

**Kent County Council  
Equality Analysis/ Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

**Directorate/ Service:** Public Transport Service, Highways, Transportation and Waste (HTW), Growth, Environment and Transport (GET)

**Name of decision, policy, procedure, project or service:** The Big Conversation - Consultation for future delivery model of rural bus services

**Responsible Owner/ Senior Officer:** Stephen Pay

**Version:** 1.0

**Author:** Robert Clark

**Pathway of Equality Analysis:** No decisions will be made until after the engagement period.

**Summary and recommendations of equality analysis/impact assessment.**

- **Context**

Against a backdrop of ever decreasing funding for local councils, we want to maintain and, where possible, improve rural accessibility for those without alternative means of travel. Helping to tackle social isolation and provide the “right transport solution for the right customer need, at the right price”.

Around 97% of journeys in Kent are run on a purely commercial basis by private operators however, over the last 30 years KCC has funded some routes which, while not commercially viable have been considered important to meet the needs of the communities and passengers they serve.

We want to explore how we can improve connectivity and evaluate the feasibility of delivering alternative services. Through engagement with all stakeholders, the “Big Conversation” programme will identify potential delivery models and test feedback and support. Once we have explored potential ideas with the market and completed engagement with resident’s future delivery models will be further developed.

The Council has also taken the decision to ensure that it focuses on the future delivery of rural transport and is not considering any changes to the current Special Educational Needs (SEN) transport arrangements.

**KCC currently support the public transport network with:**

- 130 Local bus routes
- 10 Kent Karrier contracts
- 7,000 Mainstream Home to School Transport clients
- 4,500 SEN Home to School Transport clients
- Transportation of 500 Social Care Clients
- English National Concessionary Travel Scheme for 298,000 clients
- School Concessionary Travel Schemes: 32,000 clients

Updated 12/06/2018

- **Aims and Objectives**
  - To consult with the public to determine if there is support for alternative service delivery models
  - To explore how rural accessibility can be maintained despite increasing budget pressures
- **Summary of equality impact**

**Adverse Equality Impact Rating** Medium

**Attestation**

I have read and paid due regard to the Equality Analysis/Impact Assessment concerning **The Big Conversation -Consultation for future delivery model of rural bus services**. I agree with risk rating and the actions to mitigate any adverse impact(s) that has /have been identified.

**Head of Service**

Signed: Phil Lightowler

Name: Phil Lightowler

Job Title: Head of Public Transport

Date: 12 June 2018

**DMT Member**

Signed: Barbara Cooper

Name: Barbara Cooper

Job Title: Corporate Director Growth,  
Environment and Transport

Date: 12 June 2018

**Part 1 Screening**

**Could this policy, procedure, project or service, or any proposed changes to it, affect any Protected Group (listed below) less favourably (negatively) than others in Kent?**

Protected Group	Please provide a <u>brief</u> commentary on your findings. Fuller analysis should be undertaken in Part 2.			
	High negative impact EqIA	Medium negative impact Screen	Low negative impact Evidence	High/Medium/Low Positive Impact Evidence
<b>Age</b>	<p>Concessionary pass holders may be required to contribute to the cost of some of their journeys which could deter individuals from travelling.</p> <p>The introduction of booking may impact accessibility for older customers (Idea Two)</p>	<p>Market engagement suggested that older passengers may be unwilling to change vehicles.</p> <p>Some services could be operated by smaller vehicles, not conventional buses and so may not be attractive to elderly users, due to size and accessibility</p>		<p>Those not currently able to access the bus network may benefit from increased opportunities.</p> <p>Online booking system may increase accessibility for younger people</p>

