

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Screening Form – FDC Concessionary Travel Policy – December 2025

A successful EQIA screening will look at 5 key areas:

1. Identify the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option to be assessed.

A clear definition of what is being screened and its aims.

2. Gathering Evidence and Stakeholder Engagement

Collect data to evidence the type of barriers people face to accessing services (research, consultations, complaints and/or consult with equality groups).

3. Assessment and Differential Impacts

Reaching an informed decision on whether or not there is a differential impact on equality groups, and at what level.

4. Outcomes, Action and Public Reporting

Develop an action plan to make changes where a negative impact has been assessed. Ensure that both the assessment outcomes and the actions taken to address negative impacts are publicly reported.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Stating how you will monitor and evaluate the **Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option** to ensure that you are continuing to achieve the expected outcomes for all groups.

Section 1: Identify the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option

Name of the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option to be screened	FDC Concessionary Travel Policy and project
Reason for change in Policy or Policy Development	N/A
List main outcome focus and supporting activities of the Policy, Project, Service	Please see the details above about the service area being screen.

Reform or Budget Option	
Name of officer completing assessment (signed and date)	Wendy Otter
Assessment verified by (signed and date)	December 2025

If applicable, please provide further details about the name and description of policy being analysed

Briefly summarise the policy including any key information such as aims, context etc; note timescales and milestones for new policies; use plain language – NO JARGON; refer to other documents if required

The policy being analysed – FDC Concessionary Travel Policy

In 2007 the Government brought in the National Concessionary Bus Pass Scheme which entitled passengers over the age of 60 and some passengers who had certain disabilities to travel free of charge after 9.30am Monday to Friday and all day at weekends and Bank Holidays. As Fenland is a rural area and there is a lack of buses which serve the villages, FDC introduced a policy which allowed bus pass holders who were members of FACT Community Transport to use the Dial A Ride service free of charge. The scheme operates on a revenue foregone basis and FDC pays the cost of the fares up to a maximum of £50,000 per year.

In 2010 the bus pass scheme transferred from Fenland District Council to Cambridgeshire County Council (from 2017 transferred to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority CPCA). When this happened Cambs CC/CPCA decided to provide only 50% of the cost for bus pass holders to use the DAR service for local travel. Discussions were held with FDC Members and in conclusion it was decided that FDC would provide the other 50% for local travel but also 100% of the cost for some “special” trips. These are journeys that are provided by FACT which are deemed to be essential for accessing local services and facilities. The wider FDC definition of essential journey in FDC policy ensures that residents who had been using DAR do not lose out.

From 2021 onwards, the FDC concessionary travel funding has been part operated on a revenue foregone basis and partly covid19 recovery payments. The recovery payments have been in line with central government guidance and are aimed at bridging the gap between fare payments and the cost of delivering services. Nationally, bus use has not yet returned to pre-covid levels and community transport levels are lower still. Many services are not able to continue without covid19 recovery payments. Such payments are reviewed on an annual basis. Nationally the bus industry and the community transport sector has been slow to recover. Nationally guidance and criteria has provided for this and FDC approach has been based on this guidance. This is expected to be ongoing through 2026.

Section 2: Gathering Evidence and Stakeholder Engagement

The best approach to find out if a policy, etc. is likely to impact positively or negatively on equality groups is to look at existing research, previous consultation recommendations, studies or consult with representatives of those groups. You should list below any data, consultations (previous relevant or future planned), or any relevant research or analysis that supports the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option being undertaken.

Reminder – protected characteristics include age, disability, race and/or ethnicity, religion or belief (including lack of belief), gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

Name any research, data, consultation or studies referred to for this assessment	State if this reference refers to one or more of the protected characteristics	Do you intend to set up your own consultation? If so, please list the main issues that you wish to address if the consultation is planned; or if consultation has been completed, please note the outcome(s) of consultation.
Please see the information in the text box below.		

If applicable, please provide further information about stakeholder engagement or detail used for customer analysis

Note relevant consultation; who took part and key findings; refer to, or attach other documents if needed; include dates where possible

The Main Stakeholders

Fenland District Council

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority

Cambridgeshire County Council

Community Transport Providers - Fenland Association for Community Transport (FACT) and Care Network

General Public

Findings & Research

During 2007 a bespoke database was developed by the IT team at FDC. As the database was being built in house we were able to add functions in that were not available on other databases. Features such as GIS mapping helped to plot where concessionary bus pass holder lived and then we were able to promote DAR in areas that had little or no public transport. As part of the GIS mapping, we were also able to map the bus routes throughout Fenland. This showed limited opportunity for residents living in the villages and the more rural areas on Fenland. Due to the recession and loss of bus services there is now more of a tendency for residents to rely on the FACT Dial A Ride service and the community car schemes.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) shows that due to the rural nature of Fenland, transport and access to services is very difficult especially for the more vulnerable people such as the elderly. According to the IMD Fenland comes in the top 5% of the most deprived areas nationally.

2011 Access to Healthcare Research which was undertaken partnership with the Fenland GP Surgeries and Hospitals. Around 1,500 people completed a questionnaire about their travel. In terms of the transport available and access. Survey days were also undertaken at Wisbech Hospital to meet patients and to understand their transport issues. The survey work showed that people living in more isolated communities without a car have a real difficulty getting to medical appointments.

2014 and 2015 CCC Public Health Team – Transport and Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). This work is looking to update the existing Fenland access to healthcare evidence base but also provide new information about access to hospitals. This evidence includes statistics and map based information.

2017 and 2018 the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) became the new Passenger Transport Authority. Devolved responsibility was given to Cambridgeshire County Council between April 2018 and the end of March 2021. This concentrated on the operation elements of bus services and the delivery of the concessionary travel scheme.

The CPCA commenced a review of bus services in 2018. Various reports, surveys and information have been collated and reported since that time to the CPCA Board. This is to set the future direction of local bus services and therefore the bus infrastructure network it will impact on the ability of Local Residents to use their bus passes. FDC and the Fenland Transport and Access Group continue to input into the review. The main points we are making are those set out in the key findings section of this CIA. A key outcome of this ongoing work has been to consider new ways of working and new models for delivering bus services including enhanced partnerships and bus franchising.

In November 2020 new Government Guidance on Community Transport and Section 19 permits was issued by the Department for Transport. This guidance sought to clarify what is meant by not for profit. This guidance also provides advice about travelling distances for dial a ride services and rural area exemptions where longer distance travel may be necessary to reach a shop or a health facility.

In early 2020, the Coronavirus entered the UK and from March 2020 onwards, various restrictions and local downs have been essential to keep safe and well. This has significantly impacted older people and those who are typically dial a ride customer. FACT Community Transport established a shopping service and a prescription service whereby members could phone up and volunteers collect the shopping which is then delivered by minibus. Overtime this service was extended to other vulnerable or elderly members of the community. By January 2021 the shopping service remains in existence but there is the option for members to use the dial a ride as normal (with social distancing) should they want to go out. To support this approach (and in line with Government Guidance) payments have still been made by FDC for community transport for the dial a ride and the shopping service. Additional information is provided by the operator to show their costs and income to demonstrate the finding is needed. This enables these vital services to continue supporting the public who need them. In December 2021 FDC continued to make payments in respect of the shopping service. This was reviewed monthly due to the changing nature of coronavirus and Government guidance. Ongoing recovery information and payments have continued to be provided in line with national advice and guidance.

In March 2021, Government launched the new national bus strategy buses back better. This includes a range of significant measures around new low carbon buses, funding for rural areas and significant investment programmes for buses. This is a long-term bus strategy for England outside of London. The strategy aims to deliver more buses, more routes and higher frequencies of service. This new strategy encourages Mayor Authorities such as CPCA to deliver bus franchising. Such Authorities are expected to submit Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIP) to Government to secure some of the funding available. CPCA submitted a BSIP to Government in December 2021 unfortunately that BSIP bid was unsuccessful.

In Summer 2022, the main bus operator in Fenland announced they were withdrawing from most local bus services. This would have created a situation where Fenland has virtually no bus services. CPCA found funding to retender services up to end of March 2024, this was subsequently retendered into 2025/2026. A bus network review and future network review were established along with research into demand responsive transport. By October 2023 these reviews had confirmed that all but 3 bus services in Fenland would be retendered in their current format. Further work confirmed what the approach to ensure some transport as available for the 3 remaining services. Better bus/rail integration is being considered for March town service.

In early 2024, the CPCA Mayor confirmed an increase in the precept for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. This increase for 2024/2025 was linked to funding improved bus services. New services being expected to be introduced from autumn 2024 onwards. There were no improvements or funding for community transport and therefore this is not expected to affect dial-a-riding customers.

In Spring 2024, the CPCA published its second Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to Government, this includes future proposals for buses and community transport through to 2035. The BSIP includes proposals for a Fenland demand responsive transport project but does not give specific details and timings of the project. This could affect dial a ride customer and offer additional opportunities to travel.

The future network study considering bus franchising and Enhanced Partnerships included a public consultation from September to November 2024. This document whilst proposing change to the bus network makes clear that changes to the community transport network are not being considered. Significant improvements to the bus network in Fenland will help to ensure all eligible residents can make better use of their bus pass but this is potentially unlikely to affect dial-a-ride customers.

In Autumn and Winter 2024, CPCA are undertaking public engagement about community transport, this forms part of a wider review of community transport. The outcomes of this were known in late 2025 and reported to the CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee Meeting from November 2025 (see below) A key outcome of the work is to ask officers to seek to integrate the work of community transport closer to other transport including bus services where possible. The importance of community transport journeys to medical appointments and the need for improved engagement with NHS is noted. There is an intention to create working groups to raise awareness of issues, review data and share knowledge.

Here is a link to the agenda, papers and minutes of the CPCA 25 November meeting where the community transport report was discussed:

[Agenda for Transport Committee on Monday, 17th November, 2025, 10.00 am](#)

Here is a link to the CPCA Community Transport Review document completed by Citi Science:

[<Client, update in info>](#)

Key Findings

- Over 20,000 residents in Fenland have a bus pass
- Many residents in the surrounding villages rely on the FACT Dial A Ride service
- Residents were finding it difficult to access local services
- Access for medical appointments especially to hospitals is particularly difficult
- Reductions in bus services are creating a reliance on community transport
- During 2020 and now in 2021, the shopping and prescription services have been vital for ensuring that elderly and vulnerable residents have been able to obtain food and medication. Many hundreds of journeys have been made to take essential supplies across Fenland to residents.
- COVID19 hit bus and community transport services very badly and the recovery is taking much longer than anticipated. This has caused many bus services to be withdrawn, and substantial public funding being needed to keep a basic service level available. This places greater reliance on community transport. The recovery remains ongoing and this is expected into 2025/2026.

Section 3: Assessment and Differential Impacts

Use the table below to provide some narrative where you think the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option has either a positive impact (contributes to promoting equality or improving relations within an equality group) or a negative impact (could disadvantage them) and note the reason for the change in policy or the reason for policy development, based on the evidence you have collated.

Please note that:

- a Positive Impact could benefit an equality group and a negative impact could disadvantage an equality group
- for reasons of brevity race is not an exhaustive list – please edit the list if appropriate to reflect the complexity of other racial identities
- a definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 is available on the [gov.uk website](http://gov.uk)
- there are too many faith groups to provide a list, therefore, please input the faith group e.g., Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Hindus, etc. Consider the different faith groups individually when considering positive or negative impacts

Protected Characteristic	Specific Characteristics	Positive Impact	Neutral	Negative Impact	Socio Economic/Human Rights Impacts
Sex or Gender	Women		X		
	Men		X		
	Transgender		X		
Race	White		X		

Protected Characteristic	Specific Characteristics	Positive Impact	Neutral	Negative Impact	Socio Economic/Human Rights Impacts
	Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups		X		
	Asian		X		
	African		X		
	Caribbean or Black		X		
	Other Ethnic Group		X		
Disability	Physical disability	X			
	Sensory Impairment (e.g. sight, hearing)	X			
	Mental health		X		
	Learning disability		X		
LGBT	Lesbians		X		
	Gay Men		X		
	Bisexual		X		
Age	Older people (60+)	X			
	Younger people (18-25)		X		
	Children (0-16)		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Women		X		
	Men		X		
	Lesbians		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women		X		
Religion and belief	See below		X		

Summary of Protected Characteristics most impacted	This policy could affect anyone who is eligible for a national concessionary bus pass. In line with the national guidance this is typically people aged 65 or over or younger people with certain disabilities. The people most affected by this policy must also be eligible for membership of the local community transport provider in addition to having a national bus pass.
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<p>Summary of Socio-Economic impacts</p>	<p>There are a wide range of health, inequality, social, wellbeing and deprivation issues associated with a person losing their independence. This has ongoing financial and other costs relating to new support, health and social care that will be required to assist a person.</p>
<p>Summary of Human Rights impacts</p>	
<p>Summary Explanation of the scoring against the protected characteristics</p>	<p>This Customer Impact Assessment does not raise any negative equality issues. Officers have concluded that the FSP Concessionary Travel policy will have positive impacts for those who are bus pass holders. There are older people and those with disabilities who are eligible for community transport membership. There is no evidence that the policy may result in adverse impacts on equality or good community relations. During the coronavirus pandemic nonmembers who are Fenland residents have also benefitted from the shopping and prescription services.</p>

Section 4: Outcomes, Actions and Public Reporting

Screening Outcome	Yes, No or not at this stage
Was a significant level of negative impact arising from the project, policy or strategy identified?	No
Does the project, policy or strategy require to be amended to have a positive impact?	No
Does a Full Impact Assessment need to be undertaken?	No

<p>If applicable, please state the overall outcome of the assessment, impacts and customer Analysis</p> <p>No major change or amendment needed.</p>
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Section 5: Monitoring outcomes, evaluation and review

The Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) screening is not an end in itself but the start of a continuous monitoring and review process. The relevant Service responsible for the delivery of the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option, is also responsible for monitoring and reviewing the EQIA Screening and any actions that may have been taken to mitigate impacts.

Arrangements for Monitoring	Please see the information in the text box below
Timing of the current review	November/December 2026
Next scheduled review	November/December 2027

If applicable, please provide details of the arrangements for future monitoring:

Note when analysis will be reviewed; include any equality indicators and performance against those indicators

- The policy is reviewed annually as part of FDC Corporate Planning and Review cycle
- Monthly monitoring information is provided on concessionary fares to support invoices this allows us to assess if the policy is working
- FACT Community Transport Quarterly Funders Meetings
- Ongoing work to support the future strategy for bus services in Cambridgeshire is continuing and we are feeding into this approach where possible including local concerns about not being able to use bus passes due to limited bus services.

If applicable, please provide details of any supporting data/ research linked to monitoring arrangements (both FDC & Partners):

- Bus timetables including routes of services and times
- Concessionary Fares Database
- Bus pass questionnaires
- Access to Healthcare Questionnaire results (2011)
- FACT patronage figures - Monthly monitoring statistics to support invoices
- Index of Multiple Deprivation (2010)
- Transport Issues in Fenland Evidence Base report (2007)
- CCC Public Health Team – Transport and Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2014 and 2015
- National Bus Strategy – Buses Back Better (2021)
- Bus Service Improvement Plan – CPCA (2024)

Legislation

Equality Act (2010) – the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties)

The 2010 Act consolidated previous equalities legislation to protect people from discrimination on grounds of race, sex, being a transsexual person (transsexuality is where someone is changed, is changing or has proposed changing their sex – called ‘gender reassignment’ in law), sexual orientation (whether being lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual), disability (or because of something connected with their disability), religion or belief, having just had a baby or being pregnant, being married or in a civil partnership and age.