



## Equality Impact Assessment

### Subject: Holme Valley Bus Network Review

Date: 29 November 2013

#### Equality Impact Assessment

<b>What is the organisation strategy or policy being assessed?</b> Holme Valley Bus Network Review	<b>Department:</b> Bus Services	<b>Date:</b> 29 November 2013
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#### 1. Responsibility and Ownership

<b>Service Area:</b> Bus Services
<b>Lead Officer:</b> Neale Wallace, Assistant Director Transport Services
<b>Members of the assessment team:</b> Clare Davies, Bus Consultation Team Leader
<b>Any others involved in the assessment (peer review / external challenge):</b> Joanne Waddington, Transportation Strategy Team, Kirklees Council

## 2. Terms of Reference

### **Briefly describe the aims of the strategy or policy you are assessing:**

A reduction in central government funding to local government has resulted in Metro seeking to decrease expenditure on tendered bus services by 25% across West Yorkshire. Metro has already reviewed tendered bus services in the Bradford, North and South Kirklees and Wakefield Districts to assess where savings can be made.

Bus services in the Kirklees area have been reviewed in various stages; South Kirklees in October 2012, North Kirklees in January 2012 and Holme Valley where the revised changes were introduced in April 2013 (The revised changes for services in the Denby Dale area are likely to be introduced in May 2015).

Extensive stakeholder and public consultations including an information session was carried out regarding the proposed Holme Valley bus network changes during May 2012 to February 2013.

The review has been carried out in partnership with commercial operators and the consultation incorporated their proposed changes. This Equality Impact Assessment covers the tendered services which Metro has responsibility for and not all the commercial proposed changes.

The review has also involved re-allocating resources (to ensure maximum benefit from the reduced tendered budget) and simplifying networks to make them easier for passengers to understand.

The review also sought to address changing West Yorkshire travel demands and the aims of the third local Transport Plan.

The revised Holme Valley bus network was introduced on 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

### **The Consultation Process**

Metro endeavoured to make the consultation as inclusive as possible. A range of Stakeholders were invited to participate including; all Kirklees Councillors, Passenger Consultative Committee (PCC) Members, Town and Parish Councils in affected area, Transition Towns in the affected area, Kirklees Disability Liaison Group, Kirklees Older People's Network, Young People in Kirklees, Valleys Community Transport.

The consultation and feedback review process took place in four stages:-

#### **Stage 1: February to April 2012 (Combined with the South Kirklees bus review consultation)**

Public drop-in sessions were held at a number of places across the affected area at different days of the week (including three Saturdays) and times (including evenings until 19:00). A total of ten drop-in sessions were held across the District, staffed for a total of 63.5 hours.

Drop-in sessions were held at a number of community buildings (e.g. village halls and libraries to give people the opportunity to have face-to-face discussions in their localities) though the sessions at Huddersfield Bus Station were far better attended and therefore more useful. People were encouraged to complete a feedback form (freepost address provided) or email their comments.

The information was also available on Metro's website [www.wymetro.com/consultation/busreview](http://www.wymetro.com/consultation/busreview) (with the email address for comments well promoted), and was also included on the Kirklees Involve website [www.kirklees.gov.uk/involve](http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/involve).

## Stage 2: September to October 2012

Following the feedback received from stage one, further consultation sessions were arranged to seek the views of the local public for the draft proposals. Drop-in sessions were held at a number of locations across the affected area at different times and days of the week including Saturday. A total of six drop-in sessions were held across the Holme Valley area including Huddersfield Bus Station, staffed for a total of 32 hours. People were encouraged to complete a feedback form (freepost address provided) or via survey monkey or email their comments via a dedicated email address.

## Stage 3: Information Day

An information day was held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February, 10:00-15:00 at the Holmfirth Library and Information Centre to inform the public of Metro's final proposals. Representatives from First were also available to provide information along with Officers from Metro.

## Stage 4: 29 August until 30 September 2013 (Bus Review Feedback)

The main aim of the review was to find out what users thought about the changes that were made in April 2013 and if there was any scope for further improvements. Three drop-in sessions was held in Holmfirth, Honley and Meltham, staffed for a total of 37.5 hours. Representatives from First who operate the main affected services were also available at all drop-in sessions.