<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p>The size of vehicle may make certain vehicles less accessible for those with mobility difficulties</p> <p>Concessionary pass holders may be required to contribute to the cost of some of their journeys</p> <p>Requirements to change vehicles may impact on those with mobility difficulties (Idea One)</p> <p>Booking arrangements may need to be adjusted for those with accessibility requirements (Idea Two)</p> <p>The need to book services in advance may negatively impact those with learning difficulties (Idea Two)</p>	<p>Market engagement suggested that passengers with access requirements may be unwilling to change vehicles.</p>		<p>Those not currently able to access the bus network may benefit from increased opportunities.</p> <p>Could provide a better service to those currently unable to access their local bus stop due to mobility issues.</p>
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<b>Gender</b>			It is not considered that alterations to bus services have any greater impact on this group than it does on the general public.	
<b>Gender identity/ Transgender</b>			It is not considered that alterations to bus services have any greater impact on this group than it does on the general public.	
<b>Race</b>			It is not considered that alterations to bus services have any greater impact on this group than it does on the general public.	
<b>Religion and Belief</b>			It is not considered that alterations to bus services have any greater impact on this group than it does on the general public.	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			It is not considered that alterations to bus services have any greater impact on this group than it does on the general public.	
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>			The size of vehicle may make certain vehicles less accessible for those travelling with prams	

<b>Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Carer's Responsibilities</b>	Concessionary pass holders may be required to contribute to the cost of some of their journeys			Those not currently able to access the bus network may benefit from increased opportunities.

**Could this policy, procedure, project or service, or any proposed changes to it, affect any Protected Group (listed below) less favourably (negatively) than others in Kent?**

**Age**

It has been identified that older persons are potentially more reliant on the public transport network than other protected groups or members of the wider public.

It has been identified that younger people are potentially more reliant on the public transport network than other protected groups or members of the wider public because they may not be able to drive.

- If concessionary pass holder were required to contribute to the cost of some journeys, there would be a high impact on older and younger residents who currently access services for free or at subsidised rates.

Idea 1 – Feeder services

- No specific impacts identified

Idea 2 – Bookable flexible bus services

- Market engagement has identified that some older residents would not be able to access online booking services. Where a bookable service was implemented, it would be necessary for the system to support telephone bookings to make this accessible to this group.

Idea 3- Use of taxi-bus style services instead of a bus

- No specific impacts identified

## Disability

It has been identified that disabled people such as those with mobility or visual impairment are potentially more reliant on the public transport network than other protected groups or members of the wider public because their disability may mean they cannot drive.

- The use of smaller vehicles rather than conventional buses with full DDA access may present accessibility issues for users with mobility problems dependent on the vehicle specifications. The number of available seats may also increase the likelihood that a companion can travel with disabled users.
- Those with accessibility requirements may need to book further in advance than other users to ensure the vehicle specification will meet their needs, lessening journey opportunities compared to other users.
- If concessionary pass holders were required to contribute to the cost of some journeys, there would be a high impact on disabled residents who can currently access services for free as they may not travel if they have to pay.

### Idea One– Feeder services

- Market engagement has suggested that disabled customers may find this service less accessible due to the need to change and capacity availability on both vehicles.

### Idea Two– Bookable flexible bus services

- The need to book services in advance may negatively impact those with learning difficulties who may require assistance to understand the new service.
- Booking arrangements may need to be adjusted for customers with accessibility requirements to ensure vehicle specifications are appropriate.

### Idea 3- Use of taxi-bus style services instead of a bus

- No specific impacts identified.

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## **Carers**

The Council is mindful of the relationship between older and disabled persons and any carer, who in many instances can travel free of charge using a companion pass issued as part of the English National Concessionary Travel scheme.

- If concessionary pass holder were required to contribute to the cost of some journeys, there would be a high impact on carers who currently access services for free.
- Carers who also have accessibility requirements may need to book further in advance than other users to ensure the vehicle specification will meet their needs.

### Idea One– Feeder services

- No specific impacts identified

### Idea Two– Bookable flexible bus services

- No specific impacts identified

### Idea Three- Use of taxi-bus style services instead of a bus

- No specific impacts identified

**Could this policy, procedure, project or service promote equal opportunities for this group?**

**Age**

- This group has been identified as potentially being more reliant on public transport, where changes to delivery models increase the number of locations served and/or the frequency of services, these groups will have more opportunities to travel.

