

*Question 1: Is the proposed revised distribution of special grant funding for 2010/11 preferable to the original distribution?*

**Response**

The City Council is strongly of the view that the revised distribution proposed in the consultation document is much fairer in targeting additional grant to authorities which are incurring significant additional costs. The original special grant funding formula which has operated for 2008/09 and 2009/10 has not adequately addressed the problem of “hub” authorities, whereas from an inspection of the “losers” and “gainers” list using the new formula, this is now substantially addressed by the revised formula.

*Question 2: Are there any factors which mean the revised distribution does not accurately reflect the additional costs of the improved concession being incurred by individual authorities? If yes, please provide details.*

**Response**

It is a matter of fact that the authority will incur expenditure in 2010/11 of £2.11 million in excess of the previous grant funding available and that the new formula will provide additional grant to the tune of £1.65 million. The City Council operates almost entirely the same rules as the national minimum scheme apart from one specific concession, which is to provide free travel for people who are blind or registered disabled. This concession was made after an equalities audit which concluded that the withdrawal of this provision under the previous Devonwide scheme would be a significant inequality. Insofar as this concession costs in the region of only £15,000 per annum, the revised funding formula does still leave a gap of £0.46 million in the necessary funding. Without more detailed analysis of the formula behind the revised distribution that is proposed, we have been unable to comment on any of the factors that need to be taken into account.

*Question 3: Are there any reasons why quarterly returns on year-to-date actual and full-year forecast spending on the statutory minimum concessionary travel scheme could not be provided?*

**Response**

The City Council thinks it is highly appropriate to institute a system of quarterly reports in order that the DfT is fully aware of the costs being incurred by TCAs.

*Question 4: Are there any reasons why annual returns providing details of the reimbursement arrangements entered into with bus operators could not be provided?*

**Response**

The City Council is happy to support this request.