

Blackpool Council - Equality Impact Assessment Record Form

Department:

Team or Service Area Leading Assessment: **Transportation Division**

Title of Policy/ Service or Function: **Local Transport Plan**

Proposals to introduce/ alter/ delete policy, service, expenditure etc:

Date of proposals: **Financial years 2011/12 – 2015/16** Committee/Team: **Places**

Lead Officer: **Jeremy Walker**

STEP 1 - IDENTIFYING THE PURPOSE OR AIMS

1. What type of policy, service or function is this?

Existing **5** New/ proposed **5** Changing/ updated **P**

2. What is the aim and purpose of the policy, service or function?

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) is the key vehicle for setting out transport policy and delivering it at the local level. This document identifies Blackpool's transport priorities providing a policy framework and designing a capital works programme to address five National Transport Goals:

- § Support economic growth
- § Reduce carbon emissions
- § Promote Equality of Opportunity
- § Contribute to better Safety, Security and Health
- § Improve Quality of Life and a Healthy Natural Environment

Local priorities are also addressed including the need to support the tourism industry's regeneration, address poor local morbidity and combat social exclusion. The LTP has been focused on improving transport within the public realm, promoting cycling, walking and public transport and controlling congestion. The now completed Cycling Towns programme has enabled enhanced investment in cycling over recent years.

3. Please outline any proposals being considered.

The LTP includes the following strategic priorities:

Objective 1: - Improve, maintain and make best use of Blackpool's transport network; in particular its roads, footways and bridges

Objective 2: - Improve road safety by interventions that reduce the number of people, particularly children, killed and seriously injured on Blackpool's roads

Objective 3: - Manage congestion levels on Blackpool's roads, especially where it impacts on local economic performance

Objective 4: - Improve transport to and within the resort, particularly by more sustainable modes, to enhance the visitor experience and support the local economy.

Objective 5: - Improve the efficiency and management of parking to support the local economy, especially for shoppers and visitors

Objective 6: - Improve access to healthcare, education, employment, shops, social/leisure opportunities and resort attractions, particularly by sustainable modes.

4. Why are the proposals being made - for what reason?

All English transport authorities (outside London) are required by statute to produce an LTP, setting out the authority's transport policies and objectives, and a plan to implement them.

It is essential that the Council have a robust transport strategy as part of the corporate policy framework that will inform the development and regeneration process, avoiding the negative consequences of traffic growth – congestion, poor air quality, road casualties.

The strategy framework is intended to support all citizens in taking the trips that they need to make for economic, educational, social or leisure reasons.

5. What outcomes do we want to achieve

The following will be achieved:

- § Efficient management of Blackpool's transport assets
- § Further reductions in the number of people killed and injured on the resort's roads
- § Free-flowing traffic, including peak tourism periods
- § Greater use of sustainable modes enhancing the visitor experience and contributing to economic growth
- § Provision and management of parking to meet demand
- § Improved air quality
- § Removal of barriers to travel for all, particularly deprived communities

- § Improved health outcomes due to increased exercise by active travel patterns and improved air quality
- § Reduced carbon emissions
- § Value for money in the use of transport investment resources

6. Who is the policy; service or function intended to help/ benefit?

The LTP will benefit Blackpool's entire population, including minority interest groups affected by transport provision, and visitors. This strategy will have cross-border and regional benefits in helping Blackpool remain competitive as an economic centre.

7. Who are the main stakeholders/ customers/ communities of interest?

All Blackpool citizens, transport operators, businesses, regional partners and visitors.

8. Does the policy, service or function have any existing aims in relation to equality, social inclusion or community cohesion?

The strategy promotes equality, social inclusion and community cohesion by helping remove transport barriers to economic and social opportunities. Investing in public transport and promoting cycling and walking helps all people, particularly those without access to a car. There has been particular investment in providing raised kerb bus stops to assist disabled persons board buses. The new tram system will be fully DDA compliant.

