

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

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

Name of decision, policy, procedure, project or service: The Big Conversation Pilot – Feeder Service – West Malling

Responsible Owner/ Senior Officer: Stephen Pay

Version: 0.1

Author: Robert Clark

Pathway of Equality Analysis:

Summary and recommendations of equality analysis/impact assessment.

- **Context**

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

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

We want to explore how we can improve connectivity and evaluate the feasibility of delivering alternative services. Through engagement with all stakeholders, the “Big Conversation” programme has identified the Malling area as being one where a feeder service could be effectively implemented to improve the 58 service by providing more journey opportunities.

- **Aims and Objectives**

To test how rural accessibility can be improved through feeder services despite increasing budget pressures. If the pilot is successful, we will look to make the changes permanent. If the pilot is not successful, KCC would work with commercial operators to reinstate direct journeys to Maidstone. The success of this pilot will be used to determine if similar changes to the supported bus network could be affected however this decision will be taken separately.

- **Summary of equality impact**

The need to change buses may make this service less accessible to disabled users than the existing provision. Additionally, the 58 service currently serves Maidstone Hospital, the need to change vehicles to access the hospital could impact some groups more than others. A local consultation will inform the Authority of the impact this service would have on existing and potential service users in the area, as well as measures that could be taken to reduce any impact.

Adverse Equality Impact Rating: TBC

Attestation

I have read and paid due regard to the Equality Analysis/Impact Assessment concerning **The Big Conversation Maidstone Bus Pilot**. I agree with risk rating and the actions to mitigate any adverse impact(s) that has /have been identified.

Head of Service



Signed:

Name: Phil Lightowler

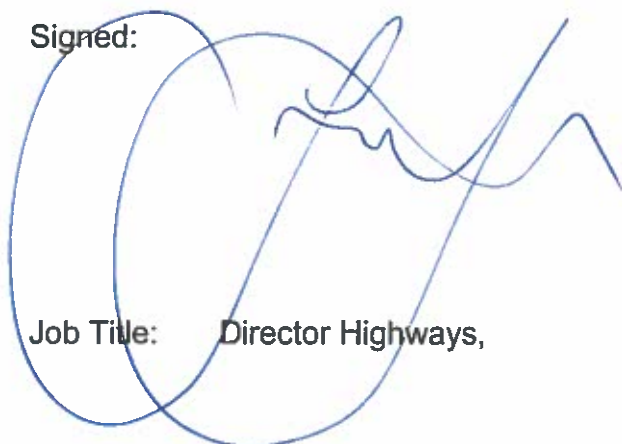
Job Title: Head of Public Transport

Date: 18 January 2018

DMT Member

Signed:

Name: Simon Jones



Job Title: Director Highways,

Date: 18 January 2018

Part 1 Screening

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

Protected Group	Please provide a <u>brief</u> commentary on your findings. Fuller analysis should be undertaken in Part 2.			
	High negative impact EqIA	Medium negative impact Screen	Low negative impact Evidence	High/Medium/Low Positive Impact Evidence
Age		Market engagement and the Big Conversation consultation suggested older service users may be less willing to change vehicles		Increased journey opportunities.
Disability	Requirements to change vehicles may impact on those with mobility difficulties. Proposal 2 - Those with ongoing medical needs find accessing the hospital more difficult. Non-emergency patient transport and volunteer car scheme may form alternative provision.			Increased journey opportunities.

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Sex				It is not considered that alterations to bus services have any greater adverse impact on either men or women group.	
Gender identity/ Transgender				It is not considered that alterations to bus services on this group than it does on the general public	
Race				It is not considered that alterations to bus services have any greater adverse impact on this group	
Religion and Belief				It is not considered that alterations to bus services have any greater adverse impact on this group.	
Sexual Orientation				It is not considered that alterations to bus services have any greater adverse impact on this group.	

<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>	<p>Requirements to change vehicles may impact on those will young children (maternity).</p> <p>Proposal 2 - The loss of a direct service to the hospital may impact pregnant service users more because they may stop driving but need to visit the hospital for appointments</p>			
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnerships</p>			<p>N/A</p>	
<p>Carer's Responsibilities</p>				<p>Increased journey opportunities</p>

Part 2

Equality Analysis /Impact Assessment

Protected groups

- Disability – those with access requirements
- Pregnancy/Maternity

Information and Data used to carry out your assessment

Total Transport Market Research Report (Nov 2016)
Kent County Council Bus Funding Review Equality Impact Assessment
Big Conversation Consultation Report (Sept 2018)

Who have you involved consulted and engaged?

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

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

Analysis

In 2017-18, 25,474 passengers travelled on the 58 service of which 17,870 (70%) were ENCTS pass holders (this includes both elderly and disabled passenger) and 1,330 (5%) young people using YTPP and 16+ travel cards.

Adverse Impact:

Disability

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

- The need to change vehicles may be more challenging for those with disabilities affecting their mobility. The nature of this disability will alter this impact these changes may have and may eliminate any positive impacts identified.
- If Proposal One was followed, Maidstone Hospital would no longer be served and would require two changes of vehicle.

Pregnancy and Maternity

- It has been identified that those visiting hospital for check-ups related to their pregnancy may be affected by the increased journey duration and requirement to change vehicles to access the hospital.
- The need to change vehicles may be more challenging for those with young children who may be using push chairs.

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Positive Impact:

Age, Disability and Carers

These groups have been identified as being more reliant on public transport and the proposed changes would enable increased frequency and a greater range of destinations, providing these groups with more opportunities to travel. in Wrotham Heath, Ryarsh, Birling, Trottscliffe, Addington, West Malling and East Malling would benefit from additional journey opportunities Mon-Fri in both proposals.

JUDGEMENT

TBC – Data regarding the number of disabled passengers accessing the 58 service is unavailable; for this reason responses to the consultation will help test our assumption that disabled and pregnant passengers will still be able to access this service despite any requirement to change buses.

Internal Action Required **YES**

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Equality Impact Analysis/Assessment Action Plan

Protected Characteristic	Issues identified	Action to be taken	Expected outcomes	Owner	Timescale	Cost implications
Disability and Maternity	<p>This service requires users to change buses to access Maidstone Town Centre which may make the service more difficult to access for those with physical disabilities or young children.</p> <p>Proposal 2 would see the loss of a direct service to Maidstone Hospital which may affect passenger with long-term medical conditions.</p>	<p>The local consultation will test our assumptions that those with disabilities will be willing and able to change buses.</p> <p>The consultation will identify whether a direct service to the hospital is important for individuals with disabilities.</p>	<p>A greater understanding of how changing of vehicles will impact on disabled passengers and mitigation strategies identified.</p>	Stephen Pay	February 2019	

Pregnancy	This service required users to change vehicles to access Maidstone Hospital which may impact on accessibility for pregnant users who may be reliant on this service.	The local consultation will test our assumptions that pregnant users will be willing and able to change buses.	A greater understanding of how changing vehicles will impact on pregnant passengers and mitigation strategies identified.	Stephen Pay	February 2019	
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Have the actions been included in your business/ service plan?

No – these will be monitored as part of the programme board that take places monthly.

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

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

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

