

# Equality Impact Assessment

## Context

1. under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, when making decisions, Essex County Council must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, ie have due regard to:
  - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
  - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
  - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
  - age
  - disability
  - gender reassignment
  - marriage/civil partnership
  - pregnancy/maternity
  - race
  - religion/belief
  - sex/gender
  - sexual orientation.
3. In addition to the above protected characteristics you should consider the cross-cutting elements of the proposed policy, namely the social, economic and environmental impact (including rurality) as part of this assessment. These cross-cutting elements are not a characteristic protected by law but are regarded as good practice to include.
4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document should be used as a tool to test and analyse the nature and impact of either what we do or are planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
5. Use the questions in this document to record your findings. This should include the nature and extent of the impact on those likely to be affected by the proposed policy.
6. Where this EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. The EqIA will be published [online](#):
8. All **Cabinet Member Actions, Chief Officer Actions, Key Decisions** and **Cabinet Reports must be** accompanied by an EqIA.
9. For further information, refer to the EqIA guidance for staff.
10. For advice, contact:  
Shammi Jalota [shammi.jalota@essex.gov.uk](mailto:shammi.jalota@essex.gov.uk)  
Head of Equality and Diversity  
Corporate Law & Assurance  
Tel 0330 134592 or 07740 901114



## Section 1: Identifying details

Your function, service area and team: **Place Commissioning**

If you are submitting this EqlA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team: **Passenger Transport**


Title of policy or decision: **To agree the level of funding for Community Transport for 2017/18**

Officer completing the EqlA: Deborah Fox Tel: Email: Deborah.fox@essex.gov.uk

Date of completing the assessment: 15/02/2017

## Section 2: Policy to be analysed

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 2.1 | <p>Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?</p> <p>This is a change in existing policy that affects the funding settlement for community transport providers in Essex (the providers) for 2017-2018.</p> <p>Community transport is defined in the Essex Road Passenger Transport Strategy 2006-11 as not for profit passenger transport services, often provided by voluntary or community-based groups, whether for groups or individuals, using cars or minibuses.</p>  |
| 2.2 | <p>Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision):</p> <p>Essex County Council (the Council) recognises the significant value of community transport. The Council is seeking to make a funding reduction for Essex community transport providers of 14.4% in the overall funding compared to 2016/17. This is the first reduction in funding for over five years. It is to help mitigate the Council's financial pressures.</p> <p>The current, longstanding methodology of apportioning the total Council grant, allocates a percentage of the total funding available each year to each community transport scheme based on population, demography, geography and social need, as set out in Appendix C of the Road Passenger Transport Strategy 2006 to 2011. The fair funding formula was devised to produce a statistical assessment of need so that funding may follow need. Four factors are considered on an Borough/District basis:</p> <p>Total Population – there will be more people in need of CT services in areas of high population.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of Old Age Pensioners (aged 60 and over) – older age groups have a higher need for CT services</li><li>• Level of deprivation – those in need of CT services tend to come from the poorer segments of society</li><li>• Population density – used as an analogue for length cost and difficulty of journeys undertaken.</li></ul> |

|     |  |
|-----|--|
|     | <p>The four factors are weighted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population 50%</li> <li>• No. OAPs 15%</li> <li>• Deprivation 15%</li> <li>• Population Density 20%.</li> </ul> <p>What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (ie decommissioning or commissioning a service)?</p> <p>We expect that community transport providers in Essex will continue to offer the range and volume of services, for which they may take fares from passengers. We have engaged the community transport providers and worked with them to try to ameliorate the impact of reduced tax payer funding. This includes providing workshops to enable sharing of best practice and ways to diversify their business as well as enabling them to bid for Council contracts alongside other bidders.</p> <p>A selection of engagement activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has invited community transport providers to take up positions on the Essex County Council Bus Board and Bus Forum and transport representatives' forums that meet every six months in localities. At these meetings, the Council's financial pressures are openly stated.</li> <li>• The Council invited all Essex community transport providers to participate in collaborative workshops in 2015/ 2016. Discussions confirmed the value of community transport as well as issues and risks to schemes in Essex and how to mitigate impact of funding reductions, such as through new ways of working. Presentations were given on themes including external funding.</li> <li>• In follow-up to the workshop in July 2016, an offer was made of support from the Council's Funding and Investment Team. Providers were invited to attend workshops on the new Essex Hive crowd funding platform. A visit to explain the new Essex Hive took place in Tendring.</li> <li>• Community transport providers were involved in stakeholder consultations in the Getting Around in Essex review in August and September 2016.</li> <li>• Throughout 2016, Council officer visits took place to schemes including Basildon, Harwich and Tendring at which the Council's financial challenges and prospective grant reduction were discussed.</li> <li>• In January 2017, all schemes were invited to participate in conversations with the The Council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and/ or his deputy. The majority of schemes attended: Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Colchester, Epping Forest &amp; Harlow, Uttlesford and Wyvern schemes shared their business models and new ways of working such as diversifying their income streams, merging back offices and setting up a trading arm.</li> <li>• In February 2017, community transport providers were included in stakeholder consultations around the 'Getting around in Essex' procurement round. Providers were offered support to register on the Council's Direct Purchasing Scheme.</li> </ul> |
| 2.3 | <p>Does or will the policy or decision affect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• service users</li> <li>• employees</li> <li>• the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities?</li> </ul> <p>Community transport schemes provide over 600,000 journeys per year in Essex. Their passengers include older people, people with disabilities and people who do not have access to other forms of public transport. It is expected that several thousand people could be impacted by widescale service reductions.</p>    |

