

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Please read the EqIA GUIDANCE and the EqIA flow chart available on KNet.

**Directorate:**

Enterprise and Environment

**Name of policy, procedure, project or service**

Statutory Quality Partnership Scheme

**What is being assessed?**

Statutory Quality Partnership Scheme

**Responsible Owner/ Senior Officer**

David Joyner

**Date of Initial Screening**

25<sup>th</sup> February 2013



## Screening Grid

| Characteristic    | Could this policy, procedure, project or service affect this group less favourably than others in Kent? YES/NO<br>If yes how? | Assessment of potential impact<br><b>HIGH/MEDIUM</b><br><b>LOW/NONE</b><br><b>UNKNOWN</b> |          | Provide details:<br>a) Is internal action required? If yes what?<br><br>b) Is further assessment required? If yes, why? | Could this policy, procedure, project or service promote equal opportunities for this group?<br>YES/NO - Explain how good practice can promote equal opportunities   |
|-------------------|---|---|----------|---|--|
|                   |   | Positive  | Negative |   |  |
| <b>Age</b>        | No  | Medium  | None     |   | <p>Older people using the bus who typically may not make use of mobile/ internet devices to search for bus times will benefit from the Real Time Information screens at bus stops.</p> <p>Older people will also benefit from raised kerbs at bus stops to access/ exit the bus and the low floor buses themselves. Both younger and older people will particularly benefit from increased frequency of buses, as they often rely heavily on public transport.</p> |
| <b>Disability</b> | No  | High  | None     |   | <p>All bus stops will be wheelchair accessible with a 2m x 2m-boarding/alighting zone.</p> <p>Disabled people will also benefit from raised kerbs at bus stops to access/ exit the bus and the low floor buses themselves.. This is particularly important as many disabled people rely heavily on public transport.</p> <p>Visually impaired people will benefit from smartcards as they negate the</p>   |

|  |    |        |      |  |  |
|--|----|--------|------|--|--|
|  |    |        |      |  | need to carry and pay with cash. The possibility of tactile smartcards and audible announcements at bus stops will also help the visually impaired.  |
| <b>Gender</b>                          | No | None   | None |  | There is evidence to suggest that a lower percentage of women than men are car owners. This means that many women will see added benefits from the improvements to bus services delivered by the Scheme. |
| <b>Gender identity</b>                 | No | None   | None |  |  |
| <b>Race</b>                            | No | None   | None |  |  |
| <b>Religion or belief</b>              | No | None   | None |  |  |
| <b>Sexual orientation</b>              | No | None   | None |  |  |
| <b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>         | No | Medium | None |  | Adults with pushchairs will benefit from raised kerbs at bus stops to access/ exit the bus and the low floor buses themselves.   |
| <b>Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b> | No | None   | None |  |  |

## Part 1: INITIAL SCREENING

**Proportionality** - Based on the answers in the above screening grid what weighting would you ascribe to this function

| Low   | Medium   | High   |
|---|--|--|
| Low relevance or Insufficient information/evidence to make a judgement. | Medium relevance or Insufficient information/evidence to make a Judgement. | High relevance to equality, /likely to have adverse impact on protected groups |

### State rating & reasons

LOW. The SQPS will bring about only positive impacts for the travelling public, including those groups named above.

### Context

The SQPS contributes to the *Bold Steps 4 Kent* objectives of *Helping the Kent Economy to Grow* and *Tackling Disadvantage*. The scheme has been designed to ensure that the level of bus provision is able to accommodate the ongoing housing and employment growth in the Medway Valley area. It will contribute to improved air quality within four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and involve the setting of minimum service quality standards, thereby locking in the benefits of investment by all parties and ensuring maximum return on public investment.

### Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the SQPS is to improve the quality of bus services operating in the Scheme area. The Local Authorities will provide improved facilities for buses and the operators will provide improved bus services. By significantly improving bus services, the SQPS can reduce or limit traffic congestion, noise and air pollution in the area and provide inclusive access to services.

Proposed improvements will include:

- More reliable journey times
- Real Time Information at bus stops (*showing when the next bus will arrive*)
- Lower emissions
- Accessible buses
- Pay As You Go smart travel card

### Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries are primarily bus users who will receive an improved service in the Scheme area. All bus users will benefit from the variety of improvements. Local residents and all road users will benefit from reduced/ limited noise and air pollution as a result of greater bus use compared to single occupancy car traffic.

## **Consultation and data**

According to Passenger Focus study (2012) 28% of bus passengers in Kent (excluding school only routes) have a disability.

The 2011 Census data for the wards surrounding the Scheme area (Aylesford, Ditton, East Malling, Larkfield South, West Malling and Leybourne) show key statistics to be very similar to national, South East and Kent figures.

- % Ratio of males to females is around 49.1% : 50.9%
- Age Distribution: 61% are aged 17-64, 18% are aged 65+, which is similar to Kent and national average.
- Average number of cars per household is 1.5, which is higher than Kent average of 1.3. 15% of households have no access to a car/van, lower than Kent average of 26%.
- Method of Travel to Work: For those employed, 3% use the bus and 74% use the car to travel to work.
- 28% of the population over 16yrs are economically inactive, (16% retired, 3% students), which is slightly lower than the Kent average of 30%.

