



**Consideration of application for the introduction of
Bus Éireann's child monthly Leap card product in Cork
city green zone**

Determination No. 11 – 2014

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1. Introduction

The National Transport Authority (the Authority) entered into a Public Service Contract with Bus Éireann in December 2009 for the provision of passenger and ancillary services. The services Bus Éireann provides under this contract are not commercial and attract a public service obligation payment in line with EU regulation 1370/07. Bus Éireann is 100% owned by Córas Iompair Éireann (CIÉ) and CIÉ is a statutory body with ownership vested in the Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport.

As part of a process of improving public transport service quality the Authority has been developing a number of initiatives such as the real time information at bus stops, the Authority's National Journey Planner, investment in the bus and rail fleet, station improvements, the reconfiguration of city bus services and the Leap card. The Leap card which was introduced in 2012 was originally rolled out in the Greater Dublin Area. 2013 saw the gradual introduction of the Leap card on Bus Éireann services in the eastern part of the country. The Leap card was rolled out on Bus Éireann services in the Greater Cork Area and in Galway city earlier this year. Bus Éireann now wish to introduce a Child Cork Green Zone Monthly product which will be available on Leap.

There are a number of benefits to using the Leap card for both the customer and the operator and these include:

- Increased overall passenger journeys arising from the convenience of using the Leap card
- No need for the passengers to carry coins
- Time savings resulting from faster vehicle boarding
- Improved transferring to other forms of public transport that use Leap
- Enhanced opportunities to reduce fraudulent travel
- Greater use of public transport by tourists and visitors

2. Proposal by Operator

Bus Éireann has proposed the introduction of a child monthly Leap product for the Cork green zone. Currently no prepaid or Leap child monthly product exists for the green zone and some secondary school children currently purchase the student monthly green zone ticket/product.

In order that all school going children aged up to 19 years of age may have the option to purchase a child monthly green zone product with a Leap Card, Bus Éireann propose to introduce this new

product, with the agreement of the Authority, at a fare of €70.00. Bus Éireann would hope to have the new product available in early 2015.

3. Determination by the Authority

As referred to above, the Leap card was introduced on Bus Éireann services in the Greater Cork area earlier this year and a range of products are available such as 1-day, 7-day, monthly and annual products and from December 1 2014 there will be a 20% discount on single fares when paid using Leap credit compared to the equivalent cash fare.

Bus Éireann now wish to add to their range of products by introducing a monthly child Leap product for the Cork green zone. This is to cater for those children under 19 years of age who may currently be purchasing a student monthly ticket and for all children under 19 who use or may in the future use Bus Éireann services on a regular basis.

This determination is:

- Approving the introduction of a monthly child Leap product for the Cork green zone
- Setting the price of this new product.

While the Authority has a policy of consolidating fares where a smaller number of good value fares are more appropriate than a multitude of higher value fares it also welcomes new fares where there is a gap in the market. With the introduction of the Cork green zone in April this year we saw the introduction of 1-day and 7-day rolling products for children but we did not introduce a monthly child product at that time. The Authority has determined that a monthly child Leap product for the Cork green zone can be introduced as soon as possible.

Bus Éireann have proposed that the fare for this new product should be set at €70.00.

The Authority have considered this proposed fare and considered it to be expensive. As part of their consideration the Authority considered the following factors:

- Child fares are in general between 50% and 60% of the equivalent adult fare and this can be seen on the child monthly fares for the Cork red zone, Limerick city, Galway city and Waterford.
- The adult and student monthly fares for the Cork green zone are about 1.25 times the adult and student monthly fares for the Cork red zone. If the child monthly for the Cork green zone

was set at the Bus Éireann proposed fare then it would have been out of sync with the adult and student fares.

- The child green zone monthly fare is very good value compared to the child green zone 1-day and 7-day rolling products but the child 1-day and 7-day products are relatively dear in comparison to the adult equivalent.

The Authority has determined that the fare for the child monthly Cork green zone will be set at €55.00.

The Authority has determined that Bus Éireann can implement the child monthly Cork green zone fare from the 1 December 2014 and must implement them by the 1 February 2015, unless there are technical reasons why this cannot be done.

4. Conclusion

The expansion of Bus Éireann's Leap card product range to Cork green zone is a positive development for customers. It will see cheaper fares for a number of children particularly those attending school that use Bus Éireann services on a regular basis.
