

Borough of Poole Equality Impact Assessment

Function:	Public Transport
Service Unit, Strategic Lead or Partnership:	Transportation Services
Names & roles of officers/ partners undertaking EQIA:	Unit EQIA Working Group consisting of: - Kay English - Parking Services Manager, John McVey – Passenger Transport & Accessibility Manager, Elaine Buckley – Business & Performance Manager, Ken Pearce – Local Transport Plan Manager.
Date completed:	17 March 2009
Aims of the Function	
<p>The aims of the function are to provide transport thus enabling access for those people without a private car and to provide alternatives for those with a car. To develop and maintain a network of socially beneficial supported bus services where services are not commercially viable. To provide bus stops, shelters etc to support the use of public transport.</p> <p>John McVey Passenger Transport & Accessibility Manager is responsible for the function and it is implemented by the Accessibility Team led by Nick Phillips. The Council has greatest influence over bus services though does undertake some work with South West Trains and Network Rail on railway matters.</p> <p>The majority of bus services are operated by private operators on a commercial basis. However, approximately 20% of services are operated on behalf of the Council with financial subsidy. The Council and the principal bus operators have formed a Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) with the bus operators. Under the QBP the operators have invested in modern, high quality, low floor buses. The Council has invested in improved passenger waiting facilities (bus shelters, seating, lighting, information) and bus priority measures.</p> <p>The Council is required to publish a Passenger Transport Policy under the Transport Act 1985. This legislation gives the authority the power to support non-commercial bus services that contribute to social need. A Bus Strategy was published in 2006 as part of the South East Dorset Local Transport Plan (LTP). Bus services are also an important part of delivering the Council's Accessibility Strategy as set out in the LTP.</p> <p>The Council has corporate objectives of Promoting Health & Well-being and Protecting Poole's Environment with improvement priorities of Meeting the Needs of our Ageing Population and Reducing Poole's Carbon Footprint. Bus services provide access to employment, education, health, shopping and leisure facilities. Supported by the concessionary travel scheme, bus services can help maintain independent living for residents on low incomes and support reductions in traffic congestion and improvements in air quality.</p>	

Equality Strand	EQIA Evidence	SMART Actions	Performance Measures
<p>People from different age groups</p>	<p>Key findings: Bus patronage increased by 62% between 2004/05 and 2007/08 (5.33m to 8.65m). Some of this increase is due to the free travel concessionary fares scheme introduced in 2006 (approximately 29% of journeys are concessionary).</p> <p>Current mitigating actions/positive actions The take up of the Concessionary fare pass is well above average in Poole (for people aged 60 and above and for younger people with certain disabilities). The recent introduction of night buses to Bournemouth on Friday and Saturday nights has supported adults partaking in leisure activities. However, fares for young people tend to be high – the principal bus operator offers no child concessions before 0900 on schooldays and there is no Local Authority concessionary travel scheme for young people.</p> <p>In a recent consultation (November 2008) undertaken on Children & Young People’s Services, bus travel was a regularly used form of transport with 27% of young people taking the bus almost every day and a further 28% at least once a week. Journeys for shopping (78%) were most popular though 37% used a bus to get to school or visit friends. To encourage further use of the buses, 97% supported the suggestion of ‘cheaper fares for younger people at all times’ and others suggested free passes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Data: - Best Value performance indicators:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>BV102 (now NI 177) – “increase in the total number of local bus journeys originating in the local authority” – The total for 2004-05 was 5,331,268, for 05-06 – 7,176,814, for 06-07 - 7,877,098, 07-08 – 8,653,404. This shows a steady increase in passenger numbers.</i> • <i>BV103 – “percentage of users satisfied with local provision of public transport information (survey carried out every three years)” – The 2006-07 survey showed a satisfaction rate of 55%. This compares</i> 		

