

1. Topic of assessment

EIA title:	Surrey County Council (SCC) Local Transport Review 2015/16
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EIA author:	Nick Meadows, Project Manager
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2. Approval

	Name	Date approved
Approved by¹	Paul Millin	10/06/2015

3. Quality control

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4. EIA team

Name	Job title (if applicable)	Organisation	Role
Nick Meadows	Directorate Programme Group, Change Consultant	Surrey County Council	Project Manager
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¹ Refer to earlier guidance for details on getting approval for your EIA.

5. Explaining the matter being assessed

What policy, function or service is being introduced or reviewed?

Surrey County Council (SCC) invests significant Council funding in local bus services and concessionary fares; both are statutory duties. SCC also invests in the funding of community transport, supporting partnership work with District/Borough, community and voluntary organisations. All of these services benefit a large and diverse number of residents, giving them access to work, employment, health care and essential shopping, as recognised by the Department for Transport (DfT).

Twenty nine million trips are made each year on Surrey buses, half of these on services that we subsidise. About a third (31%) of these trips are made by concessionary pass holders (mostly older people) or children.

SCC's budget for supporting local transport services is under increasing pressure because:

- Bus operating costs have risen faster than general inflation.
- Increased road traffic in Surrey means bus services are becoming less efficient, which means higher operating costs.

The directorate has been tasked in its medium term financial plan (MTFP) with delivering £2million in savings, from an overall budget of £19.39 million, over three years from 2015/16. A summary of the expected savings for each financial year can be found below:

2015/16 (£000s)	2016/17 (£000s)	2017/18 (£000s)	Total
£750	£515	£735	£2million

The Local Transport Review aims to grow the commercial value of the network, integrate services, find efficiencies and make savings via three streams: local buses, concessionary fares and community transport.

A 17 week public consultation from 8 October 2014 to 2 February 2015 was held to understand:

- How important bus and community transport services are to our residents? And how this would impact them if it was reduced or no longer there?
- What could be done to encourage more people to travel by bus/increase their bus travel?
- How important and valued the two extra SCC funded concessions are to our qualifying English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) pass holders?

The feedback submitted in this consultation helped inform what proposals for change were developed. The Local Bus Team has worked with bus operators to negotiate better contracts that will give the Council better value for money. However, to make the required savings needed from the review, some changes are required to local bus services. A further consultation is being held, from 11 May to 8 June 2015, to share the detail of these proposed changes to local bus services.

On 23 June, the final proposals that have developed following phases one and two of the consultation will go to Cabinet, the council's main decision making body, for its consideration. Any agreed changes will be widely communicated to residents and stakeholders in early July, with the changes coming into effect from late August 2015.

	<p>As this is a three year savings programme, this equality impact assessment will focus on changes for year one (2015/16) but will be updated for the subsequent years of the programme (2016/17 and 2017/18).</p>
<p>What proposals are you assessing?</p>	<p>The proposals for 2015/16 that the EIA will be assessing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To reduce the subsidy given by the County Council to the bus operators and community transport providers, who run services on the current transport network in Surrey. 2. Recommend that SCC retains its policy in relation to concessionary fares as described below. <p>Both of the above proposals are explained in more detail below:</p> <p><u>Local bus services</u></p> <p>Twenty nine million passenger journeys are made each year on Surrey's bus services. Over half of these journeys are made using the services subsidised by the County Council at a cost of £8.9m per annum. The remaining journeys are provided by the commercial market.</p> <p>In light of the financial pressures mentioned in the section above, the current subsidised network is unsustainable and to achieve the savings needed from the review, we are proposing some changes to local bus services including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce frequency (e.g. Instead of an hourly bus for some services it may now be every 90 mins). • Service restructuring (e.g. in some cases those affected by withdrawals may have to walk for 10 minutes to another bus or change buses to reach the same destination. • In isolated cases where there would be no conventional bus service an alternative in the form of a community transport style facility might be provided. • Saturday service reductions (e.g. in some cases services that operate 6 days a week may be reduced to 5 days). • Some areas will see an increase in the number of buses available and also an increased choice of destinations. Better evening services have been achieved in some cases with faster journeys times being achieved along some corridors. <p>The 2015/16 savings projected in year 1 are £0.584m. This will be achieved through proposed changes to services as described above (see annexe E of the Cabinet report). And also through contract price negotiations, retendering and by operators converting services to commercial provision <u>without</u> changing the level of service offered.</p> <p>Analysis of annual passenger journeys, for those services with proposed changes in 2015 (total patronage per annum 3,393,089), on the commercial and supported network has been carried out to identify how many passengers could be affected by the proposed changes to the bus network. The results show that if the proposed changes were made 3,278,177 (96.6%) of the total current bus passenger journeys for those services identified in annexe E of the Cabinet report would still have access to services on Mondays to Fridays.</p>

