

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM INCLUDING SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

(Revised March 2021)

Please refer to the current Equality Impact Assessment guidance when completing this document. If you would like further guidance please contact the Diversity and Inclusion Team on 01443 444529.

An equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken at the outset of any proposal to ensure robust evidence is considered in decision making. This documentation will support the Council in making informed, effective and fair decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010.

This document will also contribute towards our duties to create a More Equal Wales within the

- Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015.

The [‘A More Equal Wales – Mapping Duties’](#) guide highlights the alignment of our duties in respect of the above-mentioned legislation.

## SECTION 1 – PROPOSAL DETAILS

Lead Officer: Geraint Roberts

Service Director: Stephen Williams

Service Area: Transportation

Date: 13/11/2023

1.a) What are you assessing for impact?

Strategy/Plan	Service Re-Model/Discontinuation of Service	Policy/Procedure	Practice	Information/Position Statement
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.b) What is the name of the proposal?

Review of the Council's Home to School Transport Policy

1.c) Please provide an overview of the proposal providing any supporting links to reports or documents.

The proposal seeks Cabinet's approval to initiate a consultation with interested parties and relevant stakeholders in respect of a proposed new Home to School Transport Policy, namely providing mainstream English, Welsh and Faith primary school, secondary school and college transport in line with relevant statutory distance criteria, which would be implemented from the start of the 2025/2026 academic year. However, it should be noted that it is not proposed to consult on amending the discretionary elements of Additional Learning Needs, (ALN), transport - distance criteria for ALN Transport will not change.

1.d) Please outline where delivery of this proposal is affected by legislation or other drivers such as code of practice.

The Welsh Government’s Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 sets out the current statutory duties of Local Authorities with regard to the provision of home to school transport. Statutory guidance is also provided by the Welsh Government in the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance – June 2014. The Measure and the Guidance can be accessed by clicking on the following links:

Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 ([legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk))

Learner travel: statutory provision and operational guidance | GOV.WALES

1.e) Please outline who this proposal affects:

- Service users
- Employees
- Wider community

**SECTION 2 – SCREENING TEST – IS A FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED?**

Screening is used to determine whether the initiative has positive, negative or neutral impacts upon protected groups. Where negative impacts are identified for protected groups then a full Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Please provide as much detail as possible of how the proposal will impact on the following groups, this may not necessarily be negative, but may impact on a group with a particular characteristic in a specific way.

**Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011**

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and foster good relations between different groups. Please take an intersectional approach in recognising an individual may have more than one protected characteristic.

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b>Age</b> ( <i>Specific age groups i.e. young people or older people</i> )	Negative	<p>The proposals will affect children and young people of school age, and their families/carers, in the county borough.</p> <p>The proposal will affect 336 primary school pupils and 2,362 secondary school and college pupils (based on September 2023 passenger data).</p> <p>Overall, this proposal will impact approximately 24% of pupils that currently receive school transport.</p>	Current passenger information.
<b>Disability</b> ( <i>people with visible and non-visible disabilities or long-term health conditions</i> )	Neutral	<p>Children and young people who have a disability or additional learning need attending mainstream education would be assessed individually for transport on a discretionary basis. Children attending one of the special schools within the county borough are not considered as part of these proposals, so there is no change to their current provision.</p> <p>The Council's school transport policy states that free transport to and from</p>	<p>Current passenger information and Council policy.</p> <p>Whilst pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) are assessed by distance criteria, in practice SEN pupils would not be affected by this proposed policy change as their transport is based upon their individual need. The discretionary elements of SEN</p>

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
		school may be provided on medical grounds e.g. chronic illness or temporary incapacity for short but continuous periods. This is not subject to change under the proposals.	transport (pre-school, post 16, etc.) would continue
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> <i>(anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth including non-binary identities)</i>	Neutral	There is no evidence to suggest that children and young people who are transgender or gender neutral will be disproportionately impacted by the proposals.	The proposal is to provide mainstream English, Welsh and Faith primary and secondary school and college transport above statutory distance only, regardless of gender.
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i>	Neutral	No impact	The proposals will affect children and young people of school age in the county borough.
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> <i>(women who are pregnant/on maternity leave)</i>	Neutral	No impact.	The proposals will affect children and young people of school age in the county borough.  The Council will continue to offer transport on medical grounds where deemed

