

# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS (EqIAA)

## RE-TENDER OF SUPPORTED BUS SERVICES 35, 624 and 625 May 2015

### SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

This EqIAA discusses the Council's proposals relating to the re-tender of the currently financially supported local bus services no. 35, 624 and 625.

#### Background

The Council Plan and the Joint Local Transport Plan Strategy support the need for bus services to be provided to meet local needs where they are not provided without subsidy by operators.

The Council currently provides financial support to a wide range of bus services. This includes services which are entirely funded by the Council, others which are commercial services that receive top up or 'de-minimus' funding for single journeys, early morning or evenings, and services that are predominately school bus routes that also provide a public service element for non-entitled pupils.

#### Supported Bus Service No. 35

- The no. 35 service operates a 2 hourly service Monday to Saturday from Marshfield to Bristol via Wick, Kingswood, Redfield and Lawrence Hill.
- The end to end journey time is 60 minutes.
- The annual cost of the subsidy that the service currently receives from South Gloucestershire Council is £62,168 per annum.
- The 35 bus service contract is due to expire within the financial year 2015/16.
- There is currently a proposal to amend the service to offer an express service into Bristol in the morning/evening peaks with limited stops between the Kingswood and Bristol section of the route and higher frequency service in the inter-peaks between Marshfield and Kingswood. Those wishing to travel onto Bristol during the inter-peak would need to interchange at Kingswood.

#### Supported Bus Service No. 624

- The 624 bus service runs on one peak journey per day, Monday to Friday from Severn Beach to Bristol Centre via Pilning, Easter Compton, Hallen, Henbury, Westbury on Trym, Clifton Down and Tyndalls Park.
- The end to end journey time is 60 minutes.
- The annual cost of the subsidy that the service currently receives from South Gloucestershire Council is £26,126.
- The 624 bus service contract is due to expire within the financial year 2015/16.
- There is currently a proposal to withdraw the 624 service and instead offer an extra peak journey on the 625 service between Severn Beach and Parkway via Cribbs Causeway. Those wishing to travel onto Bristol would need to interchange at Cribbs Causeway.

### **Supported Bus Service No. 625**

- The 625 bus service operates an hourly service Monday to Saturday from Severn Beach to UWE via Pilning, Easter Compton, Cribbs Causeway, Patchway, Little Stoke and Bristol Parkway.
- The end to end journey time is 60 minutes.
- The annual cost of the subsidy that the service currently receives from South Gloucestershire Council is £142,630.
- The 625 bus service contract is due to expire within the financial year 2015/16.
- There is currently a proposal to retain the 625 service with some minor variations to route and timings which will result in additional journeys in the morning/evening peak and terminating the route at Bristol Parkway rather than UWE. There are a number of services already operating between Bristol Parkway and University of the West of England (Frenchay Campus).

## SECTION 2 – RESEARCH & CONSULTATION

The Council issued a public consultation with regard to the services; the consultation commenced on 10 February 2015 and ran to 10 March 2015 - a period of 4 weeks. The consultation included questions in relation to respondent's Gender, Age, Ethnic Origin and Disability in order that results and feedback could be disaggregated in respect of the questions raised.

In addition, the Council conducts regular surveys across all of its supported bus services and the results pertaining to the last 12 month period have been analysed in respect of these three services currently under consideration.

The following provides details of the information gained via both of these engagement methods.

### Supported Bus Service No. 35

- The annual patronage levels for this service are estimated at 25,000 passenger journeys per year.
- 67% of passengers surveyed use the service to access shopping facilities, and Kingswood is the most popular destination with 38% passengers either boarding or alighting here.
- 70% of passengers surveyed are concessionary pass holders. This means that these persons will be either over the age of 62 years, Disabled, or both.
- 47% of passengers surveyed use the bus 2 to 3 times a week.