We believe that although the savings will be made through a combination of service reductions and contract negotiations the number of annual passenger trips will remain static due to the fact that in the vast majority of cases alternative bus services are available. The increased frequencies and destinations being introduced in some areas, together with the County Councils continued investment in Real Time Passenger Information and bus stop improvements within the County, will help to maintain and, in some areas, potentially grow the patronage of commercial and tendered services. In the first consultation (Oct – Feb) 83% of bus users said they would use buses more if there were better information, improved infrastructure or if a better journey experience could be offered. However, it must be recognised that in some areas reduced levels of services or reduced destination choices will be evident.

Community transport services

Typically community transport services are not commercially viable and are often outside of an authority's statutory remit. Services are very much needs led with local solutions and without the commercial profit element this often leads to unconventional approaches to a community's transport problems. Community transport is not commercially viable and as such public/grant funding is essential to support schemes.

Due to increasing financial pressure both at a county and borough/district level, it is important to recognise that level of community transport grant and support cannot continue. The aim is to move toward a cost neutral delivery to the public purse with a phased programme of change, over several years, to be delivered in partnership with boroughs/district councils and the voluntary sector.

Currently SCC's grant funds the community transport sector approximately £0.643m per annum. This funding is allocated to community transport providers to assist them in the provision of Dial a Ride services, Taxi Vouchers Schemes and Voluntary Car Schemes. The boroughs and districts are the major funders of the Dial a Ride services and SCC contributes approximately 10% of the overall transport costs of a Dial a Ride service through its grant funding.

A review of community transport funding in 2015/16 has contributed a total of £0.040m in savings without changing the level of service offered. Surrey County Council will continue to grant fund organisations who provide Dial a Ride, Taxi Voucher and Voluntary Car Scheme services in 2015/16. However, more detailed work will be undertaken with our community transport partners in the coming months to revise allocations for 2016/17.

Extra concessions

SCC funds two additional local concessions to complement The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) funded by central government. These are:

- i. Surrey residents who hold a disabled person's bus pass have no time restriction on travel, meaning they can also travel for free before 09:30 and after 23:00 Monday to Friday, all day Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays. There are about 190,406 concessionary passes in circulation across Surrey, with the vast majority of these older person pass holders (177,672) and a smaller number of disabled pass holders (12,734)
- ii. Companion passes (C+) are issued to qualifying Surrey residents

	<p>(already disabled or older person's bus pass holders) who cannot travel without assistance. This means a pass holder who needs assistance can take someone with them to enable travel, such as a friend, carer or relative. This companion can also travel for free. There are currently 3,395 C+ bus pass holders in Surrey, with the vast majority of these issued to disabled users.</p> <p>Because travel is free to the pass holder, Surrey County Council then has to reimburse the bus operators for the fare revenue forgone using the agreed DfT methodology. What we spend as an authority is directly related to the number of trips made by pass holders on the Surrey bus network. The spend in 2014/15 for this was £8.676m.</p> <p>The two non-statutory local scheme enhancements mentioned above, no time restriction on travel for disabled pass holders and companion passes, is estimated at cost an additional £0.400m per annum. This is a relatively low additional cost in the context of the £8 million + overall scheme, and as a result of the consultation process we recognise the high value that is placed on them.</p> <p>Analysis of the feedback received told us that withdrawal of these could cause isolation, frustration, depression and greatly reduce independence in an already vulnerable and disadvantaged community. The relatively small saving made could be negated by increasing the need on other service areas within the council, such as Adults Social Care etc. This broad assessment recommends that SCC continues to maintain these enhanced local concessions.</p>
Who is affected by the proposals outlined above?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service users and, their carers or families. • General public. • Service operators. • Partner and External organisations.