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
			appropriate by medical practitioners.
<b>Race</b> <i>(ethnic and racial groups i.e. minority ethnic groups, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers)</i>	Neutral	There is no evidence to suggest that there will be a disproportionate impact upon learners based on race or ethnicity.	The proposal is to provide mainstream English, Welsh and Faith primary and secondary school and college transport above statutory distance only, regardless of race or ethnicity.
<b>Religion or Belief</b> <i>(people with different religions and philosophical beliefs including people with no beliefs)</i>	Neutral	<p>Learners attending the faith schools (primary and secondary) will maintain home to school transport under the proposed statutory walking distances providing the faith school is determined to be their nearest available school.</p> <p>The proposed changes will be applied equally to English medium education provision and Faith education provision</p> <p>Pupils generally travel further to Faith/Welsh Medium schools, although the proposed changes would impact upon English medium education provision in exactly the same way.</p>	The proposal is to provide mainstream English, Welsh and Faith primary and secondary school and college transport above statutory distance only, regardless of religion or belief.

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b>Sex</b> <i>(women and men, girls and boys)</i>	Neutral	There is no evidence to suggest that there will be a disproportionate impact upon learners based on sex.	The proposal is to provide mainstream English, Welsh and Faith primary and secondary school and college transport above statutory distance only, regardless of sex.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>(bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight)</i>	Neutral	There is no evidence to suggest that there will be a disproportionate impact upon learners based on sexual orientation.	The proposal is to provide mainstream English, Welsh and Faith primary and secondary school and college transport above statutory distance only, regardless of sex.

**In addition, due to Council commitments made to the following groups of people we would like you to consider impacts upon them:**

	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>

<b>Armed Forces Community</b> <i>(anyone who is serving, has served, family members and the bereaved)</i>	Neutral	There is no evidence to suggest that there will be a disproportionate impact upon learners based on whether a member a member of the Armed Forces Community or not.	The proposal is to provide mainstream English, Welsh and Faith primary and secondary school and college transport above statutory distance only, regardless of whether a member of the Armed Forces Community or not.
<b>Carers</b> <i>(anyone of any age who provides unpaid care)</i>	Neutral	There is no evidence to suggest that there will be a disproportionate impact upon learners based on whether a carer or not.	The proposal is to provide mainstream English, Welsh and Faith primary and secondary school and college transport above statutory distance only, regardless of whether a Carer or not.

If the initial screening test has identified negative impacts then a full equality impact assessment (section 4) **must** be undertaken. However, if after undertaking the above screening test you determine a full equality impact assessment is not relevant please provide an adequate explanation below:

N/A

Are you happy you have sufficient evidence to justify your decision?

Yes

No

Name: Geraint Roberts

Position: Integrated Transport Manager

Date: 2/11/2023

Please forward a copy of this completed screening form to the Diversity and Inclusion Team.



PLEASE NOTE – there is a separate impact assessment for Welsh Language. This must also be completed for proposals. Section 3 Socio-economic Duty needs only to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. Definition of a ‘strategic nature’ is available on page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.

### **SECTION 3 – SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY (STRATEGIC DECISIONS ONLY)**

The Socio-economic Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making. Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services.

Please consider these additional vulnerable groups and the impact your proposal may or may not have on them:

- Single parents and vulnerable families
- Pensioners
- Looked after children
- Homeless people
- Students
- Single adult households

- People living in the most deprived areas in Wales
- People with low literacy and numeracy
- People who have experienced the asylum system
- People misusing substances
- People of all ages leaving a care setting
- People involved in the criminal justice system

<b><u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b><u>Low Income/Income Poverty</u></b> <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i>	Neutral	There is no evidence to suggest that there will be a disproportionate impact upon learners based on low income.	The proposals will affect children and young people of school age in the county borough.
<b><u>Low and / or No Wealth</u></b> <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i>	Neutral	There is no evidence to suggest that there will be a disproportionate impact upon learners based on low and/or no wealth.	The proposals will affect children and young people of school age in the county borough.
<b><u>Material Deprivation</u></b> <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i>	Neutral	There is no evidence to suggest that there will be a disproportionate impact upon learners based material deprivation.	The proposals will affect children and young people of school age in the county borough

<b><u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u></b>	<b>Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts</b>	<b>Provide detail of the impact</b>	<b>What evidence has been used to support this view?</b>
<b><u>Area Deprivation</u></b> <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport))</i>	Neutral	There is no evidence to suggest that there will be a disproportionate impact upon learners based on area deprivation.	The proposals will affect children and young people of school age in the county borough
<b><u>Socio-economic background</u></b> <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i>	Neutral	There is no evidence to suggest that there will be a disproportionate impact upon learners based on socio-economic background.	The proposals will affect children and young people of school age in the county borough
<b><u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u></b> <i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i>	Neutral	There is no evidence to suggest that there will be a disproportionate impact upon learners based on socio-economic disadvantage.	The proposals will affect children and young people of school age in the county borough

## SECTION 4 – FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

You should use the information gathered at the screening stage to assist you in identifying possible negative/adverse impacts and clearly identify which groups are affected.

