

The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Duty requires public bodies to have **due regard** to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Protected Characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (elimination of discrimination only)
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Due Regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Duty as part of the process of decision-making. For example:

- How they act as employers
- How they develop, evaluate and review policy
- How they design, deliver and evaluate services
- How they commission and procure from others

Advancing equality of opportunity involves considering the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people because of their protected characteristics
- Meet the needs of people with protected characteristics
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low

Fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

Complying with the Equality Duty may involve treating some people better than others, as far as this is allowed in discrimination law. This could mean making use of an exception or positive action provisions in order to provide a service in a way that is appropriate for people who share a protected characteristic.

Officers should:

Keep an adequate record showing that the equality duties and relevant questions have been actively considered.

Be rigorous in both inquiring and reporting to members the outcome of the assessment and the legal duties.

Final approval of a proposal, can only happen after the completion of an equality impact assessment. It is unlawful to adopt a proposal contingent on an equality impact assessment



Title of the Assessment:	Passenger Transport Strategy	Date of Assessment:	13/11/15 06/09/16
Responsible Officer	Name:	Susan Childerhouse	
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		Extension Number:	74394

Stage 1 – Aims and Objectives
<p>1.1) What are the objectives of the strategy, policy or service being assessed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The aim of the Passenger Transport Strategy (PTS) is to deliver transport services that are safe, effective and fit for purpose and provide a framework for decision making processes in relation to all PTS services. • The PTS will be developed alongside and sit within the Central Bedfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) which is also currently under review, with the new LTP4 adoption anticipated for April 2016. • The Strategy will set out the Council’s objectives for passenger transport in the Central Bedfordshire area and will be supported by relevant policies and best practice. • The PTS refers to users of road based ‘public’ transport such as commercially operated local bus routes and community transport as well as fleet transport for the provision of home to school transport and home to day setting transport for vulnerable children and adults. • The strategy is looking to provide efficiencies and savings from 2017 onwards so it is likely that there will be a reduction in the number of subsidised bus routes, that Central Bedfordshire Council will adopt the English National Concessionary Fares Scheme and the amount of funding and the way the Council provides funding to Community Transport will change. We will also be exploring the use of voluntary transport provision schemes and the possibility of applying for an Operators Licence to allow our own fleet to operate for profit. • For clients of Adult Social Care the default for position for their transport will be with Fleet services, only if there is no capacity on fleet will we consider another transport provider • A review of the Home to School Transport Policy and the Post 16 policy and their implementation are currently taking place. When the report has been received Central Bedfordshire Council will consider the benefits of applying any recommendations from the report.
<p>1.2) What needs is it designed to meet?</p> <p>This PTS is being delivered to provide clarity to the public around decision making in relation to passenger transport services as well as helping officers make informed, consistent decisions that are supported by policy. The delivery of the PTS will also look to make the most efficient use of resources and transport systems</p>
<p>1.3) What outcomes will be delivered?</p>

Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment Template

The outcomes of the Passenger Transport Strategy (PTS) will deliver transport services that are safe, effective and fit for purpose and provide a framework for decision making processes in relation to all PTS services.

Bus Subsidies

CBC currently provides funding (subsidises) for over half of the bus routes (PDF 47.2KB)  in Central Bedfordshire. These are bus routes which are no longer commercially viable for bus companies to run. The Council also covers the costs for 43,000 bus pass holders every time they use their bus pass.

The current approach is no longer affordable so the Council is proposing to change how decisions are made on funding bus routes which are no longer viable for commercial bus companies to run. Decision making will be fair, transparent and affordable. Demand and possible alternatives will be considered.

The Council is proposing to facilitate a new process where community bus providers can compete to provide whole or parts of routes if there is enough demand.

We are also proposing to make changes to concessionary fares such as when people can use their bus passes. This will bring us in line with the English National Concessionary Pass Scheme. Changes are also proposed for applications for bus passes and how they are renewed.

CBC subsidise 53% of the bus services in Central Bedfordshire at a cost of £1.2 million in 2015/16. A subsidy for a single journey can cost up to £17.50. This is a discretionary service.

CBC is looking at developing a fair and transparent process to decide whether or not to fund a bus route that is rarely used, including whether it is financially viable to run commercially.

The decision making process will take into account:

- available alternatives (duplication of routes, alternative provision available)
- accessibility – demand from older people or disabled people
- reducing congestion – based on passenger numbers
- affordability – value for money assessment based on passenger numbers
- network coverage – priority will be given to buses running on core and second network roads

Subsidies will only be provided to buses running at the following times of high passenger demand:

- 8am to 6:30pm weekdays
- 8am to 3pm Saturdays
- no subsidies for Sunday buses

Community transport - proposed changes

There are a range of voluntary and community transport providers. Examples include Dial-a-Ride services, Flittabus, Wanderbus, Ivel Sprinter and Road Runner. CBC fund some of these providers and:

- some use volunteers

- some pay their drivers and staff

Services vary with some providers offering door to door services, whilst others have regular routes and timetables. Fares range in price.

These services are particularly popular with people living in rural areas, older and disabled people. We know from a recent survey how important these services are to customers; they really value them and most would be prepared to pay more for the individual service. We are already seeing community transport solutions stepping in to provide services and we want to encourage more of this. To this end, we are proposing a new tender process where community transport providers can enter a competitive process to provide all or part of the route. CBC will continue to provide financial support to these services but it will be through the new tender process.

Concessionary fares - proposed changes

Concessionary travel is a discount on fares for older people (bus passes), people with disabilities and unemployed people (travel aid). These will continue to be available. 43,000 residents hold a buss pass and they represent 40% of all bus journeys in Central Bedfordshire. CBC currently pay for every journey where a bus pass is used. Nearly £2.4 million was spent on covering these fares in 2015.

The Council is proposing to adopt national time regulations as set by the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, when users can use their bus pass.

Bus pass holders will only be able to use their bus passes between:

- 9:30am and 11pm on weekdays
- all day Saturday
- all day Sunday
- all day on Bank Holidays

Data about current usage suggests that most people using bus passes use them within these times already. There are no proposed changes to companion passes.

CBC would like to modernise how the service is run and make it more efficient:

- by 2030 applications would be made online
- bus passes would no longer automatically renew every five years and further applications would be required

CBC also provides discounts for unemployed people via a travel aid scheme. The council would no longer fund this scheme, but it could continue for bus companies wishing to participate.

