

EqlA - Full Equality Impact Assessment [FINAL]

Step 2: Scoping – what are you impact assessing?

Service and lead officer:

Dorset Travel – Andy Shaw

Officers involved in the EqlA:

Joseph Rose / Andy Shaw / Gordon Sneddon

What are you impact assessing?

Existing:

New/Proposed:

Changing/Update/Revision

Other, please list _____

Q1. What is the title of your ~~service~~ / ~~strategy~~ / ~~policy~~ / project?

Public & Schools Transport Review

Q2. What is the aim of your ~~service~~ / ~~strategy~~ / ~~policy~~ / project?

The Public & Schools Transport Review (P&STR) seeks to modernise the provision of transportation services in Dorset, delivering an updated transport network that meets changing user needs within limited budgets.

Dorset County Council has been subject to significant reductions in funding from central government in recent years. All directorates must find savings in order to deliver a balanced budget. Dorset Travel's contribution to the savings includes £1,000,000 reduction to the public transport budget in 2016/17; and, £850,000 from the mainstream school transport budget across 2016/17 and 2017/18.

The four primary proposals of the P&STR are detailed in the following bullet points. These proposals are based upon the policies set out in the approved Passenger Transport Strategy, part of Dorset's Local Transport Plan (LTP3):

- *We propose to prioritise remaining public transport subsidy on core interurban routes between Dorset's market towns. These routes serve most people and contribute the most to the economic wellbeing of the county.*



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- *We propose to open many more school services for use by the public, ensuring rural residents can access Dorset's market towns.*
- *We will continue to work closely with community transport operators, community groups and councillors to develop Dorset's community transport network.*
- *We will work closely with operators to attempt to secure rural 'in-fill' routes. In-fill routes are rural services that operate between school opening and closing times, making use of empty vehicles travelling to and from schools services.*

The P&STR will be implemented via the new contract model for passenger transport. Dorset's existing contract model ends in Summer 2017. The P&STR will be implemented in August '17 for public transport and September '17 for schools transport. The objectives for the new contract model for passenger transport are given in Appendix A.

Successful implementation of the P&STR proposals will lead to a network of interurban routes between market towns. These routes will be fed by a thriving community transport and open schools route network at key interchange points, providing rural accessibility across the county.

Open schools routes will also offer direct links from rural settlements to Dorset's market towns. While school routes do not work well for late morning shopping / leisure and early evening return from work trips; rural in-fill routes seek to solve this issue by utilising school vehicle resource to provide these services.

As with all major service changes, there will be a transition period where service users adapt to the changes. There are also risks to the successful implementation of the proposals – detailed in Q4.

This EqIA seeks to identify any likely negative impacts of the transition period and if any implementation risks are borne out. An action plan to mitigate these negative impacts is given at the end of the report.

Q3. Who does/will it have an impact on? E.g. public, visitors, staff, members, partners?

The implementation of this project will involve changes to the provision of passenger transport services in Dorset. There will be a reduction of traditional scheduled bus services with a greater focus on interurban transport links, open schools routes, commercially operated in-fill services and community transport solutions.

The project will impact public and schools transport users. This may include DCC staff, the public, elected officials along-with users and staff of various partner organisations.

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Q4. Are there any potential barriers to implementing changes to your ~~service / strategy-~~ policy / project? e.g. capacity or financial issues

There are a number of possible barriers and risks to the implementation of the P&STR. These are given below along with potential impacts:

Public opposition to proposals – Significant public opposition to the proposals would lead to a need to rethink our approach to the future of transportation in Dorset. An unstructured approach would likely result in significantly reduced rural services with limited alternatives available. The public consultation has largely mitigated this risk. Two thirds of respondents supported the P&STR proposals.

Political opposition to proposals - Similar to public opposition, political opposition to the proposals would lead to an unstructured approach to transportation budget reduction. Dorset Travel have been working closely with elected members to reduce this risk. The Holistic Transport Review Board oversee the review. The Portfolio Holder for Transport has also been working closely with the Dorset Travel Leadership Team.

Inability to open schools routes – Dorset Travel propose to open schools routes with students over 11 years old travelling on them. There may be a limited number of routes opened where over 9 year olds will travel. Open schools routes provide an alternative to traditional scheduled rural bus services. Failure to open enough schools routes could disadvantage rural residents.

Community transport – There are three risks to the community transport element of the proposals: insufficient existing capacity to provide transport alternatives; failure to develop additional community transport schemes; and, public resistance to using community transport. Each of these risks could disadvantage Dorset’s residents, in particular those with protected characteristics. The mitigation measures to be employed are detailed in the action plan later in this report.

Rural in-fill services – Rural in-fill services will be secured via discussion with operators rather than direct funding. There is a risk that operators will not be willing to provide in-fill routes, limiting late afternoon shopping / leisure and early evening return from work trips.

Q5. Who else will be involved in implementing this ~~service / strategy-~~ policy / project?

Dorset Travel are working closely with colleagues from: Children’s Services, the Dorset Partnership for Older People, Communications, Design & Print and the Consultation & Research Teams.

Dorset Travel are also working with external organisations, including: local authorities; commercial transport operators; community transport scheme operators; Dorset’s Learning Disability Partnership Board; Dorset’s Clinical Commissioning Group; Dorset People First and Tricuro – among others.

Holistic Transport Review**Step 3: Information gathering – what do you need to know about your customers?**

Q6. What data do you already have about your service users, or the people your policy or strategy will have an impact on, that is broken down by equality strand?

List here:

- Public & Schools Transport Review consultation data;
- Route patronage data;
- Open data communities – index of multiple deprivation;
- Address Base Dorset – Location of PoWs by faith;
- 24 & 111 bus services review consultation data;
- 2016 rural bus services review consultation data;
- 2013 bus services review consultation data; and,
- 2011 England & Wales census data.

Q7. Do you need any further information broken down by equality strand to inform this EqIA?

Yes / No

If yes, list here and add actions to gather this data to your action plan at step 5):

Step 4. Making a judgement about impacts

The implementation of the P&STR will involve significant changes to the provision of passenger transport in Dorset. There will be a reduction of traditional scheduled bus services with a greater focus on interurban transport links, open schools routes, commercially operated in-fill services and community transport solutions.

Successful implementation of the proposals will secure a modern transport network for Dorset that meets resident's needs while operating within limited financial resources. The proposals provide the opportunity to improve rural accessibility. The opening of schools routes, in-fill services and further development of the community transport network will provide greater rural access to the opportunities people require.

There are risks to the successful implementation of the project. It is likely that there will be some public resistance to the use of open schools routes and community transport schemes in place of traditional bus services. This is considered to be a transitional issue that will reduce over time. However, without careful management this could leave some rural residents feeling isolated.

Failure to secure commercially operated in-fill services will mean that late morning (shopping / leisure) and early evening services (return from work) are unavailable. There are limited existing rural bus services that are suitable for commuting. However, there are a number of services that provide the late morning journey. Existing users will have to pay to travel on open schools routes. Concessionary bus passes are not valid before 09:30.

Community Transport plays a large role in the P&STR proposals. Failure to develop the community transport network will limit the ability of rural residents to access interurban services and other necessary destinations.

The following sections of this report assess the potential impacts on each of the nine protected characteristics. The assessment of impact includes consideration of the risks to successful implementation.



Holistic Transport Review**Protected Characteristics****Age**

Young people who do not have access to their own transport are likely to be impacted by the P&STR. All subsidised public transport routes are under review. This includes a number of routes that would be suitable for younger people's education, employment and shopping / leisure trips.

The opening of schools routes to members of the public will serve to provide access to education and the morning commute. In-fill trips offer the opportunity to cover the return from work trip, however, these are subject to successful discussions with operators.

There are a number of community transport schemes that are directed to older or disabled people. This reduces the ability to mitigate the impact of the review on younger people. Dorset Travel have been, and continue to, work with community transport scheme providers to expand their coverage.

Older people who do not have access to their own transport are likely to be impacted by this review. The impact on older people is largely mitigated due to the increased availability of community transport schemes for this group. Open schools routes and in-fill services will also serve to mitigate the impact of the review on older people.

Evidence indicates a high number of passengers on the services under review are older people with concessionary passes. Some community transport operators do not accept concessionary passes and open schools routes travel before 9.30 when concessionary passes become valid. The removal of subsidy and subsequent cessation of services has the potential to increase rural isolation for these passengers.

P&STR Consultation Results

15 or under	16 (0.6%)
16 – 18	25 (1.0%)
19 – 24	31 (1.2%)
25 – 44	261 (10.2%)
45 – 64	698 (27.3%)
65 – 80	1383 (54.0%)
85 or over	147 (5.7%)

Disability

Those unable to possess a driving licence due to disability may be impacted by this review. People with physical and/or sensory disabilities can travel on all community transport schemes which will serve to mitigate this impact.

Working people who have disabilities that restrict car use may be affected disproportionately by the review. Most community transport schemes are not well suited to the regular commute to work. Dorset County Council support the Car Share Dorset website which links drivers with passengers to share regular lifts. Continued support for car sharing will help to mitigate the impact of the review.

Holistic Transport Review

Open schools routes offer the opportunity to mitigate the impact of the review on the working disabled for the morning commute to work. In-fill routes will provide the return journey – provided these can be secured where they are needed. It is important that Dorset Travel work closely with operators to secure in-fill routes.

P&STR Consultation Results

Yes, but this does not limit my ability to get out and about	282 (11.1%)
Yes, and this does limit my ability to get out and about	247 (9.7%)
No	1934 (75.8%)
Prefer not to say	88 (3.4%)

Economic Disadvantage

Those unable to afford a car may be impacted by this review. While Dorset is generally an affluent county, there are some pockets of deprivation. Discrete areas within the towns of Weymouth, Dorchester, Bridport and Christchurch are some of the most deprived areas in the country. Each of these towns will be served by interurban services and are currently served by commercially operated routes which are outside of this review.

There may be some economically disadvantaged residents in areas that are generally affluent. The proposals to develop open schools routes, in-fill services and community transport will serve to mitigate negative impacts for these people.

Race

The population of Dorset is predominantly from a white background – more so than the general population of the UK. Therefore, this review is likely to impact people of a white background more than those of other races.

P&STR Consultation Results (Please Note: only non-zero responses shown)

White British	2354 (92.0%)
White Irish	15 (0.6%)
Gypsy/Irish traveller	2 (0.1%)
Any other White background	40 (1.6%)
Asian/Asian British – Chinese	2 (0.1%)
Any other Asian background	2 (0.1%)
Black/Black British – African	2 (0.1%)
Mixed ethnic background – White and Asian	2 (0.1%)
Any other mixed background	1 (0.0%)
Any other ethnic group	1 (0.0%)



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Religion or Belief

This review is likely to impact Christians more so than other faiths. There are a large number of churches across Dorset and in both the rural and urban areas. There are places of worship for other faiths in Dorset. However, these tend to be located in the market towns that will continue to be served by public transport.

P&STR Consultation Results (Please Note: only non-zero responses shown)

No religion	684 (26.9%)
Buddhist	12 (0.5%)
Christian	1518 (59.7%)
Jewish	3 (0.1%)
Muslim	2 (0.1%)
Other faith/religion/belief	54 (2.1%)
Prefer not to say	270 (10.6%)

Rural Isolation

Dorset is a rural county. However, people without access to transport can become isolated in both rural and urban areas.

Open schools routes and in-fill services will serve to prevent rural isolation. These services will be available for use by the general public, allowing those without a car to access the goods and services they require. It is unlikely that all rural settlements will be covered by open schools routes and/or in-fill services. Community transport schemes will help to prevent isolation in these settlements.

There is a good coverage of community transport schemes across Dorset that will prevent true isolation. Some community transport schemes are directed to those without access to other forms of transport. However, some are only for older and disabled people. It is a goal of Dorset Travel to expand the coverage of community transport schemes that are available for people of all ages and abilities.

Sex

Women are more likely to live longer than men. Women over the age of 65 are also less likely to possess a driving licence than their male counterparts. Thus, this review is likely to impact older women more than older men. Community transport schemes offer the opportunity to replace these services for this group. Open schools routes and in-fill services will also serve to mitigate the impact of the review.

