

# **Surrey County Council**

Equality Impact Assessment

Transport Co-ordination Centre

All Policies

## Surrey County Council Equality Impact Assessment – Initial Screening Form



Please read the EIA toolkit for guidance before completing this form

<b>Service:</b> Transport for Surrey	<b>Policy:</b> All Transport Co-ordination Centre Policies	<b>Name of officer:</b> Keith Russell	
1. Is this a major policy: i.e. high profile / will effect many people / will have a severe effect on some people?	Yes		No
	High risk. Complete a full EIA		Go to section 2
2. Is the policy likely to have an impact on a specific group of people? (People from the E&D strands)	Yes	<b>X</b>	No
	High risk. Complete a full EIA		Go to section 3
3. For policies that have a low risk of impact on the E&D strands and where possible improvements have been identified complete section 5 below <b>and</b> sections 3 and 4 of the full EIA.			
4. For policies that have a low risk of impact on the E&D strands and require no action to be taken complete section 5 below.			
5. If this policy is low risk please give or attach evidence to indicate how you have reached this conclusion:			

**Head of Service Signed:**

**Paul Millin (PTG Group Manager)**

**Date:** December 2011

Indicate for each equality group whether there may be a positive impact, negative impact, or no impact.

Equality Group	Positive	Negative	No impact	Reason
Age		X		
Gender Reassignment			X	
Disability	X			
Sex			X	
Religion and belief			X	
Pregnancy and maternity			X	
Race			X	
Sexual orientation			X	
Carers			X	
Other equality issues – please state		X		Language
HR and workforce issues			X	Please indicate if a separate EIA needs to be carried out
Human Rights implications if relevant			X	

# Surrey County Council Equality Impact Assessment

## 1. Context of the Service or Policy

**Policy being assessed:** All Transport Co-ordination Centre Policies

**Assessor:** Keith Russell

**Date:** December 2011

**What are the aims of the service or policy? If this assessment is part of a project it is important to focus on the service or policy the project aims to review/improve**

(NB this should set out the aims and objectives of the policy or service)

The policies set out the standards that are demanded of the contracted transport operators on Surrey County Council Transport Co-ordination Centre contracts in order to supply the level of service expected by Surrey County Council and a safe environment for the clients being transported.

**Who are the beneficiaries/users of this service or policy?**

(NB this should address needs of client groups and a review of barriers to policy or services)

The beneficiaries of this service are all mainstream and special needs students, ages 2 to 19, who receive Home to School Transport, those who receive social care transport supplied by Surrey County Council and other customers who's transport is procured through the Transport Co-ordination Centre.

The users of this policy are the contracted transport operators charged with running this transport.

**What is the existing situation in relation to minority, disadvantaged and excluded groups in which this service/policy operates?** (including age, belief/faith, disability, Gender/transgender, sexual orientation, race and other general equality strands or issues that might make people vulnerable. NB this will require declaring what information is currently captured with respect to equality & diversity Monitoring) of this service or policy. It is also important to show the relevance of capturing this data.)

These policies are most relevant to the disability strand as it is focused on supplying a level of service that is necessary to be able to safely and competently transport those with special needs. It may also impact on individuals who are under 21 years old and those with language issues who wish to work on TCC contracts as an Escort.

**2. Given what you already know, what is the potential for this service/policy to have a negative or differential impact on minority, disadvantaged, vulnerable and excluded groups or on race relations and community cohesion?**

Please summarise the negative impact identified due to age, belief/faith, disability, Gender/transgender, sexual orientation, race and other or general equality issues

A negative effect of these policies is that it may not allow some minorities with language issues to work on TCC contracts as it states that Drivers and Escorts "must be able to communicate effectively in English". However this has a very low impact on the minorities as the level of communication that is required is very low and could not be stated as impacting on those who do not speak English as a first language. As part of the Authorised TCC Identification scheme applicants will have to pass an English Language Assessment but it only impacts upon those who cannot communicate in English to a very low level, and this is a necessity in order to provide safe and comfortable transport for the client.

The only other negative effect of the Terms and Conditions of Contract policy is that it does not allow individuals who are under 21 to work on TCC contracts. For Drivers this is to minimise the risk/exposure to risk of using young and inexperienced drivers who fall in the highest category of accidents in the UK (information source: British Insurance Association). For Escorts this was an earlier decision that was made in conjunction with Children's Services who recommended that it would be inappropriate to expect a young person, whose age could be similar or lower than that of the passenger, to be able to exert authority and discipline in emergency situations and decisions. However these are genuine and determining occupational requirements in order to provide a safe and high quality service, and as so come under Part 2, Section 8(2) of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

There are no negative impacts in regards to belief/faith, disability, Gender/transgender, pregnancy/maternity, sexual orientation, carers, race, HR and workforce issues, human rights implications or other equality issues. However in order to gain SCC clearance to work with children on TCC transport, if an applicant has lived outside the UK for a period of over 3 months since they were 16 years old, they will be asked to provide a Certificate of Good conduct from the country in which they resided. This should not have a negative or differential impact on minority, disadvantaged, vulnerable and excluded groups or on race relations and community cohesion as this is applicable to all applicants regardless of nationality, race or age.