6. Sources of information.

Engagement carried out
<p>On 23 September 2014, Cabinet authorised officers to carry out a wide ranging public consultation on proposed changes to local transport. A 17 week public consultation, from 8 October 2014 to 2 February 2015, was held and SCC wanted to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How important bus and community transport services are to our residents? And how this would impact them if it was reduced or no longer there? • What could be done to encourage more people to travel by bus/increase their bus travel? • How important and valued the two extra SCC funded local concessions are to our qualifying ENCTS pass holders? <p>Feedback submitted in this consultation played an important part in the review and helped draw up plans for change. A further consultation is being held from 11 May 2015 to 8 June 2015 to share and understand the views of residents and stakeholders on the proposed changes to local bus services.</p> <p>Residents and stakeholders could respond to both phases of the consultation by:</p>

- Filling out a questionnaire (online and hard-copy). Hard copy questionnaires were available from multiple locations across the county including libraries, local council offices and on request via the contact centre. They were also available in easy read and large print format. In the second phase these have been concentrated to areas of Surrey and neighbouring counties where there are proposed changes to bus services.
- Emailing or writing to the project team.
- Phoning or texting the contact centre.
- Emails and letters were sent out to a variety of stakeholders, informing them of them of both phases of the public consultation and encouraging them to be involved.
- **3850** posters advertising the first public consultation were printed and distributed to multiple locations around the county. A further **1700** posters were printed and distributed to areas affected by the proposed changes.
- Other communication medium were used to promote both phases of the consultation including a dedicated website for the review (www.surreycc.gov.uk/transportreview), social media (Facebook and Twitter posts), online newsletters (communicate, surrey matters, issues monitor), online advertising on the SCC website and Travel SMART website, editorial copy for District & Borough Council and Parish newsletters, and paid for press advertising in the Surrey Advertiser, Surrey Mirror, Surrey Herald (Phase 1 only) and Staines Informer (Phase 2 Only).
- A forum was held in December 2014 with the Disability Alliance Network, Surrey Choices, Surrey Coalition of Disabled People, Age UK Surrey, Motability Woking Access Group, Surrey Deaf Forum, Swale House plus individuals and carers.
- A range of other meetings were held throughout the first consultation with Empowerment Boards, Disability Alliance Networks, A Deaf Forum, Groups with Learning Disabilities, Community Transport Group meetings, parish & town councils, the North West Surrey Bus User Group, Bus Users UK, Businesses, Youth Groups and Local Area Committees. Further meetings were held with the Disability Alliance Networks and Member scrutiny groups in the second consultation.
- A roving bus event was organised to visit 6 destinations across Surrey over three days in January, giving residents and bus users an opportunity to find out more about the review and submit their feedback. In May, two days of public roving bus events were held giving residents an opportunity to find more about the proposed changes to local bus services and have their say.

Data used

- Surrey-i, our local data and information portal, which can be searched by protected characteristic.
- Feedback to the consultation questionnaire and views submitted by e-mail or post. (This will include the feedback from the second consultation when it closes on 8 June 2015).
- Outcomes of stakeholder meetings/public events in both phases of the consultation (The National Travel Survey).
- ESP Systex Concessionary Fares Card Management System
- Data provided by service operators
- Community Transport Grant annual monitoring data

7. Impact of the new/amended policy, service or function

7a. Impact of the proposals on residents and service users with protected characteristics

Protected characteristic ²	Potential positive impacts	Potential negative impacts	Evidence
<p>Age</p>	<p>The recommendation that SCC continues to fund the free companion pass will have a positive impact on this protected characteristic. This means that 268 older person concessionary pass holders who qualify for the companion pass, and need assistance to travel, will still be able to take someone with them on a journey to enable travel, such as a friend, carer or relative, and this companion can also travel for free.</p>	<p>The National Travel survey indicates that bus usage is highest amongst 16-24 year old and those aged 65+. In Surrey we have 177,672 older person concessionary passes in circulation.</p> <p>And a third (31%) of all annual journeys by bus are made by concessionary pass holders (mostly older people) or children.</p> <p>Almost half (46%) of respondents to the first consultation questionnaire were aged 65 and over, and 1 in 10 (9%) of respondents were aged 24 or lower.</p> <p>Nearly two thirds (61%) of respondents to the second consultation were aged 65 and over, and 1 in 20 (5%) of respondents were aged 24 or lower. The under 24 age group was under represented in both consultations.</p> <p>Any changes to services could have a great impact on older people and younger people who rely on local bus services to</p>	<p>Evidence gathered from both public consultations, ESP Systex Concessionary Fares Card Management System, and the national travel survey.</p>

² More information on the definitions of these groups can be found [here](#).

