

## **PRESS STATEMENT**

Issue date: 31 July 2009

### **BUS CONCESSIONARY FARE SCHEME**

The Department of Tourism and Leisure had announced changes to the Senior Citizens' concessionary bus fare scheme which were due to commence on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> August.

However, the Department is now pleased to announce that it is deferring the introduction of the half fare charge for two hours during the late afternoon peak period until the Bus Review is completed and all other options explored.

Mr Graham Cregeen MHK, Member for Tourism and Leisure with delegated responsibility for Public Transport, said:

'Whilst making it clear that this was the third element of a three part change in fares that the Department considered necessary for the current financial year, I have now asked the new Director of Public Transport, Ian Longworth, to reconsider this issue as part of the Bus Review that is due to be completed later this year. This will allow all stakeholders to be consulted and alternative options to be reviewed. We will then be able to present a series of options designed to help us choose how we balance our budget in these difficult economic times.'

Hon Martyn Quayle MHK, Minister for Tourism and Leisure, said:

'It is already understood that the Department faces difficult financial decisions and whilst the long term issues of replacing and operating buses are still to be addressed, I entirely support Mr Cregeen in deferring his initial decision and in incorporating the issue into the Bus Review. The Department hopes to be able to consult on the initial results of the Bus Review in October 2009.'

**Ends**