

# Health and Equity Impact Assessment

Assessing the broad options for how local bus services could be developed, managed and operated in the future

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West Midlands  
Combined Authority

## Health and Equity Impact Assessment Tool

Equity and Diversity are fundamental to our overall vision of improving the quality of life of everyone who lives and works in the West Midlands and is embedded within our values and strategic aims and objectives.

This tool combines the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Health Equity assessment (HEAT) tools and has been developed to support our vision set out in the Equity and Inclusion scheme. It has been designed to facilitate the promotion of equity, diversity and inclusion throughout our work and encourage a holistic approach, helping us to realise the potential within our commitment to equitable outcomes.

Health equity is considered within the tool as health inequalities are unjust differences in health and wellbeing between different groups of people (communities) which are systematic and avoidable and by considering alongside equality in this evolution of the equality impact assessment, we will ensure that the proposed and existing policy can benefit a wide range of people and will not disbenefit anyone. Ultimately it enables us to take further strides to achieving our vision.

The tool guides the user with a series of questions and prompts to systematically assess implications for improving our work by promoting equity, diversity and inclusion, whilst at the same time supporting us to meet the legislative requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

It is intended for use in the development and/or renewal of policy, strategy and programmes and will help to mitigate against any potential negative impacts. It considers impact upon:

- The protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010 (Age, sex, race, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership)
- Socio-economic differences by individual socio-economic position
- Area variations by deprivation level
- Vulnerable and inclusion health groups

There are 4 stages within the tool

1. Prepare
2. Assess
3. Refine and Apply
4. Review

### The Tool:

Directorate	Policy, Strategy and Innovation and Integrated Services
People responsible for conducting and overlooking assessment	David Harris, Steve Hayes, Helen Davies, Adam Harrison
Name or title of policy, strategy, programme or project being assessed	Broad options for how local bus services could be developed, managed and operated in the future.
Date completed	03.06.2024
Date review due	03.12.2024 (in line with the wider Bus Assessment work)
Person responsible for arranging review and monitoring	David Harris, Helen Davies and Steve Hayes

**Prepare – agree the scope of work and assemble the information you need**

About your work

Describe the main aims, objectives, activities, and outcomes of your work.  
Who is expected to benefit?  
How do you expect your work to reduce health and wider inequalities?

**Main objectives and outcomes**

WMCA Board in January 2022 requested that TfWM commence an independent assessment to deliver bus policy delivery options for the WMCA area. This independent assessment then identified 3 options, including bus franchising, that had the potential to achieve our objectives and outcomes for delivering better bus services. These objectives included:

- 1) Competition objectives (Stability; Best Value):** which address the challenges regarding a lack of competition in the region.
- 2) Passenger objectives (Network; Fares and Ticketing; Customer service and information; and Fleet):** which address the challenges that the current system creates for passengers.
- 3) Transformation objective (Transformation and Change):** addressing the ability of reform options which maximise the value of the bus network in achieving wider policy goals.

To move this work forward, a detailed assessment exploring a *Case for Change* in terms of bus reform is now being undertaken, encompassing three core elements. These being:

**An Efficiency Case** (enabling WMCA to manage the bus-network more efficiently and deliver more bus services for the same current level of public subsidy);

**An Operational Case** (how reform could enable the delivery of improvements for passengers without additional public-sector funding); and

**A Visionary Case** (demonstrating how reform could support WMCA's ability to enable changes to the network to help deliver wider policy goals).

The three options being examined include:

- 1) Continuation of the current enhanced partnership** (Variation 003 of the West

Midlands Enhanced Partnership) which is a "Do Minimum" Option, with Operators continuing to hold full revenue (and operating cost) risk over day-to-day bus operations.

**2) An enhanced partnership with additional elements** (such as the acquisition of key depots, transition to 'gross cost' contracts and more powers over Operators, with a partnership still existing between WMCA and all Operators.

**3) Franchising Option, where the** entire network would be planned by TfWM and contracts awarded to Operators to run services through a competitive procurement process, in which Operators deliver services to a specification set by WMCA.

These three options will be presented to the WMCA Board in July, where it will decide which option to take forward.

#### **Who is to benefit?**

Depending on the option chosen and results of more detailed modelling and evidence gathering, those cohorts likely to benefit will vary. For example:

**Option 1:** Will only support those existing groups who have no access to a car or other alternatives, with overall numbers of users continuing to decline.

