

CORRESPONDENCE FROM MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

1. SUMMARY OF ISSUES

- 1.1. A member of the public has written to the Committee expressing dissatisfaction with NET's season ticket refund policy for early bird purchasers and urging a reform to ensure fairness, transparency, and legal compliance.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. The views of the Committee are sought.

3. DETAILS OF CORRESPONDENCE

- 3.1. A resident, who purchase an early bird season ticket, does not agrees with the current refund policy. The member of public is arguing that basing refunds on full-price ticket values undermines the purpose of discounts and is unfair. The resident also raise concerns about potential discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 due to inconsistent and discretionary refund offers and criticize the policy as unethical and damaging to customer trust. The resident urges NET to reassess and reform its policy to ensure fairness, transparency, and legal compliance, and expects a response addressing these issues.
- 3.2. A copy of the correspondence can be seen in Appendix A

4. RESPONSE OF NOTTINGHAM TRAMS

- 4.1. In response to the complaint, Nottingham Trams has explained that the refund policy is based on the value of the journeys the customer has made, relative to the season ticket purchased. For example, if a customer has used the pass for 4 months and 3 days, NET would calculate the cost of a quarterly ticket, a monthly ticket, and three individual day tickets, then deduct this amount from the original cost. NET believes this approach is fair, as it applies to all sales products. The 12-month product is designed to reward the loyalty of customers who travel annually, and even if a customer only uses the pass for 10 months, they are still likely to benefit from the discount.
- 4.2. It should be noted that full details of the refund policy is available on the NET website for customers to see.
- 4.3. Copies of correspondence from Nottingham Trams can be found at Appendix B.

Martin Williams
Commercial & Governance Manager
Nottingham City Council

From: [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 8:10 AM
To: NET Admin <NET.Admin@nottinghamcity.gov.uk>
Subject: Fw: Season ticket refunds

[REDACTED]

Warning: This email is from an external sender and has an attachment or link to the internet, please use caution.

To
GNLRT Advisory Committee
C/O NET Project
Loxley House
Station Street
Nottingham
NG2 3NG

Dear Nottingham Express Transit,

I am writing to express my strong dissatisfaction with the current season ticket refund policy that Nottingham Express Transit (NET) is applying, particularly to early bird ticket purchasers. The practice of using full-price ticket values to determine refunds for those who purchased at early bird rates is deeply unfair and undermines the principle of offering discounted tickets in the first place.

As an early bird purchaser, taking advantage of the special January offer, I reasonably expected that the value I paid would be honoured fairly in the event that a refund was required. However, your policy of basing refunds on full-price ticket values, effectively diminishing or even erasing the early bird discount, is not only inequitable but comes across as misleading and contradictory to the spirit of such promotions. This approach disadvantages early bird purchasers and nullifies the financial incentive offered to customers for committing early.

What is more concerning is the apparent use of discretionary offers for refunds. Such arbitrary decisions open NET to serious legal risks, particularly under the Equality Act 2010. Offering discretionary refunds to some customers while refusing the same terms to others could easily result in accusations of discrimination. The 2010 Equality Act explicitly protects against unfair treatment based on protected characteristics, including age, disability, and other factors. The lack of transparency and consistency in your refund policy creates a significant risk of inadvertent discrimination and potential legal challenges.

In addition to the equality issues, this policy could also be seen as an unfair business practice. Penalising customers who opted for early bird purchases, while allowing full-price ticket buyers to potentially benefit from a more favourable refund structure, appears both unethical and commercially unjustifiable. Practices like these erode customer trust and suggest that NET is more focused on its bottom line than on ensuring fair treatment of its passengers.

I urge NET to immediately reassess and reform its refund policy to ensure it is both fair and legally compliant. This includes providing consistent refund options for all season ticket holders, regardless

of when they purchased their ticket, and ensuring full transparency in the application of any discretionary offers.

Failing to address these significant issues could result not only in legal consequences but also in widespread reputational damage as more customers become aware of the unfairness embedded in your current practices. I have been in contact within the last few days with Nottinghamshire Live and BBC Radio Nottingham on this very subject.

I expect a response outlining how NET intends to rectify these unfair policies. I also trust that NET will take this matter seriously and act to uphold the standards of fairness that all your passengers deserve and to reconsider my own recent request for a refund.

Yours sincerely,

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

Begin forwarded message:

On Thursday, September 5, 2024, 6:32 PM, NET Customer Relations Team <info@thetram.net> wrote:

[REDACTED]

If you wish to escalate your complaint further you may contact the Greater Nottingham Light Rail Transit Advisory Committee (GNLRTAC). The address is as follows:

GNLRT Advisory Committee
C/O NET Project
Loxley House
Station Street
Nottingham
NG2 3NG

Alternatively, you may email NET.Admin@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

APPENDIX B

Tramlink Response:

'The refund policy reflects the journeys that the customer would have had to take if they were to have purchased tickets that reflect the amount of use they have had from the season ticket. So, if the customer has used the pass for 4 months and 3 days we would calculate the price of a quarterly ticket, a monthly ticket and three day tickets and deduct this from the cost. This we believe is a fair approach. Any sale product would have the same calculation. The sale of our 12 month product is to reward the loyalty of customers who travel with us on an annual basis and is not for any other products. If customers only use this pass for 10 months it is still very likely that they will benefit from the discount.'