		<p>access work, employment, education, health care and essential shopping.</p> <p>Reduced levels of community transport grant funding may lead to a lower level of service provision if additional income is not generated from other opportunities. As a consequence this would make it more difficult for those older residents who need accessible transport to travel and access key services. This could then have an adverse effect on other service areas within the council e.g. Adults</p>	
Page 152	<p>Disability</p> <p>The recommendation that SCC continues to fund the two extra local concessions for qualifying concessionary pass holders (free disabled travel and free companion passes – explained further in section 5) will have a positive impact on this protected characteristic. This means that 12,734 disabled pass holders will be able to travel for free before 09:30am and after 11:00pm Monday to Friday. And all day Saturday, Sunday, and Public Holidays. And 3,127 disabled pass holders who qualify for the Companion pass, and need assistance to travel, will still be able to take someone with them on a journey to enable travel, such as a friend, carer or relative, and this companion can also travel for free.</p>	<p>About 1 in 5 (19%) of respondents to the first consultation questionnaire, and 1 in 3 (33%) to the second consultation questionnaire, said that they had a longstanding condition or a disability that affects how they travel.</p> <p>Reduced levels of services may affect disabled people who are dependent on using bus services to access work, employment, education, health care and essential shopping.</p> <p>Reduced levels of community transport grant funding may lead to a lower level of service provision if additional income is not generated from other opportunities. As a consequence, this would make it more difficult</p>	<p>Evidence gathered from both public consultations and ESP Systex Concessionary Fares Card Management System.</p>

		for those residents with disabilities who need accessible transport to travel and access key services. This could then have an adverse effect on other service areas within the council e.g. Adults	
Gender reassignment	None	None	There is no differential impact on this protected characteristic.
Pregnancy and maternity	None	Reduced levels of service on routes may make journeys longer for pregnant women particularly on way to/from health appointments	No data was collected on this protected characteristic as part of the public consultation
Page 153 Race	None	<p>We believe that there will be no differential impact on this protected characteristic. However an overwhelming majority of respondents (93%) to the first consultation questionnaire were of a white background, this was slightly lower in the second consultation at (86%). Both figures are consistent with the ethnic profile of Surrey.</p> <p>In the 2011 census the majority (90.4%) reported their ethnic group as white.</p>	Evidence gathered from the both public consultations and Surrey i.
Religion and belief	None	Reduction in Sunday services or other days for other worships may affect people's ability to get to their place of worship.	No data was collected on this protected characteristic as part of the public consultations
Sex	None	The National Travel Survey indicates that a greater proportion of bus users are female. Precisely three-fifths (60%) of the respondents to the first consultation questionnaire, who	Evidence gathered from both public consultations and the national travel survey.

		<p>said they had used bus services in Surrey in the last 12 months, were female.</p> <p>Roughly two-thirds (63%) of respondents to the second consultation questionnaire, were female.</p> <p>Therefore any reduced levels of service may have a greater impact on the female population.</p>	
Sexual orientation	None	None	There is no differential impact on this protected characteristic.
Marriage and civil partnerships	None	None	There is no differential impact on this protected characteristic.
Carers³	<p>The recommendation that SCC continues to fund the free companion pass will have a positive impact on carers. There are currently 3,395 C+ bus pass holders in Surrey; these are issued who cannot travel without assistance. This means a pass holder who needs assistance can take someone with them to enable travel, such as a friend, carer or relative, and this companion can also travel for free.</p>	<p>Reduced levels of service may impact on carers if the cared for person is no longer able to access a bus service as a result of the change. About 1 in 10 (8%) of respondents to the first consultation said they had a caring responsibility for an adult or child with a disability.</p> <p>In the second consultation this is slightly higher with more than 1 in 9 (12%) saying they had a caring responsibility for an adult or child with a disability.</p> <p>So any impact on the services</p>	Evidence gathered from both public consultations

³ Carers are not a protected characteristic under the Public Sector Equality Duty, however we need to consider the potential impact on this group to ensure that there is no associative discrimination (i.e. discrimination against them because they are associated with people with protected characteristics). The definition of carers developed by Carers UK is that 'carers look after family; partners or friends in need of help because they are ill, frail or have a disability. The care they provide is unpaid. This includes adults looking after other adults, parent carers looking after disabled children and young carers under 18 years of age.'

		<p>they use needs to be quantified.</p> <p>Reduced levels of community transport grant funding may lead to a lower level of service provision if additional income is not generated from other opportunities. As a consequence, this would make it more difficult for those carers who require accessible transport to travel and access key services. This could then have an adverse effect on other service areas within the council e.g. Adults</p>	
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7b. Impact of the proposals on staff with protected characteristics

There is no implications on staff with protected characteristics only service users.

