Passes are issued by, or on behalf of, the Council to any person normally resident in their area who is, or becomes, eligible for a pass during the period of operation of the Scheme, upon completion of the appropriate application procedure.

9.2 Passes will be produced in accordance with the design approved by the Welsh Assembly Government, thereby entitling passholders to concessionary travel on local bus services throughout Wales.

9.3 Passes will be issued to expire at a date to be determined by the Council or, if no expiry date is stated when the pass is issued, until such time as the Council determines that passes shall be renewed.

10. CHARGES FOR PASSES

- 10.1 Passes are issued free of charge but the Council reserves the right to make a charge for issuing any replacement passes.
- 10.2 The Council will not be liable for any expenses incurred by the applicant in obtaining and submitting documentation, including photographic and/or medical evidence if necessary, for the purpose of applying for a pass.

11. ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS GOVERNING THE USE OF PASSES

- 11.1 The use of passes issued under the Scheme will be subject to the following additional conditions: -
- (i) Passes are strictly not transferable. A pass must therefore only be used by its authorised holder. Abuse of the Scheme in this respect may result in cancellation of the pass or refusal to renew it in the future and may also result in legal action against the passholder.
 - (ii) If a pass is lost the fact must be reported to the Finance Section of the Council which may (or may not) issue a replacement pass for which a charge may (or may not) be made.
 - (iii) If a pass becomes defaced or damaged, such as to render it illegible, it must be returned to the Finance Section of the Council who may (or may not) issue a replacement for which a charge may (or may not) be made.
 - (iv) A pass must be returned to the relevant Finance Section of the Council for cancellation: -
 - (a) when the passholder no longer wishes or becomes unable to take advantage of the concessions, or
 - (b) when the passholder is no longer entitled to the concession, for example, by reason of a change of residence to an area outside that of the Vale of Glamorgan Council which issued the pass, or
 - (c) on the death of the passholder.
 - (v) A passholder must show his/her pass whenever a concessionary rate journey is requested and, if any ticket is issued for that journey, when such a ticket is inspected. Defaced, damaged or otherwise illegible passes may not be accepted.
 - (vi) Possession of a pass confers no rights on the holder other than those of any other fare-paying passenger. Use of a pass on services within the Scheme is subject to the general regulations and conditions of the operators of those services.

- (vii) The Council can accept no liability for any failure of bus services to operate or of operators to accept a pass.

12. ADMISSION OF OPERATORS TO THE SCHEME

Operators wishing to join the Scheme should give written notice to the Council at least 28 days prior to commencement of eligible services in the area.

13. WITHDRAWAL OF OPERATORS FROM THE SCHEME

Operators wishing to withdraw from voluntary participation in the Scheme must give 42 days' notice, in writing, of their intention to do so.

14. REIMBURSEMENT OF OPERATORS

The reimbursement arrangements are set out in Annex 1 to these Scheme Particulars.

15. SURVEYS

- 15.1 Operators shall allow the Council's officers or authorised agents to travel, without payment, on vehicles operating eligible services for the purpose of surveying, counting or estimating the number of passengers (whether generally or of any particular description) and the fare values attributable to those passengers.

16. VEHICLE SIGNS

- 16.1 Operators shall, if requested by the Council, cause to be displayed on every vehicle operating eligible services a sign indicating that travel concessions are available, such signs to be supplied at no cost to the operators.

17. FARETABLES

- 17.1 Operators shall, if requested by the Council, supply copies of the faretables for any or all eligible services.

18. FUTURE VARIATIONS TO THIS SCHEME

- 18.1 In the event that the Council wishes to vary the Concessionary Travel Scheme in the future, then each operator in its area will be notified in writing, within the timescales prescribed in legislation, explaining the proposed changes.

ANNEX 1

VALE OF GLAMORGAN CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL SCHEME

REIMBURSEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

1. PRINCIPLES OF REIMBURSEMENT

- 1.1 These arrangements have been compiled with reference to the ‘Guidelines for a common approach to concessionary fares reimbursement in Wales, issued jointly by the Welsh members of the Confederation of Passenger Transport and the Welsh Local Government Association’.
- 1.2 The overall objective for reimbursement arrangements is that operators should not be financially better or worse off as a result of providing mandatory travel concessions.
- 1.3 The reimbursement arrangements for this scheme will continue to be administered by The Vale of Glamorgan Council.
- 1.4 An operator’s entitlement to reimbursement can be summarised as follows:-
- (i) The number of free-travel concessionary journeys undertaken (preferably to be recorded electronically by the operator) by passholders boarding eligible services at stops in the administrative area of the Vale of Glamorgan, multiplied by:
 - (ii) The average fare paid by all adults purchasing single fare tickets on all eligible services in the administrative area,
 - (iii) The resultant value to be multiplied by 73.59%.
- 1.5 The percentage reduction takes account of :-
- (i) the availability of discounted and return fares, which passholders might have purchased if the concessionary travel scheme did not exist,
 - (ii) the likelihood that the concessionary travel scheme will increase the numbers of concessionary journeys,
 - (iii) any additional costs incurred by the operator in providing the concession.

