

Addressing Inequalities

**Public Value Review of the Transport Co-ordination
Centre Equalities Impact Assessment**

Surrey County Council Transport Co-ordination Centre Public Value Review Equality Impact Assessment

Stage one – initial screening

What is being assessed?	Possible impacts as a result of the Public Value Review of the provision of taxi transport for vulnerable groups through the Transport Co-ordination Centre.
Service	Transport
Name of assessor/s	Laura Todd (Senior Transport Officer) with input from Paul Millin (Travel & Transport Group Manager) Lisa Wynn (Category Specialist) Keith McKain (Projects Officer)
Head of service	Iain Reeve
Date	October 2010
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	This is a major review of the how the Council and its partners provide and procure transport services for vulnerable groups across Surrey.

Write a brief description of your service, policy or function. If this screening is part of a project it is important to focus on the service or policy the project aims to review or improve.

The purpose of this assessment is to highlight the possible effects on equalities groups that may result from a change in the way the Council, and its partners, provide and procure transport services for vulnerable users across Surrey. It tries, as best possible, to outline all the possible impacts, whether positive or otherwise, and, where possible, gives ways of mitigating against them. This is an extremely important and necessary part of the Public Value Review (PVR) and goes towards informing the decision making process.

The scope of the project was to review the way in which transport provision was provided for people who cannot use conventional public transport or who require access to healthcare, social care or Special Educational Needs (SEN) home to school transport. It is important to **note that the sole focus of the project was to review how these forms of transport were provided** and to recommend more effective methods of service delivery. **It did not analyse or review the eligibility criteria** for these services. These criteria will therefore remain as they are currently subject to ongoing work by the Services

representing users. There are currently a number of methods of service delivery for transport provision and these include:

- Taxi and private hire vehicles
- Minibuses and coaches
- Community transport such as Dial-a-Ride schemes, Demand Responsive transport, taxi vouchers schemes and voluntary car schemes
- Non emergency patient transport service (PTS) is currently provided by Surrey PCT via a contract with G4S

As a result of the multiple methods of service delivery, a Public Value Review was undertaken to consider the way transport services are provided in Surrey. The key focus of this has been an analysis of the current role of the Transport Co-ordination Centre (TCC) in the procurement of taxi transport provision. The TCC's core transport provision function is to transport passengers for whom the Council has a statutory responsibility; this includes SEN pupils, mainstream pupils without easy access to public transport, and increasingly, users of Adult day centres.

Since the TCC was established in 2006 substantial improvements in the levels of spend and service delivery have been achieved. However, whilst this has resulted in notable efficiencies, the TCC has yet to fulfil its true potential, both in terms of consolidating the procuring of transport across the County and in terms of delivering savings/cost avoidance. This is because significant amounts of Council transport are still being procured by Services directly rather than through the TCC. In the 2008-09 financial year the total combined Adults' and Children's social care spend for ad-hoc taxi transport was £4.1m. £2.2m of this spend was procured directly through the TCC, but the remaining £1.9m spend was procured by the Services directly.

It was the belief at the beginning of the PVR that the TCC could build on efficiencies already achieved and therefore deliver the same, or an improved level of service, whilst further improving value for money for Surrey residents.

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

Equality Strand	Positive	Negative	No impact	Reason
Age	X			The integration of Council, PCT and its partners transport services may have a positive effect on older people due to the development of common service standards and improvements in the accessibility and flexibility of services.

				The change to the contract commissioning framework for SEN home to school taxi transport could have an effect on children aged 2-19 who receive the service, but this should result in improved service delivery.
Race			X	There is no likely equalities impact for people based on their ethnicity as this has no bearing on eligibility for Council provided transport provision. Why this is the case is explained later in the Analysis and Assessment section.
Disability	X			The integration of Council, PCT and partners transport services may have a positive effect on people with physical or sensory impairment, or learning difficulties due to the development of common service standards and improvements in the accessibility and flexibility of services.
Gender			X	There is no likely equalities impact for people based on their gender as this has no bearing on eligibility for Council provided transport provision. Why this is the case is explained later in the Analysis and Assessment section.
Belief / Faith			X	There is no likely equalities impact for people based on their belief/faith as this has no bearing on eligibility for Council provided transport provision. Why this is the case is explained later in the Analysis and Assessment section.
Sexual Orientation			X	There is no likely equalities impact for people based on their sexual orientation as this

				has no bearing on eligibility for Council provided transport provision.
Other equality issues – please state	X			<p>Closer partnership and involvement of community transport providers and the third sector in the provision of social care and health PTS transport is likely to improve the levels of service provision across the County as a whole.</p> <p>This may have an effect on people in geographically isolated places, people on low incomes or living in areas of social deprivation.</p>
HR issues			X	The County Council has no HR liability for taxi or minibus operator staff under the tendering process, other than those staff previously working for Atkins Transport Management Services.