P&STR Consultation Results

Male	999 (39.3%)
Female	1542 (60.7%)



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Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment

There is no evidence available that suggests sexual orientation or gender reassignment has an effect on bus usage. Therefore, this review will not have a direct impact on this group.

RBSR Consultation Results (Please Note: Sexual orientation questions not asked within P&STR consultation)

Bisexual	9 (0.9%)
Gay man	4 (0.4%)
Heterosexual	672 (64.3%)
Lesbian	2 (0.2%)
Other	10 (1.0%)
Prefer not to say	348 (33.3%)

Safeguarding

Is there anything in this policy/procedure that has implications for safeguarding children or vulnerable adults?

Yes

No

If yes, please ensure that the policy/procedure is submitted to the DCC Safeguarding Adults Head of Service or Children's Safeguarding Head of Service.

Safeguarding

Some resistance to open schools routes is expected with safeguarding likely to be cited as a concern. The proposals put forward by Dorset Travel are within existing policy and the director for Children's Services supports the provision of schools transport by service buses.

Mainstream school children already travel on service buses; particularly in the Weymouth area where most schools transport is provided by registered bus services. Parents of children up to the age of 11 who travel on a service bus can request a chaperones pass to accompany their children to school.

Dorset Travel propose to open many more schools services to the general public. These will be routes to secondary and senior schools transporting children over 11 years old. There will be few routes where children under the age of 11 are travelling on open schools routes (co-located middle and upper schools). In this case, parents will again be able to request a chaperones pass.



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Health

Assessing health impacts is also an important issue, many factors can influence health. Health inequalities include income, housing, employment, the environment, transport, education and access to services. For more detailed information please see [‘Health Impacts’](#).

A number of the services under review provide access to health related destinations. The removal of these services could affect resident’s ability to access health services. Community transport schemes are already providing access to health related appointments for people across the County. There are some schemes that specifically provide access to medical appointments. Although, there are a couple that do not provide travel for medical appointments.

Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (DCCG) are currently undertaking a Clinical Services Review. This review is likely to lead to a reduction of community hubs with those remaining in centralised locations. Dorset Travel have been working closely with DCCG in the development of the P&STR and the Clinical Services Review. The remaining community hubs will be located a nodal points on the interurban route network. These will be highlighted to operators as key destinations when procuring future public transport services.

It has been found that loneliness is a key factor which can affect people’s health, rural isolation is a significant contributor to loneliness. The removal of bus services has the potential to increase rural isolation. The County’s network of community transport schemes can ‘fill the gap’ left by these services for older and disabled people. Younger people and other members of society without access to private transport could still suffer rural isolation in areas without community transport coverage for these groups.

Lack of social interaction can be another contributor to loneliness. Travel time on the bus offers the opportunity for a regular catch up with friends which could be lost with some community transport schemes.

A short walk to a bus stop can be valuable exercise to some of us. Many community transport schemes offer a door-to-door service which could take this away.



Conclusion:

Dorset Travel needs to reduce the budget for subsidised public transport and mainstream school transport. The budgets have been reduced by £1,000,000 in 2017/18 and £850,000 across 2016/17 and 2017/18 respectively.

To achieve these budget reductions we propose to: focus our limited funding on interurban public transport routes; open many more schools services to the public; further develop the community transport network; and, work with operators to secure in-fill services utilising vehicles that may not otherwise be in use.

This equalities impact assessment (EqIA), looks at the impact of the proposals on those in our society who are protected by law. The assessment has identified that young people, old people, the disabled and the economically disadvantaged are most likely to be impacted.

Open schools routes and in-fill services offer a real opportunity to mitigate the impact of this review and could even improve rural accessibility in Dorset. There are however risks to the delivery of these services. There may be limited opportunity to open schools routes and operators may not be willing to provide sufficient in-fill routes. It is important that Dorset Travel work closely with operators to secure these services when implementing the new contract model for passenger transport.

Community transport offers the possibility to mitigate some impacts of these proposals; especially for people with protected characteristics. Dorset Travel should increase engagement with community transport schemes across the county, seeking viable, innovative ways of supporting these services. Through increased engagement and support, Dorset Travel should also encourage community transport schemes that provide services for all ages and abilities.

