

Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee 19 September 2012

Concessionary Travel

Concessionary Travel - April 2011 to Present, Including the Recent Customer Engagement Exercise

Recommendations

1. The committee comment on the results from the questionnaire.
2. The committee comment on the date of the next proposed review of the scheme.
3. The committee endorse the development of additional performance measures as set out in Table 3.

1. Background

- 1.1 The role of Travel Concession Authority (TCA) was transferred from District/Borough Councils to the County Council on 1 April 2011 as part of a wider change by central government.
- 1.2 There are two aspects to the role of TCA. The first is the issuing of passes to eligible residents, and the second is reimbursement of the bus operators so that they are no better off and no worse off than if there were no Concessionary Travel scheme in place.
- 1.3 The transition from District/Borough Councils to WCC was managed as a PRINCE2 project, running from May 2010 to May 2011.
- 1.4 New contracts were in place prior to 1 April 2011 for both for producing the passes and for handling the complexities of operator reimbursement. It was also agreed ahead of time that the customer facing role would be undertaken by the Warwickshire Direct Partnership, using the Northgate Front Office Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database.
- 1.5 As part of the handover, WCC inherited five different sets of pass holder data and these were consolidated into a single database.
- 1.6 The decision taken by Cabinet in November 2010 on the discretionary elements of the scheme covered the period up to 31 March 2013, when the bus passes previously issued by the District/Borough Councils all expire.

2. Transition and First Year of Operation

- 2.1 WCC took over the management of concessionary travel on 1 April 2011. There were some teething problems with the transition, with the greatest being

the quality of the data which was inherited from the Districts/Boroughs and the way in which the data was imported. However, there were fewer issues than had been expected, given the scale of the transition.

- 2.2 From 1 April 2011 the service has been delivered face-to-face through a network of Warwickshire Direct one stop shops. Initially there were twelve of these but the number has recently increased to fifteen, meaning that there are more access points within local communities.
- 2.3 Currently people can access the concessionary travel service at the Warwickshire Direct sites listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Warwickshire Direct sites offering the Concessionary Travel Service

Town	Location
Atherstone	The Council House
Coleshill	Library & Information Centre
Nuneaton	Town Hall
Bedworth	Area Housing Office
Stockingford	Early Years Centre & Library
Rugby	Town Hall
Warwick	Shire Hall
Leamington	Riverside House
Kenilworth	Library & Information Centre
Whitnash	Library & Information Centre
Lillington	Library & Information Centre
Stratford	Elizabeth House
Southam	Library & Information Centre
Shipston	Library & Information Centre
Alcester	Library & Information Centre

- 2.4 Telephone customer contact is mainly handled by the Customer Service Centre (CSC), both at Kings House and Shire Hall, but at present telephone payments are being handled by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council's CSC on our behalf, for card security reasons. The County Council CSC should take over telephone payments towards the end of 2012.
- 2.5 The service was audited during August and September 2010. The audit has been reported elsewhere.
- 2.6 Over the first year, over 5,300 new pass applications were received, and over 2,900 replacement passes issued. The number of the replacement passes is artificially high for 2011-12 as the largest bus operator in Warwickshire, Stagecoach, introduced smartcard readers on its buses. This brought to light large numbers of damaged passes which had previously gone unreported. It is anticipated that in a normal year then around 1,900 replacements would be issued.

Table 5: Number of Concessionary Travel Transactions

	1 April 2011 - 31 March 2012	1 April 2011 - 31 July 2012
Passes issued to new applicants	5,398	7,114
Replacement passes issued (lost, stolen, damaged)	2,913	3,850
Number of customer contacts in addition to the above	4,239	9485*

* The increase in customer contacts in the past 4 months is down to the proactive collection of photos for the 2013 renewals.

Table 6: Number of Pass Holders

	at 31 March 2012	at 31 July 2012
Total number of pass holders	105073	103645*
% of pass holders - age related	95.9%	95.7%
% of pass holders disability related	4.1%	4.3%

* An on-going data validation exercise has removed over 4000 records of deceased persons from the database

- 2.7 Management of current and cancelled smartcards, and collection of concessionary travel journey data, has previously been done through a database (called a HOPS) hosted nationally and funded by the Department for Transport (DfT). The DfT-funded HOPS closes at the end of September 2012 and the Warwickshire data has therefore been migrated to a service hosted by Centro and which serves the majority of West Midlands authorities. This incurs an unavoidable additional annual cost. However, it will offer a greater ability to collect and analyse concessionary journey data in the future.
- 2.8 Some preliminary work has been done on identifying performance measures. These should be able to be generated from existing data rather than taking staff away from the day to day work to generate them. Those under consideration are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Proposed Performance Measures

<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Notes</i>
% take up of age related passes amongst eligible residents	This has been reported on quarterly over the past 12 months and is currently 71.1%. The figure is expected to change once the new census data and population projections are available. Reported figures are given in Table 4.
Average time from print request to it being posted	Will need some IT developer time to create a report within Northgate. Complications because of weekends and also for pass holders who have replaced a lost or damaged card more than once since April 2011
Percentage of current pass holders with incomplete data	This is easily measured and will be very high until March 2013 when the passes are renewed, then will drop significantly. Currently incomplete records run at 65.1%.
<i>The following measures will be considered for inclusion within the SLA with Warwickshire Direct.</i>	
% of passes completed through Northgate without error	There are several ways in which errors can occur and these cannot all be easily identified.
Average time taken per customer transaction	Some IT development time is needed to be able to report this data. The results may be skewed by customer-related delays which are outside the control of WCC.

Table 4: % take up of age related passes amongst eligible residents

<i>Date</i>	<i>% Take Up</i>
31 March 2011	71.51%
30 June 2011	72.38%
30 September 2011	73.84%
31 December 2011	74.10%
31 March 2012	73.05%
30 June 2012	71.10%

- 2.9 The decrease in the take up rate amongst older residents after December 2011 can be attributed to removing over 4000 records relating to deceased persons as well as flagging those pass holders who have moved out of the area.

3. Engagement with Customers

- 3.1 The current scheme was agreed by Cabinet in November 2010 and took effect from 1 April 2011. It consists of the national scheme plus the following local discretionary enhancements:-

- (i) free travel between 9.00am and 9.30am on weekdays, and

- (ii) free travel between 11.00pm and close of service on weekdays.

The overall effect is that passengers can travel between 9.00am and the close of service on weekdays and all day at weekends and on public holidays.

- 3.2 Companion passes are concessionary bus passes which allow a companion to travel free of charge with a disabled person who cannot travel without a carer or companion. WCC does not provide companion passes as part of the Warwickshire scheme.
- 3.3 However, this is a discretion that was offered by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council and Warwick District Council prior to WCC taking over the scheme. Both these authorities were asked whether they wished to continue funding the discretion, but neither did. According to DfT figures for 2011-12 55 out of 89 Travel Concession Authorities (TCAs) provide companion passes. Four out of the seven surrounding TCAs offer companion passes.
- 3.4 When WCC took over the scheme, Cabinet agreed that WCC would not offer companion passes, although it would honour any existing companion passes until their expiry date. This affects around 450 companion passes issued by Warwick District Council (WDC) which will expire on 31 March 2013 and which will be replaced with standard concessionary bus passes at that time. Consequently, the questionnaire responses include a number of comments which relate to the loss of companion passes - a decision which was taken in 2010, but where holders of the remaining soon-to-expire companion passes have only just become aware.
- 3.5 Further information about companion passes is given in section 3.14.
- 3.6 A questionnaire was circulated during June and July 2012. Paper copies were sent to around 5500 pass holders - a five per cent sample selected from the age related and disability related passes in each District/Borough. In addition, around 1500 questionnaires were available through the Warwickshire Direct outlets and the questionnaire was also available online through the Consultation Hub on the Warwickshire Direct website.
- 3.7 The questionnaire included three sections:-
About your bus pass:-
 - (i) About the service you receive from us
 - (ii) About the bus services
 - (iii) The full report on the questionnaire results is included in **Appendix A**.
- 3.8 Although the main purpose of the questionnaire was to provide information for the review of the scheme, parts 2 and 3 were included to provide some feedback from customers on the service they receive from WCC and the bus companies in respect of their bus pass. Customer satisfaction data is not routinely collected for concessionary travel.

- 3.9 More than 3600 responses were received - over a 50% response rate from the total number of questionnaires circulated. This is extremely high.
- (i) 93.7% of respondents were existing concessionary pass holders
 - (ii) 82.1% of existing pass holders qualified because of their age
 - (iii) 92.6% of passes held by respondents will expire during 2013
 - (iv) The preferred option for renewing a concessionary pass is by visiting a local "One Stop Shop", council office or library (43.6% of respondents)
 - (v) 20% of respondents would prefer to apply for a pass online (new, replacement or renewal). This compares to 17% when asked in 2010.

3.10 The questionnaire included an opportunity to leave comments for each of the three sections and offered the option to receive a response if the respondent chose to leave contact details. Comments were received as follows;

Table 7: Comments from the Questionnaire

About your bus pass	1779 comments (226 requested a response)
About the service you receive from us	811 comments (120 requested a response)
About the bus services	1272 comments (223 requested a response)

Where responses were requested, these will be sent out during September.

Travel Times

3.11 The discretionary elements of the scheme which are under review are:-

- (i) free travel between 9.00am and 9.30 am on weekdays
 - (i) free travel between 11.00pm and close of service on weekdays
- Summarised results are shown in Tables 8 to 11.

Table 8: Current use between 9.00am and 9.30am Weekdays

% of respondents	no. of respondents	
44.9%	1543	use their bus pass to attend medical appointments between 9.00am and 9.30am on weekdays
62.3%	2142	respondents use their bus pass to go shopping between 9.00am and 9.30am on weekdays
41.3%	1419	respondents use their bus pass for social reasons between 9.00am and 9.30am on weekdays
28.8%	991	respondents use their bus pass to access council services between 9.00am and 9.30am on weekdays
3.7%	247	respondents use their bus pass for work commitments between 9.00am and 9.30am on weekdays
The results indicate that those who have an age related pass use it slightly less regularly than those who have a disability related pass. This is true for all different types of journey.		

Table 9: If pass use was unavailable between 9.00am and 9.30am on weekdays.

% of respondents	
30.6%	attending medical appointments would use a later bus
60.0%	would use a later bus to go shopping
48.5%	using the bus pass for social reasons would use a later bus
51.2%	would use a later bus to access council services
54.8%	would no longer travel to work if they couldn't use their bus pass
For most types of travel, a minority of people would be prepared to pay the fare. For medical appointments, 19.1% would be prepared to pay.	

Table 10: Current Use between 11.00pm and Midnight on Weekdays

% of respondents	no. of respondents	
17.8%	584	use their bus pass for social reasons
1.2%	26	use their bus pass for work commitments
3.6%	58	use their bus pass for "other" reasons
As before, it appears that those who have a concessionary pass due to disability use their pass slightly more frequently.		

Table 11: If Pass Use was Unavailable between 11.00pm and Midnight

% of respondents	
11.6%	of 'social' travellers would use an earlier bus
4.2%	of 'work' travellers would use an earlier bus
4.6%	of 'other' travellers would use an earlier bus.
49.4%	of 'social' travellers would no longer travel
69.2%	of 'work' travellers would no longer travel

3.12 In addition to asking about people's use of the bus pass the following question was also asked:-

If the scheme within Warwickshire were changed, how would you want to see it altered?

Please provide as much detail as possible. Changes could include taking away or changing the current 9.00am start time as well as adding extra elements. However, please bear in mind that any extra elements would need to be funded from somewhere. You can attach a separate sheet if you need more space.

3.13 Over half the respondents chose to answer this question. There were over 1770 responses to this question, with a wide variety of comments.

Table 12: Comments, Grouped by Subject.

<i>No of respondents</i>	<i>Comment groups</i>
951	said they were happy with the scheme as it is, or said that the 9.00 start time should be retained
171	made comments about the bus services
165	expressed a desire to see rail travel included within the Warwickshire scheme
158	wanted to see longer hours such as an earlier start time or all day travel
78	would either like to see the national scheme only (without the extra hours) or said that they would adapt to the national scheme if the hours were changed.
50	wanted to see passes which enable carers or companions to travel free of charge

3.14 There were 202 responses which have been categorised as 'other' and which are outside the scope of this review. These include comments about eligibility for the scheme and the scope of the national scheme as well as offer to pay for a bus pass, or to pay a nominal fare. Some responses included more than one comment.

3.15 Responses were also received in letter form from a number of individuals and organisations. The majority of the comments relate to companion passes. These are summarised in **Appendix B**.

3.16 The most common grouping of comments was related to supporting retention of the current extended hours, particularly the 9.00am start. This was over 25% of all respondents and represents around half the people who commented. This includes a number of people who suggested keeping the 9.00 start but doing away with late night travel.

3.17 The comments about bus services will be passed on to the relevant officers, but a number of these comments are along the lines that if the start time is changed to 9.30am then the buses must be rescheduled to arrive after 9.30am,

rather than between 9.00 and 9.30. Such rescheduling is outside the scope of this review.

