

STATES OF JERSEY



BUS SERVICE: REVISED TICKET AND FARES POLICY

Lodged au Greffe on 28th August 2020
by Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to request the Minister for Infrastructure to take the steps necessary with LibertyBus in relation to the bus service –

- (a) to ensure that, from 1st January 2021, passengers may purchase a transfer ticket at the same price as a single ticket;
- (b) to ensure that there is no difference in the price charged for a single ticket regardless of whether the purchase is made by cash, debit card or Avanchi Card;
- (c) to investigate the feasibility of allowing passengers to top up their Avanchi Card on buses; and
- (d) to report back to the Assembly by 31st December 2020 with progress.

DEPUTY M. TADIER OF ST. BRELADE

REPORT

This proposition replaces [‘Bus Services: introduction of through-fares’ \(P.19/2020\)](#) which I lodged earlier this year. It is a refined version to take into account that LibertyBus have introduced their own version of a *transfer ticket*. However, this falls far short of what I or many expect from such a fare.

In summary, a single ticket should allow a bus user to travel from stop A to stop B for a single fare, irrespective of whether a change of bus is needed. This is what I am asking LibertyBus to implement.

At the time of writing, [the LibertyBus website](#) had the following information on its fares:

“Single Fare

LibertyBus operates a flat fare single ticket policy for travel on any route, anywhere around the Island. Tickets can be purchased from the driver on the bus either using cash or contactless.

Adult fare

Cash - £2.30

Contactless - £2.00

Child fare (15 and under)

Cash - £1.10

Contactless - £1.00

Transfer Ticket

If you need to catch more than one bus to reach your destination, then you can purchase a transfer ticket. The ticket is valid for 1 hour from time of purchase. Show the transfer ticket to the driver on your next bus.

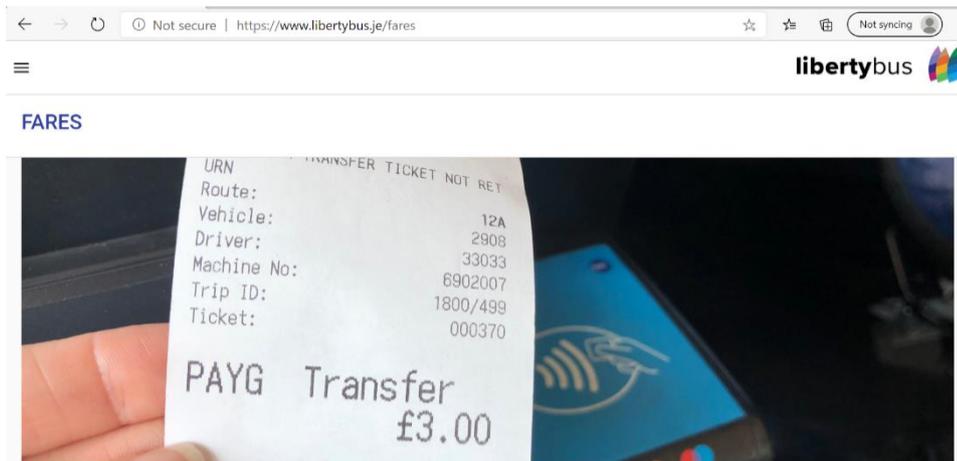
Adult fare

Cash - £4.00

Contactless - £3.50”

Despite the statements that a transfer ticket costs either £4.00 or £3.50, depending on how you pay for it, this does not stop LibertyBus using a picture of a transfer ticket at the cost of £3.00 (see below).

This is at best, unclear and confusing; at worst, it is misleading.



Part (a)

It is my contention that it should be possible to travel from one point on the bus network to another for the price of a single ticket. It does not seem right that someone can travel all the way from, say, L'Etacq to St. Helier for a £2.30 cash fare, when someone travelling from Le Squez to First Tower would pay a £4.00 cash fare – an extra £1.70, as well as the inconvenience of having to change bus.

Part (b)

I would also ask members to consider supporting a move to standardising fares across the bus network. It is understandable that LibertyBus might want to incentivise the use of an Avanchi Card (their prepaid card) over cash or debit card fares. However, a balance needs to be struck between consumer rights and pricing clarity, on the one hand, and the company's wish to influence payment methods to their preferred means on the other.

A customer would not expect to be charged a different amount for a cup of coffee based on *how* they chose to pay. However, a coffee shop might reasonably offer a free coffee for every 9 that you buy, using a loyalty card scheme. If LibertyBus wish to incentivise the use of their pre-paid card over cash or debit-card fares, then there are other ways for them to do this.

Part (c)

There are currently two ways to top up an Avanchi card. You can either do it in person at the bus station or online.

The online system is not the most user-friendly, and it is not immediate. Also, not everyone is online.

At the same time, some travellers do not need to go into Town as part of their journey, so they may not have the opportunity to top-up in person.

Not all Avanchi card users will choose to top up on the bus, and when they do, it will not be at each journey. The argument that it will create additional queues whilst people

wait to board the bus is not really credible, because cash fares and debit card fares also take time to administer. It also takes time when a customer presents their Avanchi card only to find out that there is not enough money left on it to pay for the fare. What then happens, is that they have to rummage around for change or find a debit card to pay with instead. By the time they have done this, they might as well just top up their card on the bus and they would be good to go.

Again, part (c) just asks for this to be investigated. I have had preliminary talks with Digital Jersey, and I envisage they would be prepared to help discuss ways for enhancing Avanchi card provision in the future.

Financial and Manpower Implications

There are no additional financial and manpower implications arising from the adoption of this proposition.