

BCP Equality Impact Assessment Template

Executive Summary and Conclusions

Once the Equality Impact Assessment Template has been completed, please summarise the key findings here. Please send a copy of your final document to the Policy and Performance Team.

This EIA covers the equality implications of any changes to the local bus network resulting from the need to review financial re-imbursement for concessionary fares arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, (ENCTS) enables financial re-imbursement to bus operators for carrying eligible concessionary passengers through Travel Concession Authorities, in this case BCP Council. The extent of the predominantly commercially provided bus network in the BCP Council area is linked to the overall level of re-imbursement provided. If there was a significant reduction in the financial value of re-imbursement to the participating bus operators then there would likely be corresponding reductions in the overall level of bus services provided, in terms of routes and timetable frequency.

Any decline in bus services would affect the groups that the Equality Act is intended to protect based on the profile of bus passengers.

- **Age** - Travel by bus is higher at both ends of the age categories (those aged 16-24 and those aged 65 and over).
- **Disability** - People with a **disability** are significantly more likely to travel by bus regularly compared to those without a disability.
- **Race** – people from ‘Other white backgrounds’ are significantly more likely to travel regularly by bus compared to white British people.
- **Sexual Orientation** - travel by bus is significantly higher for ‘All other sexual orientations’ compared to heterosexuals.
- **Religion** ‘All other religions’ travel by bus to a greater extent than Christians and people with no religion.
- **Deprivation** - correlation between deprivation and frequent use of travel by bus with respondents living in the most deprived areas significantly more likely to frequently travel by bus compared to those in less deprived areas.

The recommended proposal is to continue with reimbursements for the remainder of the 2020-21 financial year based broadly on 2019/20 pre-pandemic levels. For the 2021-22 financial year, through a recovery partnership, funding arrangements need to include suitable concessionary fares re-imbursement to maintain the bus network. Approval of these measures will help secure the extent of our local bus network which will continue to provide the positive outcomes to the protected groups listed above.

If consideration is given to significantly reduced re-imbursement levels, through an approach where actual lower passenger numbers as a consequence of Covid-19 are used, then there is a likelihood of commercial bus routes being withdrawn, together with reduced timetables or buses not running during evenings and weekends. This will have a negative impact on the protected groups who use buses to a greater extent.

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Part 1 - The Project	
Policy/Service under development/review:	Concessionary Fares Bus Operator Re-imbursement.
Service Unit:	Growth and Infrastructure
Service Lead:	John Mcvey
Equality Impact Assessment Team:	Richard Barnes, Karen Fry
Date assessment started:	15/12/20

Part 1 - The Project	
Date assessment completed:	
What are the aims/objectives of the policy/service?	To seek approval to make changes to the method of calculating bus operator reimbursement for the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme in 2021/22 as part of a proposed Recovery Partnership government initiative and to support the Corporate Incident Management Team, (CIMT) recommendation regarding reimbursement levels for 2020/21. These changes are proposed following government guidance and are due to the impact on use of bus services of the Covid-19 pandemic, compared to the pre-Covid levels of use.

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<p>What outcomes will be achieved with the new or changed policy/service?</p>	<p>For the current 2020/21 financial year HM Government advice stated that re-imbursement for concessionary fares journeys from Travel Concession Authorities (TCAs) should be based on adjusted pre-Covid levels. For the 2021/22 financial year, the bus industry recommends the formation of a recovery partnership with local government including suitable funding arrangements for concessionary fares re-imbursement. Through such measures the stability of the local bus network will be maintained; noting the impact of any reduction in bus services which would result in significant equalities and wider community implications. This EIA shows the likely impact of a reduction of bus services to many in our community. As generally the BCP area has a comprehensive bus network, existing equalities benefits will continue if appropriate concessionary fares re-imbursement is maintained.</p>
<p>Are there any associated services, policies or procedures?</p>	<p>Primary legislation covering BCP Council's obligations as a TCA and governance/obligations for the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, (ENCTS). BCP Council "Connect" Concessionary Fares Scheme Legislation, guidance and advice issued by HM Government and agencies for travel during various stages of the pandemic, wider HM Government support for the bus industry and communications to TCAs for re-imbursement during the pandemic. Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan 3, 2011 BCP Council Climate Emergency, declared July 2019 and Sustainable Travel Commitments in the Corporate Plan. Requirement for Transport Authorities to take account of the needs of elderly and disabled people in the transport network. Equality Act 2010.</p>
<p>Please list the main people, or groups, that this policy/service is designed to benefit, and any other stakeholders involved:</p>	<p>Bus operators with eligible services within the BCP Concessionary Travel Scheme – predominantly More Bus and Yellow Buses. (Bournemouth Transport) Concessionary pass holders who qualify due to age or disability, both local residents and other ENCTS passholders who use buses in the BCP Council area.</p>

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Part 1 - The Project	
With consideration for their clients, please list any other organisations, statutory, voluntary or community that the policy/service/process will affect:	<p>Any changes to re-imbursement of concessionary fares will affect the overall bus network. This will affect the wider BCP transport system. If ENCTS passholders are no longer able to make bus journeys that they currently rely on, then their independence is lost with likely significant health and wellbeing impacts. Others may be called on, if available to provide their transport needs.</p> <p>Any loss of bus services is likely to affect travel to work, education, retail, healthcare and leisure, involving businesses, schools, higher education, shops, hospitals and the hospitality industry. For residents that have the alternative of private vehicles an increase in car use will have adverse environmental impacts and increase congestion. It needs to be recognised that many in the BCP Council area do not have access to cars – in several of our Council wards almost 50% of households do not have a car available.</p>

Part 2 – Supporting Evidence¹

Please list and/or link to below any recent & relevant consultation & engagement that can be used to demonstrate a clear understanding of those with a legitimate interest in the policy/service/process and the relevant findings:

¹ This could include: service monitoring reports, research, customer satisfaction surveys & feedback, workforce monitoring, staff surveys, opinions and information from trade unions, previous completed EIAs (including those of other organisations) feedback from focus groups & individuals or organisations representing the interests of key target groups or similar.

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The potential for changes in Concessionary Fares re-imbursement arising from Covid-19 is of significant concern in general for the bus industry, as HM Government advice firstly to avoid public transport and then to travel only for essential journeys has resulted in much lower patronage compared to levels before the pandemic. This has resulted in significant financial challenges. Both Morebus and Yellow Buses have stated that if re-imbursement levels were significantly reduced then immediate or almost immediate reductions in each operators' networks would follow.

If there is insufficient consultation or engagement information please explain in the Action plan what further consultation will be undertaken, who with and how.

Please list or link to any relevant research, census and other evidence or information that is available and relevant to this EIA:

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Travel Survey, October 2018 to January 2019, a comprehensive local travel survey with a sample size of 3,621. There is detailed analysis as part of the survey linked to equalities profiles. Relevant findings are –

60% of respondents have used a bus in the last 12 months.

Respondents at both ends of the age categories (those aged 16-24 and those aged 65 and over) are significantly more likely to travel by bus at least weekly compared to all other age groups.

Respondents with a disability are significantly more likely to travel by bus at least weekly compared to those without a disability whilst those from other white backgrounds are significantly more likely to travel by bus at least weekly compared to white British respondents. Travel by bus is significantly higher for 'All other sexual orientations' compared to heterosexual respondents. 'All other religions' travel by bus at least weekly to a greater extent than Christians and people with no religion.

Significance testing shows a correlation between deprivation and frequent use of travel by bus with respondents living in the most deprived areas significantly more likely to frequently travel by bus compared to those in less deprived areas (43% of those in the lowest decile compared to 16% of those in the highest decile).

National Audit Office 'Improving Local Bus Services Outside London' 2/10/2020. Stated that 'Bus use is particularly common for people aged 17-20 and over 70 and for women and girls, most ethnic minority groups and people on lower incomes'.

Part 2 – Supporting Evidence¹

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Please list below any service user/employee monitoring data available and relevant to this policy/service/process and what it shows in relation to any Protected Characteristic:

The criteria for providing an ENCTS pass is based on pensionable age and disability only. Around 90% of passes are issued for age criteria but many of the elderly entitled will also have a disability.

If there is insufficient research and monitoring data, please explain in the Action plan what information will be gathered:

Part 3 – Assessing the Impact by Equality Characteristic

Use the evidence to determine the impacts, positive or negative for each Equality Characteristic listed below. Listing negative impacts will help protect the organisation from potential litigation in the future, it does not mean the policy cannot continue.

Click here for more guidance on how to understand the impact of the service/policy/procedure against each characteristic.

If the impact is not known please explain in the Action plan what steps will be taken to find out.

	Actual or potential positive outcome	Actual or potential negative outcome
1. Age ²	With those aged 16-24 and over 65 more likely to travel by bus, compared to other age groups, providing levels of re-imbursement, securing consistency in the bus network, will keep this positive outcome for these groups.	With any reduction in re-imbursement leading to a loss of bus services, those aged 16-24 and over 65 will be impacted to a greater extent. Pensionable age is one of the criteria for entitlement to travel as part of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme – ENCTS. If there is a loss of bus services, there would be a significant impact on older people to be able participate in society and on their wellbeing.