If you find a negative impact on any equality group you will need to complete stage one and move on to stage two and carry out a full EIA.

A full EIA will also need to be carried out if this is a high profile or major policy that will either effect many people or have a severe effect on some people.

Is a full EIA required?	Yes X	No
If no briefly summarise reasons why you have reached this conclusion, the evidence for this and the nature of any stakeholder verification of your conclusion.		
Briefly describe any positive impacts identified that have resulted in improved access or services		

For screenings only:

Review date	
Person responsible for	

review	
Head of Service signed off	
Date completed	

- Signed off electronic version to be kept in your team for review
- Electronic copy to be forwarded to Equality and Diversity Manager for publishing

Stage 2 – Full Equality Impact Assessment

Introduction and background

Using the information from your screening please describe your service or function. This should include:

- **The aims and scope**
- **The main beneficiaries or users**
- **The main equality, accessibility, social exclusion issues and barriers, and the equality strands they relate to (not all assessments will encounter issues relating to every strand)**

If this EIA is part of a project it is important to focus on the service or policy the project aims to review or improve.

A detailed benchmarking exercise has been undertaken with other authorities such as Hertfordshire, West Sussex, Essex and Kent along with a comprehensive cost benefit analysis. This has led to the recommendation that the commissioning of all Adults' and Children's transport should be commissioned through the TCC under a new contract commissioning framework potentially in partnership with the Primary Care Trust or its successor.

Expansion of the TCC:

Expand the operation of the TCC to include commissioning for all Adults' and Children's transport including social care and SEN home to school taxi transport through a new area-based contract commissioning framework. The recommendation is that this should be a phased approach first piloted in one or two areas of the county.

Closer Partnership Working:

Establish a joint commissioning arrangement between Surrey County Council and Surrey Primary Care Trust (PCT), or its successor, for Health Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services (PTS) with a key focus on involving the third sector, where possible, in the provision of these services. The key SCC involvement in this process will be to assist in the development of closer partnership working with community transport in the delivery of this service and supporting the creation of a transport social enterprise model within Surrey.

Explore the potential of the TCC to provide the centralised eligibility assessment and booking service for all Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services across Surrey.

During the tendering process for both County Council and PCT transport services there needs to be flexible clauses, in all contracts, that provide both organisations with the opportunity to use a pool of operators from the combined transport contracts. The result would be that operators could be used with the same terms of agreement and financial rates being applied to Council or PCT work.

The PCT's Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service is due for re-tender in March 2011. The changes proposed to the structure of the NHS in the Health White Paper 'Liberating the NHS Equality and Excellence' (2010) provides the Council with the opportunity to influence the way in which this service is provided, developing a more integrated and flexible customer-led service.

The benefits of this co-ordinated approach include a more integrated and flexible customer-led service through better service planning, cross departmental and organisational co-ordination and packaging of external contracts.

Now describe how this fits into 'the bigger picture' including other council or local plans and priorities.

The County Council has a unique opportunity to provide, in a sustainable manner, much of the (non-commercial) passenger transport across services and deliver a holistic, more flexible and cost effective service incorporating education, social care, health and socially necessary transport. The benefits to be derived from such integration are financial, environmental and socio-economic aligning with the Leader's Vision for the Council, the Local Transport Plan, The Government's Big Society Agenda (2010) and the Department for Transport's (DfT) 'Delivering A Sustainable Transport System' (2008).

A joint partnership approach would mean that the Council, PCT or its successor and partners would be able to provide a more demand responsive flexible service with the ability to respond more effectively to the impacts of changes to other areas of service provision and policy agendas e.g. co-location of health services, changes to bus services following the bus review and the personalisation agenda. If changes to service provision were made that could have a negative impact on residents access to that service, a joint partnership approach would allow greater flexibility and resource to respond and mitigate against any negative impacts for residents.

