



Concessionary Travel Unit – Update on Performance

Date of meeting 29 September 2023

Date of report 12 September 2023

Report by Treasurer

1. Object of report

To update the Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme Joint Committee on the Concessionary Travel Unit Performance, which includes the initiation of a Contact Centre Improvement Programme, 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 17 March 2023 detailed that a business improvement (BI) project had commenced with the purpose of reviewing the administrative tasks undertaken by the Contact Centre. The BI project was concluded in April 2023, the report and summary of recommendations were presented to the Strategy Group who endorsed its findings.

This has formed the Contact Centre Improvement Programme (CCIP) supported by a Project Manager and a Steering Group which has a list of initiatives endorsed by the Strategy Group to enhance customer experience, drive process efficiencies and reduce waste, duplication and risk. Work is underway to scope and develop these initiatives to remove complexity from the disabled National Entitlement Card (NEC) application and renewal process. A further update on progress will be reported to the next Joint Committee meeting.

3. Outline of proposals

3.1 Digital Update

Phase Two of the Noble Digital project is still ongoing with the integration of the national Card Management System (CMS) and Application Programme Interface (API) project. Progress has been made and the key stakeholders involved in the project are working collaboratively to deliver a solution that will allow cardholders to self-serve replacement card requests, improving speed of response due to the automation of the process.

The CCIP includes digital solutions previously noted such as webforms and the digitalisation of current paper-based forms to allow ease of access and completion for cardholders.

The Contact Centre continues to provide routes to services for all customers including those with restricted or no access to digital means.

3.2 Admin Processing

The Contact Centre agents are multi-functional, handling calls and admin processing tasks for both Concessionary Travel and the MyBus service. A conscious decision has periodically been taken to prioritise admin processing over call handling performance to ensure the customers core enquiry is resolved quicker. This does mean on occasion that call handling performance will drop to support processing of admin tasks and concentrate resources on dealing with resolving customer requests directly.

- Year to Date (YTD) the Contact Centre have processed 22,009 NECs, 13% of which were first time applications (2,871), 31% were renewals (6,709) and 56% were replacement cards (12,429). Last year, we had processed 23,423 NECs, 14% first time applications (3,333), 36% were renewals (8,340) and 50% were replacement cards (11,750) in the same timeframe.
- Year to Date (YTD) the Contact Centre have processed 7,325 postal items and 23,840 emails relating to Concessionary Travel, which include first time applications, renewals and general enquiries. Last year, we had processed 6,850 postal items and 25,300 emails in the same timeframe.
- During this Financial Year, processing turnaround times for postal enquiries have remained at one to two days and processing timescales for email enquiries average at two weeks. The Contact Centre will continue to focus on maintaining these turnaround times to promptly resolve cardholder enquiries to improve customer experience.
- The Contact Centre has successfully maintained efficient processing times for admin during the last five periods with close monitoring of admin volumes and acting where necessary to redirect resources to avoid exceeding timescales.
- Efficiency gains are still to be expected from CCIP outputs to further reduce processing times and help manage demand.

3.3 Call Handling Performance

- Year to Date (YTD), the Contact Centre have received 26,291 Concessionary travel calls, with 73% answered. At this time last year, we had received 37,747 and answered 81% of these.
- The Contact Centre are multi-functional, supporting both the Concessionary Travel and MyBus service. Since the last Committee the combined total number of inbound and outbound calls is 81,993 calls.
- The reduction of inbound calls received is a positive reflection on the healthy admin position as call volumes are no longer inflated by “chasing progress calls”. Cardholder demand is being met to avoid repeat contact. Due to this call demand is now at 67% pre-COVID levels.

3.4 Contact Centre Resource Review

The Contact Centre recruited an additional two Full Time Employees in March 2023 to improve service delivery and enhance customer experience. However, the intended resource review following the two appointments has been delayed until the end of the calendar year as the Contact Centre seeks to implement a number of initiatives from the CCIP to realise efficiency gains, the progress of which is closely monitored by a Steering Group.

The review has been extended to allow for a longer period of data capture which will provide for more informed analysis of the planned performance improvements.

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 of the CCIP.

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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Title **Treasurer**
Strathclyde Concessionary Travel Scheme Joint Committee

For further information, please contact *Cheryl Candlish, Contact Centre Manager on 0141 333 3656.*