

## **Address to Council Meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009 by Ian Blears, Lune Valley Transport**

I come here today representing Lune Valley Transport to urge you as a council to accept the recommendation decided on by your cabinet following some lengthy deliberations on the nature of reimbursement for concessionary fares charged to the users of community transport provided by ourselves.

At this point I should perhaps state that the recommendation was for the implementation of a flat £1.30 fare.

We feel that a more complicated charging structure would be unhelpful because of the administrative costs involved and whilst we acknowledge that any charges will be unpopular with our passengers initially, we do feel that the vast majority will accept these as a reasonable alternative to losing the service. Also it is felt that savings would be attained due to passengers making more economical use of the service.

More punitive charges may bring greater savings but it must be pointed out that in addition to severe unpopularity there will also be a significant drop in passenger numbers.

The concerns are that with falling passenger numbers there is considerable loss in the economies attained by scale. There will be dissent amongst members of the public depending on the service and some people will be forced to struggle with regular public transport. For passengers who use public transport as an alternative, the council will see no net savings.

We at Lune Valley Transport see that any greater charges than those already suggested will inevitably bring about the decimation of the service and the eventual demise of community transport as we have developed it.

This area has a community transport service that it can be proud of, it is held in high esteem by its many users who see it as a lifeline, we feel that to curtail it would be to discriminate against people with no alternative and because of the wish to preserve it we strongly recommend the adoption of the recommendations of your cabinet.