9. How is the resulting service or function delivered/ administered?

The Council provides few transport services directly. Instead services are provided by transport operators working independently but in informal partnership with the Council.

Transport Policy and the LTP capital programme is developed by the Transport Policy Team within Transportation Division, which also monitors the capital programme's delivery.

A small amount of subsidy to support socially desirable bus services is available. The Council replaces bus shelters and lays out stops. It also provides taxi, coach and loading bays.

The Council manages and maintains the road network. Traffic lights and street lighting is now managed under the Private Finance Initiative. Recently a prudential borrowing arrangement has made £30m available to invest in the road network.

The Capital Projects team designs, procures and delivers most of the LTP capital programme.

Road safety advice and cycle training is provided by the Transport and Road Safety team within Transportation Division.

All transport options are available to all citizens and, while policy seeks to promote sustainable modes it does not discriminate against car users, whose needs addressed through congestion management and road maintenance programmes.

STEP 2 - CONSIDERING EXISTING INFORMATION AND WHAT THIS TELLS YOU

10. Please summarise the main data/ research and performance management information in the box below.

<i>Date/ information</i>
<p>Only traffic count and ridership data is available in line with the stated LTP monitoring framework.</p> <p>The Council does not provide transport services directly and is therefore not in a position to collect equalities data.</p> <p>Transport operators may have their own equalities data, but this is not easily available to the Council.</p> <p>The tramway scheme has conducted its own equalities assessment.</p>
<i>Research or comparative information</i>

The following Local Transport Plan equality impact assessments from comparator unitary transport authorities have been examined to provide context for the Blackpool analysis:

Plymouth City Council
Derby City Council
Leicester City Council
Nottingham City Council
Wokingham Borough Council
Portsmouth City Council

Key findings of consultation and feedback

Few equal opportunities issues have been highlighted during the LTP's consultation periods.

11. What are the impacts or effects for communities?

Race or ethnicity

- § Transport providers: Black and Minority Ethnic Staff (BME).
Racist comments, statements or acts appear to be to be rare across the networks, however, as with all front line staff, there is a possibility of harassment. .
- § Fear of crime or harassment and safety concerns on public transport, pedestrian areas and in car-parks are barriers to BME people using these services.

Both of these adverse impacts can also apply to the other groups mentioned below, e.g. homophobic, transphobic harassment etc

- § No other adverse impacts are envisaged

Gender and transgender

- § Public transport access issues may affect women disproportionately as this group may have less car access. Parents and carers using/accompanying buggies and wheelchairs would find improvements such as raised bus stops particularly beneficial.
- § Possible personal safety issues for women caused by poor lighting and waiting facility placement and design (e.g. bus and tram stops).
- § Placement and management of car parking, including CCTV and lighting provision, can influence facilities' safety and the perception of this, particularly for groups potentially subject to bigotry and/or direct violence. This issue potentially applies to all minority groups to some extent and all individuals can feel vulnerable in poorly managed car parking facilities.

No other adverse impacts are envisaged.

Age
<p>§ With reduced or no car access, the young and the elderly are likely to benefit from public transport and improvements to walking and cycling conditions.</p> <p>§ Children will benefit from a less congested and calmer transport environment where speed is traffic controlled effectively, increasing play space and transport independence.</p> <p>§ Elderly people will find crossing the road easier and can give up driving earlier as they find this more difficult</p> <p>§ Alterations to some school bus services and increases in fare paying rates will affect younger users <u>adversely</u>. However, ridership of some school buses has been low and it is essential that this service is run as economically as possible. The school bus network will be managed to maximise transport and accessibility benefits with maximum efficiency.</p>
Disability
<p>§ Both sensory and physically disabled persons and their carers will benefit from the policies to be pursued and the measures to be taken as described.</p> <p>§ Sensory disabled persons have expressed reservations at the newer public realm designs that have been used. This will be considered in the future design of transport and public realm schemes.</p> <p>§ Disabled parking has been identified as an issue. This is provided or re-provided within improvement or maintenance schemes, although it cannot be guaranteed that this will be like-for-like. Such parking cannot be provided within pedestrianised areas, but can be on such areas' periphery; pedestrianisation is beneficial for disabled persons as a traffic-free and flat surface is provided.</p> <p>§ Any changes to public transport routes and frequency may create an adverse impact on disabled people's ability to access to doctor's surgeries, health centres and hospitals.</p>
Religion or belief/ faith communities
Harassment of staff and service users (see Race & Ethnicity section) No other adverse impacts envisaged.
Lesbian, gay, bisexual people
Harassment of staff and service users (see Race & Ethnicity section) No other adverse impacts envisaged.
Other socially excluded communities or groups

