

# **Findings from the Consultation on Proposed Changes to Transport**

- Discretionary Concessionary Travel Provision

**April 2012**

Jo Miller  
Research & Insight Team Leader

Tel 0116 3057341  
Email [jo.miller@leics.gov.uk](mailto:jo.miller@leics.gov.uk)

Research & Information Team  
Community Planning Branch  
Leicestershire County Council  
County Hall, Glenfield  
LE3 8RA

Danny Plumb  
Research & Insight Officer

Tel 0116 3055509  
Email [daniel.plumb@leics.gov.uk](mailto:daniel.plumb@leics.gov.uk)

Produced by the Research and Insight Team at Leicestershire County Council.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the data contained in this report, the County Council can accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions.

## Contents

	Page No.
Introduction	1
Background	1
Methodology	1
Report Overview	2
Headline Findings	2
Detailed Findings	3
Respondent profile	7
Appendix	10

## Introduction

This report sets out the findings from the consultation on proposed changes to Leicestershire County Council's transport policy which took place between 25th January and 2nd April 2012.

The aim of this report is to understand the different opinions on Leicestershire County Council's proposals on discretionary concessionary travel provision.

The consultation also covered proposals for changes to transport policy relating to transport to academies, post 16 education and voluntary aided schools. However, the analysis of these results are covered in a separate report.

## Background

Leicestershire County Council is facing a number of challenges. The funding from national Government is reducing. At the same time demand for services, such as care for older people and waste disposal, is expected to go up. In addition the impact of schools

locally moving to academy status and coming out of council control means that the Government will transfer funding from the council's budget to support the new academies. Therefore, there is the additional implication of losing further significant funding.

The resulting impact is that the County Council has to save more. The Council's financial plan has been rolled forward a year and now includes a total of £74 million in savings for the next four years. This is on top of the £24 million that was achieved during 2011/12.

## Methodology

The questionnaire (see Appendix) was made available on the County Council's website and hard copies were available on request. Printed copies of the survey were also sent out with the renewal letters to existing travel vouchers holders.

Awareness of the consultation was raised through: a series of press releases which generated coverage in the local media; through the council's twitter feed; a banner which ran on the internet home page at periods throughout the consultation; to schools via the Electronic Information System; through the county council staff intranet; through the council's Members' Information Service; and to people with learning disabilities via the Adults & Communities Department locality groups/meetings.

In addition, the following representative groups were contacted and invited to participate in the survey: VISTA, Action Deafness, Age UK, MENCAP, MIND, LAMP, Leicestershire Centre for Integrated Living, NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland, Voluntary Action LeicesterShire, and transport organisations currently offering concessionary travel.

## Report Overview

This short report provides a headline summary of the findings from the consultation on the proposals for the discretionary concessionary transport provision.

The report also identifies the views of different demographic groups and which people are more likely to be concerned about specific policy proposals.

In order to identify difference by different groups of respondents each of the demographic questions in the 'About You' section were cross-tabulated against all the questions in sections 1-3 of the consultation. Statistical tests<sup>1</sup> were calculated to identify significant differences. Where significant relationships are found they are explored.

Findings of importance or 'statistical significance' are reported as either being 'likely' or 'very likely'. The difference between 'likely' and 'very likely' depends on how far the number (i.e. the result to the question) is from its *predicted* value. The predicted value is determined by the statistical tests. If the number is above a certain statistical threshold (*more than expected*) then we can claim the difference is statistically more 'likely'. If the number (i.e. the result to the question) is very much higher *than expected* then we can be even more certain (statistically) by saying that the true difference is 'very likely'.

Tag Clouds<sup>2</sup> are also provided to show the frequency of words captured in the open-ended questions. A short summary follows each tag cloud highlighting the context in which the words were used by respondents.

<sup>1</sup> Standardized residuals were calculated as a test of significance along with Chi Square.

<sup>2</sup> Tag Clouds show the most commonly reported words.

## Headline Findings

Whilst the online survey was open to the general public, printed surveys were also distributed to known users of concessionary travel to seek their opinions on the proposed changes.

In total, 2,452 responses were received to the 'Consultation on Proposed Changes to Transport' survey. Of this, 1,543 responses were received from the printed survey (invitation only) and 909 responses were received via the online version (open to the general public). 72% of respondents (who answered the question on travel passes/ vouchers) have a concessionary travel pass or use concessionary travel vouchers. Of these, the breakdown is as follows:

- 74% use vouchers (1,219)
- 19% use the travel pass for older people (311)
- 7% use the travel pass for disabled people (116)

The large proportion of responses from voucher holders reflects the fact that the printed survey was sent out to this stakeholder group with their renewal letters, therefore eliciting a significant response rate from voucher holders as compared to other travel pass recipients, who were not directly sent a hard copy of the survey.