- 1.6 Payment to be made at generally monthly intervals.
- 1.7 The practical effect of these principles are set out in the following sections.

2. LOCAL AUTHORITY RESPONSIBILITY FOR PAYMENTS TO OPERATORS

- 2.1 Payment will be made by the Administering Council in whose area the operator's office is located, on behalf of the local authorities that administer the scheme, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed with individual operators, for example, where an operator provides services within the areas of the administering Council from a depot located elsewhere.
- 2.2 The Payment Periods will refer to calendar months.
- 2.3 The administering Council will be prepared to agree a slightly different pattern of Payment Periods, to accommodate operators with financial accountancy periods based on combinations of weeks rather than calendar months, provided that no more than thirteen Payment Periods per year would result.
- 2.4 Payments will be made at the mid-point date of each Payment Period. In respect of calendar months, the payment should be received by the operator on the 15th of each month (or the first working day thereafter) by direct debit or cheque.

3. INFORMATION TO BE SUPPLIED BY OPERATORS

- 3.1 As soon as possible (and no later than 21 days) after the end of each Payment Period, operators should submit the following information to The Vale of Glamorgan Council, except in exceptional circumstances such as software failure or data corruption, stating:-
- (i) The total number of concessionary free-travel passenger trips undertaken by passholders boarding buses in the Vale of Glamorgan area during the Payment Period irrespective of which local authority in Wales issued the pass.
 - (a) Where an operator has the ability to record the identity of the local authority that issued the pass (e.g. because the authority(ies) concerned had issued smartcards and the operator's vehicles are equipped with smartcard readers), the operator will analyse the total number of concessionary free-travel passenger trips by pass-issue authority, subject to the availability of suitable technology and software.

- (b) As a consequence of a trial smartcard experiment, Caerphilly County Borough Council has entered into a Data Sharing Agreement with the major operator in the area (Stagecoach) which permits the local authority access to specific data relating to journeys made by persons presenting concessionary smartcards whilst satisfying the operator's concerns about confidentiality. In the event of any other Administering Councils introducing smartcards, it would expect to enter into similar agreements with operators who possessed smartcard-reading equipment.
- (ii) The average fare paid by all adults purchasing single fare tickets on all eligible services that operate in the Vale of Glamorgan area.
 - (a) In practice, it is anticipated that this can be most easily achieved by taking the total revenue from adult single ticket sales at the relevant operating depot and dividing this figure by the corresponding number of adult single tickets issued.

For example, an operator based in Merthyr Tydfil but operating routes into (and/or within) Bridgend, Caerphilly or Rhondda Cynon Taff, would quote the average adult single fare all for those routes even though some of those routes may continue beyond the Bridgend, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil or Rhondda Cynon Taff areas into other local authority areas such as Cardiff, Newport, Swansea or Powys.

- 3.2 The operator will be entitled to reimbursement, calculated by multiplying the number of concessionary free-travel trips by the average adult single fare, and then multiplying the resultant figure by 73.59%.
- 3.3 It is the operator's responsibility to claim reimbursement in respect of concessionary free-travel passengers boarding in other local authority areas from the local authority where such stops are located. This applies even if those passengers had presented passes issued by the Vale of Glamorgan Council.
- 3.4 The Vale of Glamorgan Council reserves the right to examine the records of concessionary free-travel trips, together with adult single fare revenue and tickets, of all operators at reasonable intervals to verify the figures submitted.

4. CALCULATION OF PAYMENTS

- 4.1 As payments are due at the mid-point of each Payment Period, which in most cases will be monthly, there is likely to be insufficient time for the Council to receive the information (set out in Section 3 above) after the end of one month before the next monthly payment needs to be processed.

4.2 The Council is prepared to consider two alternative methods of addressing this situation:

- (i) That the estimated payment to be made at the mid-point of each Payment Period be based on the actual entitlement to reimbursement for the Payment Period two periods earlier.

Actual entitlement to reimbursement will be calculated and compared with the estimated payment already made. Any settlement due, either to the favour of the operator or the Council, will be incorporated within the first next available payment.

For example, the payment due in June would be based on the actual entitlement for April, calculated from the information supplied in accordance with Section 3.1 above. Account would need to be taken of any significant changes to services in the intervening months that might affect patronage, or

- (ii) That the Council agrees with each operator the projected entitlement to reimbursement over a pre-determined period, say, three-months, and make fixed payments accordingly.