1.4) Which other strategies or policies support this?

Local Transport Plan 4
Sustainable Means Of Travel to School
Home to School Transport Policy and Post 16 Policy
Adult Social Care Entitlement to transport

1.5) In which ways does this support Central Bedfordshire's intention to tackle inequalities and deliver services to vulnerable people?

The strategy will prioritise delivery of transport services to the elderly and vulnerable

1.6) Is it possible that this could damage relations amongst different communities or contribute to inequality by treating some members of the community less favourably such as people from black and minority ethnic communities, disabled people, women, or lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities?

If the strategy is careful in its approach to changes in transport provision and delivers its intended outcomes there is no indication that this strategy would damage relations amongst different, communities or individuals.

Local bus services are available to all members of the general public and, in principle, therefore, a reduction in service affects everyone equally. However, in practice, services are used primarily by people without access to cars. This includes young people, older people and families from lower income households. It is also the case that, despite potential mobility difficulties, disabled people do make more use of public transport than average. Finally, buses are used more by women than by men.

Consequently, a reduction in bus service provision is likely to have a disproportionate effect on these groups, and therefore mitigating action is required. The impacts are likely to range from financial (more expensive alternatives), social (fewer social journeys, so greater isolation), economic (reduced access to employment opportunities), through to inconvenience (need to reorganise family support arrangements / walk further / longer to match the changes in bus availability). It is not thought that health will be significantly affected because of alternative services.

Community transport services are available to all qualifying individuals based on personal mobility and as such are a proactive initiative to enhance accessibility and freedom of movement for those who would otherwise be restricted. The nature of dial-a-ride (enshrined in transport legislation) is that it is closed to the general public and is exclusively focused on mobility disadvantaged persons as a means of redressing an inequality.

Stage 2 - Consideration of Relevant Data & Research

Equality checklist issues to be considered

Awareness	Appropriateness	Accessibility	Partnership - working
Take Up levels	Adverse Outcomes	Staff Training Needs	Contracts & monitoring

2) What sources of evidence and key facts will be used to inform the assessment?

- National research on transport use including Central Bedfordshire (National Highways and Transport Network Survey)
- CBC Householder Travel survey
- Public Consultation
- Market research for Community Transport
- Future of Transport in an Ageing Society
- Information has been gathered from other local authorities

Each item ticked below must be evidenced

Internal desktop research

Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment Template

	Place survey / Customer satisfaction data		Demographic Profiles – Census & ONS
	Local Needs Analysis		Service Monitoring / Performance Information
*	Other local research		
Third party guidance and examples			
*	National / Regional Research	*	Analysis of service outcomes for different groups
	Best Practice / Guidance		Benchmarking with other organisations
	Inspection Reports		
Public consultation related activities			
*	Consultation with Service Users	*	Consultation with Community / Voluntary Sector
	Consultation with Staff		Customer Feedback / Complaints
	Data about the physical environment e.g. housing market, employment, education and training provision, transport, spatial planning and public spaces		
Consulting Members, stakeholders and specialists			
*	Elected Members	*	Expert views of stakeholders representing diverse groups
	Specialist staff / service expertise		

Please bear in mind that whilst sections of the community will have common interests and concerns, views and issues vary within groups. E.g. women have differing needs and concerns depending on age, ethnic origin, disability etc

Lack of local knowledge or data is not a justification for assuming there is not a negative impact on some groups of people. Further research may be required.

2.1) Existing Data and Consultation Findings:

- Age:

National Research:

Young People:

National Union of Students (NUS) and the Association of Colleges (AoC) 2015

- Young people take the bus for 15% of their journeys, more than twice the level of usage of all other ages
- only 49% of further education students can always afford their travel costs
- 40% of students spend £5 or more a day travelling to their college or place of training.
- Almost half of students from rural areas spend £20 per week on travel
- Between 2006 and 210013 bus fares increased by 30%
- The average travel time for those surveyed was two hours and 48 minutes per day at an average distance of 11 miles.
- Many young people (40%) rely on financial support from parents or guardians for travel costs

Buses Matter: a report by Campaign for Better Transport

- Studies have shown that one in five students has considered dropping out of further education because of financial cost, and transport is the greatest cost of participation.

Local Telephone Survey 2016

- The findings indicate that the majority of respondents age 18 – 24 support the funding criteria proposals (48% of respondents never use the bus)

Older People:

Going nowhere fast - Impact of inaccessible public transport on wellbeing and social connectedness of older people in Great Britain – WRVS 2013

Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment Template

- lack of suitable transport has a devastating effect on wellbeing; six per cent of older people feel lonely because they are unable to get out and about.
- older people face many barriers to accessing transport and that considerations of accessibility, safety and affordability are paramount.
- WRVS recommends that public transport providers take an age-friendly approach when designing and delivering services to recognise the needs of older people, including training drivers to assist and support older people when they travel and ensuring that bus stops are close to destinations where older people would like to travel
- Access to transport allows older people to remain independent and active in later life and helps people stay connected. Community transport can play a crucial role in helping older people access essential amenities by providing services where public transport cannot or does not, and can provide a vital lifeline for those most vulnerable to isolation and loneliness.

The Future of Transport in an Ageing Society – ILC-UK & Age UK 2015

- 32% of those 65 and over never use public transport, whilst another 27% use it once a month or less.
- The proportion of older people who regularly use public transport is highest amongst the 70-74 age group, before declining with age.

How often do older people use public transport?