- 3.18 The comments about rail travel were expected, as neighbouring authorities currently include this in their scheme. Centro covers Coventry, Solihull and Birmingham and their scheme allows free travel on rail services (they do receive a higher level of funding to Warwickshire). However, inclusion of rail travel would significantly increase the costs of the scheme as well as being extremely complicated to negotiate and monitor with several different train operating companies involved.
- 3.19 The most commonly stated reason for people wanting an earlier start time was attending medical appointments.
- 3.20 For information relating to companion passes, please see Section 6.

4. Feedback on Customer Service 'About the Service you Receive from us'

- 4.1 The questionnaire asked respondents to mark which (if any) one Warwickshire Direct one stop shops or libraries they had visited about their bus pass within the past 12 months, and asked them to rate the service they had received.
- (i) 819 respondents had visited a Warwickshire Direct one stop shop or library.
 - (ii) 95.5% of those respondents said they were fairly satisfied or very satisfied with the service they received.
 - (iii) Feedback on individual one stop shops will be passed to Warwickshire Direct, for information.
- 4.2 The questionnaire asked whether they had telephoned about their bus pass within the past 12 months, and asked them to rate the service they had received:-
- (i) 161 respondents had telephoned about their bus pass.
 - (ii) 91.1% said they were fairly satisfied or very satisfied with the service they received.
- 4.3 The questionnaire asked whether respondents had visited the Concessionary Travel bus pass page on the Warwickshire Direct Website, within the past 12 months:-
- (i) 231 respondents had visited the web page
 - (ii) 97.3% said they were fairly satisfied or very satisfied with the information on the website.
- 4.4 811 people left comments in response to the customer service question, although around half of those were 'no comment' or were comments about the bus services.
- 4.5 Of those comments attributed to either the one stop shops or libraries, the website or the telephone service;

- (i) 210 reported good service
- (ii) 18 reported poor service
- (iii) 7 mentioned the loss of companion passes

5. Feedback on Bus Operators 'About the Bus Services

5.1 The more detailed feedback about the bus services will be passed to officers who monitor the bus services, and they will respond to comments where necessary.

5.2 Overall:-

- (i) 88.1% were fairly or very satisfied with the punctuality of the buses,
- (ii) 95.1% were fairly or very satisfied with bus cleanliness,
- (iii) 96.2% were fairly or very satisfied with the attitude of bus drivers.

6. Companion Passes

6.1 All the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC) companion passes expired on 31 March 2011 before WCC took over concessionary travel. NBBC wrote to those pass holders in March 2011 advising them of the change.

6.2 When the questionnaire was being prepared it became apparent that neither WDC nor WCC had written to the WDC companion pass holders to tell them that WDC would cease funding companion passes and that WCC was not providing a companion pass scheme. A decision was therefore taken to write to each of them to tell them, and in addition to send each of them a copy of the questionnaire which would allow them to make comments on the scheme, as they had not been given the opportunity to comment when the decision was originally taken.

6.3 There were fifty responses where companion passes were mentioned in the section where comments were invited on changes to the scheme. It is not clear how many of these are pass holders who live outside Warwick District, and how many are existing WDC companion pass holders. Most state that they cannot travel without a companion or carer. Many state that the inability to travel with a carer, or increased cost will mean that they are unable to use public transport.

6.4 38 out of 50 pass holders who responded had a carer fill in the questionnaire on their behalf.

6.5 It is clear that a companion pass is a significant benefit to those who have one, but it should be borne in mind that the majority of pass holders within Warwickshire have never had a companion pass available to them. If the introduction of companion passes was considered as part of the Warwickshire scheme, there are a number of factors to be considered:-

- (i) What type and level of disability would qualify someone for a companion pass, and how would this be assessed?

- (ii) What would the age cut-off be? Younger children would be expected to travel with a responsible adult regardless of disability, so the companion would be travelling because of the child's age in any event.
 - (iii) What would the financial impact be on the scheme countywide?
 - (iv) What would be the additional costs incurred in assessing applicants?
 - (v) Would a charge be made for the companion element of the pass?
- 6.6 The introduction of companion passes, or any other benefit which solely affected disability pass holders, would be likely to increase demand for disability passes - both amongst those who do not yet hold one and amongst those age-related pass holders who would seek the additional benefits associated with a disability pass. The results from the questionnaire indicate that 11% of respondents qualified because of age and disability, whereas only 7% qualified on disability alone. Based on this, it is possible the demand for disability related passes could more than double.
- 6.7 It is worth noting that benefits such as the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and the forthcoming Personal Independence Payment (PIP) do include a person's inability to travel unaided as part of the qualifying criteria for the benefit, and so these benefits do include an element of financial support for companion travel. However, not every passholder will choose to claim or be able to claim DLA or PIP. In particular, DLA and PIP cannot be claimed by those over the age of 65.

