

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

DATE: 21 April 2006

AGENDA ITEM NO: **16.**

SUBJECT: FREE CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL

Report of the Passenger Transport Executive

1. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1.1. To note initial results following the introduction of the free concessionary travel scheme and to seek approval to serve Participation Notices on operators if required.

2. INFORMATION

- 2.1. At the meeting held on 10 February 2006 the Authority approved the introduction of free travel for senior and disabled people with effect from 1 April 2006. The scheme statutorily provides for off peak bus travel within the County. In addition, to the statutory minimum the Authority agreed to extend the free scheme to include most cross boundary bus services
- 2.2. Initial reports from bus operators indicate that the introduction of free travel has been very successful. They are reporting between a 20% and 25% increase in the number of journeys being made by senior and disabled concessionary passengers. In addition, information from Metro's own travel centres show a significant increase in the number of Senior Permits issued when compared with the normal daily average.
- 2.3. As previously reported to the Concessionary Travel Working Group bus operators can withdraw from the discretionary elements of the West Yorkshire Concessionary Travel Scheme. The discretionary elements cover cross boundary bus services and concessionary travel for children. Whilst operators have a right of withdrawal, the Authority has powers under the Transport Act 1985 to compel all bus operators to remain within the Scheme. These powers ensure that the Authority can protect the Scheme and the benefits to concessionary passengers.
- 2.4. To compel operators to remain within the Scheme the Authority must issue a Participation Notice under Section 97 (2) of the Transport Act 1985. The current West Yorkshire Concessionary Travel Scheme, approved by the Authority on 10 February 2006, provides for the issue of Participation Notices should this be required.
- 2.5. Whilst no operator has yet opted to withdraw from the West Yorkshire Scheme this has occurred elsewhere. In order therefore to ensure that the required Participation Notice is served in accordance with the

relevant regulations it is necessary for the Authority to approve the issue of a Participation Notices should the need arise.

3. FINANCIAL AND EC PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

3.1. None as a result of this report.

4. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

4.1. None as a result of this report.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1. None as a result of this report.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. That this report be noted.

6.2. That the Authority approves the issue of Participation Notices under Section 97 (2) of the Transport Act 1985 if required.

Director General
West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive

13 April 2006