

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure

DATE 27th October
2009

CORPORATE DIRECTOR Gordon McIntosh

TITLE OF REPORT Review of Aberdeen City Council Youth Travel Card for public transport

REPORT NUMBER EP&I/09/109

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise Members on the uptake of the Youth Travel Card scheme for bus travel and to review its provision.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee, instructs the Corporate Director for Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure to:

- a) To cease the provision of the Youth Travel Card bus scheme from the 1st January 2010.
- b) To write to current cardholders to advise on the alternative national scheme.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is a current budget provision of £8,000 for the 2009/2010 financial year. Ceasing operation of the scheme from 1st January 2010 is likely to deliver a saving of £7,000 in this financial year.

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

A key aim of the Community Plan is to ensure that all citizens have access to a range of transport options that reflect differing needs of age, gender, disability and income. The Single Outcome Agreement also sets a priority of improving sustainable transport options for the City.

The Vibrant, Dynamic & Forward Looking document sets out a commitment to work to improve public transport in and to our city and the introduction of appropriate bus priority measures

Although no longer providing this scheme could be considered as contrary to the these policies, there is a national scheme which is funded by the Scottish Government that provides a similar, albeit lower, discount.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The staffing implications are negligible as the work requirement to operate the scheme equates to around 1 or 2 hours per month.

The Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment has identified that 16-18 year olds in full time education (but not attending college or university) may be negatively affected.

6. REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND

Aberdeen City Council introduced the Youth Travel Card scheme in 2004; this was the first of its kind in Scotland. The Scottish Government introduced a Young Persons Travel Scheme in 2007. The Council scheme was introduced as a result of the Partnership for Aberdeen commitments in 2003.

School children aged 16-18 were surveyed as to their aspirations for such a scheme and it was highlighted that there was a preference for cheaper day travel tickets. The objective of the scheme was to address the imbalance for 16-18 year old in full time school education who pay adult fares on public transport, when 16-18 year olds in College or University education are eligible for commercial discounts provided by the bus operators.

Since the introduction of the scheme, First Aberdeen, the bus operator Youth Travel Cards are mainly used on, have changed their fare structure considerably. School children have indicated that the discounted day tickets on offer do not necessarily provide a benefit anymore and that we should offer discounted season tickets as bus operators currently do for students at College or University.

2.0 YOUTH TRAVEL SCHEMES

The Aberdeen City Council Youth Travel Card scheme offers persons aged 16 to 18 (inclusive) and who are in attendance at a school within Aberdeen City, day tickets at the child fare whereas without the card they would be required to pay the full adult fare. This applies to travel on any public bus service operating in Aberdeen.

The Scottish Government Travel Scheme for Young People offers persons aged 16 to 18 (inclusive) and young full time volunteers aged 19 to 25 (inclusive) one third off an adult single fare on a public bus services within Scotland.

The uptake of the Aberdeen City Council Youth Travel Card scheme has continually been low at around 40 to 150 people. Publicity for the scheme is distributed widespread throughout all secondary schools in Aberdeen City, leisure centres, transport centres and a number of other community venues.

The budget for the scheme in the 2009/2010 financial year is £8,000. The average spend each year is in the region of £3,000.

The Scottish Government Scheme does arguably provide the same benefit of discounting travel for those aged 16 to 18 but with a lower discount.

A peak rate day ticket purchased with a Youth Travel Card on the First Aberdeen network Monday to Friday for a month equates to £54.00 and an Adult monthly ticket is £58.00 whilst there is a saving of £4 per month, it does not allow for travel at the weekends – where the applicant would be financially better off to purchase the full price adult season ticket.

Offering discounts for the season tickets (e.g. weekly, monthly and three monthly) would not be financially viable within existing budgets. It is estimated that the cost to the Council would be in excess of £200,000 for current eligible bus users.

The following tables demonstrate the fare structures which are in place for students; persons aged 16 to 18 with and without a Youth Travel Card and the comparative cost for two single journeys using a Scottish Government Travel Card.

Fig. 1 First Aberdeen

	Adult Day Ticket (16-18 year olds in education with no Travel Card))	Student Day Ticket (College/ University)	Youth Travel Card Day Ticket (Child Day Ticket)	Scottish Government Scheme – 2 single journeys (1-2 stages)	Scottish Government Scheme – 2 single journeys (3-5 stages)	Scottish Government Scheme – 2 single journeys (6+ stages)
Peak	£3.90	£2.60	£2.70	£0.94	£2.00	£2.68
Off Peak	£3.00	£2.60	£2.00	£0.94	£2.00	£2.68

Fig. 2 Stagecoach Bluebird

	Adult Dayrider (16-18 year olds in education with no Travel Card))	Youth Travel Card Dayrider (Child Day Ticket)	Scottish Government Scheme – 2 single journeys (stage 1)	Scottish Government Scheme – 2 single journeys (stage 2)	Scottish Government Scheme – 2 single journeys (stage 3)
All Day	£2.80	£1.40	£0.94	£1.68	£2.28

As the above tables demonstrate the Youth Travel Card Scheme does provide a discount on day travel for card holders.

The National Scheme for two peak time journeys is 2p cheaper than the Council's Youth Travel Card scheme, however the Council's ticket does allow for unlimited travel with the day ticket.

The National Scheme for two off peak journeys (which is not common for 16-18 year olds attending school other than at weekends or during holidays or study leave) is 68p more expensive than the current Council's scheme.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS