



Appendix O:

Equality Impact Assessment

April 2011



Title of the Assessment:		Local Transport Plan	Date of Assessment:	10/9/10
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Stage 1 – Aims and Objectives

1.1) What are the objectives of the strategy, policy or service being assessed?

The LTP establishes a series of overarching principles to form a strategic approach and direction for investment in transport. In line with these principles, a series of objectives and priorities have been established based upon the reasons people travel.

These objectives relating to journey purposes form a series of themes throughout the Plan, drawn together in the Journey Purpose Strategy. The Strategy details the strategic issues associated with different journey purposes and the broad areas of intervention through which they may be addressed.

These broad areas of intervention established within the Journey Purpose Strategy will be applied at a local level, through a series of Local Area Transport Plans (LATPs). These take into account locally specific issues and identify schemes within these broad areas, through which the programme of investment will be developed, and as such form a rolling three year Implementation Plan for the longer term, 15 year vision of the LTP.

A series of modal strategies have also been produced which focus on the details of specific types of travel, including walking, cycling, public transport and car parking. These support the Journey Purpose Strategy and the LATPs by highlighting specific priority areas and potential measures which will be introduced to improve the provision for each mode of travel.

The objectives of the LTP for Central Bedfordshire have been identified through an assessment of the reasons why people actually travel. This is based upon the notion that people don't travel for the sake of travelling, but travel for a particular purpose.

By understanding the reasons people travel and the nature of these trips, the authority can more accurately prioritise funding, ensure that improvements to the transport network are effective, and provide value for money in what is being delivered. It also enables multi-modal solutions to be identified and the delivery of co-ordinated programmes of improvements to the transport network.

As such a number of journey purposes have been identified and form the key themes to the LTP, notably:

- Journeys to work
- Travel to school
- Access to healthcare
- Access to retail
- Access to leisure and cultural provision
- Transportation of freight

1.2) What needs is it designed to meet?

The LTP seeks to deliver the aims of the Sustainable Community Strategy through managing the current and future demand for travel across the authority. It will consider the needs of all users of the network and seek to provide improvements to individuals' journey experience and the travel options available, particularly for those without a car, through investment in walking, cycling, public transport and other measures to improve the efficiency of the existing provision.

1.3) What outcomes will be delivered?

Transport is not an end in itself but a good transport system is important in helping to achieve key council goals. Resolving transport issues is especially important in relation to promoting and supporting economic prosperity and ensuring sustainable population and housing growth.

1.4) Which other strategies or policies support this?

There are a number of strategies which the LTP relate to, the most notably of which are:

- The Sustainable Community Strategy
- Local Development Frameworks

The LTP will also influence policies focusing upon economic growth, health and safety, the environment and encouraging social inclusion.

1.5) In which ways does this support Central Bedfordshire's intention to tackle inequalities and deliver services to vulnerable people?

The LTP has a vital role to play in reducing social exclusion amongst local residents, particularly for those without access to a car, who comprise some 15% of the households within Central Bedfordshire. It is important that it provides realistic travel options and alternatives to car based travel to increase accessibility especially to employment and training opportunities, education, healthcare provision and leisure facilities.

In addition the worst impacts of traffic, namely pedestrian accidents, air and noise pollution and busy roads cutting through communities, disproportionately affect deprived areas and people facing social exclusion.

1.6) Is it possible that this could damage relations amongst different communities or contribute to inequality by treating some members of the community less favourably such as people from black and minority ethnic communities, disabled people, women, or lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities?

No.

Stage 2 - Consideration of Relevant Data & Research

Equality checklist issues to be considered

Awareness	Appropriateness	Accessibility	Partnership - working
Take Up levels	Adverse Outcomes	Staff Training Needs	Contracts & monitoring

2) What sources of evidence and key facts will be used to inform the assessment?

Consultation took a number of different forms. In terms of the high level strategy, a website called "My Journey" was established and the public were invited to comment on the principles of the overall strategy.