Equality and Diversity Profile Data for Tonbridge and Malling show:

- 21% aged 0-15 yrs. 63% aged 16-64 yrs, 17% aged 65+.
- 6.2% Black and Ethnic Minority, of which Indian is the largest group.
- 13.6% Limiting Long Term Illness, which is below the National average and the majority of whom are aged 65+.
- 6% claiming Disability Benefits, which is below the National average and the majority of whom are aged 65+.
- The main religion is Christianity.

## **Potential Impact**

There are no negative impacts on any of the groups. The SQPS will bring about positive improvements to local bus services. This will bring benefits to passengers as well as all other road users and local residents.

### **Adverse Impact:**

There are no negative impacts on any of the groups. The SQPS will bring about positive improvements to local bus services. This will bring benefits to passengers as well as all other road users and local residents.

### **Positive Impact:**

All bus users will benefit from improved services and all road users and local residents will benefit from reduced/ limited congestion, air and noise pollution. More specifically, disabled, elderly and parents with pushchairs will benefit from raised kerbs and accessible bus stops and buses. Visually impaired passengers will benefit from audible announcements.

## JUDGEMENT

Option 1 – Screening Sufficient

YES

**Following this initial screening our judgement is that no further action is required.**

### **Justification:**

There is no negative impact of the scheme. However actions have been identified to extend the positive benefits to certain groups, and these have been detailed in the Action Plan.

### **Equality and Diversity Team Comments**

***The Equality and Diversity Team to make any comments following their review.***

### **Sign Off**

I have noted the content of the equality impact assessment and agree the actions to mitigate the adverse impact(s) that have been identified.

### **Senior Officer**



Signed:

Name: David Joyner

Job Title: Transport & Safety Policy Manager

Date: 17 April 2013

### **DMT Member**



Signed:

Name: Tim Read

Job Title: Head of Transportation

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> April 2013

## Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

| Protected Characteristic | Issues identified   | Action to be taken   | Expected outcomes  | Owner          | Timescale   | Cost implications  |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|----------------|---|--|
| <b>All</b>               | The scheme is developed in a partnership that involves KCC and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council  | Take a partnership approach to Equality Impact Assessment, with KCC and TMBC working together  | Using the “Partnership approach to EqIA” the scheme benefits from input from both authorities, working to get the best outcome for users of the bus service, taking into account the needs of people with all protected characteristics. | Charlotte Owen | Until end of Consultation- 15 <sup>th</sup> July.                 | None   |
| <b>Age/Disability</b>    | Older people using the bus who typically may not make use of mobile/ internet devices to search for bus times will benefit from the Real Time Information | Work with organisations such as Kent Association for the Blind to ensure that displayed information has good colour contrast and take advice about other | Information at bus stops is easy for all passengers to read. As a result the service is easier for older and disabled customers to use.  | Charlotte Owen | Until infrastructure improvements are completed (September 2013). | Potentially higher costs of tailoring information to easier read format. |



|            |   |   |  |                |   |   |
|------------|---|---|--|----------------|---|---|
|            | screens at bus stops. For this to be truly effective for people with low vision, the displayed information must be easy to see. | aspects of accessible presentation.   |  |                |   |   |
| <b>All</b> |   | Amend Scheme to include requirement for bus operators to deliver Awareness Training to all drivers. | All drivers will be trained in how to communicate appropriately with passengers with learning difficulties; hearing difficulties; English as a second language; visually-impaired people (who may need to be told when they have reached their destination). | Charlotte Owen | Before Consultation Start Date 22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2013. | Bus operators may incur costs in delivering training to drivers and staff time in receiving training. |

|                          |  |  |  |                |   |   |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|----------------|---|---|
| <b>Visual Impairment</b> | People with visually impairments will benefit from audible announcements at bus stops to inform them when the next bus will arrive.  | New Real Time Information displays at bus stops will have audible announcements built in. These will be triggered by visually impaired people carrying an appropriate key fob. | People with visual impairments will find it easier to find out when the next bus will arrive.  | Charlotte Owen | Before Scheme Commencement Date (November 2013)                       | Real Time Information Displays may be more expensive with audible announcements enabled.  |
| <b>Visual Impairment</b> | People with visual impairments will benefit from tactile smartcards. A small notch or groove etc. on the card will differentiate it from other plastic cards in one's wallet, allowing visually impaired people to easily locate it amongst their other cards. | The possibility to produce tactile cards for passengers requiring them will be explored.   | Visually impaired people will be able to easily discern the smartcard from their other plastic cards in their wallet, making travelling by bus and paying for journeys easier. | Charlotte Owen | As multi-operator smartcard is developed (1 <sup>st</sup> March 2014) | Producing a notch or groove on the smartcard will likely increase the cost of production. |