

## **DEFINITION OF SENIOR CITIZENS IN COUNCIL POLICIES**

**Report By: Head of Legal and Democratic Services**

### **Wards Affected**

County-wide

### **Purpose**

1. To note the response to a request from a member of the public that the Committee examine whether there was a lack of consistency in the Council's definition of senior citizens in its policy documents.

### **Financial Implications**

2. There would be some financial implications if the Council were to change eligibility criteria in the case of the concessionary car parking scheme as referred to below.

### **Background**

3. It was suggested by a Member of the Public at the Strategic Monitoring Committee on 17 September that there appeared to be a lack of consistency in the Council's definition of senior citizens in its policy documents. As an example a bus pass was available to people aged 60 whereas to be eligible for the concessionary parking scheme people had to be aged 65. It was requested that this issue should be investigated.
4. In relation to the specific point, the Concessions (Eligibility) Act 2002 extended eligibility for concessionary bus travel to men aged 60 or over.
5. In terms of concessionary car parking, Cabinet took a decision on 12 September 2002 that the age of eligibility for concessionary car parking for both men and women be set at 65 but with current pass holders retaining eligibility."
6. Prior to this decision the eligibility for men was 65 and women 60. Cabinet did have the option to adopt a common age for eligibility of 60. However, it was decided to adopt a common age for eligibility of 65.
7. The reasons for the decision were:

"European human rights legislation requires that the age of eligibility be the same for both men and women. To lower the age of eligibility for men from its present 65 would entail significant cost to the authority for which there is no budgetary provision."

8. In terms of other Council policies no information was forthcoming from Directorates suggesting that there were inconsistencies that need to be investigated.
9. An information request was also sent to the New Unitaries Benchmarking Group. No replies were received, again suggesting that this is not an issue for the authorities involved.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT the report be noted, subject to any comments the Committee wishes to make.**

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- None