**Option 2:** Will potentially support some additional groups, through enhancing the network to serve potentially more areas. But this may be limited depending on funding, and therefore there is still an assumption of declining user numbers.

**Option 3:** By the WMCA setting all service specifications on ticket prices, routes and operational times together with targeted interventions for certain communities and cohorts, far more groups and areas would be likely to benefit, and may reduce the decline of bus services.

#### **Health Implications**

A more reliable and enhanced bus network can result in improved health outcomes - be it reduced isolation through allowing more social

	<p>connections to be made, helping incorporate incidental physical activity, leading to better physical and mental wellbeing and generally helping to improve health outcomes overall which tackle those wider determinants of health.</p> <p>So, depending on the option chosen, health implications would vary. <b>Option 3</b> would potentially allow more people to have access to a better bus network, which would potentially serve more health care and well-being facilities, help increase take up rates of active travel options, help reduce isolation and loneliness and enhance people’s social connectivity levels. It could also support those groups who are disproportionately facing higher levels of air pollution, which is then often linked to higher risk of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, especially if zero emission fleets are deployed in areas most affected. Overall <b>Options 1 and 2</b> would likely see little change in peoples access and general health and wellbeing, with some healthcare facilities still being underserved.</p>
<p>Does your work affect the public or employees directly or indirectly? In what ways?</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>Data and evidence</p>	
<p>What data, indicators and evidence are available on the equity, diversity and health equity issues in the key target groups? (Consider inequalities and discrimination in relation to the target groups. Consider national, regional and local data (e.g., census and local demographic data, national and regional reports, health profiles and local data such as JSNA, contract performance data and qualitative data from local research). Please use this section for a brief outline of the issues and include detailed data and information breakdown as Appendix A</p>	<p><b>Data range</b> A range of data, indicators and evidence has been collected on key target groups. This data includes, but does not exclusively cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Census data and local demographic data (including unemployment rates, inactivity rates, LOSA data)</li> <li>• DfT Statistical data set on mode of travel</li> <li>• Healthcare Inequalities Improvement Dashboards</li> <li>• Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) data</li> <li>• TfWM Segmentation Tool</li> <li>• Market research studies and surveys undertaken by TfWMs Human Intelligence Team</li> <li>• Other studies and research conducted by the WMCA as well as other organisations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Brief outline of the issues</b></p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Slow declining commerciality of the bus network, with a long term trend of falling patronage, increased operating costs and long lasting impacts of the pandemic – resulting in circa 60% of the commercial network being viable today. As such, these reductions have disproportionately affected some communities more than others.</li> <li>2) The ongoing need for a greater proportion of public sector subsidy to operate the bus network. With greater bus reforms however, the WMCA may have more control on how public sector subsidy is used; whereas the current deregulated model provides the WMCA with a primarily reactive role with limited influence and requiring further referrals to the Subsidy Advice Unit and use of Bus Recovery Grants (which may not be viable in the long term if the intention of the subsidy is to avoid a failure of the market).</li> <li>3) The region experiences a lack of competition for local bus services, with National Express' (NX) services accounting for the vast majority of bus passenger journeys and scheduled bus mileage (over 90% of commercial vehicle mileage). This puts the WMCA in a weaker negotiating position when seeking to protect the bus network – be it negotiating the lowest costs for a bus service under threat or having access to an alternative Operator.</li> </ol>
<p>Have you consulted interested parties? (including employees, community representatives or/and residents from the target groups?)</p> <p>Detail who will be affected by the policy, outcomes of consultation.</p> <p>If you haven't conducted consultation, is there need for consultation and who are you planning to consult?</p>	<p><b>A market engagement exercise with bus operators</b> within the West Midlands and surrounding areas has been undertaken (to understand their views on the 3 different Options). The response to this exercise suggests that many Operators would prefer the stability and lower risk profile associated with franchising rather than the current framework to help stimulate competition for contracts.</p> <p><b>Bus user profile reports, travel trends and bus behaviour surveys</b> have further been undertaken to engage existing bus users. Bus users were the most dissatisfied of all the modes covered with poor bus punctuality, declining satisfaction rates and poor value for</p>