Idea Two– Bookable flexible bus services

- An online bookable service may be more accessible to young people who are more comfortable accessing services digitally.

**Disability**

- This group has been identified as potentially being more reliant on public transport, where changes to delivery models increase the number of locations served and/or the frequency of services, these groups will have more opportunities to travel.

Idea Two– Bookable flexible bus services

- Market engagement and the Total Transport Market Research Report suggest that patronage by this protected group is low on supported services compared to Kent Karrier dial-a-ride services. The provision of more door to door services could provide this group with a more accessible service, both in terms of pick up and destination.

**Carers**

- Where changes to delivery models increase the number of locations served and/or the frequency of services, these groups will have more opportunities to travel.

## **Part 2**

### **Equality Analysis /Impact Assessment**

#### **Protected groups**

- Age – Older people eligible for ENCTS pass
- Age – Young people who are unable to drive
- Disability
- Carers – Those traveling on a companion bus pass
- Pregnancy/Maternity

#### **Information and Data used to carry out your assessment**

Total Transport Market Research Report (Nov 2016)  
Kent County Council Bus Funding Review Equality Impact Assessment

#### **Who have you involved consulted and engaged?**

- Bus Operators
- Taxi Operators
- Community Transport Operators
- Wider Public (public meetings and deliberative groups)
- Parish Councils

## Analysis

Each of the ideas currently being explored has the potential to impact both positively and negatively on the protected groups identified. Further analysis would be necessary if any of the ideas are developed at a local level.

### Adverse Impact,

Unknown – Given then range of ideas currently being explored from a County wide perspective it is currently not known what impact these changes will have on protected groups

### Positive Impact:

Unknown – Given then range of ideas currently being explored from a County wide perspective it is currently not known what impact these changes will have on protected groups

## JUDGEMENT

If any of the ideas are developed at a local level a full impact assessment should be undertaken. This consultation is seeking feedback on potential ideas that may or may not be developed. Further engagement will be required where a more detail EqlA will need to be compiled fully exploring any potential change to the current service provision in relation to the potential discrimination and opportunities to promote equality. This will be required before any potential decision is implemented. Currently there is:

- **No major change** - no potential for discrimination and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken

**Internal Action Required                      YES**

There is potential for adverse impact on particular groups and these will be considered and explored further as the scope develops in order to improve the proposal.

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This document is available in other formats, please contact  
bigconversation@kent.gov.uk or telephone on 03000 415951.

### Equality Impact Analysis/Assessment Action Plan

Protected Characteristic	Issues identified	Action to be taken	Expected outcomes	Owner	Timescale	Cost implications
Age/ Disability/ Carers/ Maternity	Many potential impacts based on size of vehicle, financial implications, and booking requirements.	County wide public consultation to allow the assumptions above to be tested. The questionnaire will specifically direct people to consider the equalities implications. Deliberative workshops with targeted attendees are also being organised to ensure representation of the groups with protected characteristics identified.	Lake Market Research report to provide feedback on the public response to the equalities question. Further equalities considerations may be identified. Based on the public consultation, local plans may be formed, and furthermore specific equalities implications will be considered.	Rob Clark	June-September 2018	Built into cost of consultation

**Have the actions been included in your business/ service plan?** No – these will be monitored as part of the programme board that take places monthly.

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Please forward a final signed electronic copy and Word version to the Equality Team by emailing [diversityinfo@kent.gov.uk](mailto:diversityinfo@kent.gov.uk)

If the activity will be subject to a Cabinet decision, the EqIA must be submitted to committee services along with the relevant Cabinet report. Your EqIA should also be published.

The original signed hard copy and electronic copy should be kept with your team for audit purposes.