

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Stage 1: Passenger Transport – December 2015	
Service	Infrastructure Services
Section	Transportation
Title of the activity etc.	Support to Passenger Transport – Review of Services

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<p>Aims of the activity</p>	<p>A spending review of non-statutory passenger transport is required in order to meet budget cuts. This is being undertaken in a way that aims to minimise the effects for customers.</p> <p>Following a review of spend the following revisions that will directly affect customers are proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A reduction in TaxiCard scheme spend of £71k.</li> <li>• Withdrawal of support to bus operators for the U21 Youth Fares Scheme resulting in the termination of the scheme.</li> <li>• The introduction of fares on A2B dial-a-bus services.</li> </ul> <p>Procurement and provision of supported local bus and demand responsive transport services (contracted in and in-house), delivery of statutory functions in relation to home to school transport, transport provision for social care activities, provision of public transport information, public transport infrastructure, partnership initiatives with commercial bus operators, strategy and policy as covered in the various Transport Acts, community transport support and liaison, concessionary travel scheme administration (including TaxiCard), promotion and administration of fares and ticketing initiatives, and operation of the Council's in-house passenger transport fleet.</p> <p>The aim is to provide access for the general public and identified services users to employment, education, health, shopping and other services/facilities whilst meeting Council wide commitments within Climate Change Action Plans, Local, Regional and National Transport Strategies and supporting the delivery of the Single Outcome Agreement and the Councils Strategic Priorities.</p> <p>The PTU is working to meet the objectives of the Council's Passenger Transport Strategy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To support and deliver services and facilities that improve the quality of life of those without private means of travel.</li> <li>▪ To increase the attractiveness and use of passenger transport services, aiming to increase their share of the total travel market.</li> <li>▪ To address perceived barriers to passenger transport through the provision of high quality services and facilities, that are accessible, reliable and user friendly.</li> <li>▪ To address issues of affordability for the travelling public.</li> <li>▪ To provide existing and potential passengers with information that is accurate and appropriate to their needs.</li> <li>▪ To understand our customers' needs and expectations, through consultation and market research.</li> </ul>
<p>Author(s) &amp; Title(s)</p>	<p>Head of Transportation</p>

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Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment.	
Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).	<p>The following data provides an indication of the type of vehicle and type/level of service/infrastructure that is required to meet identified transport needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local bus service passenger trip data and on-bus passenger surveys.</li> <li>• A2B dial-a-bus customer records and trip records (trips made and trip requests that could not be accommodated).</li> <li>• TaxiCard user surveys.</li> <li>• Results of the Council's Annual Bus User Satisfaction Survey.</li> <li>• A2B dial-a-bus user surveys.</li> <li>• Minutes of Area Bus Forum meetings.</li> </ul>
Internal consultation with staff and other services affected.	All of the key action plans and strategies have been discussed with internal client groups.
External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils).	The Council's Area Bus Forums are used as the main means of consulting on public transport but none of the proposals for reduced service delivery have been taken to them or to the Aberdeenshire Community Transport Forum, the CPP, the Local Authority Bus Operators Forum or other transport operator groups.
External data (census, available statistics).	Department for Transport PSVAR (Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations) Guidance 2000, 2011 Census, Aberdeenshire Small Area and Population Statistics.

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<p>Other (general information as appropriate).</p>	<p>The PVSAR regulations set out the way that local bus services will comply with The Equality Act 2010, including timescales for when all vehicles (by type) must be compliant.</p> <p>The Council seeks to introduce The Equality Act 2010 compliant vehicles on supported local bus services in line with statutory timescales.</p> <p>The contracts for conventional local bus services, i.e. those that operate to fixed routes and timetables, have been progressively specified to be operated by The Equality Act 2010 compliant vehicles.</p> <p>All A2B dial-a-bus services (contracted in and in-house) are operated with wheelchair accessible vehicles. A2B dial-a-bus services operate door-to-door wherever possible. The drivers offer passengers assistance in boarding and alighting the vehicles.</p> <p>All PTU in-house drivers are MiDAS trained.</p> <p>The Council recognises that some groups, particularly older people and disabled persons, have difficulty accessing bus services and therefore the balance between how budgets are prioritised has had to consider the impact of the services provided and the links to wider issues. Hence the support to Community Transport has not seen the level of cut previously put in place whilst other aspects such as back office support to operators is a focus for reductions.</p>
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Stage 3: Evidence Gaps.	
<p>Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold?</p>	<p>It is felt that we have sufficient high-level information to inform the decision on which elements of passenger transport provision be amended to meet the budget cuts.</p>

Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps.		
<p>What measures will be taken to fill the information gaps before the activity is implemented? These should be included in the action plan at the back of this form.</p>	Measures:	Timescale:
		12 months

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Stage 5: Are there potential impacts on protected groups? Please complete for each protected group by inserting "yes" in the applicable box/boxes below.				
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown
Age – Younger		yes		
Age – Older		yes		
Disability		yes		
Race – (includes Gypsy Travellers)			yes	
Religion or Belief			yes	
Gender – male/female			yes	
Pregnancy and maternity			yes	
Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual)			yes	
Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender)			yes	
Marriage and Civil Partnership			yes	

Stage 6: What are the positive and negative impacts?		
Impacts.	Positive (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)	Negative (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)
Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on those with protected characteristics you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe		Disability, Age –Older The change to Taxicard scheme benefits and the introduction of charges for A2B dial-a-bus passengers will significantly reduce the affordability of travel.