	<p>money being stated as the key issues. Transport Focus’s data hub and their national benchmarking study further showed that West Midlands residents were in the top 5% of being least satisfied with current bus services.</p> <p><b>Bus Network Impact Study: On Employees and Businesses</b> has also taken place, demonstrating that over 70% of businesses agree that bus travel is vital to their business, and if the existing network was reduced, 41% would consider re-locating outside of the region, with 61% of their employees then expressing it would be difficult/very difficult to make alternative arrangements if their bus service became unavailable.</p> <p><b>Wider Supported Travel Policies Review / research / HEIA</b> also showed that certain demographic groups and those with protected characteristics require more support in terms of accessing bus services, be it cost, level of coverage or in terms of information provision and many wanted more support provided to them.</p> <p>Following the conclusion of the assessment, should the WMCA wish to proceed with franchising, the relevant legislation requires that the assessment is consulted on.. As the bus franchising guidance sets out, the authority should consult widely on the proposals. This should ensure that local passengers, businesses, and transport providers are able to comment on the proposals before the authority takes the decision as to whether to implement the franchising scheme.</p>
<p>Is further research needed? (Consider if there is need for consultations, working groups, surveys, data etc) If yes, how will it be undertaken and by when?</p>	<p>If the WMCA Board determines in July that it wishes to proceed with franchising, a detailed consultation strategy will be drafted up. This will provide more detail on the level of consultation required following the independent audit of the assessment.</p> <p>If bus franchising is the chosen option, consultation and engagement will take place in late 2024. This public consultation will enable a greater level of primary data, statistics on public perceptions and further attitudes towards bus franchising to be gathered. This will include additional data</p>

	<p>being collected on protected characteristics, which will then inform the bus reform assessment including a more in-depth Equity and Health Impact Assessment.</p>
<p>Which measures does, or could the programme or policy include to help promote equality of opportunity for and or foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic?</p>	<p>Adopting new options for delivering on bus reform (and especially that of bus franchising) would give the WMCA greater control in decision making including setting the bus network itself, fares and ticketing, customer service and information, bus priority and the ability to set standards over fleets.</p> <p>This could result in a more accessible, convenient and affordable network supporting social mobility and inclusive growth and opening up access to a wider range of opportunities in terms of education and employment, giving businesses a wider pool of employees and making it easier for people to get to schools, hospitals, doctors' surgeries, shops and leisure activities. A better public transport network with bus at the heart of it would make a positive contribution to the overall attractiveness of the West Midlands region and make it a more compelling case for businesses to locate to the region.</p> <p>This initial HEqIA has therefore identified how the objectives of our three bus delivery options could overall benefit / disbenefit a person with protected characteristic(s) (i.e. their levels of accessibility, health and wellbeing outcomes, safety and exposure to poor air quality as examples) together with ways these three options could allow for more WMCA control (through franchising ) or somewhat limited control through the status quo or the Enhanced Partnership option.</p> <p>The HEqIA has also identified those groups most reliant on our bus network today and who would disproportionately be affected by any future changes in how our bus network is governed. In advance of a final decision being made, a more detailed HEqIA and greater in-depth analysis through future assessment work will be undertaken on the recommended option in order to better understand the impacts and subsequent changes to the bus network on those people with Protected Characteristics.</p>





<b>Assess – examine the evidence and intelligence</b>			
<b>Do you think that the policy in the way it is planned and delivered will have a negative, positive or no impact on any of the equality target groups (please detail in the table)</b>			
	<b>Distribution of Inequalities</b> Which populations face the biggest health and wider inequalities for your topic, according to the data and evidence above?	<b>Causes of Inequalities</b> What does the data and evidence tell you are the potential drivers for these inequalities?	<b>Positive/Negative/Neutral Impact</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive impact: where the impact on a particular group of people is more positive than for other groups</li> <li>• Negative impact: where the impact on a particular group of people is more negative than for other groups</li> <li>• Neutral impact: Neither a positive nor a negative impact on any group or groups of people, compared to others</li> </ul>
Age	<p><b>Older people</b> (aged 65), and especially older women on low incomes Older people from ethnic minority communities, who retire much later into their old age. Also older people with long term health conditions.</p>	<p><b>Older people</b> Nearly 190K people in the region are aged 61 or over with a third more likely not to have access to a car compared to the average bus user (Segmentation Tool / Bus User Trends / Concessionary Pass Holder survey 2022)</p> <p>Those 75 + rely more heavily on the bus network, as we see reduced driving licence take up for this age group and the purchasing of vehicles (DVLA data and RAC trends).</p> <p>Older age groups generally find it more difficult to walk to stops and witness their vision declining. They will also be more reliant on accessing healthcare as their age increases, with health</p>	<p><b>Neutral – Positive Impact</b> <b>Older people</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In terms of our passenger objectives, older people currently benefit to a greater degree than the average person from existing arrangements due to receiving free concessionary travel. Impacts from all three options in relation to fares, will be largely neutral for this group.</li> <li>• The ability to better co-ordinate and plan the network under franchising could enable better access to hospitals, doctors' surgeries, retail, leisure and cultural/educational activities - and in some cases employment, where some older people work well into their retirement (especially across certain racialised communities).</li> <li>• Franchising bus services would allow the Combined Authority to improve the customer experience e.g. through a single point of contact for customers and help make our bus system more navigable and accessible.</li> <li>• Stronger bus reforms could help reduce a person's levels of isolation and loneliness and improve on social connections.</li> </ul>

