

Equalities Comprehensive Impact Assessment v2 - optional ECIA review

Reference: ECIA504882229

Submitted: 18 April 2023 14:18 PM

Executive summary

Title of policy / decision: Supporting Local Bus Services - 2024 onwards

Policy / decision type: Cabinet Decision

Overview of policy / decision: The majority of buses in Essex, around 85% of the network, are run commercially. Where there is no bus service, Essex County Council has a legal duty to consider whether one should be provided. It is then entirely discretionary whether a service is provided or not. Currently around 15% of the network is supported by taxpayers under this policy at a cost of £10.1m (based on the 2023/24 budget). The contracts for these current services expire in 2024 and ECC must now make a decision on what services to provide after that point.

What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve?: To understand the views of Essex residents and bus users in making decisions on the future of supported bus services.

Executive Director responsible for policy / decision: Mark Ash (Climate, Environment and Customer Services)

Cabinet Member responsible for policy / decision: Lee Scott (Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport)

Is this a new policy / decision or a change to an existing one?: New policy / decision

How will the impact of the policy / decision be monitored and evaluated?: Local bus services are monitored for cost, patronage, reliability and performance against contractual standards

Will this policy / decision impact on:

Service users: Yes

Employees: No

Wider community or groups of people: Yes

What strategic priorities will this policy / decision support?: Strong, Inclusive and Sustainable Economy, High Quality Environment, Health, Independence and Wellbeing for All Ages, A good place for Children and Families to Grow

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Economy?: Good jobs, Future growth and investment, Green growth, Levelling up the economy

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Environment: Net zero, Transport and built environment, Green communities, Levelling up the environment

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Health: Healthy lifestyles, Promoting independence

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Families: Education outcomes, Family resilience and stability, Outcomes for vulnerable children, Levelling up outcomes for families

What geographical areas of Essex will the policy / decision affect?: All Essex

Digital accessibility

Is the new or revised policy linked to a digital service (website, system or application)?: No

Equalities - Groups with protected characteristics

Age

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Disability - learning disability

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Disability - mental health issues

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Disability - physical impairment

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Disability - sensory impairment

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Sex

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Gender reassignment

Nature of impact: None

Marriage / civil partnership

Nature of impact: None

Pregnancy / maternity

Nature of impact: None

Race

Nature of impact: None

Religion / belief

Nature of impact: None

Sexual orientation

Nature of impact: None

Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact: Buses are used more by older and younger people, those with a disability and women. Further information on who uses bus services can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/annual-bus-statistics-year-ending-march-2022/annual-bus-statistics-year-ending-march-2022#:~:text=In%20metropolitan%20areas%2C%20there%20were,the%20financial%20year%20ending%202021.>

Impacts on these groups will depend on decisions made following consultation. Consultation will help to provide the evidence base for those decisions. We will be seeking views from diverse communities. Further ECIA's will support those decisions.

What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?: Not applicable at this stage

Levelling up - Priority areas & cohorts

Children and adults with SEND, learning disabilities or mental health conditions (taking an all-age approach)

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Children on Free School Meals

Nature of impact: None

Working families

Nature of impact: None

Young adults (16-25 who have not been in education, training or employment for around 6-12 months)

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Residents of Harlow

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Residents of Jaywick and Clacton

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Residents of Harwich

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Residents of Basildon (Town) housing estates

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Residents of Canvey Island

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Residents of Colchester (Town) - Housing Estates

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Residents of Rural North of the Braintree District

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact: Impacts will depend on decisions made following consultation. A further ECIA will be prepared for those decisions. Consultation will help support those ECIA's.

What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?: Not applicable at this stage

Equalities - Inclusion health groups and other priority groups

Refugees / asylum seekers

Nature of impact: None

Homeless / rough sleepers

Nature of impact: None

People who experience drug and alcohol dependence

Nature of impact: None

Offenders / ex-offenders

Nature of impact: None

Victims of modern slavery

Nature of impact: None

Carers

Nature of impact: None

Looked after children / care leavers

Nature of impact: None

The armed forces community (serving personnel and their families, veterans, reservists and cadets)

Nature of impact: None

People who are unemployed / economically inactive

Nature of impact: None

People on low income

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

Sex workers

Nature of impact: None

Ethnic minorities

Nature of impact: None

Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities

Nature of impact: None

People with multiple complex needs or multi-morbidities

Nature of impact: None

Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact: There is no evidence that these groups are disproportionate users of buses, aside from those on low incomes. As before, the impact will depend on later decisions and further ECIA's will be prepared to support those decisions.

What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?: Not applicable at this stage

Equalities - Geographical Groups

People living in areas of high deprivation

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

People living in rural or isolated areas

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

People living in coastal areas

Nature of impact: Too early for impact to be known

People living in urban or over-populated areas

Nature of impact: None

Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact: Buses are used more by people living in areas of deprivation. Supported services are more likely to run in rural areas. These groups could be impacted by subsequent decisions. Further ECIA's will be prepared to support those decisions.

What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?: Not applicable at this stage

Families

Family formation (e.g. to become or live as a couple, the ability to live with or apart from children)

Nature of impact: None

Families going through key transitions e.g. becoming parents, getting married, fostering or adopting, bereavement, redundancy, new caring responsibilities, onset of a long-term health condition

Nature of impact: None

Family members' ability to play a full role in family life, including with respect to parenting and other caring responsibilities

Nature of impact: None

Families before, during and after couple separation

Nature of impact: None

Families most at risk of deterioration of relationship quality and breakdown

Nature of impact: None

Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact: There is no evidence than buses are disproportionately used by people in these groups

What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?: Not applicable at this stage

Climate

Does your decision / policy involve development or re-development of buildings or infrastructure?: No

Does your decision / policy take place in, or make use of, existing buildings or infrastructure?: No

Does your decision / policy involve elements connected to transport, travel or vehicles? This includes travel needs / requirements of both service users and staff (including staff you're planning to recruit): Yes

Where are staff or service users coming from and how are they travelling?: Bus operator staff will use a variety of means to travel to work. Bus passengers predominantly walk to bus stops.

If car travel is unavoidable, are you specifying electric cars and vehicles?: No

What is your transition plan to introduce electric vehicles?: Not applicable at this stage

Are you undertaking a procurement exercise?: No

Does your decision / policy involve the purchase of goods or materials?: No

Will any waste be generated by this decision? This includes waste from construction, waste generated by service users / staff, and waste generated by replacing existing products / materials with new: No

Nature of impact

Built Environment / Energy: None

Sustainable Transport / Travel: None

Waste: None

Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact: There will be sustainable transport impacts but it is too early to make a full assessment. This will be assessed in future ECIA's.

What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?: Not applicable at this stage

Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

Does your ECIA indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one

or more of the groups / areas identified?: No

Details of person completing the form

I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance: I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance

Date ECIA completed: 04/04/2023

Name of person completing the ECIA: Helen Morris

Email address of person completing the ECIA: helen.morris@essex.gov.uk

Your function: Climate, Environment and Customer Services

Your service area: Highways and Transport

Your team: IPTU

Are you submitting this ECIA on behalf of another function, service area or team?: No

Email address of Head of Service: helen.morris@essex.gov.uk