Actual entitlement to reimbursement over the pre-determined period will be calculated and compared with the fixed payments already made. Any settlement due, either to the favour of the operator or the Council, may be incorporated within the next available payment. The actual entitlement to reimbursement over the pre-determined period will be taken into account in agreeing fixed payments for future periods.

4.3 Where, following any subsequent audit, a mathematical error is identified in any calculation, or incorrect information is found to have been supplied by an operator, the entitlement to reimbursement will be recalculated.

5. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR SMALL OPERATORS

5.1 Section (6) of The Mandatory Travel Concessions (Reimbursement Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2001 provides for local authorities to agree special reimbursement arrangements in certain circumstances.

5.2 The circumstances are where, in the opinion of the local authority, applying the standard reimbursement arrangements would impose an unreasonable administrative or financial burden on the operator due to the nature or extent of the services provided.

5.3 However, local authorities must publish the criteria which would entitle an operator to claim exemption from the standard method and obtain the Assembly's Government approval for those criteria. The authorities must offer the exemption to all operators that satisfy the criteria.

5.4 The administering Council may consider applying for an exemption from the standard reimbursement arrangements for an operator if any one of the following conditions is satisfied: -

- (i) the vehicles normally used in providing services where concessions are available have 8 or less seats available for passengers;
- (ii) the total registered local bus service mileage operated is less than 150,000 miles per annum within the area of the administering Council;
- (iii) only registered local bus services provided under a service subsidy agreement with a local authority are operated within the area of the administering Council.

5.5 The administering Council will consider applying the following reimbursement arrangements where any of the above conditions is satisfied and the operator wishes not to be reimbursed by the standard method explained in Section 3 above: -

Option 1

- (i) Staff of the Vale of Glamorgan Council, or agents, to undertake a sample survey of actual concessionary travel on the routes involved.
- (ii) Reimbursement for the concessionary travel observed during that survey to be calculated in accordance with the standard method, taking account of any specific data regarding fare values and/or generated passengers on the service(s) involved.
- (iii) The amount of reimbursement entitlement thus obtained to be compared with some other measure of operation agreed with the operator.
 - (a) Where operators only operate registered local bus services provided under a service subsidy agreement with a local authority, the Council would seek to use the total revenue obtained from all passengers travelling on those services as the 'comparator'.
 - (b) Where commercial services are involved, and the legislation prevents the Council from requiring operators to disclose information on the turnover of any part of the business, the Council would seek to use other data (e.g. total number of tickets issued to all categories of passenger, or revenue from adult single fares, or actual service miles etc) as the 'comparator'.
- (iv) Payment Periods would be the same as the standard method, unless the Council and the operator agree otherwise.

- (v) The operators will be required to supply the relevant ‘comparator’ information relating to the period involved, as agreed under clause (iii) above, within 21 days of the end of each pre-determined period, except in exceptional circumstances, to enable the Council to calculate entitlement to reimbursement for concessionary travel.

Option 2

- (i) Staff of The Vale of Glamorgan Council, or their agents, to undertake a sample survey of actual concessionary travel on the routes involved.
- (ii) Reimbursement for the concessionary travel observed during that survey to be calculated in accordance with the standard method, taking account of any specific data regarding fare values and/or generated passengers on the service(s) involved.
- (iii) The amount of reimbursement entitlement thus obtained to be assessed as a value per payment period.
- (iv) Payment Periods would be the same as the standard method, unless The Vale of Glamorgan Council and the operator agree otherwise.
- (v) The Vale of Glamorgan Council to make regular fixed payments at the mid-point of each payment period.
- (vi) The Vale of Glamorgan Council reserves the right not to offer Option 2 where they consider that the resultant reimbursement entitlement is so great that a fixed payment method is inappropriate.

6. REVIEW OF REIMBURSEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

- 6.1 The Unitary Authorities across Wales are co-operating with an independent study, undertaken by consultants and financed by the Welsh Assembly Government, that is examining the effect on passenger journeys, operators’ costs and local authorities’ payments to operators arising from implementation of the Wales free-travel scheme. That study cannot be completed until the free-travel scheme is implemented and the actual effects can be measured. The Vale of Glamorgan Council expects to review the reimbursement arrangements in the light of the findings of that study.

7. APPEALS

- 7.1 Any operator who feels that he/she may be adversely affected by the conditions of the scheme may appeal to the Welsh Assembly Government, as detailed under Section 150 (3) of the Transport Act 2000 and The Mandatory Travel Concessions (Reimbursement Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2001.

Vale of Glamorgan Council

November, 2002