Fig1: Frequency of use of public transport by people aged 65+

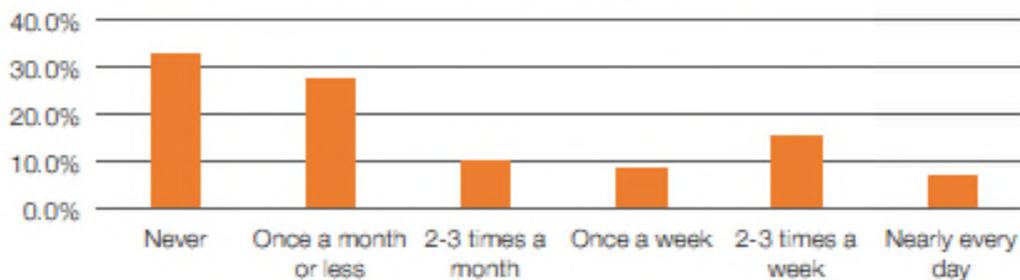
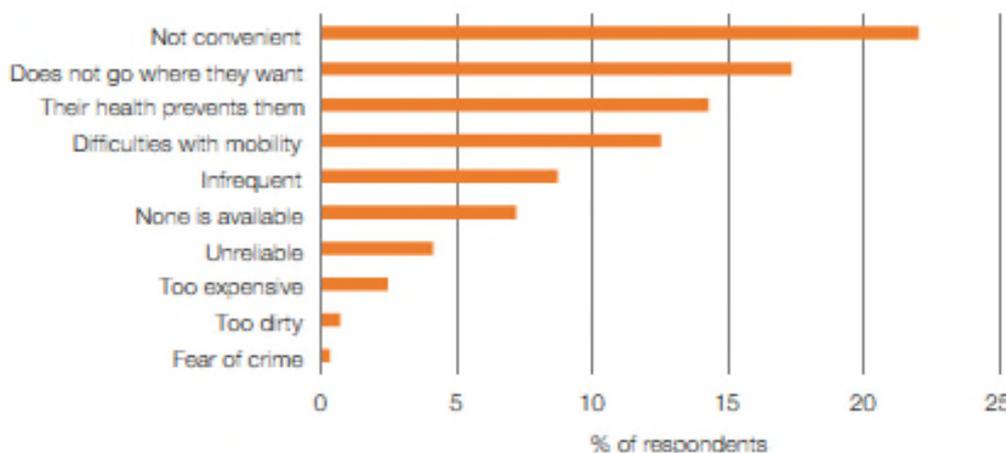


Fig 13: Reasons for not using public transport given by those over 65

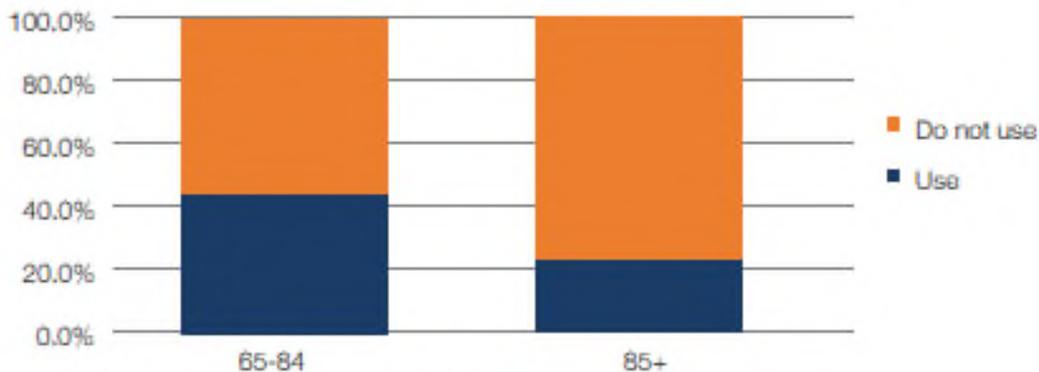


Source: English Longitudinal Study of Ageing wave 6, 2012/13

Is public transport meeting the needs of those who need it most?

Whilst driving is the preferred mode of transport for many older people, many who do not have access to a private car rely on public transport. Below we look at whether the transport needs of those who need public transport the most (people whose only means of transport is public transport and also have difficulty walking quarter of a mile) are being met.

Fig9: Use of public transport by people whose only means of transport other than walking is public transport and who have difficulty walking a quarter of a mile.



Source: English Longitudinal Study of Ageing wave 6, 2012-13

Approximately 35,000 people aged 65-84 in England are restricted to using public transport and have difficulty walking even a short distance, yet more than half (approximately 20,500 people) do not use public transport. Among the over 85s, even more people - 50,000 - are restricted to using public transport and have difficulty walking a short distance and even more, 80% (approximately 40,000 people), do not use it. This again indicates that current public transport provision is not meeting the needs of those who need it most.

The issues:

1. Older drivers

- Older people need to be supported in driving safely for longer, with viable alternative transport options available for those who are unable to drive.
- Driving remains the most common form of transport for older people in the UK, with 68% of households where someone is aged 70+ having their own car.
- Research by Age UK shows that health problems are more likely than age alone to lead to giving up driving. Only 1% of people surveyed aged 60+ would give up driving because of their age, while 43% would stop driving due to health concerns

2. Transport to health services

- 1.45 million of those 65 and over in England find it difficult to travel to hospital, whilst 630,000 of those 65 and over find it difficult or very difficult to travel to their GP. It is the oldest old who find it the hardest - less than half of people over 80 find it easy to travel to a hospital.
- It is the people with the worst health and the lowest incomes who struggle the most to travel to health services.
- Of the people who find it 'very difficult' to travel to their GP, 71% are in fair or poor health. This contrasts with people who find it 'very easy', of whom just 22% are in fair or poor health.
- The average weekly household income of those who find it easiest to access their GP is £526, compared with an average income of £313 for those who find it most difficult.

3. Making public transport convenient

- Public transport is not meeting the needs of many older people. The most frequent reasons for not using public transport among those 65 and over are that it's not convenient and does not go where you want.
- Women, those with lower incomes, and those without a car were less likely to state that public transport was inconvenient – perhaps because they have no choice.

4. Active transport

- Encouraging older people to engage in active travel such as cycling or walking could have health benefits and reduce isolation.
- Only 8% of men over 65 and 3% of women over 65 ever cycle. This is low compared to rates of older people cycling in other European countries.
- Road crossings do not give older people adequate time to cross safely.
- Pelican crossings assume pedestrians walk at a pace of at least 1.2 metres per second (2.7 miles per hour) but 76 % of men and 85 % of women over 65 walk more slowly .

5. Rural transport

- Older people in rural areas don't have sufficient access to public transport. Just 20% of those aged 70-74 living in rural areas use public transport weekly, compared to 38% of those who live in an urban setting.
- 18% of those over 65 living in rural areas don't use public transport because none is available, compared to 2% of those living in urban areas.

Opportunities for Improvement

Local decision making

- Devolution of central Government powers to local communities could mean more flexible transport services which better reflect the needs of older people. Strong local leadership could also better deliver safe, accessible, and reliable transport to meet the needs of older people.
- Age friendly infrastructure is fundamental to developing innovative transport solutions. This requires an integrated approach to the planning and design of road networks, cycle lanes, safe crossings, level pavements, and the location of amenities and services.

Technological Improvements

- The development of new platforms, such as mobile phone apps, to support the “social economy” could facilitate greater peer to peer transport provision.
- Wider use of live departure boards and audio-visual announcements on buses could increase older people's confidence in using public transport.

Volunteering

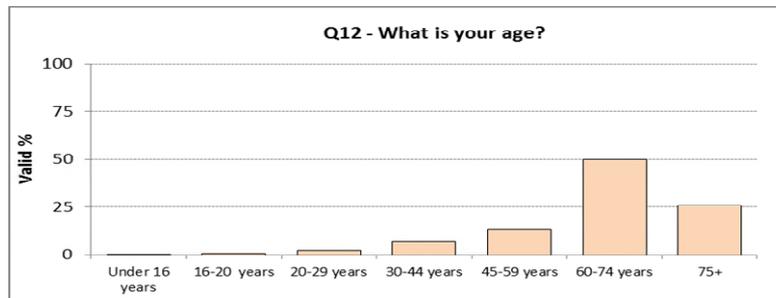
- Volunteer run schemes could encourage older people to choose active forms of travel by making cycling and walking into sociable activities.
- Community car sharing schemes with volunteer drivers are very important for supporting mobility in rural areas and should be extended.
- Volunteers could make busy transport hubs easier to navigate.

Achieving Change

- Local Government should encourage the pooling and sharing of resources to help fill gaps in local transport provision, working together with the voluntary sector.
- Older people's access to healthcare must be improved by better linking of health and transport services.
- Public transport providers should design their services with older transport users in mind, using technological improvements and customer insight to improve their experiences.

Central Bedfordshire Public Consultation 2016

Age profile of respondents:

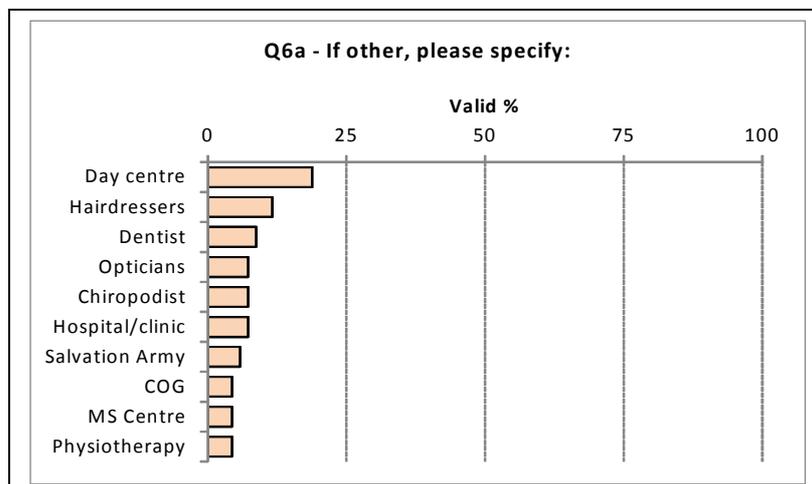
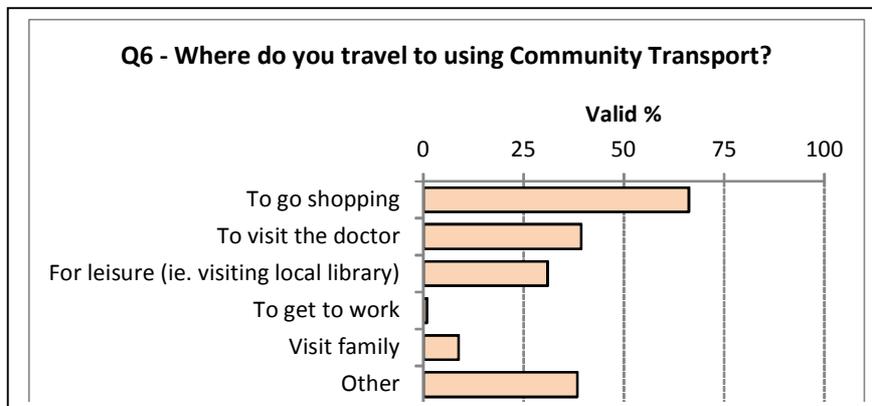


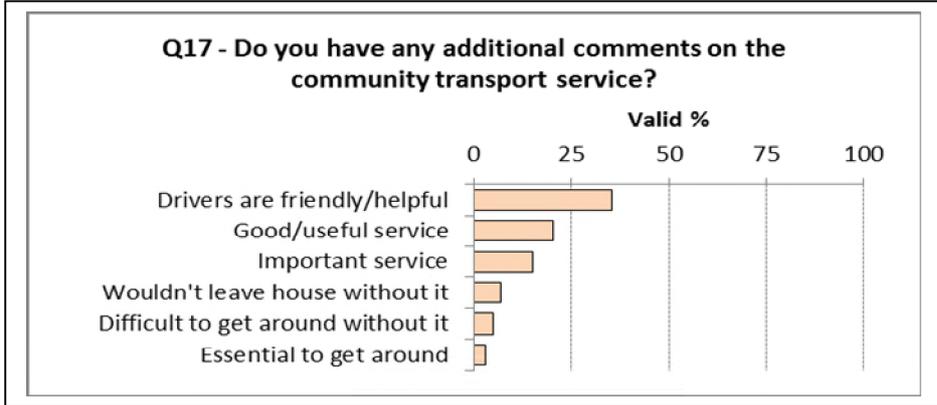
Older people were more likely to use the buses. They were more likely to agree with the overall process (Q1), but much more likely to disagree with how we process applications and the renewal process (Q5c & Q5d).

