

## Cabinet Member Delegated Decision Form

1. Decision Title: Changes to the Your Staffordshire Card Scheme (YSC) – scheme to end on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019

2. Decision Date: 03/06/2019

3. Decision Summary:

Cabinet approved the ending of the YSC scheme at their meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018, subject to an appropriate engagement exercise being undertaken.

Following the engagement exercise this decision is to confirm that the YSC scheme will end on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019, and notice will now be served on local bus operators.

4. Member Delegated Function:

Select appropriate delegated function below:

General Delegation to Cabinet Member – Section 6 of the Constitution:

Specific Delegation to Cabinet member (Complete No.5):

5. Specific Delegation to Cabinet Member:

At the Cabinet meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018 cabinet gave approval to communicate proposed changes to the YSC scheme to key stakeholders and conduct a public engagement exercise.

This decision takes in to consideration comments received through this process.

6. If decision is exempt, please tick the relevant paragraph number:

1		2		3		4		5	
6		7		8		9		10	

7. **Options Considered:**

**Background:**

The Your Staffordshire Card scheme is a discretionary concessionary travel scheme, not a statutory requirement. The YSC scheme was introduced in 2011 to provide an attractive and affordable way for young people living in Staffordshire to travel on the local bus network.

Patronage peaked in 2014/15 when more than 2.2 million bus journeys were made by young people using the YSC scheme. Since 2015 there has been a

significant reduction in the number of journeys made by YSC cardholders, and a steady decline in the number of cardholders (see table 1 below).

Last year, 2018/19, less than 700,000 journeys were made using the YSC scheme. There are likely to be a number of reasons for the decline in patronage, including an increase in alternative commercial ticketing offers from local bus operators.

Table 1: Cardholder and Journey numbers by year

Year	Cardholders	Journeys
2013/14	37,203	2,302,113
2014/15	35,776	2,375,069
2015/16	31,051	1,870,684
2016/17	24,134	1,444,754
2017/18	17,923	1,000,564
2018/19	10,851	696,866

### **Public and stakeholder Engagement Exercise –**

Following cabinet approval on 19 September 2019 a 9 week public and stakeholder engagement exercise was undertaken. This commenced on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018. All comments and feedback received during the engagement exercise have been reviewed, summarised, captured within the Community Impact Assessment and considered as part of this decision-making process.

The Community Impact Assessment is attached in appendix 1 and a summary of feedback and comments received during the engagement exercise can be found in appendix 2.

The engagement exercise included emailing cardholders directly, emailing schools and colleges, notices and changes to website pages, posters in libraries, on buses, and schools and colleges, press releases and communications to County Councillors and MPs.

A summary of the public and stakeholder engagement and communication undertaken during the engagement exercise is attached in appendix 3. The number of responses was very low, only 31 individual responses were received between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

The majority of responses received related to concerns over affordability of travel in the absence of the scheme –

- 90% of respondents stated that the increase cost in bus fare would not be affordable and could increase hardship.
- 32% of respondents said that the price increase would affect their ability to access education.
- 6% of respondents raised concerns over the lack of regular bus services and increased isolation.

Local bus operators have been fully engaged during the engagement period and anonymised feedback from stakeholders has been shared with them.

#### **Further engagement –**

In March this year, members of the Youth Parliament (YP) and Youth Union (YU) for Staffordshire met with Cllr Helen Fisher and Cllr Mark Sutton to discuss the concerns that the young people they represent have regarding the proposed change.

The feedback they had received was localised and related in the main to those travelling out of county in to the West Midlands.

Members of the YP and YU have agreed work with officers to identify particular routes and services that may be problematic for young people so that this information can be shared directly with the relevant local bus operator.

#### **Impact –**

When the YSC scheme ends on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019, young people travelling on the local bus network in Staffordshire will be required to pay a commercial fare set by the local operator.

Local bus operators already offer a wide range of competitively priced ticketing options to suit young people's travel needs, some of which work out better value than paying the YSC fare. Local bus operators are fully engaged and have responded to feedback received through the engagement process. One operator has reviewed and amended their fare structure to the benefit of young people in the area, following feedback from the community.

This change should have no direct impact on the level of bus services available.

#### **Recommendation -**

Having reviewed the comments and feedback received during the engagement exercise, along with the Community Impact Assessment and discussion with YP YU, the YSC scheme will end on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019.

Officers will continue to work closely with local bus operators, sharing insight from young people and encouraging operators to have dialogue with those most affected. Affordability of travel for young people will be discussed at the next meeting of the Staffordshire Bus Operators Forum (SBOF) on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

#### **8. Consultation Process (mandatory for Cabinet Member Delegated Decisions):**

An 9 week engagement process was undertaken between 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 and the 30 November 2018.

Detailed discussions have taken place with the Cabinet Support Member (Cllr

Helen Fisher) as well as the Director for the Environment, Infrastructure and Skills (Darryl Eyers).

9. Electoral Divisions Affected:

This decision impacts on all YSC passholders in Staffordshire therefore it is highly likely that all electoral divisions will be affected.

10. Name of Cabinet Member Making Decision:

Cllr Helen Fisher – Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

11. Community Impact Assessment:

**Key Issues:**

A full Community Impact Assessment was prepared to inform this decision. The paper can be found in appendix 1.

The majority of concerns relate to the affordability of travel in the absence of the scheme.

**Resource and VFM Analysis:**

The MTFs proposals state a saving of £50k will be achieved from these proposed changes.

**Risk Analysis:**

It is recognised that travel patterns and decisions made by individuals are complex and variable and following the ending of the scheme, young people will have to decide whether to continue travelling by bus or consider alternative forms of transport.

It is noted that it will not be possible to mitigate the financial impact of these changes for all, however as stated we intend to continue to work closely with commercial bus operators and encourage them to offer attractive commercial products for young people.

**Legal Analysis:**

The YSC is not a statutory requirement, it is a discretionary concessionary travel scheme. There is no legal obligation on the local authority to operate such a scheme.

12. Implementation:

Any implementation action required?	Yes		No	
-------------------------------------	-----	--	----	--

To be implemented by:		
Implementation status:	Work to commence on	dd/mm/yyyy
	Work in progress	dd/mm/yyyy
	Work completed on date below	dd/mm/yyyy

13. Report Author's name and contact details

Louise Clayton – Connectivity Support and Interim Connectivity Operations Manager

Tel No 07855 336910

Email: louise.clayton@staffordshire.gov.uk

Clive Thomson – Commissioner for Connected and Sustainable County

Tel No 01785 276522

Email: clive.thomson@staffordshire.gov.uk

14. Decision Uploaded By:

[This is the Business Support Manager responsible for uploading the details to modern.gov.](#)

Uploaded by (BSM):	Vicki Sandells
Date uploaded:	05/06/19