No adverse impacts are envisaged.

Improved bus, cycling and walking access will benefit socially excluded groups, particularly if the bus network's focus on employment, educational, retail and community facilities is maintained.

Relationships between or within communities

No adverse impacts envisaged

12. What do you know about how the proposals will impact on different communities?

No systematic community impact assessment is available. The strategy is designed to benefit the maximum number of citizens, support the economy and reduce transport's environmental impacts and it is believed that programmes, partnerships and initiatives will achieve this.

Removing communities' and groups' transport barriers is central to the LTP strategy, particularly where car ownership is low.

STEP 3 - ASSESSING THE IMPACT

13. Is there any evidence of higher or lower take-up by any group or community, and if so, how is this explained?

Monitoring data and surveys conducted under the Cycling Towns programme enables some analysis. However, other data is not available for the reasons noted previously. The ability to afford a car is known to be the strongest factor influencing transport choice. National Statistics: focus on social inequalities states:

Car ownership is closely related to income, as well as to sex, age, stage of lifecycle and location. In 2002, 59% of households in the lowest income quintile did not have access to a car. This was around seven times the proportion in the top quintile group (8%). High proportions of households without access to a car were found among single pensioners (69%), student households (44%) and lone parents (43%).

For many people, lack of access to a car can cause difficulties in getting to the shops or health services. In 2000/01, 11% of households without access to a car said that they had difficulty in accessing their GP. This compares with 4% who had access to a car.

37.34% of Blackpool's working age population had no access to a car or van in 2001. This is higher than the North West (30.21%) and England (26.84%). Blackpool's transport policy aims to assist those without cars to access the facilities that they require and to participate fully in civic life.

Selection of train will be skewed by over-crowding at peak times, although significant off-peak rail capacity is available.

Severe bus over-crowding is experienced at peak times and this is likely to depress bus modal share. Again significant off-peak capacity is available, but this will be under-exploited if households have to have a car for priority trips.

14. Does the geography or demography of service users reveal anything?

Data gathered for the Cycling Towns project is available.

The Council is working with Blackpool Transport Services to correlate socio-economic, car ownership and ethnicity data with bus boarding data using mapinfo software. As boarding data is collected in fare stages rather than at specific boarding points, this has proved technically difficult. However, this is a valuable exercise which will continue. When a correlation is achieved, that analysis will be integrated with the equal opportunities assessment process.

Equal opportunities data from the initial LTP consultation material distributed via 'Your Blackpool' is available, although this is not a random or balanced sample and many fields were ignored or filled in incorrectly.

15. Do any rules or requirements prevent any groups or communities from using or accessing the service?

The Council and operators are keen to maximise access for all citizens and there are few specific restrictive rules. Ultimately citizens are free to select the transport mode that suits their needs the best.

Public transport space restrictions on buggies, wheelchairs and cycles (heavy rail only) may apply. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the PSV Accessibility Regulations 2000 is the relevant legislation. Bus vehicles are extremely variable and are assessed individually. The Vehicle Operator Services Organisation (VOSA) grants a Public Service Vehicle accessibility certificate. The Office of Rail Regulation now manages provision for disabled persons and cycles on trains. The Council does not license any aspect of public transport services, apart from hackney carriages, but is keen to see maximum access to services by all disability and minority interest groups.

The new trams and retained heritage trams will be disabled accessible. There will be no cycle carriage (apart from folding cycles) on the new trams, but it is hoped that cycle parking at out-lying tram stops can be provided increasing the system's accessible radius.

16. Does the way a service is delivered/ or the policy create any additional barriers for any groups of disabled people? (DDA duties arising out of DDA 1995)

See section 11 above. The policy framework will remove transport barriers for all citizens.

17. Does the way a service is delivered/ or the policy create any additional barriers for any other groups or communities, for example, due to limited income or because of the time during the week or day when the service is available? E.g. women, cultural reasons.

No additional barriers will be created.

18. Do any of these limitations amount to unlawful discrimination?

Yes **5** No **P**

If yes, please explain (referring to relevant legislation) in the box below

19. If No, do they amount to a differential impact, which should be addressed?

Yes **P** No **5**

If yes, please give details in the boxes below.

Pedestrianisation may require disabled drivers to park further from retail outlets; however, this is not always the case as parking control is often in place prior to a scheme's implementation. As described above, the new pedestrianised environment is designed to help disabled persons and parking issues are considered during the design process, during which groups representing disabled persons are consulted.

20. If the impact or effects are adverse for any community or group, can they be defended in order to provide equality for another community under legislation or policy?

Yes **P** No **5**

Please give details below.

Effects identified are minor and can be addressed in the design process for schemes that have many positives for special needs groups, along with

major benefits for the wider community and Blackpool's economy.

21. Do you have enough information to make a judgement?

Yes **5** No **P**

If no, what information do you require, about which communities?

As discussed, there is a general lack of equal opportunities related information due to the Council not acting as a direct transport service provider.

There are insufficient resources to gather the breadth and depth of information that would be required using surveys.

Equal opportunities issues have not generally been raised during the initial LTP scoping consultation or a recent questionnaire exercise conducted for the Local Sustainable Transport Plan bid at Area Panels.

22. Is it possible to get the information quickly and easily or is it recommended that the collection of such data be included as an action for the action plan that will be developed? Please detail below.

Transport providers may be able to provide some data, but these organisations tend to be very sensitive to commercial confidentiality issues, particularly train operating companies (TOCs). Having spent considerable sums to gather any information that they have, transport providers will be reluctant to make it available without direct corporate benefits.

As stated, there are insufficient resources to fund comprehensive data collection, particularly as strategy is derived with the intention of benefiting the maximum communities, families and individuals as possible with the minimum, if any, negative consequences.

As there is little qualitative or quantitative evidence about the effect of the LTP, further future engagement with protected groups will be helpful.

STEP 4 - DEALING WITH ADVERSE OR UNLAWFUL IMPACT

23. What can be done to improve the policy, service, function or any proposals in order to reduce or remove any adverse impact or effects identified?

It is believed that an acceleration of the LTP programme and the ability to fund more and larger improvement schemes and modal shift promotion programmes, would have an overwhelmingly beneficial effect for Blackpool's citizens, economy and environment.

The Oxford Square provides an example. Here a congested junction offers very poor pedestrian facilities, a serious obstacle to all pedestrians, particularly buggy users and those persons with mobility or sensory impairment, and a poor gateway on a principal route into the resort. There are inadequate resources to fund the major works that are needed in this location.

24. What would be needed to be able to do this? Are the resources likely to be available?

LTP resources have been reduced by 50% since the LTP2 period; the Transportation Division's revenue resources have also been reduced, limiting the work that can be done to address accessibility issues for potentially disadvantaged groups. The Council's bid to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) failed, thus resources that would have funded revenue-side measures to promote accessibility and sustainable travel will not be available.

The PFI and Project 30 initiatives provide some resources, but these are not designed for the regeneration focused schemes that are required. Work under these initiatives is performed to 'best industry practice' under which mobility and sensory impairment issues are addressed and any solutions necessary designed in. LTP resources to provide additional pedestrian crossing facilities at road junctions have been provided, with clear equal opportunities benefits.

New tram vehicles have been procured to meet the identified legislation's requirements, and indeed to improve all users' travel experience on the reconstructed tramway. The Council's transport service provider partners procure new vehicles similarly, thus over the course of time, public transport is increasingly accessible to all groups provided they are able to reach bus/tram stops and railway stations. Most public transport systems are now fitted with CCTV systems, addressing citizens' personal safety concerns.

25. What other support or changes would be necessary to carry out these actions?

Design, safety audit and consultation procedures are in place. No further support would be required.

STEP 5 - CONSULTING THOSE AFFECTED FOR THEIR VIEWS

26. Please outline the steps taken to test out your findings and possible courses of action below.

Questionnaire surveys supported by public exhibitions are carried out for large schemes that affect the public realm, the results of which are considered to inform the design or to indicate that the scheme is not acceptable to the community.

The LTP strategy has received a stakeholder community consultation exercise, releasing a draft strategy and requesting comments. Transport Policy team maintains a database of stakeholder organisations for this purpose.

27. What feedback or responses have you received to the findings and possible courses of action? Please give details below.

As discussed, there has been no significant response on equal opportunities matters from the stakeholder consultation undertaken. The initial consultation material included equal opportunities monitoring data and the following section:

Equality of opportunity –challenges:

- § People need the skills to support the future economy
- § Travel and accessibility difficulties contribute to inequalities, particularly in health
- § The needs of different social groups may mean that they do not have equitable access to key services
- § There is a growing ageing population with specific transport needs
- § People in isolated communities suffer poor access to services and social networks
- § Limited awareness of travel opportunities is restricting people's life chances

Citizens were asked to rank these out of five as to how important they consider them. Although citizens did rank these as **important**, this did not indicate a great perception that there were major equal opportunities issues with services or the manner in which they are delivered.

28. If you have not been able to carry out any consultation, please indicate below how you intend to test out your findings and recommended actions.

As the LTP is substantially complete, incorporating reference to the stakeholder comments that have been received, consultation emphasis will shift to the schemes and programmes implemented.

29. If you are impact assessing some proposals, what steps have been taken to ensure that stakeholders have been able to voice their opinions on the proposals or the need for change?

As discussed above.

STEP 6 - ACTION PLANNING

Please outline your proposed action plan below.

Issues/ adverse impact identified	Proposed action/ objectives to deal with adverse impact	Targets/Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility	Indicate whether agreed
Disabled parking locations	Site disabled parking bays sensitively		Ongoing	Capital Projects/Transportation Division	Yes
Visually impaired reservation at pedestrianisation schemes	Address concerns within design process, with reference to best practice		Ongoing	Design teams	Yes
Difficulty in taking up sustainable transport alternatives among special needs groups	Offer advice and training through travel planning. Individuals can still choose car travel		Ongoing	Transportation Division	Yes
General	Continue scheme-by-scheme community consultation and incorporate comments and suggestions		Ongoing	Transportation Division	Yes

STEP 7 - ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND REVIEW

Please outline your arrangements for future monitoring and review below.

Agreed action	Monitoring arrangements	Timeframe	Responsibility	Added to Service Plan etc.
Scheme-by-scheme consultation informing the design process		Ongoing	Capital Projects/Transportation Division	Yes
Include equal opportunities information/questions within any ad hoc research that is carried out (this is done as a matter of course).		Ongoing	Transportation Division	Yes

Agreed action	Monitoring arrangements	Timeframe	Responsibility	Added to Service Plan etc.
Use new projects to start collecting equality information, e.g. equality monitoring when service users register with a service: travelcards, bike hire scheme etc.		Ongoing	Transport Policy Team	To consider

Date completed:

Signed:



Name: John Donnellon

Position: Service Director
Built Environment