



Concessionary Travel Unit – Update on Performance

Date of meeting 14 March 2025

Date of report 24 February 2025

Report by Treasurer

1. Object of report

To update the Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme Joint Committee on the Concessionary Travel Unit Performance, which includes an update on the Webforms and Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme (SCTS) Ferry Entitlement projects, as well as a review of the current performance position for both call handling and administrative tasks undertaken by the Contact Centre.

2. Background to report

The update at the previous Joint Committee on 20 September 2024 advised that Webforms were part of a wider discussion and that SPT were reviewing suppliers that may be able to provide a suitable solution for the organisation. The Contact Centre prepared a business investment proposal that was presented to the Strategy Group 13 December 2024, where it was agreed to procure a Webforms and Customer Service Hub (CSH) platform from a company called Granicus. The initial contract is for 3 years, with an option to extend this for a further 3 years. Further to this, discussions are still ongoing with regards to the migration of the SCTS Ferry Entitlement to the National Entitlement Card (NEC).

3. Outline of proposals

3.1 Digital Update

The Granicus project, led by the Contact Centre Manager, started at the beginning of January supported by SPT Project Management and Digital resource. The project is governed by weekly progress meetings and a monthly steering group. To date the project team have undergone initial user training supplied by the Granicus team to learn the system, next steps are for the Contact Centre to build Webform flows and create a User Acceptance Testing (UAT) plan. The project team are working to a deadline of June 2025 to implement Webforms via the CSH which will allow SPT more control over the process flows as the Contact Centre team will fill the forms out with customers as they are on the telephone. This will help highlight any amendments required before moving the Webforms to the public domain for customers to self-serve.

Once implemented, webforms will allow for quicker turnaround times for customers as they will be able to self-serve their enquiries and receive contextualised responses to their queries, which will in turn create efficiencies for the Contact Centre. This will allow more time to be spent on more complex queries and result in enhanced reporting of productivity processing times. The Contact Centre will also begin discussions with the Card

Management System (CMS) provider to integrate an Application Programming Interface (API), which will allow automation of replacement card requests, allowing cardholders to self-serve these requests at any time. An update will be given at the next committee.

SPT are still reviewing possible solutions for migrating the SCTS Ferry entitlement to the National Entitlement Card (NEC). Discussions are on-going with the National Entitlement Card Programme Office (NECPO) with regards to the design of the NEC to include Ferry entitlement, and how this process will be implemented to the CMS to allow automation of Ferry entitlement based on eligible postcodes. This will create efficiencies for both the Contact Centre and the cardholder. Once implemented the cardholder will receive their NEC with Ferry entitlement without having to have both cards processed separately.

Further consideration is being given to 2nd homeowners Ferry entitlement within the SCTS, as detailed in the Proposal to Consult on removal of 2nd Homeowner Ferry Cards paper being presented to this committee.

It has been previously reported to the committee that SPT had access to the Social Security Scotland (SSS) Data Sharing Portal (DSP) to allow the Contact Centre to check applicants' disability benefit status in order to process disabled NEC's more quickly. The DSP was updated with the review dates of awards in November 2024, previously this information had been missing which meant the DSP could not be used to its full potential. The Contact Centre are now able to renew and process disabled NEC applications more efficiently, which also has resulted in fewer repeat contacts with cardholders to obtain the required paperwork. This is a positive win for applicants and the Contact Centre team as it allows for a quicker turnaround time for individuals to receive their disabled NEC's.

The Contact Centre continues to provide routes to services for all customers including those with restricted or no access to digital means. Since the last update to the committee, the Concessionary Travel Booth within Buchanan Bus Station has supported 5 clients with their concessionary travel cards. Out of the 5 appointments, 4 were for first time applicants for a disabled NEC, the remaining appointment was to support a cardholder change their Disabled NEC to a Visual Disabled NEC +1. Appointments are for those individuals who require additional support, and in these cases have been clients who have visual impairments or struggle to complete the required forms. Appointments can be made by calling the contact centre and SPT's concessions webpage has guidance on this.

3.2 Admin Processing

- Since the last Committee, the Contact Centre agents have processed 24,516 NECs, 12% of which were first time applications (3,307), 23% were renewals (5,514) and 65% were replacement cards (15,965).
- Since the last Committee, the Contact Centre agents have processed 4,702 postal items and 20,400 emails relating to Concessionary Travel, which include first time applications, renewals and general enquiries.
- Since the last update to the Committee, processing turnaround times for postal enquiries has remained at one to two days and processing timescales for email enquiries average at one to two weeks. The Contact Centre agents will continue to focus on maintaining these turnaround times to promptly resolve cardholder enquiries and thus improve customer experience.
- The Contact Centre agents successfully minimised an expected cyclical backlog situation of admin levels throughout the festive period. This involved close monitoring of admin volumes and focusing a portion of the team each day to process outstanding work.

3.3 Call Handling Performance

- Since the last Committee, the Contact Centre agents have received 20,504 concessionary travel calls, with 93% answered.
- The Contact Centre agents support a range of tasks across both the concessionary travel card unit and the MyBus service. Since the last Committee, the combined total number of inbound and outbound calls was 82,822. This has decreased by 2% from the previous Committee update.

4. Committee action

The Committee is recommended to:

- (i) note the contents of this report;
- (ii) acknowledge the progress made with admin processing turnaround times; and
- (iii) support the progress made with digital enhancements and future initiatives.

5. Consequences

Policy consequences	<i>None directly.</i>
Legal consequences	<i>None directly.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>None directly.</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>None directly.</i>
Equalities consequences	<i>Improved customer experience achieved via efficiency gains and performance improvements</i>
Risk consequences	<i>Mitigations to minimise the risk to card holders.</i>
Climate Change, Adaptation & Carbon consequences	<i>None directly.</i>

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