### In summary:

- 63% disagreed<sup>3</sup> that half fare on community transport should be withdrawn (39% 'Strongly Disagreed').
- 82% disagreed with the withdrawal of vouchers for disabled people who cannot use conventional bus services and for older people who live over 800 meters from a bus-stop (59% 'Strongly Disagreed').
- 63% disagreed with the withdrawal of free travel for disabled people before 9.30am (40% 'Strongly Disagreed').

<sup>3</sup> The convention used when expressing significant findings is as follows. 'Agree' refers to a value on the rating scale in the survey where as *agreed* is used as a collective term for those that either 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree'. This convention is used consistently throughout the report.

- 51% disagreed with the withdrawal of free travel for older people and for disabled people after 11pm Mondays to Fridays. Conversely 30% agreed with the proposal.

The findings show that, although there are discretionary elements of the concessionary travel provision which the authority can choose not to provide, the clear majority of respondents value the concessions and do not want to see them withdrawn.

An overview of results by user type is shown below:

	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neither (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Don't Know (%)
Withdrawal of half fare on community transport	4.8	8.4	14.6	24.1	39.0	9.1
Withdrawal of vouchers for disabled and older people who live 800 metres plus from bus service	2.9	2.8	8.1	22.8	59.3	4.2
Withdrawal of free travel for disabled people before 9.30 am Mondays to Fridays	6.6	12.3	11.0	23.0	40.4	6.6
Withdrawal of free travel for older and disabled people after 11pm Mondays to Fri-	10.0	19.9	12.7	17.8	33.7	5.8

Note: For the sake of clarity some statements have been shortened.

## Detailed Findings

The following sections report the overall summary findings and highlight any significant differences by demographic group. Only where statistical significance was found by different demographic group is it reported.

## Discretionary Concessionary Travel Provision

This section of the consultation sought responses to the following statements using this prompt:

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following extra elements of the Leicestershire concessionary travel scheme should be withdrawn?**

1. Withdrawal of half fare on community transport (2,147 responses)
2. Withdrawal of vouchers for disabled people who cannot use conventional bus services and for older people who live over 800 metres from an hourly bus (2,194 responses)
3. Withdrawal of free travel for disabled people before 9.30am Mondays to Fridays (2,154 responses)
4. Withdrawal of free travel for older people and disabled people after 11pm Mondays to Fridays (2,165 responses)

### Statement 1: Withdrawal of half fare on community transport

Headlines:

- Three fifths of respondents disagreed with the proposals (63.1%)
- Just under 15% agreed with the proposals (13.2%)
- Roughly one in six 'Neither agreed nor disagreed' (14.6%)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
%	4.8	8.4	14.6	24.1	39.0	9.1

Headline findings between those who use discretionary concessionary travel transport against those who don't:

- Those who use discretionary concessionary travel were more **likely** than expected to say ‘Don’t know’ (11%) than those who do use it

Headline findings between discretionary concessionary travel user type:

- Users of ‘Concessionary travel vouchers’ were more **likely** than expected to say ‘Don’t Know’ (12.7%)
- Users of ‘Concessionary travel vouchers’ were more **likely** than expected to say ‘Neither agree nor disagree’ (16.9%)
- Users of ‘Concessionary travel passes for older people’ were **very likely** (more than expected) to say ‘Strongly Disagree’ (57.7%)

Other demographic differences:

**Strongly Agree ...**

- Males were more **likely** than expected to say this (7.0%).
- Those aged under 39 were more **likely** than expected to say this (9.6%).

**Agree ...**

- Owners of two cars or vans were more **likely** than expected to say this (13.3%)

**Strongly Disagree ...**

- Those of Roman Catholic religion were more **likely** than expected to say this (46.3%).

**Don’t Know ...**

- Those aged over 60 were more **likely** than expected to say this (11.2%).
- Those with a long standing illness, disability or infirmity were more **likely** than expected to say this (11.1%).

