



Mr Michael McMahon MSP
Convenor
Public Petitions Committee
c/o Public Petitions Clerks
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Mike Brown MVO
Commissioner of Transport

Transport for London
Windsor House
42-50 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0TL

By email: petitions@scottish.parliament.uk

2 November 2015

Dear Mr McMahon,

Consideration of Petition PE1549

Thank you for your letter of 7 October regarding the above.

The main difference between our Veterans' Oyster photocard scheme and the Disabled Persons' Freedom Pass, which is run by London Councils, is that residency is not one of the qualifying criteria. Further information about both schemes is as follows.

Veterans' Oyster photocard

This scheme was launched in Autumn 2008 and the eligibility criteria were agreed with the Service Personnel and Veterans' Agency (a part of the Ministry of the Defence), which is now known as Veterans UK.

Applicants may be eligible for a Veterans' Oyster photocard if they are:

- Receiving ongoing payments - in their name - under the War Pensions Scheme: this includes widows, widowers and dependants
- Receiving Guaranteed Income Payment under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme - in their name: this includes widows, widowers and dependants

Ongoing payments are awarded to service personnel who have sustained a certain level of physical or psychological injury in the line of duty.

Applicants do not have to live in London to be eligible for the scheme. Veterans' Oyster photocards are not issued to applicants who live in London and are instead eligible for a 60+ London Oyster photocard or a Freedom Pass.

There are currently just under 8,000 active Veterans' Oyster photocard compared with 136,000 active 60+ Oyster photocard.

From the feedback we have received, the Veterans' scheme is popular with its users and we have not received any legal challenges. Where there is any doubt about an applicant's eligibility, we contact Veterans' UK for clarification.

Further information about the scheme is available here:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/fares-and-payments/adult-discounts-and-concessions/veterans-oyster-photocard>

We have recently started the procurement process to renew the seven-year contract for all of our concessions schemes which has an overall value of £50 million. These schemes cover concessions for students, those aged 60 or over, veterans, apprentices, those on Job Seeker's Allowance, and various concessions for children up to the age of 18. We also offer concessions on bus and tram travel for those who meet specific criteria, and for those who buy Annual Travelcards.

Also included in the costs are, amongst other things: systems development costs; issuing and validating applications and responding to any queries; printing, encoding and despatching photocard; and dealing with on-going management, such as issuing replacement cards.

Disabled Persons' Freedom Pass

London Councils require applicants to be a London resident to qualify for a Disabled Persons' Freedom Pass and to have any of the statutory disabilities listed in the Transport Act 2000. Some boroughs, however, offer a discretionary disabled Freedom Pass.

Please follow the link below for details of the scheme:

<http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/services/freedom-pass/disabled-persons-freedom-pass/eligibility>

Our lead contact for the scheme at London Councils is Hannah Davies

Please let me know if you need any further information.

Yours sincerely

Mike Brown MVO