² Under this characteristic, The Equality Act only applies to those over 18.

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2. Disability ³	People with a disability are more likely to regularly travel by bus compared to people that are not disabled. Providing levels of re-imbursement that secure consistency in the bus network, will keep this positive outcome for disabled people.	With any reductions in re-imbursement leading to a loss of bus services, disabled people will have a negative outcome with fewer bus services available. Disability is one of the criteria for entitlement to travel as part of the ENCTS. Disabled people could have fewer opportunities to travel and as a result lose some independence.
3. Sex	According to the BCP Travel Survey there is no significant difference locally between men and women in terms of regular bus use.	The National Audit Office states that bus use is higher for women, so if services are withdrawn due to reductions in re-imbursement, then women potentially would be affected more than men.

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If the impact is not known please explain in the Action plan what steps will be taken to find out.

	Actual or potential positive outcome	Actual or potential negative outcome
4. Gender reassignment ⁴	There are not any known positive outcomes specific to Gender reassignment.	There are not any known negative outcomes specific to Gender reassignment
5. Pregnancy and Maternity	There are not any known positive outcomes specific to pregnancy and maternity	There are not any known negative outcomes specific to Pregnancy and Maternity.

³ Consider any reasonable adjustments that may need to be made to ensure fair access.

⁴ Transgender refers people have a gender identity or gender expression that differs to the sex assigned at birth.

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6. Marriage and Civil Partnership	There are not any known positive outcomes specific to Marriage and Civil Partnership	There are not any known negative outcomes specific to Marriage and Civil Partnership
7. Race	Locally people who identify as 'White other', likely to be residents from the EU, are more likely to use bus services regularly than 'White British' people. Providing levels of re-imbursement that secure consistency in the bus network, will keep this positive outcome in terms of race.	With any reductions in re-imbursement leading to a reduction in bus services people who identify as 'White other' will have a negative outcome with fewer bus services available.
8. Religion or Belief	'All other religions' travel more regularly by bus than Christians and people with no religion. Providing levels of re-imbursement that secure consistency in the bus network, will keep this positive outcome for people with a religion that is not Christian.	Any reductions in bus services resulting from changes in re-imbursement levels will disproportionately affect people whose religion is not Christian.
9. Sexual Orientation	'All other Sexual Orientations' travel by bus to a greater extent than heterosexual people. Providing levels of re-imbursement that secure consistency in the bus network will keep this positive outcome for people that do not identify as heterosexual.	Any reduction in bus services would have a negative outcome for people that do not identify as heterosexual as they use buses more than heterosexual people.
10. Armed Forces Community	Members of the armed forces community are entitled to an ENCTS pass on disability grounds subject to certain conditions. Consistency in the bus network will continue to benefit those in this community eligible.	Any reduction in bus services would have a negative outcome for people in the armed forces community who qualify for a pass.

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Part 3 – Assessing the Impact by Equality Characteristic

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	Actual or potential positive outcome	Actual or potential negative outcome
11. Any other factors/groups e.g. socio-economic status/carers etc ⁵	People living in the most deprived areas of our Council area rely on and use buses significantly more than residents in affluent areas. Providing levels of re-imbursement that maintain the existing bus network will keep this positive outcome for residents who experience deprivation.	Any reduction in bus services would result in a negative outcome for many of our residents in more deprived areas who are less likely to have their own transport and use buses more than people in affluent locations.
12. Human Rights	There are not any known positive outcomes specific to Human Rights	There are not any known negative outcomes specific to Human Rights.

Any policy which shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination must be stopped, removed or changed.

Part 4 – Equality Impact Action Plan

Please complete this Action Plan for any negative or unknown impacts identified in the assessment table above.

Issue identified	Action required to reduce impact	Timescale	Responsible officer
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⁵ People on low incomes or no income, unemployed, carers, part-time, seasonal workers and shift workers

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Subsequent level of bus services provided by the bus operators compared to existing.	Monitor through published timetables and feedback from bus passengers. Liaise with bus companies the interdependencies with concessionary fares re-imburement	April 2021, when new financial year ENCTS scheme introduced.	John McVey

Key contacts for further advice and guidance:

Equality & Diversity:

[Sam Johnson - Policy and Performance Manager](#)

Consultation & Research:

[Lisa Stuchberry – Insight Manager](#)