

BUDGET CUT ASSESSMENT FORM

W15

Budget Cut Assessment Form CONCESSIONARY FARES	Ref No W15	Responsible AD	Responsible Finance Manager	Responsible HR Manager	Responsible Lawyer	Responsible EIA Officer
---	---------------	----------------	-----------------------------	------------------------	--------------------	-------------------------

Description of Proposal: Concessionary fares (Bus Passes) reduced to statutory requirements only.

The Council must continue to implement the scheme as prescribed by the Government providing free off-peak local bus travel to eligible older and disabled people anywhere in England. The off peak period covers any time on a Saturday, Sunday or bank holiday, and from 9.30am to 11pm on any other day.

The current scheme includes a companion pass which is a discretion agreed by the Council. This proposal includes a number of options to try and manage down the anticipated growth in costs associated with this statutory scheme. These include:

- Returning to the statutory scheme levels by removing the discretionary elements; This means removal of the Disabled person Companion pass, where certain disabled users are issued a pass that allows a companion to travel with them. The companion would not travel free.
- The introduction of new ICT systems to reduce fraudulent use.
- reduced assumptions on inflation built in future years budgets

There are currently 635 disabled companion passes (July 2015) in Darlington. i.e. :

ENCTS Disability Companion pass holders	No
Blind or partially sighted	51
Has a learning disability	176
Long term disability/injury preventing ability to walk	326
No arms or lack of use of arms	1
Not further specified	17
Profoundly or severely deaf	11
Unfit to drive	49
Without speech	4
Total	635

As part of the Equality Impact Assessment and Cumulative Impact analysis the proposed removal of the companion bus pass does have a negative impact across a number of groupings within the disability protected characteristic. A number of options were put forward from users as part of the EQIA consultation process. To try and mitigate the impact it is recommended that further work be undertaken to investigate options to retain the Companion Bus Pass option on the principle of developing a sustainable scheme which is a combination of a more robust criterion and assessment for entitlement and an annual charge at a level to be determined.

These proposals do not guarantee savings but assist in managing demand in the annual negotiations regarding the cost of the service. These will reduce the numbers using the scheme to the statutory minimum and reducing any fraudulent use. The anticipated savings is expected to be £208,000 by 2019/20.

Human Resources Impacts		Asset Management Impacts	Decommissioning Costs	Cost Shunting
No. of posts to be deleted	0	Detail any released buildings/building space Identify disposal or requisition issues No impact	In addition to HR and Asset costs identify any others e.g. early contract termination costs There will be processes to consider and implement in the removal of passes that will require staff resource to deliver.	Is there any known or potential to increase costs elsewhere within Council budgets Unknown at this stage. Children's and Adults services input required to develop impact assessment.
No. of potential redundancies	0			
Estimated Redundancy costs	£0			

	Financial Summary				
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Estimated reduction to budget	47,000	97,000	151,000	208,000	268,000
Redundancy Costs	0	0	0	0	0
Asset Implication					
Decommissioning Costs					
Known Cost Shunting					
Overheads	1,535	3,123	4,798	6,561	6,561
NET Budget Reduction	48,535	100,123	155,798	214,561	274,561

Equality Impact Assessment

Officers have considered the proposal's relevance to Darlington Borough Council's Public Sector Equality Duty and full Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken. A copy of this is available in 3 (b) Appendix 1.