**3. Given what you already know, what is the potential for this service/policy to have a positive impact, such as tackling discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and / or promoting good community relations, for minority, disadvantaged and excluded groups?**

Please summarise the positive impact identified due to age, belief/faith, disability, Gender/transgender, sexual orientation, race and other or general equality issues. NB this would include positive initiatives delivery by the service or through the policy for any/all of these equality groups. What have been the outcomes or changes?

These policies are designed to set the standards of what is expected from the operator, and their drivers and escorts in order to be able to provide a high level of service, particularly to those with disabilities in order to allow them greater educational opportunities.

The Conditions of Contracts states that “in some cases, communication in a language other than English may be a specific requirement of the contract” which allows employment opportunities to some minorities with the necessary language skills.

The County Council has a responsibility for organising home to school transport for entitled scholars in Surrey. It has developed, in consultation with schools, transport operators and the police, both the Code of Conduct for students travelling on transport and a broad framework for managing instances of misbehaviour. The purpose of the documents is to provide a framework to help manage student’s behaviour on transport thereby creating a comfortable and safe environment while travelling to ensure that home to school transport is safe and welcoming for all passengers.

The County Council is currently working with independent trainers to develop a training programme to see a common, nationally recognised quality standard for all drivers of its contracted local bus services. This will work towards enhancing the journey experience for all passengers and includes: customer care, disability awareness, incident reporting, safe operations, health & safety and Special Needs. It is anticipated that driver-training programmes could become a part of tender evaluation in the future and further work is being undertaken on this proposal.

There are no real positive impacts in regards to age, belief/faith, Gender/transgender, pregnancy/maternity, sexual orientation, carers, race or other equality issues.

**4. Give details of involvement, consultation and or research undertaken for each relevant equality and diversity grouping, upon which this policy/service has had an impact either internally or externally.**

**What is the research telling you in relation to age, belief/faith, disability, race gender/transgender, sexual orientation and other equality issues?**

Although there is no quantifiable evidence, the necessity to be able to communicate clearly in English has been dictated by the needs of the client being transported, as well as the educated opinion of the Officers in the TCC and Children's Services. This is especially relevant in regard to special needs transport where the client may have communication difficulties and may well become distressed by the inability to communicate effectively with the Driver or Escort. The vast majority of transport is undertaken with the need for communication in English as a necessity, however on the occasion that another language is necessary to continue the high standard of care and service demanded, this would be provided.

In terms of the impact upon age, research from the British Insurers Association was used that highlighted the fact that young drivers fall in the highest category for accidents in the UK. For escorts there was no quantifiable evidence available, however it is the educated opinion of Officers from within the TCC and Children's Services that it would be inappropriate to expect a young person, whose age could be similar or lower than that of the passenger, to be able to exert authority and discipline in emergency situations and decisions.

- 5. Given your answers to the previous questions, how will your service or policy be revised to mitigate, reduce or eliminate negative impacts and enhance positive impacts for the relevant equality groups?**

(NB this is in effect the Recommendations to improve this policy)

The policies cannot be revised as they have been produced in line with the operational necessities as dictated by the needs of the transport, and all the negative impacts have been created by a need to protect the client and supply a high level of service. These policies could also be seen as a catalyst to promote a better understanding of English especially to ethnic minorities where integration may be impaired by the lack of language skills.

**6. Actions needed to implement the EIA recommendations:**

**Action Plan**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Expected outcome</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Deadline for action</b>
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

NB these actions should have SMART Targets

Please continue and attach a separate sheet if necessary

NB these actions should be reported to the Departmental Equality and Diversity Implementation Group (DIG) and incorporated into the Equality and Diversity Action Plan, Service Plans and/or personal objectives of key staff.

**7. If no actions are to be taken with respect to the recommendations please give reasons below:**

There are no recommendations to follow, and therefore no actions to follow. The policies cannot be revised as they have been produced in line with the operational necessities as dictated by the needs of the transport, and all the negative impacts have been created by a need to protect the client and supply a high level of service. However these negative impacts are genuine and determining occupational requirements, and as so come under Part 2, Section 8(2) of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

**Action plan review date:** December 2011

**Name of person responsible for review:** Keith Russell

**Name of person who carried out assessment:** Keith Russell

**Name Head of Service:** Paul Millin

**Signed:**



**Date Completed:** December 2011

1. Signed off electronic version to be kept in your team for monitoring and audit purposes
2. Send an electronic copy to the SCC 'Web Operations Team' for publication on the SCC website
3. Send Action Plan to DIG for review at its next meeting.

**Date sent to Web Operations Team:** 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2011