#### Key consultation feedback:

- 27% of respondents were supportive of reducing stops between Kingswood and Bristol during peak-times as the bus often becomes overcrowded with passengers travelling between Bristol and Kingswood.
- 33% of respondents did not support the proposal to curtail the service at Kingswood during the off-peak as they would be reluctant to change buses for onward travel to Bristol. Of these:

Female	60%
Male	30%
Unknown	10%
Under 65	70%
Over 65	30%
White British	10%
Unknown	90%
Disabled	30%
Non-Disabled	60%
Unknown	10%

## Supported Bus Service No. 624

- The annual patronage levels for this service are approximately 4,000 passenger journeys per year.
- 91% of passengers surveyed board/alight the service in Bristol not in South Gloucestershire.
- 64% of passengers surveyed used the service to travel to and from work in Bristol.
- 52% of passengers surveyed use the bus 2 to 3 times a week.

### Key consultation feedback:

- 78% of respondents were against the withdrawal of this service as it is their only link to Bristol. Of these:

Female	50%
Male	40%
Unknown	10%
Under 65	90%
Over 65	0%
Unknown	10%
White British	80%
White Other	10%
Unknown	10%
Disabled	0%
Non-Disabled	90%
Unknown	10%

- People commented on the reliability and friendliness of this service which is much improved.
- The option of catching the 625 to Cribbs Causeway and then getting a connection to Bristol was not popular, with 44% of respondents raising concerns regarding increased journey time and/or cost.

## Supported Bus Service No. 625

- The annual patronage levels for this service are approximately 72,000 passenger journeys per year.
- 35% of passengers surveyed board/alight at Cribbs Causeway followed by Severn Beach (16%) and Patchway (15%).
- 65% of passengers surveyed used the service for shopping primarily at Cribbs Causeway.

### Key consultation feedback:

- 23% of respondents stated that they were for, and 54% stated they were against curtailing the service at Bristol Parkway as opposed to UWE. Of these:

Female	50%
Male	40%
Unknown	10%
<hr/>	
Under 65	90%
Over 65	0%
Unknown	10%
<hr/>	
White British	80%
White Other	10%
Unknown	10%
<hr/>	
Disabled	0%
Non-Disabled	90%
Unknown	10%

It is noted that there were a total of 44 consultation responses in relation to the supported bus service no. 35, 30 responses in relation to supported bus service no. 624 and 30 responses in relation to supported bus service no. 625.

## **SECTION 3 - IDENTIFICATION OF EQUALITIES ISSUES AND IMPACTS**

### **Supported Bus Service No. 35**

The survey data shows that 70% of passengers are concessionary pass holders. Concessionary pass holders are over the age of 62 years and/or Disabled People.

The proposal to terminate at Kingswood during the interpeak would result in a need to change bus for onward travel to Bristol. Indeed, 33% of respondents did not support the proposal to curtail the service at Kingswood during the off-peak as they would be reluctant to change buses for onward travel to Bristol - of this 33%, 30% identified as being Over 65 and 30% identified as a Disabled Person.

It is reasonable to state that Disabled People and Older People (1 in 2 people over state pension age are disabled<sup>1</sup>) would find a proportionately higher level of difficulty and inconvenience in changing bus service.

This indicates the potential for negative impact for Disabled People and Older People should the proposals be adopted.

It is also noted that Kingswood is a recognised interchange point and has a good level of facilities including seating, service information and toilet facilities nearby.

### **Supported Bus Service No. 624**

The data shows that 91% of passengers surveyed board/alight the service in Bristol. This evidences that the no. 624 serves a very low number of South Gloucestershire residents.

There is no evidence that passenger numbers or need for this service is made up of a particular group (for example Disabled People, Older People, school pupils etc.) and therefore, this EqIAA has not identified any negative equalities-related impacts in relation to the proposal to withdraw the no. 624 service and offer an extra peak journey on the no. 625 service between Severn Beach and Parkway via Cribbs Causeway.

It is also noted that Parkway and Cribbs Causeway are recognised interchange points with a good level of facilities including seating, service information and toilet facilities nearby.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Office for Disability Issues (ODI)

## **Supported Bus Service No. 625**

The survey data shows that 57% of passengers are concessionary pass holders. Concessionary pass holders are over the age of 62 years and/or Disabled People.

The proposal to terminate the service at Parkway as opposed to UWE (Frenchay Campus) would result in a need to change bus for onward travel to UWE. Indeed, 54% stated they were against curtailing the service at Bristol Parkway as opposed to UWE, however there was no evidence to show that any equalities group(s) in particular held this view.