In terms of the detailed proposals for the LTPs, a three stage process was set up incorporating:

- A Member group, consisting of all local Members for the area. This group highlighted the key issues for the LTP.
- Stakeholder and public consultation on these issues. This included specific discussions with the local town and parish councils and with local businesses.
- The principles agreed from this process were then worked up into a specific programme and this programme was taken back to the local Member group for refinement and agreement.



Each item ticked below must be evidenced		
Internal desktop research		
	Place survey / Customer satisfaction data	√ Demographic Profiles – Census & ONS
√	Local Needs Analysis	√ Service Monitoring / Performance Information
	Other local research	
Third party guidance and examples		
√	National / Regional Research	√ Analysis of service outcomes for different groups
√	Best Practice / Guidance	√ Benchmarking with other organisations
	Inspection Reports	
Public consultation related activities		
√	Consultation with Service Users	√ Consultation with Community / Voluntary Sector
	Consultation with Staff	√ Customer Feedback / Complaints
√	Data about the physical environment e.g. housing market, employment, education and training provision, transport, spatial planning and public spaces	
Consulting Members, stakeholders and specialists		
√	Elected Members	√ Expert views of stakeholders representing diverse groups
√	Specialist staff / service expertise	
<p><i>Please bear in mind that whilst sections of the community will have common interests and concerns, views and issues vary within groups. E.g. women have differing needs and concerns depending on age, ethnic origin, disability etc</i></p>		
2.1) Existing Data and Consultation Findings:		
General Research:		
<p>Access to good public transport links, along with the provision of direct, safe and well signposted walking and cycling facilities, is vital for local communities. Provision of public transport and well-designed walking and cycling routes allow independence in travel choices. Shared spaces are another way that walking and cycling facilities can be encouraged although care should be taken to carefully balance the needs of different road users, including the needs of disabled and visually impaired people in particular.</p> <p>For groups who may be unable to use public transport, community transport and door-to-door services are important and provision of waiting spaces etc should be considered in development design. The design of public transport facilities also need to be sensitive to the needs of some groups, for example, bus stops need to be well lit and have seats. An accessible bus system is crucial for allowing equality of opportunity, and accessible bus stops are needed together with the accessible buses.</p>		
Age:		
National research - Children and Young People:		
<p>Young people need to be provided with opportunities to be independently mobile. Reliable, safe and cheap or free public transport has a vital role to play in this. Transport and safety Walking and cycling are also important ways for children and young people to maintain their independence and keep fit and the implementation of Home Zones can address local safety issues. Home Zones can also encourage community cohesion.</p>		
Local Research:		
<p>A Young Parliament was held on 2 August 2010 which sought young people's opinions on what they wanted to see improved in terms of transport provision in Central Bedfordshire. The provision of more comprehensive public transport with cheaper fares was highlighted, together with more cycle lanes, and more pedestrian crossings.</p>		



National research – Older people:

Convenient, cheap, safe and reliable **public transport** is a priority for older people alongside the provision of specialist transport services such as dial-a-ride. Older people have major concerns about the safety of using the public transport network. Older people are also restricted in their ability to use the transport system owing to mobility issues and a lack of facilities such as toilets, handrails and seating. Some older people such as those who are very old and those on low incomes are more reliant on public transport, either because of their frailty or the cost of private transport. This is particularly the case for older single women.

- 29% of households in rural areas do not have access to a supermarket within 4 kilometres. (CRC)
- Older People who are reliant on public transport find it harder to visit their GP or hospital, see friends and go shopping

Local Research:

The Householder Travel Survey undertaken in 2010 highlighted that 25% of those aged over 75 do not have access to a car or van for their use. It also highlighted that those aged over 75 are more likely than any other group to use the bus to go food shopping (7% of all respondents), whilst 4% use the bus for accessing their leisure activities.

Disability:

National research:

While significant improvements in public transport have been made – there are still some inaccessible environments that present barriers to mobility. Barriers for disabled people to access the built environment need to be removed to enable equal access and independent mobility.

Local authorities will need to assess the need for provision of more localised and specialist transport services, such as dial-a-ride or shop-mobility schemes. In addition, many disabled people have to rely on the use of the car and lack of accessible car parking space can be limiting. Provision of blue badge parking is therefore essential. Disabled people travel one-third less than non disabled people.