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those affected.		Age – Younger: The reduction in funding to the U21 youth concession scheme will significantly reduce the affordability of travel.

**Stage 7: Have any of the affected groups been consulted?**

<p>If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps?</p>	<p>Not on the specific changes but there is a general awareness of the lack of funding and that we require to prioritise.</p> <p>The Area Bus Forums are the main means for the Council to consult on bus services operating in the six Council Areas. Forum meetings are held in each Area on a six monthly basis. Representative groups of older, younger and disabled persons attend Forum meetings. Access Panel representatives are also invited to attend the Area Bus Forums.</p> <p>A2B dial-a-bus and TaxiCard scheme user surveys are carried out periodically, most recently in December 2015. Whilst the surveys did not specifically refer to budget cuts the results provide information that is useful for the decision-making process.</p>
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**Stage 8: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts?**

<p>These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form.</p>	<b>Mitigating Steps</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
	Provide contact details of third sector providers to passengers where applicable	From when the cuts are made public.
	Liaise with Council Benefits Team to ascertain whether financial advice can be provided to affected residents.	Jan/Feb 2016
	Increased promotion of lift sharing and community/voluntary opportunities to the affected groups.	May 2016 onwards

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Stage 9: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups?		
These should be included in the action plan.	Local bus services and some A2B dial-a-bus services are open to all members of the general public. People representing different protected groups are invited to Area Bus Forum meetings.	
Stage 10: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?		
The activity does not create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity.		
Stage 11: What equality monitoring arrangements will be put in place?		
These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).	The Public Transport Unit (PTU) carries out regular on-bus passenger surveys. Any comments from passengers or drivers regarding equality matters will be recorded. DRT passengers are periodically surveyed to seek data on passenger satisfaction.	
Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?		
Please complete the appropriate box/boxes	1	No negative impacts have been identified –please explain.
	2	Negative Impacts have been identified, these can be mitigated - please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen.
	3	The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen
	The withdrawal of the U21 Youth Fares Scheme, changes to the TaxiCard Scheme discount and the introduction of charges on in-house A2B dial-a-bus services will all have a financial impact on protected groups.	
	The U21 Scheme was introduced as a pilot, initially on Service 35 route (Portsoy – Aberdeen), and then in the Buchan area. The original intention was to expand the scheme throughout Aberdeenshire but this has not been possible.	
It is proposed that the TaxiCard Scheme benefits be changed rather than eligibility criteria so that all current TaxiCard users continue to receive some benefits, albeit reduced.		
With regards to A2B, the results of the customer survey indicate that the vast majority of users can afford to pay something and are willing to do so.		

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\* Stage 13: Set out the justification that the activity can and should go ahead despite the negative impact.

There are limited funds so priorities have to be set and alternatives do exist but at an increased cost to individuals.

Stage 14: Sign off and authorisation.

Sign off and authorisation.	1) Service and Team	Infrastructure Services	
	2) Title of Policy/Activity	Support to Passenger Transport – January 2016	
	3) <b>Authors:</b> I/We have completed the equality impact assessment for this policy/activity.	Name: Position: Principal Officer Date: 22/1/16 Signature:	Name: Position: Date: Signature:
		Name: Position: Head of Service Date: 24/1/16 Signature:	Name: Position: Date: Signature:
	4) Consultation with Service Manager	Name: Date:	
	5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service	Name: Position: Date:	Name: Position: Date:
	6) If the EqIA relates to a matter that has to go before a Committee, Committee report author sends the Committee Report and this form, and any supporting assessment documents, to the Officers responsible for monitoring and the Committee Officer of the relevant Committee. e.g. Social Work and Housing Committee.	Date:	
	7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: eia@abdshire	Date:	
(Equalities team to complete) Has the completed form been published on the website? YES/NO			Date:



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Action Plan					
Action	Start	Complete	Lead Officer	Expected Outcome	Resource Implications
Ongoing monitoring and consideration of feedback from bus users either direct or through the Area Bus Forums.	ongoing	ongoing		Ongoing understanding of the passengers satisfaction with various aspects of public transport service delivery.	n/a
Ongoing monitoring and feedback from A2B dial-a-bus and Taxicard scheme users	ongoing	ongoing		Ongoing understanding of the transport needs of A2B dial-a-bus passengers and TaxiCard scheme users.	n/a
Promotion of lift share and wider community/voluntary opportunities to the affected groups	May 2016			Increased numbers of people car sharing and using community/voluntary transport.	May require some small additional resource initially.