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# Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee Comataidh Eaconomaidh Dùthchail is Co- cheangailteachd

## Subordinate Legislation



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# Contents

<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>National Bus Travel Concessionary Scheme</b>	<b>2</b>
Purpose of the instrument	2
Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee consideration	2
Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee consideration	2
<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>4</b>

# Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee

To consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity.



<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/rural-committee.aspx>



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and Unionist Party



**Mairi Evans**  
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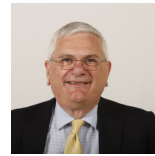
**Jamie Greene**  
Scottish Conservative  
and Unionist Party



**Richard Lyle**  
Scottish National Party



**John Mason**  
Scottish National Party



**Mike Rumbles**  
Scottish Liberal  
Democrats



**Stewart Stevenson**  
Scottish National Party

# Executive summary

This report details the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee's consideration of the National Bus Travel Concessionary Scheme for Older and Disabled Persons (Scotland) Amendment Order 2017 and its agreement to recommend to the Parliament that it approves the draft instrument.

# National Bus Travel Concessionary Scheme

The Committee reports to the Parliament as follows—

1. On 26 January 2017, the National Bus Travel Concessionary Scheme for Older and Disabled Persons (Scotland) Amendment Order 2017 [draft] was laid before the Parliament and was subject to the affirmative resolution procedure.

## Purpose of the instrument

2. The National Bus Travel Concession Scheme for Older and Disabled Persons provides for the reimbursement of bus operators for carrying passengers under the scheme. This Order updates the capped level of funding and the reimbursement rate for the financial year 2017/18.
3. The Amendment Order proposes that the rate of reimbursement should be 56.9% of the adult single fare and should be capped at £196 million.

## Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee consideration

4. The Delegated Powers and Law Reform (DPLR) Committee considered the instrument at its meeting on 31 January 2017 and agreed not to draw the Parliament's attention to the instrument on any grounds within its remit. The DPLR Committee's report can be found at the following link—

<https://digitalpublications.parliament.scot/Committees/Report/DPLR/2017/2/1/Subordinate-Legislation-1#Introduction>

## Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee consideration

5. At its 6th meeting of 2017, held on 22 February, the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee took evidence on this instrument from Humza Yousaf, Minister for Transport and Islands, and his officials.
6. The Committee noted that the Minister would respond in writing to provide further information on an assessment of the social and health benefits of the Scheme.
7. The Committee also raised a number of further points about the proposed reimbursement cap, the agreed price of single standard fares and the expected level of demand for bus travel. Members questioned how the Scottish Government's ambition to reverse the decline in bus patronage related to the capped level of reimbursement for bus operators proposed in the amendment order. The Minister

confirmed that having experienced a small decline in take-up of the concessionary travel scheme in 2016/17, the Scottish Government anticipates a small rise in 2017/18, which is allowed for within the £196 million cap.

8. The Committee also questioned the Minister about the consequences of breaching the reimbursement cap. The Minister and his supporting officials confirmed that contractually the bus industry would cover any additional costs and explained that, in practice, discussion would take place between the Scottish Government and the industry on how any claims above the cap would be managed.
9. The Minister subsequently moved the following motion in his name—

S5M-03819-That the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee recommends that the National Bus Travel Scheme for Older and Disabled Persons (Scotland) Amendment Order 2017 [draft] be approved.
10. The Committee agreed the motion without division.
11. The Official Report of the meeting is available at the following web page—

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=10799>



# Recommendation

12. The Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee recommends to the Parliament that it approves the draft instrument.