Community Transport Users Survey 2016

68% of respondents were aged 75+

- 89% rate the comfort of journey using Community Transport as good / very good
- 97% rate the reliability of the Community Transport service as good / very good
- 99% agree / strongly agree that the community transport service provides good value for money
- 83% agree / strongly agree that it is easy to travel around using community transport
- 70% agree / strongly agree there has been an improvement in the service in the past two years
- 98% agree / strongly agree a good quality community transport is important to them





Local Telephone Survey 2016

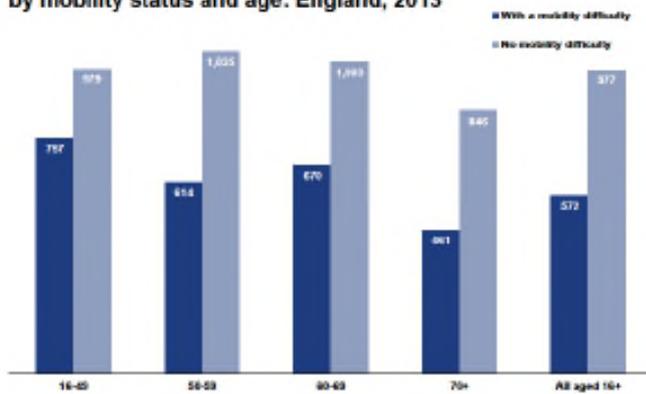
- The findings indicate that the majority of older respondents age support the funding criteria proposals (48% of respondents never use the bus)

- Disability:

National Research:

Department for Transport Accessibility and Equality Action Plan 2015:

Trips per person per year by mobility status and age: England, 2013



405

more trips made, on average, by adults without a mobility difficulty compared with those with a mobility difficulty*

9%

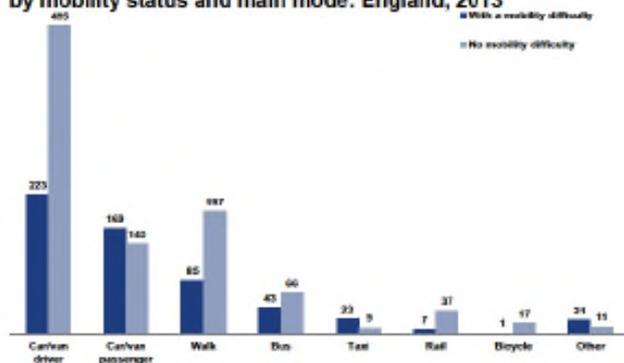
of adults in England reported having a mobility difficulty in 2013

31%

of adults aged 70+ reported reported having a mobility difficulty

*From the National Travel Survey: respondents who say they have difficulties travelling on foot, on bus or both.

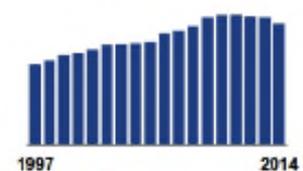
Trips per person per year by mobility status and main mode: England, 2013



69%

of all trips made by adults with mobility difficulties in 2013 were by car (as a driver or passenger)

Blue Badges



2.45 million valid Blue Badges held in England in 2014

6.9% since '11

Concessionary travel

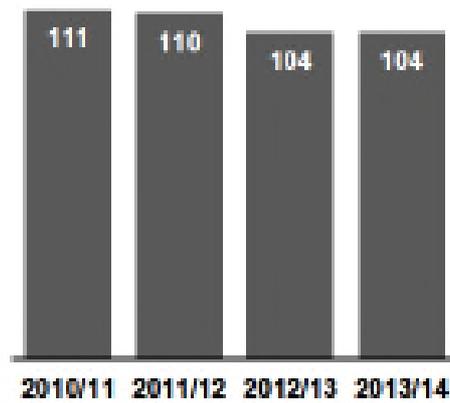
9.7 million
older and disabled
concessionary travel
passes in England
in 2013/14

2%
since '10/11

104
average bus concessionary journeys
per pass in England in 2013/14



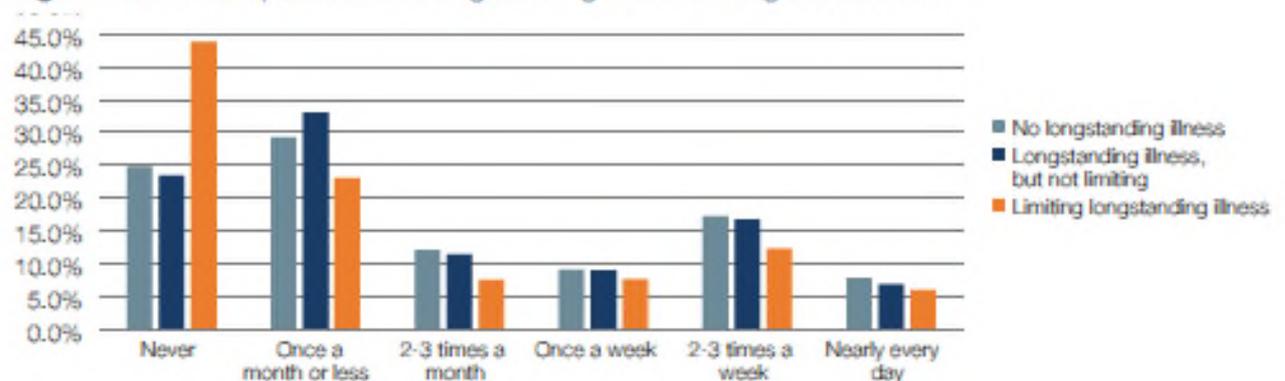
25%
of disabled people in 2012
experienced difficulties
in using public transport



The Future of Transport in an Ageing Society – ILC-UK & Age UK 2015

ELSA data also show that those with longstanding illnesses are the least likely to use public transport. 8% of older people in the study reported that they don't use public transport due to problems with mobility while 10% reported that their health prevents them from using public transport.

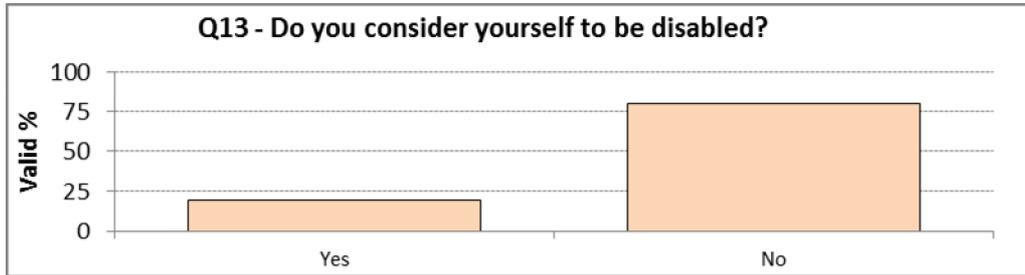
Fig 12: Public Transport use and longstanding illness among the over 65s



Source: English Longitudinal Study of Ageing wave 6, 2012-13

Central Bedfordshire Public Consultation 2016

Disability profile of respondents:



Respondents with a disability were much more likely to use the bus regularly. They were also much more likely to disagree with the overall process (Q1), when you can use your bus pass (Q5a) how we process applications (Q5c) and how we renew bus passes (Q5d).

Community Transport Users Survey 2016

63% of respondents had a disability

- Carers:

No specific issues identified.

- Gender Reassignment:

No specific issues identified.

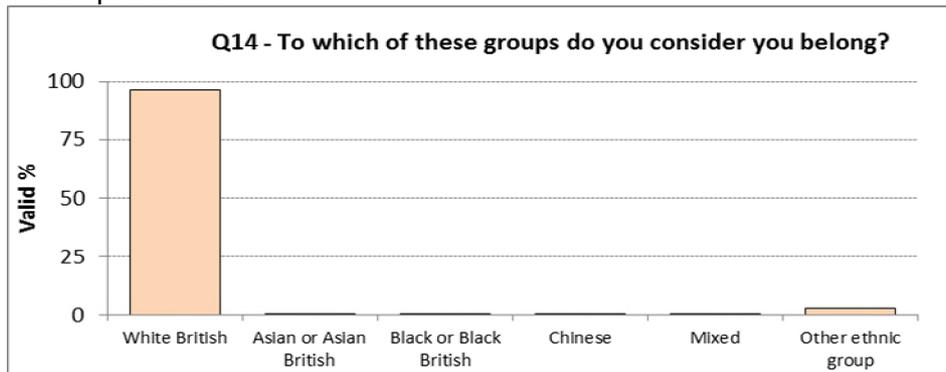
- Trans Gender / Gender Reassignment:

No specific issues identified.

- Race:

Central Bedfordshire Public Consultation 2016

Ethnicity profile of respondents:



Community Transport Users Survey 2016

98% of respondents were White British

- Religion or Belief:

No specific issues identified.

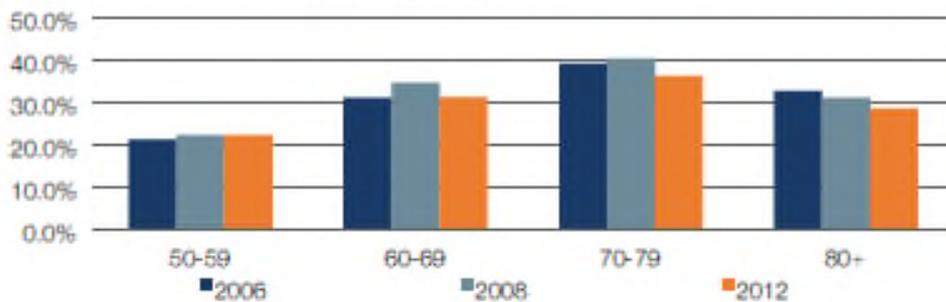
- Sex

National Research:

The Future of Transport in an Ageing Society – ILC-UK & Age UK 2015

How does public transport use differ between genders?

Fig3: Proportion of women over 50 using public transport at least once a week

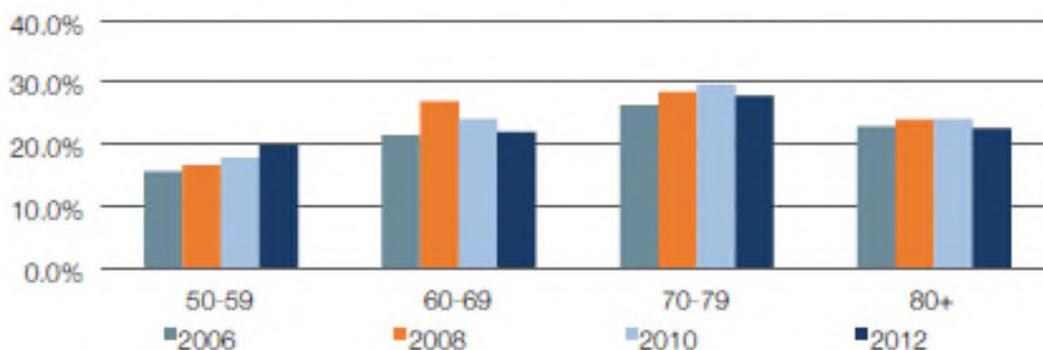


Source: English Longitudinal Study of Ageing

Looking at how use of public transport has changed since 2006, the analysis paints a mixed picture. In terms of older women who use public transport at least once a week, excluding the 80 and over age group, little has changed between 2006 and 2012.

A noticeable trend is the steady decrease between 2006 and 2012 of women over 80 regularly using public transport. One explanation of this is the increasing likelihood of women holding a driving licence; the National Travel Survey shows that the number of women over 70 with a driving licence increased by 20% between 1995 and 2010²². With more older women having access to a car, the numbers regularly using public transport would be expected to decline.

Fig4: Proportion of men over 50 using public transport at least once a week

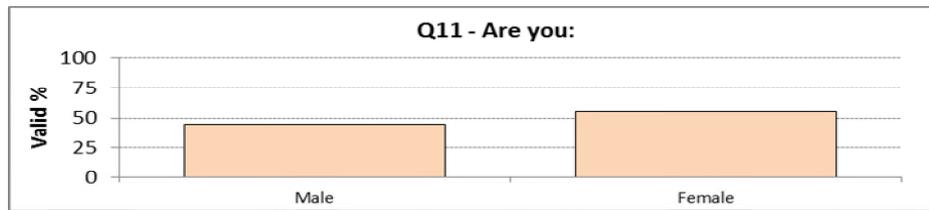


Source: English Longitudinal Study of Ageing

Public transport use is lower among men than women, with less than 30% of men in their 70s using public transport at least once a week while 35% of women in the same age bracket use it at least weekly. However in recent years the proportion of men aged 50-59 who use public transport steadily increased, from 15% in 2006 to 20% in 2012. This is much closer to the corresponding figure of 22% for women in the same age group. As with older women, the proportion of older men regularly using public transport increases with age, before declining at 80 and above.

Central Bedfordshire Public Consultation 2016

Sex profile of respondents:



Women were more likely to use the buses regularly compared to men (Q10). Women were also more likely to disagree with how we process applications, and the renewal process (Q5c & Q5d).

Community Transport Users Survey 2016

76% of respondents were women

- Sexual Orientation:

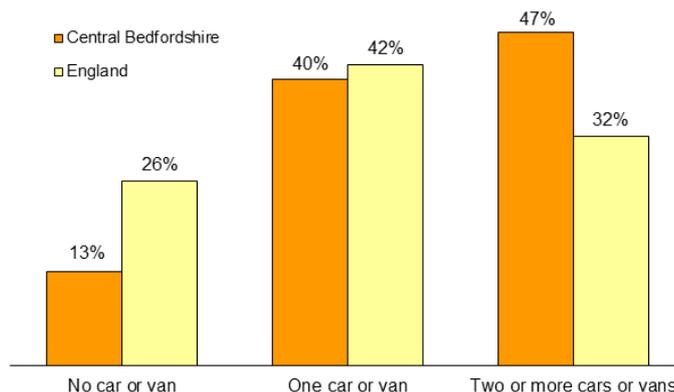
No specific issues identified.

- Other: e.g. Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion

National Research:

Buses Matter: a report by Campaign for Better Transport

- **People on low incomes** will be disproportionately negatively affected, Poorer people are less likely to have a car. Some children from poor families are put at further disadvantage because their parents cannot afford bus fares to get them to colleges and services. Children from low income families are at risk of poverty if affordable transport is not available.
- **Local businesses** rely on buses. Shoppers travel by buses, particularly to the high street which means that poor bus provision is a barrier for local economic growth.
- **Rural communities** suffer from buses that are infrequent, expensive, and in some areas non-existent, causing isolation and suffering for many.
- **Climate change** requires shift away from high carbon modes of transport, like driving, to lower carbon modes like public transport. Cuts to buses take us further away from meeting vital emissions reductions targets. The UK's domestic transport emissions are still rising
- Twenty five percent of households in the UK do not have access to a car.
- Central Bedfordshire households are more likely than England households to have access to a car or van. There were 157,000 cars or vans in Central Bedfordshire at the 2011 Census.





Central Bedfordshire Household Travel Survey April 2016

- usage of public bus services in Central Bedfordshire has declined 68% of residents never or rarely (i.e. not more than once a year) travel by bus, 65% in 2014 and 56% in 2012
- In terms of national comparisons, local bus use compares less favourably, with nationally
 - 27% of respondents saying that they use a bus at least once a week (compared to 13% locally).
 - 47% said they use a bus less than once a year or never compared to 68% locally (Department for Transport (Sept 2015), National Travel Survey 2014)
- 18% of residents said they are not interested in using public transport

Central Bedfordshire Public Consultation 2016

69% of respondents used the bus at least once a week

35% agreed with **proposal for changes to funding for bus services**. 19% unsure 44% disagreed.

Comments included:

Summary of comments - Proposed changes to how we decide which bus services to fund?	Valid %
Present bus service are poorly run and promoted so not well used. Need improving not cutting	19.7
Proposals could seriously impact or cut off rural communities	17.7
Elderly and vulnerable rely on bus services - cutting them will impact them severely	14.2
Proposals will block me/other commuters from being able to get to work/access job opportunities	12.7
I/we rely on bus services/concessions - please don't take them away	11.8
Proposals discriminate against/penalise older people and disadvantaged	11.7
9.30 is too late a start time for bus passes	10.4
Affected services needed for medical appointments	10.4
Cutting services will isolate vulnerable people	7.2
Passenger numbers do not reflect the importance of the routes to those who use them/their future usage	6.9
Cutting services will young people in terms of getting to school, work and socialising	4.2

45% agree with proposed approach to encouraging more voluntary and community transport solutions

A range of issues were highlighted in terms of how this would work in practice

- 40% agreed with proposal relating to times when bus pass can be used
- 24% agreed with proposal relating to how Travel Aid is funded
- 32% agreed with proposal relating processing bus pass applications
- 31% agreed with proposal relating to renewing bus passes.

Overall comments included:

Online-only bus pass applications/renewals would be problematic - not everyone can access the internet/a computer	37.0%
Should not adopt proposed time restrictions for bus passes - they are unreasonable and would make life difficult	33.2%
Not sure what will be achieved by new renewals process - will entail more admin costs and difficulties for users	12.2%
Proposals are unfair/discriminatory towards the old, vulnerable and disadvantaged	12.1%

Rural Urban Analysis:

Most of the results were similar for those in rural and urban areas, but there were some differences:

- Urban respondents were more likely to use the buses once a week or more (73% vs 65% for rural respondents).
- Respondents in rural areas were more likely to Disagree or Strongly Disagree with the proposed changes (Q1) – 49.5% of rural respondents, vs 40.5% of urban respondents.
- Rural respondents were more likely to Disagree or Strongly Disagree with the approach of encouraging more voluntary and community transport solutions (Q3) - 30.1% rural, 25.0% urban.

Representative Telephone survey 2016

19% of respondents used the bus at least once a week

83% of respondents agreed / strongly agreed with proposals for changes to funding for bus services. There was majority also support for:

- introducing a competitive tender process for community transport,
- limiting the times at which bus passes can be used and
- requiring residents to apply to renew their bus pass every 5 years.

62% Disagreed / strongly disagreed with the proposal to make applying for a bus pass online-only by 2020

2.2) To what extent are vulnerable groups experiencing poorer outcomes compared to the population or workforce as a whole?

The findings of local research and consultation highlight that:

- Community Transport is highly valued by older and disabled people
- Respondents to the public consultation which included a strong representation from frequent bus users, older and disabled people, have expressed concerns that the proposals will have an adverse impact in terms of reducing the number of services.
- Concern has also been expressed that online application processes can be problematic for older and disabled people
- Many respondents also highlighted that it would cause problems to limit the times when bus passes can be used

2.3) Are there areas where more information may be needed?

Section 2.4 below provides details of the research and consultation that has been undertaken.

2.4) Are there any gaps in data or consultation findings?

The following Consultation and market research been undertaken.

Central Bedfordshire **Household Travel Survey** undertaken in April 2016

Market research is being carried out with **Community and Fleet transport users** to identify the demand for this type of door to door transport provision.

The **Youth Parliament** will be consulted in relation to demand for transport provision for younger people.

Work is being undertaken to identify core, priority and tertiary routes based on current passenger usage, information in relation to concessionary pass usage outside the English National Scheme

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hours is also being gathered.

A full **public consultation** was held for 12 weeks commencing in April 2016.

There were 1,526 responses to the public consultation. 541 were returned in paper form with 985 completed on line.

A **telephone survey** of residents in Central Bedfordshire was undertaken over a period of a month ending on the 15th August 2016. This survey provides a benchmark of the general population. Efforts have been made to include mobile phone numbers to help ensure that young people are included in the survey.