|     |  |
|-----|--|
|     | <p>Community transport is often a 'safety net' should passenger transport services for the wider community be deemed non-commercial by bus or other transport operators.</p> <p>Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?</p> <p>The Council has been working with the Essex community transport providers to help them identify ways for dealing with a reduced funding allocation for over two years as stated in 2.2. and will continue to do so in future through an annual action plan. In particular the Council is promoting joint working, changing working practices, improving revenue streams and looking for alternate sources of income.</p> <p>We have engaged directly with the community transport schemes over a range of potential funding levels. They tell us that they have modelled changes in grant funding from -10% to -100% with their directors and trustees as part of forming their business plans.</p> <p>In January 2017, the majority of the schemes met with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport to share their business plans and discussed potential reductions in tax payer funding.</p> <p>Through our engagement we have found that in anticipation of reduced tax payer funding, and to grow their business, some providers have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up trading arms.</li> <li>• Secured grant funding from Clinical Commissioning Groups and charitable trusts to deliver services.</li> <li>• Taken on a wider variety of work including contracted work from the Council.</li> <li>• Merged to form stronger organisations serving adjacent localities, such as in Harlow and Epping Forest.</li> </ul> <p>We listened to their needs, which may include longer e.g. three-year Council agreements in future in order for them to give more certainty to other funders.</p> |
| 2.4 | <p>Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?</p> <p>We believe this is a medium-sized reduction in funding for the providers. It will be apportioned by a fair funding formula as outlined in 2.2. We considered other options including from 0% to 100% of the current values. We discussed this with the providers. In general the view they expressed was that any funding reduction would be unwelcome. However, reductions at higher levels would be likely to cause some or all of the schemes to have to reduce services and/ or cease operations during 2017/18.</p>   |
| 2.5 | <p>Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes?</p> <p>Passenger transport supports all of the Council's outcomes. The Essex Local Transport Plan 2011, states that the Council will seek to achieve five outcomes, one of which is "Provide sustainable access and travel choice for Essex residents to help create sustainable communities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Enabling Essex residents to access further education employment and vital services (including healthcare, hospitals and retail)</li> <li>b) Maintaining the vitality of our rural communities</li> <li>c) Encouraging and enabling healthier travel and leisure activities</li> <li>d) Creating strong and sustainable communities.</li> </ul> <p>(Essex County Council Local Transport Plan 2011, Page 23 table 2.1).</p>  |



|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p>During the first Local Transport Plan, the Council's aim was to provide equitable access to community transport services in all districts of Essex, identifying a single main community transport service provider for each District and entering into partnership agreements with them to provide a specified range of services with funding based on a needs related formula. In this it was successful. As a result funding was increased by 75%, twelve district based partnerships were established and passenger numbers increased from 180,000 in 1999/2000 to 459,000 in 2003/4.</p> <p>The Council recognises the unique position occupied by community transport within the overall transport network and the opportunities for developing flexible locally based transport this offers. It also recognises the limitations of community transport schemes – particularly the need for ongoing long term funding stability and the restrictions on development caused by variable availability of volunteers.</p> <p>These factors mean that for the second and current transport strategy (2006-11 and still extant), we said that if Community Transport is to meet its full potential it will need to look for additional funding sources, new ways of working and new partners.</p> |
|--|--|