	<p><b><u>Younger people (11-25)</u></b> account for a significant proportion of bus passengers to access education and will not have access to a car. This group make up over 26% of the population in the region and are also more likely to be in low paid work or economically inactive (18.5%).</p>	<p>appointments increasing for this age group by as much as 68% (Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) data).</p> <p>Younger people overall have a more limited ability to travel independently without public transport, than most other demographic groups. And so are among the largest user group relying on bus services (Census Data / TfWM survey data / Segmentation tool data).</p> <p>They are also the largest group to rely on bus services in the evening where 21% of young people work in the night time economy.</p> <p>Young women without access to a car (DVLA data on driver licence uptake) and those in lower skilled level jobs are particularly dependent on bus services.</p> <p>From annual bus usage statistics, around 32.7% of all local bus passenger journeys in the region are by young people under the age of 25.</p> <p>From passenger surveys and travel trend data, young people are the most dissatisfied with bus services and the network overall, including</p>	<p><b>Positive Impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any bus reforms will have a disproportionate impact on younger people because they rely on the existing bus network the most.</li> <li>• They would benefit to a greater degree than average from the transport benefits of increased bus reforms, including better access to education and employment than under the status quo where the number of bus services are anticipated to decline.</li> <li>• Bus reform could support an increase in coverage and frequency across the bus network, especially early morning or in the evening/night time periods, this would help support those working shifts.</li> <li>• Bus reform could create opportunities for new support for younger people and especially where ticketing costs are reduced, and the network is enhanced. More targeted cohorts such as young carers, disabled young people, care leavers and students could especially be supported more with tailored offers.</li> </ul>
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		<p>punctuality, frequency and the cost of travel.</p> <p>Certain young people (smaller cohort groups) like care leavers, young carers, those Not in Employment, Education and Training (NEETs) and students as just some examples particularly struggle with the cost of public transport (Supported Travel Policies Research).</p> <p>Younger people also have higher safety fears, particularly young girls with over 80% of young women experiencing some form of abuse /incident on the network.</p>	
Socio Economic status or geographical deprivation		<p>Vulnerable groups (i.e those on a low income, those out of work or those residing in areas of deprivation) witnesses around a quarter of such households not having access to a car (but this can be even higher for some areas or groups). As a result, they are more reliant on public transport including bus services.</p>	<p><b>Positive Impacts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus reform options would give the Combined Authority more control over the bus network and the ability to develop it in a way that could respond more easily to socio-economic challenges. For example, in the case of deprived areas, stronger bus reform options could provide opportunities for a network to be replanned – providing improved access to key opportunities which may not currently be available to certain socio-economic groups.</li> <li>• Regulatory change could also increase TfWM’s ability to use revenue sources to directly subsidise fares and increase the number of concessions, which could target specific groups such as low-income groups or communities in deprived areas, which rely heavily on bus travel to access opportunities.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Sex		<p>National Travel Survey data indicates that women are more likely to use buses compared to men.</p>	<p><b>Positive Impacts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As often women are more concerned than men about personal security when travelling by bus, bus reform options would provide the choice for WMCA to consider changes to services and frequencies e.g. in the early mornings, evenings or night time. Greater bus reforms could also help reduce waiting times at bus stops after dark, which is when women often feel most vulnerable.</li> </ul>