In March 2009, Surrey County Council (SCC) published its revised Accessibility Strategy that was to form part of Surrey's Local Transport Plan. A substantial amount of research and consultation with Surrey residents was undertaken in order to identify the key accessibility barriers and issues facing Surrey residents. One of the key issues identified was access to healthcare and key

Council services, the common issues focused around the following:

- Surrey residents have to contact several different service providers to obtain the services they need.
- Inconsistent levels of service provision.
- There are currently no minimum standards of delivery, leading to inequitable service provision and residents confusion over service standards.

The key aim of the TCC PVR is to address and reduce the above barriers and issues identified through the Accessibility Review.

The TCC Public Value Review is one part of the wider Environment and Infrastructure (E&I) Directorate performance, efficiency and savings review. Due to financial pressure there is a requirement for the County Council to reduce its annual revenue budgets by around 20% per year by 2013/14. Alongside this requirement to reduce costs is the key focus to maintain and improve services for residents and to place the Council in the top 25% of local authorities for performance and improvements in quality assurance.

The changes proposed to the structure of the NHS in the Health White Paper 'Liberating the NHS' Equality and Excellence (2010) provides the Council with the opportunity to influence the way in which this service is provided in the future. The proposals include the abolition of Strategic Health Authorities and Primary Care Trusts and to move the commissioning of service to GPs through a consortium type approach. The proposal is that there will be a number of GP consortiums across Surrey and each local authority. Governance and overview of the commissioning of services will happen via a new Health and Well-Being Board with the local authority holding this responsibility. A number of possible options are still being discussed and the scope of this joint working is still to be agreed. An initial project board has taken place and a GP representative and representative from Surrey LINKs are part of the overall governance structure.

The 'Personalisation Agenda' in Adult Social Care will also have an impact on future service demand and delivery. Through self directed support more people will have greater control over how their care is delivered. One key aspect that needs to be considered is the impact on transport procurement and the importance of safeguarding vulnerable groups through the transport they are procuring.

Improved service delivery and better coordination of transport, through the TCC, is likely become an increasingly important issue for the Council and service users. With the possibility of local bus service reductions from Phases 2 and 3 of Bus Review, transport provided by the voluntary and community transport sectors will need to be able to deliver a service for those people who may be affected. The PVR is looking at how third sector transport, especially community transport, can be improved and helped to become more financially sustainable.

Evidence gathering and fact-finding

What evidence is available to support your views above? Please include:

- **A summary of the available evidence**
- **Identification of where there are gaps in the evidence (this may identify a need for more evidence in the action plan)**
- **Information on contributing factors to inequality.**
- **What information is currently captured with respect to usage and take up of services.**
- **What the current situation is in relation to equality and diversity monitoring (where relevant)**

The revised SCC Accessibility Strategy published in March 2009 identified that access to healthcare services was a huge issue. The DfT's 'accession maps' were used as one form of research to analyse how easy it is to access a particular service in a given area. The 'accession maps' showed that access to hospitals via public transport even during peak time travel was poor, with over 5.9% (62,123) of the population living over 60 minutes from their nearest hospital.

Further consultation with user groups found that Adults' and Children's social care, community transport and PTS services are in many cases duplicating the same routes and clients using these services.

The following is a summary of the desk research that was undertaken during the development of the TCC Public Value Review final report, action plan and the EIA report:

- Process mapping the end to end process from the service assessment of eligibility to the transport provision for all social care and SEN home to school services.
- Detailed analysis of the 2008/09 and 2009/10 spend from TCC data, pro-class data and SAP data.
- Substantial research was undertaken benchmarking Surrey against other local authorities, including those who have been held up as examples of national good practice. Comparator authorities included Hertfordshire, West Sussex, Essex, Kent, and Norfolk.
- Research into the international, national and local statutory obligations and policy context this area of service provision sits within.
- TCC data pack summarising the function and service being reviewed.
- GIS Mapping of current taxi provision across Surrey (December 2009).
- Review paper summarising arrangements for performance monitoring between the TCC and the client service, with a key linkage to the PCT monitoring arrangements.
- Research into the minimum standards of service delivery.
- Surrey County Council (2009), Accessibility Strategy.
- Department of Health (DoH) (2005), Accessibility planning and the NHS: Improving Patient Access to Health Services.
- DfT (2010), Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing: Best Practice Guidance.
- Surrey PCT (2010), Draft Patient Transport Service Specification.
- DfT (2009), Providing Transport in Partnership: A Guide for Health Agencies and Local Authorities.
- Surrey County Council (2009), EIA Guidance document.
- Equalities Act (2010).

