



### Update Report on Travel Card Unit Activities

**Committee** Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme Joint Committee

**Date of meeting** 4 November 2016

**Date of report** 19 October 2016

#### Report by Treasurer/Secretary

##### 1. Object of report

To update the Joint Committee on the current workload priorities and performance of the SPT Travel Card Unit (TCU) which is responsible for the issue of National Entitlement Cards on behalf of the Joint Committee.

##### 2. Background

There are currently 547,942 National Entitlement Cards (NEC) held by residents of the 12 local authorities within the Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme (SCTS) area. This accounts for 42% of all concessionary cards in Scotland. Detailed figures can be found in the Appendix A. As members will be aware access to the local concession scheme is demonstrated by holding a NEC from one of the 12 councils in the Scheme area.

These NECs provide access to both the National Concessionary free-bus Travel (NCT) Scheme and the SCTS. SPT manages the card application (for disability related cards), card renewal and card replacement processes for this group of NEC holders. In addition, SPT provides the call centre service for all NEC holders, other than Young Persons, within the SCTS area.

##### 3. Current position

###### NEC MIGRATION PROJECT

In July 2014 the National Entitlement Card Programme Office (NECPO) decided to implement a revised and upgraded card technology (CDM2). While any card issued after this date was a CDM2 card, there were many previously issued cards in circulation with a forward expiry date of December 2016 and beyond.

The previously issued cards and technology will be inactive after the 1 January 2017, and as a result a mass card replacement strategy was implemented by NECPO. This affected over 210,000 card holders in the Scheme area.

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The work to replace cards has involved a significant project to cleanse the data held, thus ensuring that all old records or invalid records are identified. This ensures that NEC cards are

only issued to those entitled to access the national scheme. This has involved all local authorities, as the data controllers, verifying the records held against other council held systems such as electoral register or council tax. In the event that the card data held does not match other records, a replacement card has not been issued.

At the time of this report, 11 of the 12 local authorities in the Scheme area have now issued the majority of the new style CMD2 cards to affected customers, while the remaining council expects to have completed this by the end of October.

However, there remain a significant number of unmatched records across the Scheme area – an unmatched record can occur for many reasons including the card holder has moved from the Scheme area, is no longer on the electoral roll etc. All councils have a residual batch of as yet unmatched records. The Travel Card Unit is working closely with the individual councils and NECPO to ensure that those entitled to an NEC continue to have a valid card in January 2017, and is seeking the support of the Joint Committee to ensure that all actions are taken by individual councils to maximise the data match exercise, and reduce the potential spike of enquiries to the Travel Card Unit in January and beyond. A meeting for all local authority co-ordinators was hosted in late October 2016 and an update will be available at the meeting on agreed actions.

## OTHER TRAVEL CARD ACTIVITIES

The Travel Card Unit (TCU) operates both as a drop in point for card holders with enquiries (based at Buchanan Bus Station) and a call contact centre. The TCU contact centre digital telephone system and call recording facilities function well. A new software based telephone interface and system were installed in early 2016. Some minor issues were experienced after installation but these have now been resolved with the help of both the SPT Digital Team Service Desk and the system provider Capita. The digital recording facility continues to be used to resolve customer issues and for training purposes and to assist in continually improving the standards of our customer service.

The TCU continues to offer a unique pro-active service, aimed at reducing down-stream renewal-related telephone and written enquiries. This is achieved by prompting disabled cardholders in advance of expiry dates to renew their cards, subject to continuing eligibility. The TCU issues on average 2,700 renewal letters and forms for disabled cardholders each month.

There have been no significant issues with the Card Management System (CMS) since the last report.

Elderly and disabled first time applications must currently be done in person at a local validation point (mainly Post Offices for elderly and mainly Social Work Offices for disabled applications). The NECPO plans to move to offer an additional 'on-line' system for applications and other elements of the scheme (updating photos, order of lost cards etc.). This is to be tested soon and TCU staff will be involved with NECPO and individual councils in these trials. NECPO have advised this should commence early 2017.

## TCU PERFORMANCE

### **Call volumes:**

Call volumes for the year so far P1-7, 2016/17 were 3.2% higher than 2015/16.

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<b>Comparative figures</b>	<b>for P1-7</b>	<b>Full Year</b>
2016/17	48,989	est. 90,000
2015/16	47,470	85,000
2014/15	42,043	80,000
2013/14	43,105	75,000

## **Call handling:**

The P1-7, 2016/17 call-handling rate figure of 98.08% is similar to previous years.

## **Comparative figures for P1-7**

2015/16	98.36%
2014/15	98.42%
2013/14	98.83%
2012/13	98.45%

## **Disabled NEC Applications:**

Disabled NEC first time applications: The P1-7, 2016/17 volume has decreased by 1.6%, with 100% of applications processed within 2 days of receiving a valid application.

<b>Comparative figures</b>	<b>for P1-7</b>	<b>Full Year</b>
2016/17	4,698	N/A
2015/16	4,775	7,783
2014/15	4,053	7,631
2013/14	3,616	6,300

## **Disabled renewal applications:**

The P1-7, 2016/17 volume of NEC renewal applications processed has risen by 5.2% to 15,509 compared to 14,740 in the same periods in 2015/16.

Annual totals are consistent year to year at around 25,000.

## **4. Committee action**

The Committee is recommended to note:

- The current progress of the Travel Card Unit in supporting concession travel and on behalf of the 12 councils in the Scheme area the work being undertaken as part of their card issue; and
- The performance of the TCU in responding to travel card enquiries.

## **5. Consequences**

Policy consequences

*Supporting the move to ensure accessible transport for all.*

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Legal consequences	<i>None directly.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>None directly.</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>None directly.</i>
Equalities consequences	<i>Maintenance of public transport for concession card holders.</i>
Risk consequences	<i>Mitigations to minimise disruption to card holders.</i>

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**Title** **Treasurer/Secretary**

For further information, please contact *Gerry Irvine, Ops & Security Manager (Bus), on 0141 333 3217.*

**NEC Cardholder Volumes: SCTS Area at 10/10/2016**

**APPENDIX A**

Local Authority	Elderly	Disabled	LA Total	% of overall Total	Elderly % (SCTS Area)	Disabled % (SCTS Area)
Argyll & Bute	25,108	2,368	27,476	5%	5%	3%
East Ayrshire	26,817	4,439	31,256	6%	6%	5%
East Dunbartonshire	27,221	2,115	29,336	5%	6%	3%
East Renfrewshire	20,648	1,841	22,489	4%	4%	2%
Glasgow City	96,900	30,017	126,917	23%	21%	36%
Inverclyde	18,104	3,810	21,914	4%	4%	5%
North Ayrshire	33,480	4,963	38,443	7%	7%	6%
North Lanarkshire	62,377	11,059	73,436	13%	13%	13%
Renfrewshire	37,158	5,998	43,156	8%	8%	7%
South Ayrshire	30,321	3,677	33,998	6%	7%	4%
South Lanarkshire	67,102	9,751	76,853	14%	14%	12%
West Dunbartonshire	18,970	3,698	22,668	4%	4%	4%
<b>SCTS Area Totals</b>	<b>464,206</b>	<b>83,736</b>	<b>547,942</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>SCTS Area %</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>100%</b>			

<b>Scotland Totals</b>	<b>1,145,446</b>	<b>166,123</b>	<b>1,311,569</b>
<b>Scotland %</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**APPENDIX B**

**At 10/10/16 :**

**Report from NECPO: Elderly 'CMD3' cards still to be replaced in SPT area after data match 'done'.**

<b><u>Local Authority</u></b>	<b>Elderly CMD3 cards still to be replaced</b>	<b>Of which Cards Used in Previous 12 months</b>
Argyll and Bute	2753	1610
East Ayrshire	1628	1007
East Dunbartonshire	1912	1262
East Renfrewshire	1362	1279
Glasgow City	7069	4531
Inverclyde	2152	1552
North Ayrshire	2731	1930
North Lanarkshire	3555	2267
Renfrewshire	3147	2461
South Ayrshire	852	519
South Lanarkshire	6704	4596
West Dunbartonshire	532	344
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34397</b>	<b>23358</b>