7. Finance

Reimbursement

- 7.1 The amount that bus operators are reimbursed for each bus route is determined by a number of factors which are included within a DfT calculator. These include:-
- (i) number of concessionary journeys
 - (ii) average fare for non-concessionary passengers
 - (iii) average journey length for non-concessionary passengers
 - (iv) default values set by DfT (which can be overwritten by local data if the bus operators have it)
 - (v) bus occupancy rates
- All of these are outside the control of WCC, making the budget difficult to manage and predict.
- 7.2 There were 6.21 million concessionary journeys taken in Warwickshire in 2011-12, compared to 6.15 million in 2010-11. This is around 40% of all bus journeys in Warwickshire.
- 7.3 Although WCC only took on Concessionary Travel in 2011, the reimbursement figures go back several years, due to previous involvement with the District/Borough Councils.

Table 14: Reimbursement of bus operators

Year	Reimbursement Expenditure £000	% increase on previous year
2009-10	£ 5,557	4.5%
2010-11	£ 5,741	3.31%
2011-12	£ 6,209	8.15%
2012-13	£ 6,581	*6%
2013-14	£ 7,041	7% (estimated)

*5.48% increase was forecast at the start of the financial year, but reimbursement payments have been higher than expected.

- 7.4 The increases in 2010-11 and 2011-12 are despite significant cuts to evening services and subsidised bus routes.
- 7.5 Due to the rising cost of running a car and the impact of cost of living increases on eligible residents, the number of concessionary journeys is expected to increase next year, so that the % increase in reimbursement will be towards the top of the range shown above, at around 7%.

Cost in Reimbursement of Changes to the Scheme

- 7.6 It is not possible at present to analyse travel data so as to know exactly how many concessionary journeys are made during the discretionary times. However, the questionnaire does give an indication of how people use their pass during the discretionary times.
- 7.7 Bus operators are reimbursed per concessionary boarding and so if the majority of passengers simply caught a later bus there would be no saving in moving from a 9.00am start to a 9.30am start.
- 7.8 Payments also have to be made to bus operators where concessionary travel results in the need for additional bus capacity at peak time. By moving the start time to 9.30am, there could be an additional peak caused by concessionary passengers, which would result in additional payments.
- 7.9 In addition, there are a number of rural areas served by a bus between 9.00am and 9.30am where the next bus does not arrive until after 11.00am (i.e. with a frequency of less than every two hours). It is likely that an exception would need to be made for these services so that residents were still able to use their bus passes.
- 7.10 The cost of funding travel from 9.00am to 9.30am was estimated in 2010 at £156k, and is estimated at £191k for 2013-14. The 2010 figure was provided by the contracted independent travel specialist and based on a number of factors, including comparison with schemes elsewhere in the country where free travel is not permitted between 9.00am and 9.30am. The 2013-14 figures have been increased in line with reimbursement costs (see Table 14 above).

- 7.11 However, it should be stressed that if this discretion were removed, the majority of the cost would remain, due to the factors covered in paragraphs 7.7 to 7.9. above.
- 7.12 If companion passes for disabled pass holders were considered for introduction, further work would be needed to assess the extent of the scheme in terms of eligibility, and the likely cost. Based on WDC figures from 2010, the cost of companion passes being introduced countywide in 2013-14 would be around £202k per year in reimbursement costs and could cost considerably more if demand increased, as suggested above.
- 7.13 Additional costs would be incurred in assessing applicants.

8. Next Steps

Concessionary Travel Scheme 2013 onwards - discretionary elements

- 8.1 A report will be taken to Cabinet in November asking them to approve the Concessionary Travel Scheme for 2013-14 and subsequent years.
- 8.2 The proposed Concessionary Travel Scheme for 2013-14 and subsequent years will be determined once the responses to the questionnaire have been studied in more detail.
- 8.3 The two year duration of Warwickshire's first Concessionary Travel Scheme was dictated largely by the expiry date of the District/Borough Council issued passes, and the expiry of the District-issued companion passes.
- 8.4 It is recommended that the next Scheme to be published lasts for three years, with a review of the scheme in the second half of 2015. This will reduce the cost of any consultation which is carried out as well as allowing a period of stability during which usage pattern data can be collected and analysed more closely, enabling more accurate estimates of future cost to be made.
- 8.5 It is recognised that central government may choose to make changes to the statutory English National Concessionary Travel Scheme in the meantime and, if this happens, it is recommended that the review be brought forward.

Renewals

- 8.6 With around 100,000 passes expiring on 31 March 2013, planning has already been underway for several months. The largest problem is that around 25,000 pass holders do not have a photograph in the database. Without a photograph a bus pass cannot be issued.
- 8.7 Pass holders are being written to on a phased basis, to ensure numbers are manageable, between June and November, asking them to call into a Warwickshire Direct one stop shop to have their photo taken or alternatively, send a photo by post with a reply slip. To date there has been a good response to the letters, and over 4,100 photographs have been collected

- 8.8 Where we have photographs, new passes will be sent out to pass holders automatically during January and February 2013.
- 8.9 When the renewed passes are sent out in 2013 the expiry dates will be staggered so that a large bulk renewal does not occur again. Once this has been done, it is hoped to develop an online option for the service which will allow pass holders to renew their pass, and order replacements online if they wish to, without having to visit a one stop shop or make contact by telephone or post.
- 8.10 Huge strides have been made in validating pass holder data - removing people who have moved away or who have died - but it is inevitable that passes will be sent to the wrong address (if people have moved since 2008 and not provided a change of address) or to deceased pass holders.
- 8.11 Despite writing to pass holders about photographs, March and April are still expected to be very busy for the Warwickshire Direct partnership as people who have not received a new pass get in touch. There are several reasons why they may not receive a new pass automatically:-
- (i) if they have moved and the pass has been sent to their old address
 - (ii) if there is still no photograph in the database
 - (iii) if their record is missing from the data inherited by WCC

Assessing Applications for Disabled Passes

- 8.12 At present, it is up to the applicant for a disabled pass to prove that they are eligible. For some applicants this is relatively straightforward as there are several other documents which would automatically qualify for a disability related bus pass. These include a blue badge, award of the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance, and registration as blind or partially sighted.
- 8.13 There are currently around 4500 pass holders who have passes due to a disability. The bulk of these pass holders were inherited from the District/Borough Councils and there is no recorded information about their disability.
- 8.14 In 2011-12 almost 600 new passes were issued to people with qualifying disabilities.
- 8.15 Of those applicants, around 380 rely on medical evidence or letters from their GP or another relevant practitioner to prove their eligibility. In most cases the applicant is being charged for a letter from their GP and in some cases the GP refuses to write a letter because it is not part of the NHS contract.
- 8.16 DfT guidance explicitly says that GPs should be used as a last resort and recommends that local authorities run dedicated assessment centres.
- 8.17 The Warwickshire Local Medical Committee has indicated that GPs should not be writing letters to support bus pass applications.
- 8.18 During 2013-14 the feasibility and cost of setting up WCC-led disability assessments to determine eligibility will be investigated.

Online Applications

- 8.19 It is the intention in the medium term to develop ways for residents to apply for their age related bus pass online as well as for pass holders to renew their passes or to order a replacement.
- 8.20 Setting up online applications for passes will be more complicated than renewals or replacements as it will involve automatic verification of residence and date of birth.
- 8.21 It is likely that an off the shelf system will be purchased, which provides the service needed, including a verification service. This will need to be integrated with the customer relationship management (CRM) database used by the Warwickshire Direct Partnership to deliver the service.
- 8.22 It is planned to start work on this during 2013-14.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 The first year and a half of service has operated very successfully. The largest challenge in the immediate future will be the successful renewal before April 2013 of the passes issued by the district/Borough Councils, which will affect almost 1 in 5 Warwickshire residents.
- 9.2 The very high response rate to the questionnaire indicates the value that pass holders place on their concessionary bus pass.

10. Proposals

- 10.1 It is proposed that the scheme to be agreed by Cabinet in November remain in place for a period of three years, from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2016, and that a further review of the scheme is undertaken in the summer of 2015.
- 10.2 It is also proposed that a review be carried out sooner if central government makes significant changes to the national scheme.
- 10.3 It is proposed that further development is carried out on the performance measures suggested in Table 3 above.

11. Appendices

- **Appendix A** – the questionnaire
- **Appendix B** – results from the questionnaire
- **Appendix C** – letters and emails received separately from the questionnaire

Background Papers: None

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Jo Cooper	Tel: 01926 412779 jocooper@warwickshire.gov.uk
Head of Service	Graeme Fitton	graemefitton@warwickshire.gov.uk
Strategic Director	Monica Fogarty	monicafogarty@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Peter Butlin	cllrbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk