

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Concessionary Bus Travel Questions

1) What is the take-up (number of users)?

There has been a high take up of the pre 09:30 concessionary travel and in its first year of operation the usage was higher than predicted. The figures for first financial year 2013/14 and this financial year up to September 2014 are as follows:

The figures have reduced recently due to the changes in bus services in the Borough.

2013-14	Diamond	Green Transport	Johnsons	Stagecoach	Fleet	All
M01-Apr	10,581	92	3	106	61	10,843
M02-May	11,815	105	208	90	44	12,262
M03-Jun	10,812	53	253	64	167	11,349
M04-Jul	13,880	12	275	103	65	14,335
M05-Aug	12,308	6	218	156	102	12,790
M06-Sep	12,059	3	320	32	32	12,446
M07-Oct	12,507	2	294	56	20	12,879
M08-Nov	11,886	0	363	82	28	12,359
M09-Dec	11,096	1	297	47	13	11,454
M10-Jan	11,742	0	294	46	6	12,088
M11-Feb	10,818	0	243	44	6	11,111
M12-Mar	12,627	0	315	54	12	13,008
Actual Total	142,131	182	3,080	774	495	146,924

2014-15	Diamond	Green Transport	Johnsons	Stagecoach	Fleet	All
M01-Apr	10,736	0	327	0	2	11,065
M02-May	11,106	0	267	110	6	11,489
M03-Jun	11,189	0	298	77	7	11,571
M04-Jul	11,932	0	344	153	15	12,444
M05-Aug	9,690	0	88	164	5	9,947
M06-Sep	9,196	47	129	94	0	9,466
Actual Total	63,849	47	1,126	598	33	65,653
Current Projection	127,698	94	2,252	1,196	79	131,319

2) How much does Redditch Borough Council pay the bus company to subsidise concessionary travel?

The council has a budget set aside of £86,000 and has negotiated a fixed sum payment with each of the bus operators with registered services operating within the Borough. For commercial reasons the individual payments are not disclosed.

3) How is the financial contribution from the Council to support concessionary travel calculated?

The calculation was based on figures supplied by Worcestershire County Council, those figures were based on take up of the pre 09:30 concession that was available until 2011 prior to the transfer of responsibility for concessionary travel from the District Councils to Worcestershire County Council. The pre 09:30 journeys comprise 7.8% of all concessionary journeys originating on the routes on which the Scheme operates and is in line with the advice received from the County Council.

4) Do the bus company have plans to introduce more accurate automated ticket machines (to allow more accuracy around the number of users)?

The major bus companies have all installed SMART Ticket machines, capable of reading the passes, the County Council has a scheme to provide similar equipment to smaller bus companies.

To date Diamond, Stagecoach, Johnson's and Green Bus have the machines and the remaining operator (Fleet) will be equipped this financial year.

5) How are eligible users informed about the service?

When residents receive a pass or replace a pass, they receive a leaflet provided by the County Council that includes details of the Redditch Scheme. In addition at the start of the scheme there was press coverage in the local papers.

The effectiveness of this can be demonstrated in the high passenger numbers.

6) Why do retired people need to travel before 9.30am?

Generally residents use their pass access a wide range of services/facilities at times to suit their needs. This includes medical facilities before 09:30. In addition the Scheme also includes disabled residents who may be travelling to activities or to education as free home to 'school' travel is not available to residents over 16 years of age.

An example of one such group are Disabled residents with Learning Difficulties, such as those accessing the 'Where Next' facility in Wellesbourne Close off Easemore Road.

However, with the age for eligibility for a pass rising nationally, there are far fewer residents using their pass for access to work