

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

PLATINUM TRAVELCARD SCHEME FOR RESIDENTS REGISTERED ON THE SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE CERTIFICATE OF VISUAL IMPAIRMENT REGISTER

INTRODUCTION	<p>The existing England National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) is currently issued under 2 separate schemes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Part 1 is the national scheme which allows the holder of a valid card to travel on any local bus in England between the times 0930 – 2300, Monday to Friday and anytime on weekends and Bank Holidays.2. Part 2 is a local enhancement with our scheme partners to extend the time of validity to 0900 – 0400, Monday to Friday and anytime weekends and Bank Holidays. This is known in South Gloucestershire by the name Diamond Travelcard. <p>Introduction of a South Gloucestershire Platinum Scheme would allow persons to travel on local buses, where the journey commences in South Gloucestershire, free of charge at any time, 7 days a week.</p> <p>This EqIAA concerns the introduction of the Platinum Scheme so that residents of South Gloucestershire who are registered on the South Gloucestershire Certificate of Visual Impairment Register will automatically qualify for the Platinum Scheme.</p>
RESEARCH AND CONSULTATION	<p>Local bus travel is a lifeline, providing an important means of transport within the community, especially for those who are not able to drive or who do not have access to other forms of transport. We know that bus travel is important to disabled people in South Gloucestershire.</p> <p>For people who are blind or partially sighted, getting to places (such as GP surgeries, shops, places of work or accessing local services) can bring with it increased fear, anxiety and a real risk of injury. In a survey conducted by RNIB, a third of people said they had been injured during a three month period when walking around their local area. Some people even said they were so intimidated by the risks outside they ended up staying at home and becoming isolated.</p> <p>Research in regard to bus travel conducted by the RNIB has found that key issues pertinent to blind and partially sighted people include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Embarking and disembarking from a bus.• The provision of information about reaching their stop,• Nearly half of blind and partially sighted people say they miss buses, because the bus they are waiting for pulls in further away from the bus stop. This is most often caused by multiple buses arriving at the bus stop at the same time, and queuing up behind each other, rather than pulling in directly at the bus stop. <p>One effect of this is that blind and partially sighted people feel less confident about travelling independently.</p> <p>The RNIB research also found that only 12% of respondents are using bus</p>

	<p>apps on smart phones to help them locate buses or know when to get off a bus. Bus apps on smart phone are available, however, many blind and partially sighted people either don't have a smart phone or don't know which apps are accessible.</p> <p>Additionally, the Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for public authorities, including highways authorities, to discriminate in the exercise of a public function. There is also a duty to make reasonable adjustments including changing practices, policies and procedures.</p> <p>The RNIB research found that blind and partially sighted people believe that progress is taking place to make bus services more accessible. There is still some way to go and the council works with local bus providers to ensure that progress is made in respect of accessibility and also wishes to be proactive in addressing barriers to the independence of blind and partially sighted people.</p> <p>Consultation has been conducted with The South Gloucestershire Low Vision Services Committee who have responded with the following:-</p> <p><i>"The South Gloucestershire Low Vision Services Committee, which includes Action for Blind People, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Service Users, DeafBlind UK and Sense acknowledges the additional and particular barriers to travel which are faced on a daily basis by people with a visual impairment. These additional barriers can lead to issues including additional obstacles to gaining employment, a lack of confidence to travel independently and the prohibitive cost or availability of alternatives. This causes problems with access to shops, dentists, GP surgeries, friends and family and can ultimately lead to loneliness and isolation. The South Gloucestershire Low Vision Services Committee therefore welcomes South Gloucestershire Council's introduction of a new Platinum Travel Card, for persons on the Certificate of Visual Impairment Register, as a fair scheme, which assists in working towards improving access to travel for those with a visual impairment, enabling better accessibility more on a par with others in society."</i></p>
<p>IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS OF EQUALITIES ISSUES AND IMPACTS</p>	<p>This EqIAA is relevant to the protected characteristic of "Disability".</p> <p>It is well acknowledged that disabled people face barriers and challenges when accessing bus services. The council engages with bus providers on an ongoing basis to raise issues and reduce barriers.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that people who are blind or partially sighted in particular, face fundamental barriers to their ability to travel independently. As such, the council's proposal to introduce the Platinum Scheme so that residents of South Gloucestershire who are registered on the South Gloucestershire Certificate of Visual Impairment Register will automatically qualify for the Platinum Scheme recognises these particular challenges and identifies an adjustment to its local enhancement policy which directly impacts on the key issue of independent travel for people who are blind or partially sighted.</p>

EqIAA OUTCOME	Outcome	Response	Reason(s) and Justification
	Outcome 1: No major change required.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Outcome 2: Adjustments to remove barriers or to better promote equality have been identified.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>People with disabilities face barriers to their independent travel. In particular, people who are blind or partially sighted face fundamental barriers and a change to introduce the Platinum Scheme so that residents of South Gloucestershire who are registered on the South Gloucestershire Certificate of Visual Impairment Register will automatically qualify for the Platinum Scheme has been identified. This would result in a positive impact, enabling better accessibility more on a par with others in society.</p> <p>Actions have been identified below as a result of this EqIAA.</p>
	Outcome 3: Continue despite having identified potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Outcome 4: Stop and rethink.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	<p>Actions to be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the Platinum Scheme so that residents of South Gloucestershire who are registered on the South Gloucestershire Certificate of Visual Impairment Register will automatically qualify for the Platinum Scheme. • Review and update the application form and process to ensure maximisation of accessibility for people who are blind and partially sighted. 		
EVIDENCE INFORMING THIS EqIAA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For full details of the RNIB research, please visit: https://www.rnib.org.uk/sites/default/files/Who%20put%20that%20there!%20Report%20February%202015.pdf http://www.rnib.org.uk/campaigning-current-campaigns/bus-campaign • Consultation results from consultation with The South Gloucestershire Low Vision Services Committee. 		