		<p>Our existing bus network can often be viewed as complex and not always designed around trip changing requirements and supporting the travel needs of women (such as travelling with small children or the needs of carers).</p> <p>Despite feeling vulnerable and having greater personal safety fears, women are more likely to require evening bus services due to working more unsociable hours (in evening/night time).</p> <p>Women are more likely than men to be travelling with buggies and/or shopping and may often find this more challenging and stressful at times. Overcrowding on buses can also make it more difficult to manoeuvre a buggy and keep their child/children safe.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher standards covering the customer experience may also result. For example improved driver training on issues like reducing Violence against Women and Girls, more support with those facing language barriers, improved service frequencies and the creation of a more cohesive network which would allow for easier interchange and an understanding of the network.</li> <li>• Bus reform could allow the Combined Authority to have more autonomy on the design of vehicles e.g. this could help us to ensure that there is enough pram space on buses and improved facilities in general at our bus stations / interchanges for pregnant women, those choosing to breast feed and requiring facilities for small children including changing facilities and seating areas.</li> <li>• Bus reform options could also deliver on cheaper ticketing options, such as the introduction of a carer pass (where women are more likely to undertake this role).</li> </ul>
Disability		<p>Around 1 in 4 people in the region are disabled with many feeling they do not have equal access to transport.</p> <p>Interchanging or making connections is rated by far (by 51% of respondents), as the greatest barrier to using a bus for disabled people (Transport for All Survey Data)</p>	<p><b>Positive impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TfWM would likely be in a better position than currently, through improved bus reforms to address the customer service needs experienced by disabled people; ensuring they are aware of travel opportunities provided by bus services by offering a single, consistent point of contact.</li> <li>• TfWM could be in a stronger position to facilitate travel by disabled people, through introducing stronger requirements and specifications which could govern the standards of information provided including audio-visual announcements, higher customer service standards, Disability Awareness Training as well as other on-board compliance standards and regulations.</li> </ul>

		<p>In 2023, the employment rate of disabled people was 53.7%; highlighting that people with a disability are more likely to be unemployed and be more reliant on bus services. For non-disabled people, this figure was 82.7% (census data 2021).</p> <p>Disabled adults make 38% fewer trips than non-disabled adults, and travel just 46% of the distance travelled by the latter (National Travel Survey Data).</p> <p>Those disclosing they have some form of disability have greater dissatisfaction levels with current bus service provision. Be it having access to priority seating, punctuality, customer service standards, driver awareness or the frequency of services (TfWM survey data).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus reform options and a more stable bus market - specified by TfWM under a single livery/branding of buses could make it easier to communicate travel opportunities to people with a learning disability or cognitive impairment.</li> <li>• Bus reform could allow the Combined Authority to have more autonomy on the design of its vehicles and ensure we provide a consistent, on board offering to disabled people e.g. enough adequate wheelchair spaces and good facilities at our stations, stops and interchanges.</li> </ul>
Race	<p>Across the region, 45% of our population see themselves as being an ethnic minority.</p> <p>For most ethnic minority groups, they will live in a household without access to</p>	<p>Ethnic minority groups undertake more trips overall, in a given day and week.</p> <p>Due to the areas they tend to reside in, will often experience greater exposure to transport inequalities.</p> <p>Ethnic minority groups will also experience wider underlying socio-economic impacts, i.e. reside in poorer quality housing, have lower</p>	<p><b>Positive impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People from ethnic minority groups are more likely than average to experience deprivation and as such, they are more likely to depend on bus services as they may not be able to afford a car. Consequently, where greater bus reform is undertaken, this group should experience greater levels of transport benefits than average, including improved access to education and employment opportunities.</li> <li>• Through bus reform improvements to the availability of services as well as frequencies, especially early in the morning and in the evenings/late at night could be enhanced.</li> <li>• This group may further benefit more than average from the improvements in terms of improved of air quality, improved safety, reduced bus travel costs and</li> </ul>

