



Equality Impact Assessment

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and why does the County Council do them?

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) is an obligation within the [Equality Act 2010](#) ("the Act"), which asks public authorities, like Hampshire County Council, to give 'due regard' to equality considerations, in particular 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 those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This includes assessing the impact of policies and practices on individuals and communities with a protected characteristic, as defined in the Act and some other specific groups. The County Council uses EIAs to ensure it has paid 'due regard' to equalities considerations when there are changes to a service or policy, a new project or certain decisions.

EIA author	Position & Department	Contact
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Title:	Concessionary Fares and Community Transport Contract Payments
Related EIAs:	None

EIA for Savings Programme:	No
Service affected	Concessionary fares reimbursement payments to local bus and community transport operators from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. Contract payments to Community Transport operators - no change / no impact.
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	To transition the local bus sector to Concessionary Fare reimbursement based on usage. This is following DfT guidance, which seeks to minimise the impact of the short-term revenue reductions on the concessionary fares reimbursement for local bus services due to Covid related reduction in patronage. To allow Community Transport services to recover fully in view of the impact of COVID-19 and for an analysis of demand to be carried out and applied to future service provision.
New/changed service/policy/project	To change concessionary fares reimbursement payments. In 2021-22 these were based on the percentage pre-COVID-19 bus network that an operator provided. It is proposed that we follow the DfT guidance for a phased approach for 2022-23, to facilitate the transition back down to actual concessionary patronage levels, which initially asks Concessionary Travel Authorities (CTA's) to pay concessionary fares at 90% of pre-Covid levels in April 2022. It is then proposed that authorities should gradually decrease their reimbursement payments to bus operators by 5% every other month until these payments meet with actual patronage levels. To extend the current arrangements of making 100% Community Transport contract payments to operators, to cover the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Engagement
No consultation is planned as the proposal is following guidance issued by the Department for Transport.

Age

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>Presently, operators are receiving reimbursement based on percentage of the pre-Covid network they are operating, rather than for the number of passengers actually travelling. This means in many cases operators have in 2021-22 been receiving between 90% and 95% of their pre-Covid reimbursement. Fewer concessionary pass holders are currently travelling. Therefore, the DfT guidance for transitioning reimbursements back to the actual number of passenger trips will reduce the income of bus operators, as this returns to payments based on passenger numbers. Therefore, we anticipate that bus operators are likely to reduce the level of service they provide.</p> <p>Therefore, this may indirectly impact the users of off-peak services and the rural bus network. Off-peak day time services tend to be predominately by older people.</p>
Mitigation	<p>The proposal to facilitate the transition back down to actual concessionary patronage levels avoids any immediate cliff edges, allowing time for patronage levels to recover to what may be in the longer term considered the 'new normal'.</p>

Disability

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>This proposal will impact the users of off-peak services and the rural bus network as the bus network contracts due to reduced patronage and income, with commercial operators focusing their resources on the most profitable urban peak time services.</p>

	Individuals who have a disability are more reliant on public transport than those without a disability.
Mitigation	The proposal to facilitate the transition back down to actual concessionary patronage levels avoids any immediate cliff edges, allowing time for patronage levels to recover to what may be in the longer term considered the 'new normal'. The alternative is to revert to reimbursing transport operators for the use of concessionary bus passes based on the actual number of concessionary pass holders travelling from April 2022. This option was rejected as projected passenger recovery levels at this time would leave operators with an even greater shortfall in their operational budgets and lead to an immediate and more severe reduction in service levels.

Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.
Mitigation	

Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral

Rationale	There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.
Mitigation	

Race

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>This proposal will impact the users of off-peak services and the rural bus network as the bus network contracts due to reduced patronage and income, with commercial operators focusing their resources on the most profitable urban peak time services.</p> <p>BAME individuals, living outside of London, are proportionally more reliant on public transport than their white counterparts.</p>
Mitigation	<p>The proposal to facilitate the transition back down to actual concessionary patronage levels avoids any immediate cliff edges, allowing time for patronage levels to recover to what may be in the longer term considered the 'new normal'. The alternative is to revert to reimbursing transport operators for the use of concessionary bus passes based on the actual number of concessionary pass holders travelling from April 2022. This option was rejected as projected passenger recovery levels at this time would leave operators with an even greater shortfall in their operational budgets and lead to an immediate and more severe reduction in service levels.</p>

Religion or Belief

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Neutral

Rationale	<p>This proposal will impact the users of off-peak services and the rural bus network as the bus network contracts due to reduced patronage and income, with commercial operators focusing their resources on the most profitable urban peak time services.</p> <p>Those seeking to access places of worship on a Sunday using local bus may no longer be able to do so.</p>
Mitigation	<p>The proposal to facilitate the transition back down to actual concessionary patronage levels avoids any immediate cliff edges, allowing time for patronage levels to recover to what may be in the longer term considered the 'new normal'. The alternative is to revert to reimbursing transport operators for the use of concessionary bus passes based on the actual number of concessionary pass holders travelling from April 2022. This option was rejected as projected passenger recovery levels at this time would leave operators with an even greater shortfall in their operational budgets and lead to an immediate and more severe reduction in service levels.</p>

Sex

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>This proposal will impact the users of off-peak services and the rural bus network as the bus network contracts due to reduced patronage and income, with commercial operators focusing their resources on the most profitable urban peak time services.</p> <p>Women are proportionally more reliant on public transport than their male counterparts.</p>
Mitigation	<p>The proposal to facilitate the transition back down to actual concessionary patronage levels avoids any immediate cliff edges, allowing time for patronage levels to recover to what may be in the longer term considered the 'new normal'. The alternative is to revert to reimbursing transport operators for the use of concessionary bus passes based on the actual number of concessionary pass holders travelling from April 2022. This option was rejected as projected passenger recovery levels at this time would leave operators with an even greater shortfall in their operational budgets and lead to an immediate and more</p>

	severe reduction in service levels.
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Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.
Mitigation	

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.
Mitigation	

Poverty

Impact on public	Negative - Medium

Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>This proposal will impact the users of off-peak services and the rural bus network as the bus network contracts due to reduced patronage and income, with commercial operators focusing their resources on the most profitable urban peak time services.</p> <p>Those on a lower income are less likely to have access to an alternative mode of (private) transport. This may lead to increased isolation and difficulty accessing essential services.</p>
Mitigation	<p>The proposal to facilitate the transition back down to actual concessionary patronage levels avoids any immediate cliff edges, allowing time for patronage levels to recover to what may be in the longer term considered the 'new normal'. The alternative is to revert to reimbursing transport operators for the use of concessionary bus passes based on the actual number of concessionary pass holders travelling from April 2022. This option was rejected as projected passenger recovery levels at this time would leave operators with an even greater shortfall in their operational budgets and lead to an immediate and more severe reduction in service levels.</p>

Rurality

Impact on public	Negative - Medium
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>This proposal will impact the users of off-peak services and the rural bus network as the bus network contracts due to reduced patronage and income, with commercial operators focusing their resources on the most profitable urban peak time services.</p> <p>This may result in the complete removal of a bus service from some rural communities. For those residents that do not have access to an alternative form of (private) transport, this may lead to increased isolation and difficulty accessing essential services.</p>
Mitigation	<p>The proposal to facilitate the transition back down to actual concessionary patronage levels avoids any immediate cliff edges, allowing time for patronage levels to recover to what may</p>

be in the longer term considered the 'new normal'. The alternative is to revert to reimbursing transport operators for the use of concessionary bus passes based on the actual number of concessionary pass holders travelling from April 2022. This option was rejected as projected passenger recovery levels at this time would leave operators with an even greater shortfall in their operational budgets and lead to an immediate and more severe reduction in service levels.

Geographical Impact: All Hampshire

Equality Statement

Additional information:

None

Overview Statement:

Assessment to show that due regard has been given and that there is no requirement for a full EIA:

EIA reference number: 00172

Date of production of EIA for publication: 20/10/2022