Local Research:

Feedback from consultation has highlighted the need for easier access to train stations within the authority, particularly in those locations which do not have a lift or other alternative to using the stairs. This is the case in Biggleswade where access to the platforms is via two staircases only, with the rail operator providing taxis for those with limited mobility to Sandy station for alternative access to rail services.

It is also recognised that not all of the bus services operating within the authority benefit from low floor access. Coupled with a lack of raised kerbs at bus stops, this somewhat impedes access to bus service provision for those of limited mobility.

Carers:

See above.

Gender:

National research:

The nature of women's trip making patterns – often making a range of complex local journeys –

means that they need **access to convenient, affordable and safe public transport**. Women also require **safe and accessible walking and cycling routes** to cover most local journeys from the home for work, shopping, leisure and childcare.

Local bus routes are particularly important for women – both for those who live in the centre and the suburbs. Increasing provision of these services is vital because of the kind of trips that women are more likely to make – combining trips for work, local shopping, childcare as well as social and leisure.

Women with children are also likely to be concerned about the safety of local roads and support the creation of home zones where relevant.

In general women have less access to private cars than men, and are the main users of public transport. (Planning Advisory Service)

Local Research:

The Householder Travel Survey undertaken in April 2010 demonstrated that the majority of local people found it easy or very easy to access employment and local services. No variation was highlighted by gender. Other findings include:

- Female respondents reported travelling a shorter distance to work more frequently than male respondents, with 28% of female respondents travelling zero to two miles compared with 14% of male respondents. More than a third (35%) of male respondents travelled twenty miles or more to work whereas only 15% of female respondents did so.
- Some 15% of females tend to walk to work

Trans Gender / Gender Reassignment:

Personal safety in public spaces and on public transport is often an issue for Transgender people.

Race:

National research:

70% of People from Black and Minority Ethnic Communities live in the most deprived wards in the country. Living in these deprived areas often means that these groups are restricted in the level of access to essential social facilities and the transport provision to reach them.

Local Research:

People from Black and Ethnic Minority Communities are more likely than White British People to consider that public transport is most in need of improvement (45% compared to 26%).

The Householder Travel Survey undertaken in April 2010 demonstrated that the majority of local people found it easy or very easy to access employment and local services. No variation was highlighted by ethnicity.

Religion or Belief:

The Householder Travel Survey undertaken in April 2010 demonstrated that the majority of local people found it easy or very easy to access employment and local services. No variation was highlighted by religion or belief.

Sexual Orientation:

Personal safety in public spaces and on public transport is often an issue for LGB people, particularly for those who are open about their sexual orientation.

Other: e.g. Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion

Half of all lone parents are in low income households, the overwhelming majority are women. Disabled adults are twice as likely to live in low income households.

There is a greater reliance on the private car in the more rural parts of the authority as opposed to the more densely populated urban areas. This is as a result of the lack of public transport provision and availability of everyday services within an easy walking or cycling distance. These issues put those residents in rural communities at greater risk of isolation from any potential cut backs in the supported bus network across the authority.

The Central Bedfordshire Council Place Survey undertaken in 2008 highlighted that:

- Residents in rural areas are more likely to see public transport as being important than those in urban areas (29% compared to 23%).
- Residents of rural areas are more likely to consider public transport to be in need of improvement (38% compared to 20% in urban areas).

The Central Bedfordshire Householder Travel Survey undertaken in 2010 highlighted that:

- Around a tenth (13%) of respondents in socio-economic group D/E had no cars or vans available for their use.
- Almost half of respondents living in rural areas (48%) said that there was not a direct bus route home compared to 35% of respondents living in urban areas.

2.2) To what extent are vulnerable groups experiencing poorer outcomes compared to the population or workforce as a whole?

Disabled people in Central Bedfordshire have been highlighted as the group which may benefit to the greatest degree from the proposals contained within the LTP.

2.3) Are there areas where more information may be needed?

Further consultation is to take place in the autumn which may shed further light on specific issues.

2.4) Are there any gaps in data or consultation findings?

Not applicable.

2.5) What action will be taken to obtain this information?

Not applicable.

2.6) To what extent do current procedures and working practices address the above issues and help to promote equality of opportunity?

The focus of the LTP is to provide realistic alternatives to the private car. This will be to the benefit of all groups in society particularly those without access to a car and of limited mobility through some of the examples listed below:

- **Public transport:** More accessible bus services, the provision of new low floor buses and raised kerbs at bus stops, better public transport information provision, new bus shelters with lighting and potential CCTV coverage.
- **Walking:** Provision of improved footpaths, dropped crossings, wider footways, new signing and increased pedestrian priority in town centres in particular. The role of shared space and associated traffic calming will also improve safety and perceived safety for those with limited mobility.



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- **Cycling:** Development of a comprehensive, coherent network of safe cycling routes, together with providing training for those who lack confidence cycling on the road network.
- **Car users:** Ensure the more efficient operation of the network through encouraging more sustainable travel where feasible, the co-ordination of road works and better signing. The LTP will seek to increase access to a car through initiatives such as Car Sharing Schemes and Car Clubs potentially.

Stage 3 – Assessing Positive & Negative Impacts

Equality checklist issues to be considered			
Awareness	Appropriateness	Accessibility	Partnership - working
Take Up levels	Adverse Outcomes	Staff Training Needs	Contracts & monitoring
Analysis of Impacts	Impact?	Summary of impacts and reasons for this	
3.1) Age	√	The LTP will have positive impacts across all groups.	
3.2) Disability	√		
3.3) Carers			
3.4) Gender			
3.5) Transgender			
3.6) Race			
3.7) Religion / Belief			
3.8) Sexual Orientation			
3.9) Other <i>e.g. Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion</i>	√		

Stage 4 – Conclusions, Recommendations and Action Planning

4.1) What are the main conclusions from the assessment? The LTP will have positive impacts across all groups, particularly disabled people and those in deprived areas without access to a car.															
4.2) What are the priority recommendations and actions? To apply the Strategy as proposed as a means of reducing social exclusion and improving access to employment and services, particularly by sustainable forms of travel.															
4.3) What changes will be made to address any adverse impacts that have been identified? Not applicable.															
4.4) Are there any budgetary implications? Not applicable.															
4.5) Actions to be Taken:															
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Not applicable.															

Stage 5 - Quality Assurance & Scrutiny:

Checking that all the relevant issues have been identified
5.1) What methods have been used to gain feedback on the main issues raised in the assessment?
Step 1:
√ The Corporate Policy Advisor (Equality & Diversity) for comment & decision re further scrutiny



Step 2:		
The Equalities Working Group	√	The Equalities Forum – 9 December 2010
Other:		
5.2) Were any additional actions / amendments identified?		
Members of the Equality Forum highlighted the following issues:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The significant challenge of trying to encourage people to change their travel patterns • The importance to older people and families of providing bus shelters and seats • The increasing isolation of people in rural areas who lack their own transport – how can this issue be addressed in the plan? • The lack of local statistics and research findings in the Equality Impact Assessment relating to specific Equality Groups and the likelihood that the needs and concerns of people age 75 and over are not being properly identified and addressed. 		
Step 3:		
5.1) Has a member of the senior management team been notified of the outcome of the assessment?		

Stage 6 – Monitoring Future Impact
6.1) How will implementation of the actions be monitored?
A series of targets and indicators are included within the LTP against which performance against the objectives of the Plan will be determined.
6.2) What sort of data will be collected and how often will it be analysed?
Annual data collection will be undertaken including the Householder Travel Survey which includes details on travel behaviour which can be drawn out for specific user groups and minority groups.
6.3) How often will the policy be reviewed?
The vision and objectives for the strategy cover a 15 year timeframe. However the Implementation Plan element of the LTP will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to enable the programme of schemes to remain flexible and targeted to the most pertinent areas of need.
6.4) Who will be responsible for this?
The production and review of the LTP is the responsibility of the Local Transport Plan Team Leader.
6.5) Have the actions been incorporated in the service / business plan or team targets?