The main piece of evidence gathering was consultation with key SCC and PCT services and other stakeholder engagement. These are discussed more in the next section.

Sources of evidence may include:

- Service monitoring reports including equality monitoring data

- User feedback
- Population data – census, state of the county, Mosaic
- Complaints data
- Published research, local or national.
- Feedback from consultations and focus groups
- Feedback from individuals or organisations representing the interests of key target groups
- Evidence from partner organisations, other council departments, district or borough councils and other local authorities

How have stakeholders been involved in this assessment? Who are they, and what is their view?

This section outlines details of the stakeholders and engagement events organised and requested as part of the Public Value Review.

There has been continuous engagement with staff from Children’s and Adults’ Services, gathering information, inputting service expertise and keeping them up to date on the proposals for the project. The project team has attended senior management meetings and held regular update meetings to sense check the proposals developed at each key stage of development.

As already mentioned, a number of best practice visits were undertaken with other authorities to see what lessons and innovative approaches could be adopted by the Council in the development of the proposed options. Those authorities visited included West Sussex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Essex and contact was also made with Norfolk, Manchester and East Sussex.

Consultation and information sharing meetings were also held with the following groups:

- Surrey’s Dial-a-Ride Forum
- Surrey Coalition of Disabled People
- Disability Empowerment Board
- Surrey Community Action
- Number of meetings with key officers across all services involved in the process throughout the development of the options

A number of common themes emerged from the various meetings held with SCC services. One of the key points raised was that better service monitoring of transport spend, passenger volumes and trends in levels of need and service requirements would be extremely useful for all SCC services where transport is required. The need for 24/7 coverage was also stressed as needing to be a key recommendation and as such an operating model has been developed for coverage outside of core office hours. From a number of points raised at meetings with Council Services, the implementation action plan and future monitoring frameworks have been developed with the Services and future engagement with the Services and service users will form a key part of the implementation process.

In relation to the community transport social enterprise model a wide range of

community and voluntary sector transport operators have been consulted, along with service users groups such as Surrey Coalition of Disabled People and Surrey Community Action. One of the main issues raised by service users was the need to develop standardised criteria and better cross-border co-operation between community transport operators. The majority of community transport operators have been supportive of the potential to establish a social enterprise model, but there was some concern that many would want to maintain their independence. Following on from this, a number of workshops have been held and the Council has been working on a number of potential social enterprise models. For example, where operators could operate independently, but where they could also provide coordinated services as part of a social enterprise if required.

All stakeholders groups consulted about the possibility of closer working between the PCT and the County Council were extremely supportive of this development. One of the main issues raised about the current arrangements was the lack of co-ordination and the need for one central contact number for all Surrey transport services. As a result of these issues raised a co-design event was held on 21 September 2010 with key stakeholders, to help in the planning and development of a service specification for the provision of health and social care journeys to hospitals, day centres and GP practices. One of the main proposals now being explored between the PCT and the County Council is the potential for the Transport Co-ordination Centre to provide the centralised call centre for assessing and booking patient transport services. This would provide one point of contact for PCT or its successor's and the County Council's transport services and result in a more customer focused and simplified process of service delivery.

Further engagement and consultation is needed as part of the detailed implementation planning process. This will include:

- A Supplier Conference on the proposed changes to the contract management framework
- PCT and GP's consortium representatives
- Community transport operators and the voluntary sector
- Social care teams across all four area offices
- Service user groups

Analysis and assessment

Given the available information, what is the actual or likely impact on minority, disadvantaged, vulnerable and socially excluded groups? Is this impact positive or negative or a mixture of both?

(Refer to page 17 of the EIA guidance for full list of issues to consider when making your analysis)

What can be done to reduce the effects of any negative impacts? Where negative impact cannot be completely diminished, can this be justified, and is it lawful?