The consultation was advertised in the following ways:

- Information flyers sent to all operators of affected bus services for passengers to pick up.
- Posters displayed on all affected bus services.
- Posters prominently displayed at all affected bus stations (Huddersfield and Holmfirth Bus Stations).
- Posters sent to all community buildings in South Kirklees (list provided by Kirklees Council).
- Posters sent to a range of interest groups – disabled, older people etc.
- Posters put up at some affected bus shelters.
- Press releases – a number of articles were printed in the Huddersfield Examiner
- Internal Kirklees Council promotion.

As a result of the review some areas ended up with a reduced bus service frequency and loss of service all day or at certain times of the day. However, the overall response has been that reliability of services has significantly improved. First reported that in June and July this year bus passenger numbers increased by 5% over the equivalent period in 2012.

### **Who is intended to benefit from the outcomes of the strategy or policy?**

The aim of the review was to make best use of the available resources and make the bus network in the Holme Valley as sustainable as possible.

### **What objectives are intended to be delivered by the strategy or policy?**

The review has provided an opportunity to consider a number of elements of the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan, which sets out a 15 year strategy for developing and managing an integrated transport system that will support economic growth, reduce carbon dependency and improve quality of life.

- Assessment of the public transport hierarchy in the Holme Valley, with core commercial bus services identified and promoted.
- The concept of hubs has also been considered, with Holmfirth potentially being developed as a mini transport hub.

**Please list other strategies and policies and operational areas which relate to this strategy or policy:**

ITA Policies  
LTP 3

### 3. Equalities implications

**Is there reason to believe that any people who share a protected characteristic could be adversely affected by this strategy or policy?**

Protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

Yes.

**Which people sharing a protected characteristic are affected?**

Bus services are used by all sectors of the community though consultation has generated most feedback from older and / or disabled people.

### 4. Evidence of adverse impact or unmet needs

<b>What is the concern about adverse impact or unmet needs on the grounds of:</b>	<b>What evidence do you have for this?</b>
<b>Age</b>	Data not collected as part of the consultation but the National Travel Survey and Metro's Tracker Survey 2012 shows that bus use is highest amongst 16-24 year olds and those aged 65+. Changes to services could impact these groups disproportionately.  The review has sought to maintain access to a daytime bus service to address accessibility needs
<b>Disability</b>	Data not collected as part of the consultation but the proportion of adults with a disability increase with age and these groups are more likely to be reliant on public transport. Disabled people may experience longer journeys however all vehicles operating tendered services will now comply with DDA legislation ahead of the 2016 deadline.
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	Data not collected as part of the consultation. No evidence this group will be adversely impacted.

<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Data not collected as part of the consultation but reduced levels of service on routes may make journeys longer for pregnant women particularly on way to/from appointments.
<b>Race</b>	Data not collected as part of the consultation. No evidence this group will be disproportionately impacted.
<b>Religion or belief</b>	Data not collected as part of the consultation. No evidence this group will be disproportionately impacted.
<b>Sex</b>	Data not collected as part of the consultation however the National Travel Survey indicates a greater proportion of bus users are female.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Data not collected as part of the consultation. No evidence this group will be disproportionately impacted.

## 5. Decisions and recommendations

### Following the assessment, is further action required?

Metro undertook extensive consultation to understand the impact of the proposals. A number of actions have been taken after analysing the consultation feedback – see the attached appendix.

### What are your recommendations? Do you need to:

- **Take any immediate action?** No further action required. The tendered bus services will be reviewed at the end of the tender (in April 2016).
- **Prioritise the problems identified and develop equality objectives and targets for people who share protected characteristics based on this assessment?**  
Not applicable
- **Conduct to a more detailed impact assessment?**  
Not applicable

### List the specific actions that will be taken to address the problems you have identified:

Not applicable.

### Who will do this?

Bus Services Team



Signature of lead officer:

Name of lead officer: Neale Wallace

Date: 29 November 2013