**Statement 2: Withdrawal of vouchers for disabled people who cannot use conventional bus services and for older people who live over 800 metres from an hourly bus.**

Headlines:

- Three quarters disagreed with the proposals (82.1%)
- One in twenty agreed (5.7%)
- Almost one in ten ‘Neither agreed nor disagreed’ (8.1%)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
%	2.9	2.8	8.1	22.8	59.3	4.2

Headline findings between those who use discretionary concessionary travel transport against those who don’t:

- Those who do not use discretionary concessionary travel were more **likely** than expected to say ‘Agree’ (31%) than those who do use it

Headline findings between discretionary concessionary travel user type:

- Users of ‘Concessionary travel passes for disabled people’ were more **likely** than expected to say ‘Neither agree nor disagree’ (14.8%)
- Users of ‘Concessionary travel passes for older people’ were more **likely** than expected to say ‘Disagree’ (27%)
- Users of ‘Concessionary travel passes for older people’ were more **likely** than expected to say ‘Don’t Know’ (35.8%)

Other demographic differences:

**Agree ...**

- Those aged under 39 were **very likely** (more than expected) to say this (8.7%).
- Those aged 40-60 were more **likely** than expected to say this (5.6%).
- Those of no religion were more **likely** than expected to say this (7%).
- Owners of two cars or vans were more **likely** than expected to say this (4.3%)

**Neither Agree nor Disagree ...**

- Those aged under 39 were more **likely** than expected to say this (13.8%).

**Strongly Disagree ...**

- Those with a long standing illness, disability or infirmity were more **likely** than expected to say this (66.4%).

**Statement 3: Withdrawal of free travel for disabled people before 9.30 am Mondays to Fridays.**

Headlines:

- Almost three quarters of respondents disagreed (63.4%)
- One in five agreed (18.9%)
- One in ten 'Neither agreed nor disagreed' (11%)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
%	6.6	12.3	11.0	23.0	40.4	6.6

Headline findings between those who use discretionary concessionary travel transport against those who don't:

- No significance found

Headline findings between discretionary concessionary travel user type:

- Users of 'Concessionary travel passes for older people' were more **likely** than expected to say 'Agree' (18.9%)
- Users of 'Concessionary travel passes for disabled people' were more **likely** than expected to say 'Strongly Disagree' (55%)

Other demographic differences:

**Strongly Disagree ...**

- Those aged under 39 were more **likely** than expected to say this (53.6%).

**Don't Know ...**

- Those aged over 60 were more **likely** than expected to say this (8%).
- Owners of no cars or vans were more **likely** than expected to say this (8.5%).

**Statement 4: Withdrawal of free travel for older people and for disabled people after 11 pm Mondays to Fridays.**

Headlines:

- Just over half of respondents disagreed (51.5%)
- Close to a third agreed with the proposals (29.9%)
- Just over one in ten 'Neither agreed nor disagreed'(12.7%)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
%	10	19.9	12.7	17.8	33.7	5.8

Headline findings between those who use discretionary concessionary travel transport against those who don't:

- Those who do not use discretionary concessionary travel were more **likely** than expected to say 'Strongly Disagree' (39%) than those who do use it

Headline findings between discretionary concessionary travel user type:

- Users of 'Concessionary travel passes for older people' were more **likely** than expected to say 'Agree' (31.5%)

Other demographic differences:

**Disagree ...**

- Those aged 40-60 were more **likely** than expected to say this (39%).

**Strongly Disagree ...**

- Those of no religion were more **likely** than expected to say this (41.9%).
- Those of Roman Catholic religion were more **likely** than expected to say this (42.4%).

**Open ended question: Please use the space below to let us know any other comments on our proposed policy for the provision of transport to academies**

576 responses were received to the above question. A 'tag cloud' showing the top 30 words is shown below:



(Words removed from data when generating tag cloud: 'discretionary', 'concessionary', 'travel', 'provision')

The following key points, expressed from a perspective of someone responding to the survey, intend to provide an overview of the breadth of comments received. The objective is to provide an indication of each 'theme' of comment as opposed to the number of people who expressed it.



A summary review of the comments reveals the following key points.

### **Comments on the policy in general**

- Concessions on community transport are vital to maintaining independence and some quality of life for those people who cannot use public transport (due to disability, frailness, etc) and/or because there is no available bus route.
- The concessionary travel provision for non-disabled, elderly people is too generous in today's economic situation. Halving the cost rather than providing free travel would be more appropriate.