As mentioned in the screening section of this EIA, the Public Value Review of the Transport Coordination Centre **did not** look at changing the eligibility criteria but solely examined how better procurement and coordination could

delivery an improved service for users whilst still making efficiency savings.

Possible impacts on older people and their carers

- The integration of Council, PCT or its successor's and its partners transport services may have a positive effect on older people due to the development of common service standards and improvements in the accessibility and flexibility of services.
- For those older people who are not entitled to County Council or PCT transport services a more joined up partnership approach should improve the help and information available on other methods of transport available.
- Improvements made through this PVR could go some way to mitigate any impacts felt from possible service reductions on the main bus network as a result of Phases 2 and 3 of the Bus Review.

Possible impacts on disabled people and their carers

- The integration of Council, PCT and its partners transport services may have a positive effect on disabled people due to the development of common service standards and improvements in the accessibility and flexibility of services.
- For those disabled people who are not entitled to County Council or PCT transport services a more joined up partnership approach should improve the help and information available on other methods of transport available.
- This may improve the ability of people to live independently and to access key SCC and PCT services with possible positive affects for the services and users. An example of this is in place in West Sussex. They and the PCT have an integrated transport service that allows people who can be discharged from hospital, but cannot use standard transport provision or there is no transport due to the time of day, they can be taken home, in adapted vehicles and therefore do not have to stay in hospital.

Possible impacts on Black and Minority Ethnic communities, Belief/Faith and Gender

There may be specific instances where belonging to one or more of the above equalities groups could result in special arrangements being required when making transport provision. This would need to be identified by the service, in someone's care package for example and the issue is reported to the TCC. The TCC would then take the appropriate steps to address the issue. This is the current practice and it will continue in future.

An example of this process in practice could be where it might not be deemed

appropriate for a Muslim girl with learning difficulties to travel alone in a taxi with a male driver or escort. The TCC would be informed of this and organise for a female escort to accompany the girl in question on her journeys.

Possible impacts on people on low incomes, the unemployed and in areas of social deprivation

People on low incomes, the unemployed and in areas of social deprivation, will be no more or less affected by changes to service provision as this is not a barrier to using Council provided transport provision.

Impacts on geographically isolated areas

Some areas in Surrey, such as parts of Waverley, Mole Valley and Tandridge, are rural and geographically isolated. This is defined by having to walk 12 minutes or more to a bus stop. Closer partnership and the involvement of community transport providers and the third sector in the provision of social care and health PTS transport is likely to improve the levels of service provision across the County as a whole, particularly for those living in geographically isolated areas.

Many services in more rural areas are provided by the third sector. This means that the TCC receive little or no information on usage. However, the County Council has a Community Transport Officer who engages closely with providers and service users to identify where there may be problems and what improvements can be made.

Other means of reducing/mitigating impacts:

Enhancing the Council's travel website with more and easier access to information on community transport, more on-line promotion of the bus network and availability of concessionary fares

- In the 2009 National Highways and Transport (NHT) Network survey Surrey County Council came 3rd out of 24 on 'The availability of information to help plan journeys in advance' and 7th on 'The ease of finding public transport information'

It may be that, in future, services may decide to change the eligibility criteria for accessing these services. If this were to happen the TCC would be in a better position to respond to any changes. This would not only be through having better coordination of services but through joint working with the Adults' and Children's Services. This joint working is ongoing with the TCC providing transport expertise and an accessibility perspective on future options for delivering peoples' care and transport requirements.

There is currently a lack of data on who uses the service and their requirements. This will change when the new contract and arrangements are in place in May 2011. Monitoring data will be recorded to inform the service regarding how they are spending their budget but also importantly if there are any trends in usage. This could lead to better linkage between a person's

need and the service they receive.

Where there are positive impacts, what changes have been or will be made, who are the beneficiaries and how have they benefited?