## Section 3: Evidence/data about the user population and consultation<sup>1</sup>

As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 3.1 | <p>What does the information tell you about those groups identified?</p> <p>Community transport providers provide data on current usage of services. We have passenger information at a high level which broadly enables us to identify the number of journeys involved and the service providers have membership lists (which are confidential under the DPA). The data indicates that around 600,000 passenger journeys are made per year in Essex. Approval ratings for the services regularly exceed 90%. Community transport services are disproportionately used by groups with protected characteristics, principally age, and disability and more used by women than men. This includes older people, people with disabilities and people who do not have access to other forms of public transport. We know that these groups of people – older people, women and people with disabilities - are disproportionately dependent on the community transport network and the value they obtain from it is most likely significant.</p>   |
| 3.2 | <p>Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?</p> <p>We have engaged the community transport providers and worked with them to try to ameliorate the impact of reduced funding but have not undertaken a wider or public consultation. We know that at least one provider, Braintree Community Transport, has conducted its own local review and public consultation on the basis of modelled tax payer funding reductions.</p>  |
| 3.3 | <p>If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary. Please include any reasonable adjustments, e.g. accessible formats, you will provide as part of the consultation process for disabled people:</p> <p>We do not feel that this is necessary since the reduction in funding is felt to be of a medium size. The providers themselves are at liberty to consult with their customers on level and volume of service. For example, in 2016, Braintree District Council undertook a public review of its community transport provision. The stated aims of the review were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To create a sustainable and resilient community transport service that meets the needs of Braintree District's residents for the future.</li><li>• To review options for provision of the community transport service in line with different funding levels.</li><li>• To identify and evaluate models of delivery</li><li>• To identify benefits to local Communities.</li></ul> |

<sup>1</sup> Data sources within EEC. Refer to Essex Insight:  
<http://www.essexinsight.org.uk/mainmenu.aspx?cookieCheck=true>  
with links to JSNA and 2011 Census.



## Section 4: Impact of policy or decision

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

| <b>Description of impact</b>                                    | <b>Nature of impact</b><br>Positive, neutral, adverse<br>(explain why)                               | <b>Extent of impact</b><br>Low, medium, high<br>(use L, M or H) |
|---|--|---|
| Age   | Adverse if services are reduced  | Medium  |
| Disability – learning disability                                | Adverse if services are reduced  | Medium  |
| Disability – mental health issues                               | Adverse if services are reduced  | Medium  |
| Disability – physical impairment                                | Adverse if services are reduced  | Medium  |
| Disability – sensory impairment (visual, hearing and deafblind) | Adverse if services are reduced  | Medium  |
| Gender/Sex  | Adverse if services are reduced albeit other passenger transport services will be accessible to them | Low   |
| Gender reassignment   | Neutral since people with this characteristic are not a main service user                            | Low   |
| Marriage/civil partnership                                      | Neutral since people with this characteristic are not a main service user                            | Low   |
| Pregnancy/maternity   | Neutral since people with this characteristic are not a main service user                            | Low   |
| Race  | Neutral since people with this characteristic are not a main service user                            | Low   |
| Religion/belief   | Neutral since people with this characteristic are not a main service user                            | Low   |
| Sexual orientation  | Neutral since people with this characteristic are not a main service user                            | Low   |



| Cross-cutting themes                                       |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Description of impact                                      | Nature of impact<br>Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)  | Extent of impact<br>Low, medium, high<br>(use L, M or H) |
| Socio-economic   | Neutral since these services are not generally used to connect people with employment opportunities | L  |
| Environmental, eg housing, transport links/rural isolation | Adverse if services are reduced due to potential social isolation                                   | M  |

| Section 5: Conclusion |  |  |   |
|-----------------------|--|--|---|
|                       |  | Tick<br>Yes/No as<br>appropriate       |   |
| 5.1                   | Does the EqlA in Section 4 indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups? | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |   |
|                       |  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/>           | If 'YES', use the action plan at <b>Section 6</b> to describe the adverse impacts and what mitigating actions you could put in place. |





## Section 6: Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

| What are the potential adverse impacts?   | What are the mitigating actions?  | Date they will be achieved.   |
|---|---|---|
| A potential for reduction in services by those providers that have not taken steps to make their business resilient to reduction in funding from the tax payer. | Essex County council will continue to work with Essex community transport schemes to help them find ways to adjust to a reduced level of Council funding for 2017/18. This will be focused on improved joint working, improving income streams, identifying alternate grant sources and introducing better working practices. | According to an agreed action plan to be embedded in the annual funding agreements. |
| As above.   | The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and/or a deputy will meet regularly with schemes to obtain feedback on their progress.  | During 2017/18  |
| As above.   | The Council will consider multi-year agreements from 2018/19.   | During 2017/18  |
| As above.   | The Council will update the fair funding formula to inform agreements from 2018/19.   | During 2017/18  |



**Section 7: Sign off**

**I confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately.  
(A typed signature is sufficient.)**

Signature of Head of Service: Deborah Fox

Date: 03/03/2017

Signature of person completing the EqlA: Deborah Fox, Richard Gravatt

Date: 03/03/2017

**Advice**

Keep your director informed of all equality & diversity issues. We recommend that you forward a copy of every EqlA you undertake to the director responsible for the service area. Retain a copy of this EqlA for your records. If this EqlA relates to a continuing project, ensure this document is kept under review and updated, eg after a consultation has been undertaken.