### **Comments on the detail of the policy**

- The vouchers are invaluable as they are used on taxis as wheelchair users are unable to get to bus stops.
- Concessionary travel is a financial necessity for many older people living in rural areas where there are no bus routes.
- The value of concessionary travel vouchers should be looked into. £33 per year does not cover taxi fares.
- Someone using a free bus pass can spend far more on travel than the allocation of £33 per year. As this is the only means that some people have for getting out and about it seems rather unfair to take it away.
- You have omitted two relevant questions which should be taken into consideration 1. Do you live on your own? (This can make a big difference to the person completing the form as they may have less need for concessionary travel). 2. Do you have family living close by? (Family can make a big difference in terms of assisting someone's mobility).

### **Comments on the consequences of the policy**

- Whilst the need to save money in the present circumstances is understandable, removing concessionary travel will make

people prisoners in their own homes.

- The proposals are unfair to someone who lives miles from the nearest bus route and is also disabled so unable to walk to the bus stop. A bus pass would be no use whatsoever to them.

### **Suggestions regarding the policy**

- I think we should get more vouchers and/or a greater entitlement, not have them withdrawn.
- Some taxi firms abuse the vouchers and many will not take them.
- Concessionary travel should be means tested.

### **Respondent profile**

The demographic profile of respondents (see following tables) shows that there is an over representation of responses (using comparable data where available) from county residents who are:

- Female
- Those aged over 60
- Those of White ethnic background

Further, there is a under-representation from county residents who are:

- Males
- Those aged under 40
- Those of Asian or Asian British ethnic background

To test for representativeness, a breakdown of the respondents to the survey follows. Each table reviews the demographic profile

of respondents against that of the latest information (where available).

Note: The profile of those who responded to the discretionary concessionary transport consultation is different to the profile of respondents to the consultation on transport to academies, post 16 education, and voluntary aided school, because of the additional postal surveys that was sent out to concessionary travel voucher holders.

### Gender

	Mid-2010 population estimates (%)	Transport Consultation (%)
Male	48.9	33
Female	51.1	67

### Age

Age band	Mid-2010 population estimates (%)	Transport Consultation (%)
Less than 40 years old	30.9	7.0
40-59	37.1	24.7
Over 60	32.1	68.3

### Do you currently have/use concessionary travel provision?

	Transport Consultation (%)
Yes	71.7
No	28.3

### Which type of concessionary travel do you have?

	Transport Consultation (%)
Concessionary travel pass for older people	18.9
Concessionary travel pass for disabled people	7.0
Concessionary travel vouchers	74.1

### Long standing illness, disability or infirmity

	2001 Census (%)	Transport Consultation (%)
Yes	15.5	57.8
No	84.5	42.2

### Ethnicity

	Mid-2009 estimates (%)	Transport Consultation (%)
White	90.6	97.4
Mixed	1.3	0.3
Asian	5.8	1.3
Black	1.0	0.3
Other	1.2	0.7

## Religion

	2001 Census (%)	Transport Consultation (%)
No religion	16.3	10.9
Christian (no denomination)	79.3	19.7
Christian (other denomination)	n/a	7.9
Roman Catholic	n/a	16.0
Church of England/Anglican	n/a	42.9
Buddhist	0.2	0.2
Hindu	2.2	0.2
Jewish	0.1	0.6
Muslim	0.9	0.0
Sikh	0.9	0.2
Any other religion or belief	0.2	1.5

## Number of cars or vans in household

Number of cars or vans in household	2001 Census (%)	Transport Consultation (%)
None	16.8	34.4
One	43.6	42.6
Two or more	39.54	23

## Sexual orientation

	Transport Consultation (%)
Bisexual	1.4
Gay	0.6
Heterosexual / Straight	94.3
Other	0.2
Lesbian	3.6

## Leicestershire County Council Employee

	Transport Consultation (%)
Yes	5.9
No	94.1

## Geography

District	Mid-2010 estimates (%)	Transport Consultation (%)
Blaby	14.5	10.6
Charnwood	25.7	20.2
Harborough	12.9	20.7
Hinckley and Bosworth	16.2	13.9
Melton	7.6	10.1
North West Leicestershire	14	18.3
Oadby and Wigston	9	6.1

# Appendix

## Consultation on Proposed Changes to Transport

### Budget pressures

Leicestershire County Council is facing a number of challenges. The funding we receive from national Government is reducing. At the same time demand for services, such as care for older people and waste disposal, is expected to go up.

We also have to deal with the impact of schools locally moving to academy status and coming out of council control. Because the Government will transfer funding from the council's budget to support the new academies, we have to deal with the implications of losing significant funding.