In December 2009, following a national study of models of transport delivery, the DfT in partnership with the North West Regional Centre of Excellence published good practice guidance 'Providing Transport in Partnership – A guide for health agencies and local authorities.' This guidance provided detailed case study examples of the most effective transport models that provide high quality efficient customer-led service delivery. These case studies included examples from Cheshire County Council, Essex County Council, Norfolk Integrated Transport Model and Hertfordshire Integrated Model. Detailed benchmarking data and a number of key meetings were held with all of these authorities to understand the benefits that had been achieved from adopting these models of service delivery. All of these authorities advised that better integration and centralisation of transport services helped address a number of problems and resulted in service improvements, these included:

- Before integration in many cases a poor service to the public was provided with little planning to optimise access for those who have difficulty travelling to their healthcare or social care provision.
- Where a patient/service user was not eligible for PTS or social care services a joined up approach would ensure alternative transport options were available, with notification of any charges that would be levied.
- Improved public access to information on all transport options to their care.
- Maintained and assisted client independence by greater range and provision of transport options (right vehicle to meet transport need).

Surrey is following this guidance and it is hoped that the positive outcomes seen in other areas of the country will also be achieved in Surrey.

Recommendations

Please summarise the main recommendations arising from the assessment. If it is impossible to diminish negative impacts to an acceptable or even lawful level the recommendation should be that the proposal or the relevant part of it should not proceed.

It is clear that certain aspects of the PVR are integral to delivering a better service for users.

There needs to be continued working with the development of a transport social enterprise. The result is hoped to be a more sustainable community transport system, despite reductions in grant funding. There will also be a standardised but more flexible service across the County that better reflects and responds to user needs.

Continued close working with the current PCT and, possible future GPs

consortium representatives to agree the use of the TCC as the centralised assessment and booking service for all non-emergency patient transport.

Maintaining the good working relationships and interaction with other County Council Services. For example, there is ongoing work with the Children's Service on their 'Fit for the Future' programme. Part of this is working closely with users taking onboard their feedback on how the service is delivered to them. This is not just isolated to the Children's Service. As stated previously meetings will be being held with the areas Social Care teams for both Children's and Adult Social Care. This should result in a better linkage between social care requirements and transport requirements. Coordination and linkage across services should ultimately result in better service delivery for the user.

Recording of monitoring data, from when the new contract comes into force in May 2011, will give a more informed view of who is using the service and how. This would result in the possibility of better service delivery through examining trends and seeing if services could be designed to meet particular Service needs whilst still meeting the requirements of the users.

Future service delivery standards and customer satisfaction would need to be monitored. This could be achieved through updating the current or including new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Monitoring this data will make sure that service delivery to users is working as it should and that the service is meeting the requirements and expectations of those users.

Overall these changes should be widely beneficially for service users and partners.

Action Plan – actions needed to implement the EIA recommendations

Issue	Action	Expected outcome	Who	Deadline for action
Identifying who is using the service	Recording of monitoring data	Data will be recorded from when the new contract starts. This will provide information on who is using the services and why – leading to better designed services in future	TCC and Operators	By May 2011 – in time for the phase 1 contract to begin

Accessibility of information e.g. for people with visual impairments	The TCC can provide information over the phone or it can be made available in other formats on request. In line with SCC corporate policy. Some information will also be available online	More and better information available for those eligible and not eligible with guidance on alternatives and any cost involved	TCC and relevant services	By May 2011 – in time for the phase 1 contract to begin
Monitoring service delivery and user satisfaction	Development of KPIs	Ascertain if service is delivering for the user and meeting their requirements	TCC	By May 2011 – in time for the phase 1 contract to begin – with ongoing review to see if there needs to be adjustments/ replacements
Implementation of what is a complex and ambitious scheme	Build on the outcome of the co-design meeting 21.09.10. Continued work with other SCC services, third sector and user groups	Service will be ready to start to deliver the coordinated role outlined	TCC, Communications Team, PCT/ GP's reps, user groups, operators and third sector bodies.	By May 2011 – in time for the phase 1 contract to begin – with ongoing work to maintain what is hoped to be a high level of satisfaction and service delivery

- Actions should have SMART Targets
- Actions should be reported to the Directorate Equality Group (DEG) and incorporated into the Equality and Diversity Action Plan, Service Plans and/or personal objectives of key staff.

Review date	
Person responsible for review	

Head of Service signed off	
Date completed	
Date forwarded to EIA coordinator for publishing	

- **Signed off electronic version to be kept in your team for review**
- **Electronic copy to be forwarded to your service EIA coordinator**