

Bristol City Council Equality Impact Assessment Form

(Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance when completing this form)



Name of proposal	Reduction of subsidies for bus routes with low numbers of passengers
Directorate and Service Area	Sustainable Transport, Place
Saving	£900k
Name of Lead Officer	Nicola Phillips

Step 1: What is the proposal?

Please explain your proposal in Plain English, avoiding acronyms and jargon. This section should explain how the proposal will impact service users, staff and/or the wider community.

1.1 What is the proposal?

We are looking to review and re-tender our supported bus services. We currently provide support 18 bus services across the city, either fully or partially. These services complement the commercial bus network and would not be provided if the council did not support them. The bus network in Bristol is de-regulated meaning any private bus operator can run a bus service on the route which they choose. This then leaves sections of the city without a bus service. As a council we are able to provide socially necessary bus services which complement the commercial bus network. These services are classed as supported services. Many of the supported services are orbital in nature or create links between communities that are not connected by arterial routes. The re-tender of the supported services may impact service users and staff due to change in supplier.

If we decide not to award an existing service this may impact service users, due to no longer having access to the service.

At present there is no proposal to amend or withdraw any supported bus services; however as part of the Council's Corporate Strategy there is a proposal to reduce the supported bus service budget by 50% over the next two years.

Step 2: What information do we have?

Decisions must be evidence-based, and involve people with protected characteristics that could be affected. Please use this section to demonstrate understanding of who could be affected by the proposal.

2.1 What data or evidence is there which tells us who is, or could be affected?

We have carried out a consultation exercise with passengers from 22 August until 30 September 2016, which has provided us with details on who is travelling and if they have any protected characteristics. We had 1304 responses to the consultation. The survey has identified the following statistics:

The results have shown us that 58% of the respondents were female and 31% were male. This is not a true representation of the population of Bristol which is split 50.02% Male to 49.98% Female (ONS 2015), this shows us that more females use bus services than males.

24% of passengers on supported bus services defined themselves as disabled, with 17% preferring not to say or not providing a response. This figure is comparatively higher than the Bristol average of 16.7% of the population living with a long-term health problem (2011 Census).

The majority of residents completing the consultation were in the age ranges of 24 to 49 and 50 to 64. This is similar to the population of the city, where the highest age range is 25 to 49, with the remaining age ranges being represented in similar proportions (ONS 2015).

The majority of respondents 82.95% to the consultation were of a white background. This figure is very similar to the 2011 Census which shows us that 84% of the population were of a white background, and 16% were of a BME background. The consultation results tell us that 4.45% of respondents were of a BME background, which does not represent the true ethnic breakdown of the Bristol population. However we had 12.59% of respondents who did not provide us with their ethnic origin which might explain the difference in figures.

The largest number of respondents to the consultation were either Christian or had no religion. The 2011 Census data shows us that the split of respondents to the consultation were representative of the population of Bristol.

The results have shown us that the largest number of respondents class themselves as heterosexual, with only 6% of respondents stating they were lesbian, gay or bisexual. This figure is in line with the Government's estimates that 5-7% of the population are lesbian, gay or bisexual.

2.2 Who is missing? Are there any gaps in the data?

We do not have any data on Marital status, pregnancy and maternity. The data on sexual orientation is likely to be affected by non disclosure.

2.3 How have we involved, or will we involve, communities and groups that could be affected?

As part of the consultation process we contacted all of the equality groups in the city and provided them with details of the consultation and how to complete it. Paper copies of the consultation were provided to any groups which requested them.

The consultation specifically asked how the traveller would make the journey if the bus service ended. 455 people said they would not be able to make alternative arrangements.

Step 3: Who might the proposal impact?

Analysis of impacts on people with protected characteristics must be rigorous. Please demonstrate your analysis of any impacts in this section, referring to all of the equalities groups as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

3.1 Does the proposal have any potentially adverse impacts on people with protected characteristics?

The supported bus services enable people who don't have their own transport to travel across the city so this is those with the lowest incomes or cannot drive due to age or disability.

As part of the consultation carried out we asked residents how they would make their journey if the service was no longer provided. 455 respondents told us they would no longer be able to travel. Looking in detail at these respondents we are able to establish that we might be affecting: White People 86%, Females 62%, residents over 65 35%, Heterosexual's 64%, residents with no Religion 38% or Christian's 34% and people with Disabilities 35%, of these residents the majority of people have a physical disability 42%.

1.2 million journeys are made on these services per year. 1304 people

responded to the survey. We can extrapolate that therefore that a concerning number of people will be affected by a reduction or cessation of some of these services and some of these will have protected characteristics.

Disability – The consultation found that supported bus services are underused by disabled people, this may be due to them having a local commercial service to use or them not being able to use the bus.

Age – The consultation showed us that the under 15 group underuse supported bus services, this is likely to be due to them travelling with parents/guardians. 32% of the respondents were 65 or over, which might mean they have limited mobility or no other means of transport.

Gender Reassignment – no effect/no data

Marriage and Civil Partnership – no effect

Pregnancy and Maternity – no effect

Race – The consultation has shown us that supported bus services are underused by BME residents, this is likely due to the areas in which our supported bus services operate.

Religion or belief – This may affect any passengers using the evening journeys, who do not feel safe using alternative means of transport.

Sex – This may affect any passengers using the evening journeys, who do not feel safe using alternative means of transport.

Sexual Orientation – This may affect any passengers using the evening journeys, who do not feel safe using alternative means of transport.

3.2 Can these impacts be mitigated or justified? If so, how?

Some services are under used due to the barriers of travelling on the bus. This impact can be mitigated by making sure that the vehicles used on the service are low floor and abide by the Public Service Vehicle Regulations 2000 to allow more disabled people to use them.

If the reduction in service is implemented we can mitigate the impact because we can identify which buses are used frequently and by those with protected

characteristics so these services could be continued.

3.3 Does the proposal create any benefits for people with protected characteristics?

The continuation of the services enables less well off people to travel to areas not served by the commercial bus service. This could decrease isolation for a group of people although it is hard with the current data to determine the size of this group.

All buses used on supported bus services are low floor vehicle and are accessible for wheelchair users and also has allocated spaces for elderly and disable passengers. Parents with buggies can also use the wheelchair accessible spaces.

The buses must be cleaned and maintained at all times whilst in operation of the contract. Including deductions if vehicles are not cleaned.

3.4 Can they be maximised? If so, how?

The services could be promoted better to increase passenger usage.

Step 4: So what?

The Equality Impact Assessment must be able to influence the proposal and decision. This section asks how your understanding of impacts on people with protected characteristics has influenced your proposal, and how the findings of your Equality Impact Assessment can be measured going forward.

4.1 How has the equality impact assessment informed or changed the proposal?

The equalities impact assessment will be used as part of our supported service award criteria.

If the outcome of the budget consultation is to reduce the service the data will inform us of which services have the greatest positive impact on those with protected characteristics and guide the remodelling of the service.

4.2 What actions have been identified going forward?

It has introduced equalities monitoring into service surveys.

We recognise some under usage by younger and BME people and will take measures to advertise more widely.

4.3 How will the impact of your proposal and actions be measured moving forward?

We will do surveys with equalities monitoring at least once every 2 years on those services that continue to exist.

Service Director Sign-Off:	Equalities Officer Sign Off: Wanda Knight
Date:	Date: 4/1/17