Community transport does not offer a viable alternative for regular access to employment or education. Dorset Travel should work with operators in an attempt to secure commercial alternatives to the routes under review i.e. in-fill routes and moving existing subsidised services to commercial operation. Alongside this, Dorset Travel should increase promotion of car sharing schemes which can provide a feasible alternative to scheduled bus services.



Holistic Transport Review**STEP 5. Action planning****Recommendations:**

Dorset Travel to proceed with contract model proposals, setting clear objectives of securing a transport network that maximises accessibility. To be achieved by significant coverage of open schools routes and commercially operated in-fill services.

Dorset Travel to work with operators of existing subsidised routes in an effort to retain these services on a commercially operated basis.

Continue to fund community transport engagement officer post in Dorset Travel. The post holder will be responsible for engaging with scheme operators and colleagues within partnership for older people team (POPP).

Dorset Travel to continue to set defined budgets for community transport scheme support:

- 2016/17 – £135,000 (approx. including CT engagement post)
- 2017/18 - £135,000 (approx. estimate including CT engagement post)
- 2018/19 - £135,000 (approx. estimate including CT engagement post)

Dorset Travel to consider and implement alternative ways of supporting community transport schemes, such as: Section 106 funding agreements; sale of DCC owned fleet to operators; capital contribution to fleet purchase; and, assistance setting up and managing schemes.

Continued development and maintenance of Community Transport Directory and community transport pages on Dorset for You website. Engagement officer to work with operators to ensure information is up-to-date and easily accessible.

Continued engagement with community transport scheme operators to encourage them to expand services to people of all ages and abilities.

Continue with the bi-annual Dorset wide Community Transport Forum where operators can meet, share ideas and Dorset Travel can engage with them.

Investigate and implement innovative ways of encouraging increased numbers of volunteers for community transport schemes.

Q8. Is there any potential for direct or indirect discrimination?

Yes **No** **Don't Know**

If yes, please explain how you are going to change this?

No direct discrimination.

EqIA approved by: E&E Equality & Diversity Group

Date: 14th October 2016

Review date: October 2017

Check with your equality officer for the EqIA signing-off process and for posting the EqIA on the web.

Step 6: Improvement plan – what are you going to change?

Issue	Action	Performance Target (<i>what difference will it make</i>)	Lead Officer	Achieved	Difference made
Reduction of services that provide access to education and employment.	<p>Work with operators to secure significant coverage of open schools routes and commercially operated in-fill services.</p> <p>Dorset Travel to work with operators of existing subsidised routes in an effort to retain these services on a commercially operated basis.</p> <p>Increase awareness and usage of car sharing schemes.</p>	<p>Increased number of commercially operated services in Dorset with routing and times suitable for employment and education trips – this includes in-fill services.</p> <p>Significant coverage of open schools routes providing access to market towns across Dorset.</p> <p>Increased usage of car sharing in the county.</p>	<p>Chris Hook – DT</p> <p>Amanda Evans - DT</p>		
Reduction of services that provide access to health services.	<p>Continued work with DCCG on the implementation of the P&STR and Clinical Services Review.</p> <p>Working with operators to secure access to health services via interurban routes.</p> <p>Include health service locations as key destinations in tender packages.</p>	<p>Supported interurban and commercially operated services with routing and times suitable for health related appointments.</p>	<p>Chris Hook – DT</p> <p>Amanda Evans - DT</p>		
Lack of capacity or coverage of community transport schemes.	<p>Work with community transport operators and utilise Dorset Travel engagement officer to encourage volunteer drivers and new scheme operators in areas where there are gaps in provision.</p>	<p>Increase number of volunteer drivers for existing community transport schemes.</p> <p>Employment of innovative funding mechanisms for supporting community transport schemes. i.e. S106, capital grant match funding etc.</p>	<p>Amanda Evans - DT</p>		
Some community transport only serving elderly and disabled	<p>Work with community transport schemes to expand their offer to all members of society without access to transport.</p> <p>Any new schemes to be encouraged to offer services to all members of society.</p>	<p>Increased number of schemes that provide travel solutions for everyone who does not have access to transport.</p>	<p>Amanda Evans - DT</p>		
Awareness of community transport schemes	<p>Promotion of community transport to be key element on P&STR implementation plan.</p> <p>Utilise P&STR consultation to increase awareness of CT schemes.</p> <p>Continue to develop and promote community transport directory.</p> <p>Split directory into areas to make more easily accessible.</p>	<p>Measure community transport scheme usage before and after intervention. <i>Potential difficulties getting data as most schemes do not issue this data to DCC.</i></p>	<p>Amanda Evans - DT</p>		
Smaller vehicle (car based) community transport schemes not meeting people's social interaction needs.	<p>Work with operators to ensure good coverage of larger vehicle (minibus) schemes.</p> <p>Encourage smaller vehicle schemes to feed into interurban services rather than provide end to end journey.</p>	<p>Measure number of larger vehicle community transport schemes via changes to community transport directory and ongoing engagement with operators.</p> <p>Establish number of smaller vehicle schemes that feed into interurban services.</p>	<p>Amanda Evans - DT</p>		