7 8. Amendments to the proposals

Change	Reason for change
N/A	N/A

9. Action plan

Potential impact (positive or negative)	Action needed to maximise positive impact or mitigate negative impact	By when	Owner
<u>Negative</u>	It is recognised that SCC is unable to meet the needs of everyone in the review; however in any potential changes to services, we'll ensure that provision is directed to where it is most needed. We'll endeavour to achieve this through iterative work with our service operators, and considering other important factors centring on social and economic need.	Ongoing throughout the timescale of the review(2014/15 to 2017/18)	Local Bus Planning Team
<u>Positive</u>	To make some savings through contract pricing efficiencies resulting in no changes to the current service that is provided. We'll endeavour to achieve this by extending contracts that are due to expire and through iterative work with our operators to provide best value for money	Ongoing throughout the timescale of the review(2014/15 to 2017/18)	Local Bus Planning Team
<u>Positive</u>	Look for opportunities to grow the commercial value of the current network. We'll endeavour to achieve this by securing funds through bid opportunities or contributions from developments to implement improvements that will encourage people to start travelling by bus or increase their bus travel.	Ongoing and beyond the life scale of the review	Transport Projects Team
<u>Positive</u>	Investigate income generation opportunities for the community transport sector to sustain, support and grow their services. Moving organisations to become less grant reliant and more income reliant with improve the robustness of the sector.	Ongoing and beyond the life scale of the review	Transport Projects Team
<u>Positive</u>	Ensure the robust communication of any service changes well in advance of them	July 2015 – September 2015 (for year	Review Project team and corporate

	coming into effect. This will include providing these materials in alternative formats if requested for those with a visual impairment or those with learning disabilities.	one changes 2015/16)	communications
<u>Positive</u>	Update this equality impact assessment for changes in year 2 and 3 of the review (2016/17 and 2017/18)	Ongoing throughout the timescale of the review(2014/15 to 2017/18)	Review Project team

10. Potential negative impacts that cannot be mitigated

Potential negative impact	Protected characteristic(s) that could be affected
<p>Analysis of annual passenger journeys, for those services with proposed changes in 2015 (total patronage per annum 3,393,089), on the commercial and supported network has been carried out to identify how many passengers could be affected by the proposed changes to the bus network. The results show that if the proposed changes were made 114,912 (3.4%) of all current bus passenger journeys, using services identified in Annex E of the Cabinet report, could be negatively impacted by the proposals. This impact could be due to a change of bus being required to reach some destinations or in a few cases, passengers having to walk further to reach a bus stop. If the latter issue is taken into account, it is not expected that any person currently travelling will have no bus service at all after the 2015 changes, but may require a change of bus to reach certain destinations.</p> <p>A very small number of passengers; namely those using Saturday services 22 and 513, 17 passengers in total per Saturday (data collected from Operators electronic ticket machine data), will not have an alternative service on Saturdays. We'll endeavour to work with local communities to signpost residents to other transport options.</p> <p>Where service frequencies have reduced it is difficult to make assumptions on any negative impact this could create as the journey is still possible, albeit with less choice. However, it should be recognised that this may have a negative impact on some users.</p>	Age, Disability, Religion and Belief, Sex, Carers

11. Summary of key impacts and actions

Information and engagement underpinning equalities analysis	<p>Analysis is mainly based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses received during two public consultations • Feedback given at our stakeholder events during the public consultation period • National surveys and bus operator patronage data • ESP Systex Concessionary Fares Card Management System data • Local information (Surrey-i)
Key impacts (positive and/or negative) on people with protected characteristics	<p>Potential impacts are perceived to be negative and in some cases positive. However any changes to local bus services are likely to impact people with protected characteristics who rely on services to access work, employment, education, health care, places of worship and essential shopping. Mitigating actions have been developed to ensure the likelihood of any potential inequalities is reduced.</p> <p>Our recommendation that SCC continues to fund the two extra local concessions for qualifying concessionary pass holders (free disabled travel and free companion passes) is likely to have a positive impact on the protected characteristics Age, Disability and Carers.</p>
Changes you have made to the proposal as a result of the EIA	No amendments made
Key mitigating actions planned to address any outstanding negative impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that funding support is directed where it's needed most • To make some of the required savings without changing the current service level. • Look for opportunities to grow the commercial value of the current bus network. • Make Community Transport organisation less grant reliant and more income reliant. • Ensure service changes are communicated well in advance of them coming into effect including providing materials in alternative formats for those who are visually impaired or those that have learning disabilities. • Continue to update the equality impact assessment throughout the life cycle of the review.
Potential negative impacts that cannot be mitigated	<p>An average of 234 current passengers, identified as using services proposed for change in Annex E, could be negatively impacted by the proposed changes. This could mean they have to walk further to reach a bus stop or may need to change bus to get to their required destination meaning they can still access local transport. However, a very small number of these passengers (17 in total), that are unique to services 22 and 513 on a Saturday, will have no alternative service</p>