	<p>favourably with the Unitary average of 51%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>BV 104 – “percentage of users satisfied with local bus services”</i> – The 2006-07 survey showed a satisfaction rate of 55%. The Unitary average is 57%. It is disappointing to be below the Unitary average. However, there were significant changes to the bus network during 2006 which would have adversely affected user satisfaction. 		
<p>Disabled people</p>	<p>Key findings: The majority of bus services are operated with low floor accessible vehicles (approximately 85%). This was the highest of all authorities in the 2007/08 South West Highways Benchmarking Group survey. Most new local bus service tenders now specify low-floor buses.</p> <p>Current mitigating actions/positive actions:</p> <p>Disabled people and their representatives are consulted through the Getting About Poole Group.</p> <p>Travel training has been provided by the Council for learning disabled people.</p> <p>Raised kerbs have been installed at bus stops to aid the access and egress of wheelchairs and passengers with other mobility problems. In the 2007/08 Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers (ATCO) Benchmarking Survey, Poole was the highest Unitary Authority with 56% of its bus stops having raised kerbs. In addition all shelters are provided with seating and lighting where possible. In 2007/08 Poole had 1.59 bus shelters per 1000 head of population which is above the Unitary Authority average of 1.43.</p> <p>On buses manufactured since 2000 (and some earlier buses) wheelchair access is provided plus other accessibility features including specific seating allocated for those with a disability near the front of the vehicle.</p> <p>Concessionary travel is provided for those over the age of 60 or for younger</p>	<p>.</p>	

	<p>people with a qualifying disability. (See Concessionary Travel screening).</p> <p>Service 128 has been extended to serve Upton Country Park and is timed to enable learning disabled people to access supported employment at Upton House.</p> <p>The Route ONE town centre bus service provides low-floor access to services and facilities including Poole Hospital, Poole Quay and local shops.</p> <p>For those unable to access public transport community transport is offered (see Community Transport screening).</p> <p>The installation of the Real Time Information system has resulted in the following benefits for disabled people:</p> <p>Real Time information displays at approximately 100 bus stops, most with key-fob activated audible announcement facility.</p> <p>SMS text messaging of next 3 buses from any stop in the Borough.</p> <p>On-bus next stop displays on most Wilts & Dorset and Transdev Yellow Buses</p>		
<p>People of different religions or beliefs</p>	<p>Key findings: No statistics are collected from public transport users about their faith. Census 2001 – almost ¾ of Poole’s population said they were Christian. 16% stated they had no religion, for 8% religion was not stated and the remaining 1% belong to other denominations.</p> <p>Current mitigating actions/positive actions: The majority of bus services operating on a Sunday are subsidised by the Council.</p>		
<p>Men, Women, Trans people</p>	<p>Key findings: There are more female public transport users than male – research nationally has shown that 75% of bus journeys are undertaken by women.</p>		

	<p>This is likely to be because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More men than women hold Driving Licenses. • There are more females in Poole. Poole's total population is 137,900 of whom 48% are males and 52% are females (census data 2007). • 3.1% of men travel to work by bus in Poole compared to 8.6% females (Census 2007 data). <p>Current mitigating actions/positive actions: CCTV is installed on many vehicles to aid passenger safety. The Poole Bus Station refurbishment resulted in a brighter waiting area and Bus Station Marshals will continue to be employed on a part-time basis.</p>		
<p>Black and minority ethnic people</p>	<p>Key findings: Census 2001 showed Poole BME communities made up 4% of the population. No statistics are available to confirm whether or not BME public transport users in Poole reflect the 2001 Census.</p> <p>Current mitigating actions/positive actions: There is a translation facility for public transport information on the Poole website.</p>	<p>To consult with at least 2 BME communities on their use of public transport by December 2009.</p>	
<p>Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual people</p>	<p>Key findings: No statistics are collected from public transport users about their sexual orientation.</p> <p>Current mitigating actions/positive actions: A corporate stand is taken at Bourne Free in Bournemouth where public transport information is available. Poole tourism.com links to the Bournemouth Gay Guide – an independent website offering a comprehensive guide for lesbian and gay visitors to the area. This information includes public transport.</p>		
<p>Review date:</p>	<p>2010/11</p>	<p>Sent record to PERD Rep and Improvement and Policy Officer – Equalities</p>	
			<p>Yes</p>