	<p>a car or a van, and as twice as dependent on bus services compared to white British.</p>	<p>income levels, gain lower levels of educational attainment and be more exposed to more negative impacts brought about by transport like poor air quality, road safety issues and personal safety concerns which then directly or indirectly contribute to transport-related inequality (Race Equality Taskforce data findings).</p> <p>Ethnic minority women are twice as likely, compared to white workers to be in insecure work or be working in low-paid health and social care jobs and are therefore disproportionately affected by the bus network, which currently does not adequately enable care-related journeys to be made. The strong focus placed on radial routes into cities at peak times leaves some struggling to access work in more out of city locations (National Household .</p> <p>Safety, and perceived risks are significantly higher for this group when travelling on the bus (TfWM survey data).</p> <p>Satisfaction rates amongst this group in terms of value for money, punctuality, frequency and reliability are significantly lower</p>	<p>improved customer information which are associated with greater levels of bus reform.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TfWM would likely be in a better position than currently, through improved bus reforms to address the customer service needs experienced by disabled people; ensuring they are aware of travel opportunities provided by bus services by offering a single, consistent point of contact.</li> <li>• Stronger bus reforms would give the Combined Authority autonomy over fares and ticketing policies; creating helping to address the differences in satisfaction rates concerning ticketing as well as punctuality and frequencies this group experience.</li> </ul>
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		<p>then other groups overall (TfWM survey data).</p> <p>People with English as an additional language, or new arrivals to the UK may face barriers to bus travel; further influencing their accessibility levels and ability to travel.</p>	
Religion/belief		Some evidence suggests that individuals who identify with particular religions or beliefs have faced marginalisation due to ethno-religious identities and migratory backgrounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While no obvious additional impacts are noted for these groups, similar considerations, as outlined under race may apply to this protected characteristic.</li> </ul>
Sexual Orientation		Nearly 65% of LGBT people stated they hid their sexual orientation on public transport and would avoid certain journeys because of safety fears and concerns about negative reactions from others (The 2018 Equalities Office report on LGBT Communities).	<p><b>Positive impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Similar considerations as outlined under the sex of a person are also likely to apply to this group.</li> </ul>
Marriage and civil partnership			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No obvious additional impacts are noted for this group.</li> </ul>
Gender reassignment			<p><b>Positive impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Similar considerations as outlined under the sex of a person are also likely to apply to this group.</li> </ul>
Inclusion health and vulnerable groups (for example people experiencing homelessness, prison leavers,			<p><b>Positive impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other excluded groups could benefit from new concessions being introduced from improved bus reforms. This could include discounts for students or more vulnerable groups (i.e. low income groups, care leavers, those experiencing homelessness or prison leavers as some examples).</li> <li>Bus reform options could also improve the availability of services as well as frequencies, especially early in the morning and in the evenings/late at night. This may include more circular route provision, with services operating in locations</li> </ul>



young people leaving care			where more vulnerable groups require access to, which maybe outside of town and city centres.
If adverse/negative impact is noted to any of the listed equality target groups, can it be justified i.e. on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for any other group/s?	At this stage, no apparent adverse or negative impacts have been noted to any of the listed equality target groups. However, once a final option is agreed, a more in-depth HEIA will be undertaken. Further steps will then be taken in collecting additional data and ways the agreed option may affect different groups of people. This will be included in the formal statutory consultation (if franchising is agreed).		

<b>Action plan:</b> What specific action can your programme or policy take to maximise the potential for positive impacts and or to mitigate the negative impacts identified above				
Issues to be addressed	<p>Actions required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could you consider targeting action on populations who face the biggest inequalities?</li> <li>• Could you design the work with communities who face the biggest inequalities to maximise the chance of it working for them?</li> </ul>	Responsible Officer	Timescales	<p>How would you measure impact/outcomes in practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on the option agreed by the WMCA Board in July, a detailed consultation strategy will be drafted up, covering the level of consultation required and more detailed information on the key groups and organisations being consulted.</li> <li>• If bus franchising is the chosen option, a public consultation, as required by the legislation. will take place in late 2024.</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alongside this, a more detailed assessment will be conducted, as well as detailed modelling and evaluation. This will include additional data being collected on those with protected characteristics, which will then inform the bus reform assessment including a more in-depth Equity and Health Impact Assessment, which will then inform us of where the greatest inequalities may lie.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evaluation and monitoring:</b> How will you quantitatively or qualitatively monitor and evaluate the effect of your work on different population groups at risk of inequalities? What output or process measures could you consider?</p>	<p>Appropriate monitoring activity will be considered and developed as necessary, should a new option be taken forward (enhanced EP or Franchising). This will be accompanied by a greater in-depth analysis through future assessment work to understand the impacts and subsequent changes to the bus network on those people with Protected Characteristics.</p> <p>Once this is completed, and the chosen option is operational, continual consultation and engagement with relevant organisations representing bus users as well as key stakeholders like operators, local authorities, businesses, elected representatives, the traffic commissioner and those groups with protected characteristics will take place to evaluate how well the option is working. Full reporting on the responses to these consultations will also take place.</p>			
<p><b>Review Date:</b> Recommended between 6 and 12 months from initial completion</p>	<p>Likely to be Autumn 2024 (but subject to the outcomes of the audit), with a peer review on the HEIA being undertaken by the Equalities Team as well as other WMCA members. This may include the Chair of the Race Equality Taskforce Group and members of the Disability Working Group, the WMCA’s women’s group and other such groups.</p>			