All of this means we have to save more. Our financial plan has been rolled forward a year and now includes a total of £74 million in savings for the next four years. This is on top of the £24 million that we already achieved during 2011/12.

We are now looking at how we can achieve additional savings. In making decisions, we must target our resources at those with the greatest need.

### Your views

Last year we carried out extensive consultation on our four year financial plan. Our budget plans for this year reflect what residents told us, and have been amended to take into account extra budget pressures that have arisen over the last 12 months.

We are now asking for your views about the detail of the council's proposals to make changes to the provision of transport.

If you have any questions about this consultation or if you require the information contained in this questionnaire in an alternative version such as large print, Braille or help in understanding it in your language please contact: 0116 305 0001 or email: [stg@leics.gov.uk](mailto:stg@leics.gov.uk)

### Discretionary concessionary travel provision

The national concessionary travel scheme entitles both older residents and disabled residents to free travel on local bus services between 9.30am and 11.00pm Monday to Friday and at any time at weekends and bank holidays.

The council in addition to this scheme in England provide a number of additional concessions. The council is considering the withdrawal of these extra elements of the Leicestershire concessionary travel scheme, which cost us £270,000 per year.

Around 120,000 residents hold an older person's bus pass, and a further 8,500 hold a disabled person's bus pass.

**Q1 Do you currently have a concessionary travel pass or use concessionary travel vouchers?** Please tick one box only

Yes .....

No .....

**If yes, which type of concession do you have?** Please tick one box only

Concessionary travel pass for older people .....

Concessionary travel pass for disabled people .....

Concessionary travel vouchers.....

**Q2 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following extra elements of the Leicestershire concessionary travel scheme should be withdrawn?** (The amount currently being spent is shown in brackets against each service listed). Please tick one box per row only

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
a. Withdrawal of half fare on community transport (£155,000)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Withdrawal of vouchers for disabled people who cannot use conventional bus services and for older people who live over 800 metres from an hourly bus (£85,000)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Withdrawal of free travel for disabled people before 9.30 am Mondays to Fridays (£20,000)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Withdrawal of free travel for older people and for disabled people after 11 pm Mondays to Fridays (£10,000)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q3 Please use the space below to let us know any other comments about our proposals for discretionary concessionary travel provision**

**About You**

Leicestershire County Council is committed to ensuring that its services, policies and practices are free from discrimination and prejudice and that they meet the needs of all sections of the community.

We would be grateful if you would answer the questions below. You are under no obligation to provide the information requested, but it would help us greatly if you did. Information will be used to inform service development to ensure that what we are providing is fair and effective.

**Q4 Are you male or female?** Please tick one box only

Male .....  Female .....

**Q5 What was your age on your last birthday?** Please write in box below

**Q6 Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity?** Please tick one box only

Yes .....  No .....

**Q7 What is your ethnic group?** Please tick one box only

White .....  Black or Black British .....   
 Mixed .....  Other ethnic group .....   
 Asian or Asian British .....

**Q8 What is your religion or belief?** Please tick one box only

No religion .....  Hindu .....   
 Christian (no denomination) .....  Jewish .....   
 Roman Catholic .....  Muslim .....   
 Church of England/Anglican .....  Sikh .....   
 Christian (other denomination) .....  Any other religion or belief .....   
 Buddhist .....

**Q9 Sexual Orientation.** Many people face discrimination because of their sexual orientation and for this reason we have decided to ask this monitoring question. You do not have to answer it but we would be grateful if you could tick the box next to the category which describes your sexual orientation: Please tick one box only

Bisexual .....  Lesbian .....   
 Gay .....  Other .....   
 Heterosexual / Straight .....

**Q10 In total, how many cars or vans are owned or available for use by members of your household?** Please tick one box only

None .....  Three .....   
 One .....  Four or more .....   
 Two .....  Don't know .....

**Q11 What is your postcode?** Please write in the box below

**Q12 Are you an employee of Leicestershire County Council?** Please tick one box only

Yes .....  No .....

**Thank you for your time.**

**Please return your completed questionnaire in an envelope by 2nd April 2012 to:**  
 Transport Consultation, Leicestershire County Council, Have Your Say, FREEPOST NAT18685,  
 Leicester, LE3 8XT.

**Please note that you do not need to add a stamp**

**Data Protection:** Personal data supplied on this form will be held on computer and will be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for statistical analysis, management, planning and the provision of services by the County Council and its partners, Leicestershire County Council will not share any personal information collected as part of this survey with its partners. The information will be held in accordance with the Council's records management and retention policy.