- 4.a) In terms of disproportionate/negative/adverse impacts that the proposal may have on a protected group, outline the steps that will be taken to reduce or mitigate the impact for each group identified. **Attach a separate action plan where impacts are substantial.**

Protected Characteristics - Age

The proposals will affect children and young people of school age in the county borough.

- 4.b) If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible, please explain why they are not possible.

Transport for all primary school pupils living between current discretionary distance of 1.5 miles and statutory distance of 2 miles would no longer be provided. Free transport for pupils living further than 2 miles away would continue, including where pupils attend Welsh or Faith schools because of parental/carer/learner preference.

Transport for all secondary school pupils living between current discretionary distance of 2 miles and statutory distance of 3 miles would no longer be provided. Free transport for pupils living further than 3 miles away would continue, including where pupils attend Welsh or Faith schools because of parental/carer/learner preference.

All pupils within these two age ranges will be assessed equally.

- 4.c) Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning, in particular, the sources used for establishing the demographics of service users/staff.

Data used is school bus passenger information from September 2023.

- 4.d) Give details of how you engaged with service users/staff on the proposals and the steps taken to avoid any disproportionate impact on a protected group. Explain how you have used feedback to influence your decision.

Consultees must be given adequate time to consider the proposal and to respond. It is proposed that consultation would run for a period of 6 weeks. Subject to Cabinet approval, it would commence on 27th November 2023 (subject to call in) and end on the 8th of January 2024.

The results of any consultation will be reported back to Cabinet in order for it to determine whether, and if so, how it wishes to progress with implementation of the proposed new policy.

4.e) Are you satisfied that the engagement process complies with the requirements of the Statutory Equality and Socio-economic Duties?

Yes

No

## SECTION 5 – MONITORING AND REVIEW

5a) Please outline below how the implementation of the proposal will be monitored:

The proposal will be monitored firstly as part of a public consultation and secondly, if subsequently implemented, by reviewing attendance levels at school.

5b) When is the evaluation of the proposal due to be reviewed?

The proposal will be reviewed at the end of the public consultation.

5c) Who is responsible for the monitoring and review of the proposal?

The Integrated Transport Unit and Education and Inclusion Services.

5d) How will the results of the monitoring be used to develop future proposals?

Findings from the public consultation will be used to determine whether the option of providing mainstream English, Welsh and Faith primary school, secondary school and college transport in line with relevant statutory distance criteria is to be implemented.

## SECTION 6 – REVIEW

As part of the Impact Assessment process all proposals that fall within the definition of ‘Key Decisions’ must be submitted to the Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your proposal is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Decision please forward your impact assessment to [Councilbusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Councilbusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk) for a Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. The EqlA guidance document provides more information on what a Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that you can demonstrate how you have considered equality and socio-economic outcomes. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below

<b>Officer Review Panel Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations</b>
<b>Consultation Comments</b>	<b>Date Considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following consultation</b>

## **SECTION 6 – SUMMARY OF IMPACTS FOR THE PROPOSAL**

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment. This summary should be included in the equality and socio-economic impact section of the Cabinet report template. The impact assessment should be published alongside the report.

There is one negative equality and diversity implication associated with this report.

This one negative impact relates to the protected characteristic of Age.

This negative impact will be mitigated by a range of actions as detailed in the impact assessment above.

## **SECTION 7 – AUTHORISATIONS**

Lead Officer: G ROBERTS

Name: GERAINT ROBERTS

Position: INTEGRATED TRANSPORT MANAGER

Date: 13/11/2023

I recommend that the proposal:

- Is implemented with no amendments
- Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined
- Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on protected groups or socio-economic disadvantage

Head of Service/Director Approval: S WILLIAMS

Name: STEPHEN WILLIAMS

Position: DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS, STREETCARE, AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES



Date: 13/11/2023

Please submit this impact assessment with any SLT/Cabinet Reports.