EqIA improvement plan approved by: E&E Equality & Diversity Group

Date: 14th October 2016

Review date: October 2017

Check with your equality officer for the EqIA signing-off process and for posting the EQIA on the web.

Appendix A – New Contract Model for Passenger Transport – Objectives & Contribution to Corporate Outcomes

Objective Priority	New Contract Model Objective	Contribution to DCC’s Corporate Outcomes / Values
1	Secure the provision of home-to-school transport for all eligible students in Dorset.	<p>Independent (Outcome) - Children and young people are confident learners and are successful as they grow into adulthood.</p> <p>Prosperous (Outcome) - Dorset’s residents are well educated, with the skills that Dorset’s employers need.</p>
2	Ensure procured transport services are safe and secure for all users wherever they travel.	<p>Safe (Outcome) - Children and vulnerable adults are safe wherever they are.</p>
3	Ensure that all procured transport services are legally compliant.	<p>Openness (Value) – We are clear and honest about what we are doing and why.</p>
4	Ensure that cost efficiency of the transport network is maximised.	<p>Effectiveness (Value) – We ensure local tax-payers get the best value for money.</p>
5	Secure a stable network of viable interurban routes with little or no routing or timetable changes.	<p>Prosperous (Outcome) - New businesses thrive and existing businesses become more efficient and productive.</p> <p>Prosperous (Outcome) - More people secure the employment opportunities of their choice.</p> <p>Prosperous (Outcome) - The need to travel is reduced, and people and goods are able to move about the county safely and efficiently.</p>
6	Facilitate the growth of commercially operated public transport services across the county.	<p>Prosperous (Outcome) - New businesses thrive and existing businesses become more efficient and productive.</p>

Objective Priority	New Contract Model Objective	Contribution to DCC's Corporate Outcomes / Values
7	Secure a transport network that maximises accessibility and thus the independence of Dorset's residents across the whole county.	<p>Healthy (Outcome) - People live in healthy, accessible communities and natural environments where waste is minimised.</p> <p>Independent (Outcome) - People remain happily independent and stay in their own homes for as long as possible.</p> <p>Independent (Outcome) - People are part of inclusive communities and don't feel lonely or isolated.</p> <p>Prosperous (Outcome) - The need to travel is reduced, and people and goods are able to move about the county safely and efficiently.</p>
8	Secure transport services that facilitate Dorset's economic development and growth.	<p>Prosperous (Outcome) - New businesses thrive and existing businesses become more efficient and productive.</p> <p>Prosperous (Outcome) - More people secure the employment opportunities of their choice.</p>
9	Facilitate effective contract management between suppliers and Dorset Travel.	<p>Fairness (Value) – We are fair in balancing competing demands.</p> <p>Openness (Value) – We are clear and honest about what we are doing and why.</p> <p>Respect (Value) – We show full and proper respect to everyone we work with.</p>
10	Secure transport services that meet customer needs.	<p>Effectiveness (Value) – We ensure local tax-payers get the best value for money.</p>
11	Facilitate the integration of procured transportation services.	<p>Innovation (Value) – We find new ways of working to achieve more for local people</p>
12	Secure transport services where at-least 95% of journeys arrive at their destination on-time.	<p>Effectiveness (Value) – We ensure local tax-payers get the best value for money.</p>