2.5) What action will be taken to obtain this information?

See above

2.6) To what extent do current procedures and working practices address the above issues and help to promote equality of opportunity?

A variety of consultation and market research has been undertaken in respect of the new strategy It is the stated aim that priority for transport will be where there is a proven demand by the elderly and or disabled.

Stage 3 – Assessing Positive & Negative Impacts

Equality checklist issues to be considered

Awareness	Appropriateness	Accessibility	Partnership - working
Take Up levels	Adverse Outcomes	Staff Training Needs	Contracts & monitoring

Analysis of Impacts	Impact?	Summary of impacts and reasons for this
3.1) Age		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National research indicates that young people take the bus for 15% of their journeys, more than twice the level of usage of all other ages and that only 49% of further education students can always afford their travel costs The local telephone survey findings indicate that the majority of respondents age 18 – 24 support the funding criteria proposals Older people face many barriers to accessing transport and that considerations of accessibility, safety and affordability are paramount. Access to transport allows older people to remain independent and active in later life and helps people stay connected. Community transport can play a crucial role in helping older people access essential amenities Older people were more likely to use the buses. There were more likely to agree with the overall process (Q1), but much more likely to disagree with how we process applications and the proposed renewal process (Q5c & Q5d). 99% agree / strongly agree that the community transport service provides good value for money 83% agree / strongly agree that it is easy to travel around using community transport
3.2) Disability		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25% of disabled people experience difficulties using public transport People with longstanding illnesses are the least likely to use public transport Respondents with a disability were much more likely to use the bus regularly. They were also much more likely to disagree with the overall process (Q1), when you can use your bus pass (Q5a) how we process applications (Q5c) and

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		<p>how we renew bus passes (Q5d).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 63% of respondents using community transport had a disability
3.3) Carers		No specific issues identified
3.4) Gender		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women were more likely to use the buses regularly compared to men (Q10). Women were also more likely to disagree with how we process applications, and the renewal process (Q5c & Q5d).
3.5) Transgender		No specific issues identified
3.6) Race		No specific issues identified
3.7) Religion / Belief		No specific issues identified
3.8) Sexual Orientation		No specific issues identified
3.9) Other <i>e.g. Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion</i>		<p>Poorer people are less likely to have a car. Car ownership in Central Bedfordshire is above the national average National research indicates that rural communities are more likely to experience buses services that are infrequent, expensive, and in some areas non existent, causing isolation and suffering for many. Respondents in rural areas were more likely to Disagree or Strongly Disagree with the proposed changes (Q1) – 49.5% of rural respondents, vs 40.5% of urban respondents. Rural respondents were more likely to Disagree or Strongly Disagree with the approach of encouraging more voluntary and community transport solutions (Q3) - 30.1% rural, 25.0% urban</p>

Stage 4 – Conclusions, Recommendations and Action Planning

4.1) What are the main conclusions from the assessment?

Local bus services are available to all members of the general public and, in principle, therefore, a reduction in service affects everyone equally. However, in practice, services are used primarily by people without access to cars. This includes young people, older people and families from lower income households. It is also the case that, despite potential mobility difficulties, disabled people do make more use of public transport than average. Finally, buses are used more by women than by men.

The results of research and consultation have demonstrated that respondents to the public consultation, which included a strong representation from frequent bus users, older and disabled people, have expressed concerns that the proposals will have an adverse impact in terms of reducing the number of services.

Concern has also been expressed that online application processes can be problematic for older and disabled people and many respondents also highlighted that it would cause problems to limit the times when bus passes can be used.

Community Transport provision is highly valued by older and disabled people

4.2) What are the priority recommendations and actions?

Further consideration should be given to retaining the existing time frames for bus passes. Whilst encouraging and supporting people to submit online applications whenever possible, a facility should remain to enable paper applications to be submitted in cases where a resident is unable to use the online application process.

As part of the introduction of the Subsidised Bus Service Assessment Process it will also be important

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that the Council facilitates and supports the development of community transport solutions.

4.3) What changes will be made to address any adverse impacts that have been identified?
 See above

4.4) Are there any budgetary implications?

4.5) Actions to be Taken:

Action	Date	Priority
Retaining the existing time frames for bus passes	ongoing	high
Enable paper applications	ongoing	high
Supports the development of community transport solutions	ongoing	high

**Stage 5 - Quality Assurance & Scrutiny:
 Checking that all the relevant issues have been identified**

5.1) What methods have been used to gain feedback on the main issues raised in the assessment?

Step 1:

The Corporate Policy Advisor (Equality & Diversity) for comment & decision re further scrutiny
 The Corporate Policy Adviser (Equality & Diversity has supported the development of the EIA.

Step 2:

The Equalities Forum

16 June 2016

The Panel noted that these proposals were the subject of public consultation, which would conclude on 12 July 2016.

Further to a comment it was noted that in the past concessionary fares bus passes had been automatically renewed. The current proposal was that this practice should discontinue, as passes had in the past been sent to people no longer able to benefit from them, and in some cases, individuals who were deceased. Holders of concessionary passes would therefore be required to re-apply before their pass expired.

School transport, safe routes to school and associated matters were discussed. A proposal was noted that bus companies should be permitted to bid for a school run contract lasting longer than a year, possibly for as long as 4-5 years. This would enable smaller companies to invest in the business with the security of knowing that the contract would run for longer than one year.

The Panel discussed issues about the times of day during which concessionary rates should apply, including how this affected hospital out-patients attending appointments using public transport. A comment was made that the current times during which the concessionary fares operated were conducive to attending hospital appointments. It was acknowledged however that some retired people liked to use public transport early in the day for leisure reasons and be back home again before darkness fell.

The Panel noted that 900 responses had been received so far and the consultation would remain open for a further month. A report would then be taken to the Executive and recommendations would go before a meeting of full Council in November 2016.

The Panel was urged to encourage participation in the consultations. Paper copies of the consultation were in libraries.

Step 3:

5.1) Has a member of the senior management team been notified of the outcome of the assessment?

Stage 6 – Monitoring Future Impact

6.1) How will implementation of the actions be monitored?

6.2) What sort of data will be collected and how often will it be analysed?

6.3) How often will the policy be reviewed?

6.4) Who will be responsible for this?

6.5) Have the actions been incorporated in the service / business plan or team targets?

The results of all equality impact assessments will be made accessible to the public.