However, the survey data shows that 57% of passengers are concessionary pass holders. Concessionary pass holders are over the age of 62 years and/or Disabled People. It is reasonable to state that Disabled People and Older People (1 in 2 people over state pension age are disabled<sup>2</sup>) would find a proportionately higher level of difficulty and inconvenience in changing bus service.

This indicates the potential for negative impact for Disabled People and Older People should the proposals be adopted.

It is also noted that Parkway is a recognised interchange point and has a good level of facilities including seating, service information and toilet facilities nearby.

## **Other Protected Characteristics**

This EqIAA has raised issues in respect of the protected characteristics of Disability and Age (in this instance, Older Age).

In respect of Age groups under 62 years, Sex, Race, Sexual Orientation, Gender Reassignment, Religion or Belief, Pregnancy and Maternity and Marriage and Civil Partnership, no impact either positive or negative has been identified.

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<sup>2</sup> Source: Office for Disability Issues (ODI)

## SECTION 4 - EqIAA OUTCOMES

### Supported Bus Service No. 35

Outcome	Response	Reason(s) and Justification
<b>Outcome 1:</b> No major change required.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Outcome 2:</b> Adjustments to remove barriers or to better promote equality have been identified.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Outcome 3:</b> Continue despite having identified potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Negative impact in respect of Disabled People and Older People has been identified should the proposal be adopted.</p> <p>Changing buses presents an additional barrier and the data has shown that the majority (70%) of passengers are concessionary pass holders i.e. over 62 and/or disabled people.</p> <p>This is also supported by the consultation feedback received.</p> <p>Some mitigation of impact has been identified through the identification of Kingswood as a termination point during the interpeak as this is a recognised interchange point with a good level of facilities.</p>
<b>Outcome 4:</b> Stop and rethink.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### Supported Bus Service No. 624

Outcome	Response	Reason(s) and Justification
<b>Outcome 1:</b> No major change required.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>No negative impacts have been identified in respect of any protected characteristic groups in relation to this proposal as indicated in Section 3 of this EqIAA.</p> <p>Should this proposal be adopted, the implementation of additional morning/evening peak services on the No. 625 service would be taken forward.</p>
<b>Outcome 2:</b> Adjustments to remove barriers or to better promote equality have been identified.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Outcome 3:</b> Continue despite having identified potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Outcome 4:</b> Stop and rethink.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

## Supported Bus Service No. 625

Outcome	Response	Reason(s) and Justification
<b>Outcome 1:</b> No major change required.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Outcome 2:</b> Adjustments to remove barriers or to better promote equality have been identified.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Outcome 3:</b> Continue despite having identified potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Negative impact in respect of Disabled People and Older People has been identified should the proposal be adopted.</p> <p>Changing buses presents an additional barrier and the data has shown that the majority (57%) of passengers are concessionary pass holders i.e. over 62 and/or disabled people.</p> <p>This is also supported by the consultation feedback received.</p> <p>Some mitigation of impact has been identified through the identification of Parkway as a termination point as this is a recognised interchange point with a good level of facilities.</p>
<b>Outcome 4:</b> Stop and rethink.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## SECTION 5 – ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AS A RESULT OF THIS EqIAA

**35 Service** – Two options will be presented to Committee for consideration: option 1 to continue the service in its current form; and option 2 to amend the service as set out in this proposal.

**624 Service** – Two options will be presented to Committee for consideration: option 1 to continue the service in its current form; and option 2 to terminate the service with effect 23 August 15.

**625 Service** – Two options will be presented to Committee for consideration: option 1 to continue the service in its current form; and option 2 to amend the service as set out in this proposal.

Any decision is required to take account of the equalities issues and impacts raised within this EqIAA.

It is also noted that any re-tendering and subsequent contract management of services would be carried out in accordance with the Council's adopted Contracting rules and guidelines which include full equalities in procurement guidance.

## SECTION 6 - EVIDENCE INFORMING THIS EqIAA

- Consultation Report – March 2015
- Ongoing survey information