

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration (EDCI) screening



As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provides a record of both the **process** and **decision**. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.
- whether or not equality, diversity, cohesion and integration is being or has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

Directorate: City Development	Service area: Highways & Transportation
Lead person: Gwyn Owen	Contact number: 0113 37 87526

1. Title: LCC Response to the WYCA Bus Reform Consultation

Is this a:

- Strategy / Policy**

 Service / Function

 Other

If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) are consulting on their Bus Franchising assessment that compares the benefits of a deeper partnership with commercial bus operators (termed EP+) against the benefits of moving to a system of public control known as franchising. This assessment recommends moving to franchising, whereby the combined authority takes control of bus services in the area, through the suspension of bus de-regulation and instead the CA controlling bus service provision through tendered franchise contracts. For this consultation as a constituent member of the CA and as the Highway Authority, Leeds City Council are a statutory stakeholder.

This screening considers the impacts that have been considered by WYCA and Leeds City Council's response to the Combined Authority's plans, that Leeds City Council endorse the principal of moving to bus franchising.

3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

All the council's strategies and policies, service and functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater or lesser relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Also those areas that impact on or relate to equality: tackling poverty and improving health and well-being.

Questions	Yes	No
Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?	x	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?	x	
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	x	
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?		x
Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment• Advancing equality of opportunity• Fostering good relations	x	

If you have answered **no** to the questions above please complete **sections 6 and 7**

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above and;

- Believe you have already considered the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 4**.
- Are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 5**.

4. Considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you have carried out an impact assessment.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below (use the prompts for guidance).

• **How have you considered equality, diversity, cohesion and integration?** (think about the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

In our response to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), we have reviewed WYCA's own EDCI impact assessment (see Background Papers) of their proposed franchising scheme. This is included in response to question 47 in appendix x.

The key points are:

- Opportunities to improve bus design, routing, and interchanges to improve the ease of which disabled people can use the bus under franchising are not acknowledged
- The opportunity of a controlled bus network to better meet the needs of women, those in part time jobs and caring responsibilities is not acknowledged. The specific needs of older women who are more likely to travel by bus and less likely to drive, as they live longer and therefore may find themselves without car access following the death of their spouse; is not referenced.
- There is a lack of detail on how accessibility (services, information, bus stops) will be improved, resulting in generalised statements next to all protected characteristics.

As mentioned in part x of our response, a three-month Transport conversation conducted by LCC in the Autumn of 2016, generated 8,169 questionnaire responses, (along with feedback from 100 workshops, meetings, and presentations), overall we found that

- A general consensus from the Leeds Transport Conversation was that there is a need for better connections between local areas and key services such as hospitals, employment, and education sites.
- Women, those from an ethnically diverse background and people with disabilities are more likely to use public transport than others and therefore any issues with public transport were felt most acutely by these groups. Similarly, those in more deprived areas where car ownership is low also felt the impact of poor public transport links more than others. Poor reliability, lack of services and cost impacted these groups quite significantly reducing their ability to access services, employment and education.
- 64% of respondents told us that 'Cross City journeys including those not going through the city centre' were a priority for improvement.
- 57% considered 'Local journeys in and round adjoining neighbourhoods' to be a priority for improvement.

- **Key findings**

(think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

Positive

Buses are the most widely used form of public transport in Leeds. If franchising successfully delivers a better bus network for passengers in Leeds, then given It is identified that many equality groups are more reliant on public transport than the wider public. Improvements will reduce barriers to employment, education, and social needs targeting the most disadvantage groups.

Increased hours of operation of public transport will have a positive impact on lower-income workers and encourage greater use of public transport. This has the potential to open greater opportunities for employment and education. More reliable services will also have a positive impact on these groups.

Disabled people may travel more frequently by bus than others, so public transport plays a vital role in ensuring that they can participate in community life and avoid social exclusion.

Negative

Consultations to date have indicated that women tend to rely on public transport more than men. This may result in greater safety concerns raised and greater conflict between groups. There may be a negative impact

If franchising changes the bus network – then Bus re-routing may have specific negative impacts on older people and some disabled people (learning difficulties, dementia, blind and partially sighted people) as changes are often confusing and unsettling. This may result in missed buses, being taken to an unknown destination, and may affect loss of confidence to go out independently.

As identified, certain groups are disproportionately reliant on public transport. If franchising does not deliver public transport enhancement these groups will be further impacted. The impact may result in greater social isolation and prevent certain groups from accessing opportunities. Lack of public transport integration also has specific negative impacts on older people and disabled people as well as women and carers who may not find interchanging modes easy due to physical distance and physical barriers (steps, gradients, lack of crossings) choice of ticketing, price, and information availability.

• **Actions**
(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/ reduce negative impact)

- **As noted in our response we will strive to engage and work with the combined authority to help provide a bus network in Leeds that delivers the most attractive and equitable bus network.**
- **We note in our response that districts within WYCA like Leeds have invaluable local knowledge and connections with groups representing varied needs that need to be considered, and so we will continue to work with WYCA to ensure their decision making takes on board differential impacts.**
- **We will continue to engage with key stakeholders such as Central Government to identify further funding sources to enable the full delivery of bus priority infrastructure to allow for further benefits to accrue.**
- **Ensure thorough consultation and engagement is maintained throughout the lifetime of bus franchising. The Combined Authority when introducing individual components of franchising should bring forward an Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration screening or assessment these should be undertaken of individual schemes and policies brought forward because of franchising.**

5. If you are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you will need to carry out an impact assessment.

Date to scope and plan your impact assessment:	n/a
Date to complete your impact assessment	n/a
Lead person for your impact assessment (Include name and job title)	n/a

6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening

Name	Job title	Date
Gwyn Owen	Principal Transport Planner	14/11/2023
Date screening completed		14/11/2023

7. Publishing

Though **all** key decisions are required to give due regard to equality the council **only** publishes those related to **Executive Board, Full Council, Key Delegated Decisions** or

a Significant Operational Decision.

A copy of this equality screening should be attached as an appendix to the decision making report:

- Governance Services will publish those relating to Executive Board and Full Council.
- The appropriate directorate will publish those relating to Delegated Decisions and Significant Operational Decisions.
- A copy of all other equality screenings that are not to be published should be sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk for record.

Complete the appropriate section below with the date the report and attached screening was sent:

For Executive Board or Full Council – sent to Governance Services	Date sent:
For Delegated Decisions or Significant Operational Decisions – sent to appropriate Directorate	Date sent:
All other decisions – sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk	Date sent: