

**Equality Impact Assessment
Budget Proposals 2013/14**

EIA No:

E&T24

Portfolio Ref:	Budget Proposals 2013/14
E&T 24	Revert to national disabled bus pass scheme
Brief Service Profile	<p>Unlike most local authorities Southampton City Council currently provides bus passes that enable free off peak travel within the city only to people who are on Disability Living Allowance (DLA) - lower rate of mobility or any rate of care. Only those on the higher rate of the DLA mobility allowance are eligible for a disabled bus pass under the national criteria.</p> <p>Currently approximately 2,600 disabled people have bus passes that meet the national criteria and 1,400 people have bus passes that meet the local criteria.</p> <p>Bus operators receive reimbursement every time a pass is used under the standard reimbursement rate used by the council.</p>
Summary of impact and Issues	<p>The proposal to remove the local enhancement will result in approximately 1,400 people not being able to renew their local bus pass when they expire. It is estimated that about half of these would qualify for a national disabled bus pass by other means by providing additional supporting evidence. For example by having a medical form signed by a medical practitioner.</p> <p>Having to pay for a bus service that you have previously received for free will clearly have the greatest impact on disabled people on a low income. However, a component of DLA payment relates to meeting additional mobility costs.</p>
Potential positive impacts	
Responsible service Manager	Simon Bell
Date	02-Oct-12
Approved by Senior Manager:	
Signature	
Date	

POTENTIAL NEGATIVE IMPACT

Portfolio Ref	Brief description of proposal		EIA Ref:
E&T 24	Revert to national disabled bus pass scheme		E&T24
Impact assessment	Details of impact	Possible Solutions	
Age	Pensioners are entitled to free off peak bus travel so unaffected by this change. Young disabled people are much less likely to have an income and therefore may be discouraged from getting out, decreasing social mobility and inclusion.	Signpost existing disabled bus pass holders to the alternative routes to meet the national criteria to obtain a pass.	
Disability	Up to 1,400 people currently entitled to free off peak bus travel will be unable to renew their bus pass. Having to pay for travel could lead to less travel, increased isolation, increased financial hardship. It is estimated that about half of these passengers could be entitled to the national disabled bus pass.	Signpost existing disabled bus pass holders to the alternative routes to meet the national criteria to obtain a pass.	
Gender reassignment	Not applicable	Not required	
Marriage & Civil partnership	Not applicable	Not required	
Pregnancy & maternity	Not applicable	Not required	
Race	Not applicable	Not required	
Religion or belief	Not applicable	Not required	
Sex	Not applicable	Not required	
Sexual Orientation	Not applicable	Not required	
Community Safety	Not applicable	Not required	
Poverty	DLA is not means tested. However, for disabled people on a low income the removal of free bus travel could result in significant additional expenditure that could be make accessing work, social engagements harder. This is estimated to effect around half of the curent bus pass holders (circa 700). Twice as many residents in the most deprived areas of the city are receiving incapacity benefits.	Signpost existing disabled bus pass holders to the alternative routes to meet the national criteria.	
Other significant impacts	Impact on health and wellbeing of individuals particulary in areas of deprivation if they cannot afford to attend medical appointments, or socialise. Impact on the health service if large numbers of bus pass holders request appointments with medical practitioners to have forms signed to demonstrate that they should qualify for a national pass.	Signpost existing disabled bus pass holders to the alternative routes to meet the national criteria. Liase with the Primary Care Trust over the number of people who may approach medical practitioners to obtain proof of entitlement. Review the impact of the proposal after 6 months.	