

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and our equality duty

The Equality Duty helps public bodies to deliver their overall objectives for public services, and as such should be approached as a positive opportunity to support good decision-making.

It encourages public bodies to understand how different people will be affected by their activities so that policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people's needs. By understanding the effect of their activities on different people, and how inclusive public services can support and open up people's opportunities, public bodies are better placed to deliver policies and services that are efficient and effective.

Complying with the Equality Duty may involve treating some people better than others, as far as this is allowed by discrimination law. For example, it may involve providing a service in a way which is appropriate for people who share a protected characteristic, such as providing computer training to all people to help them access information and services.

Whilst [the Gunning Principles](#) set out the rules for consulting with 'everyone', additional requirements are in place to avoid discrimination and inequality.

Cheshire East Council is required to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Equality Act 2010 simplified previous anti-discrimination laws with a single piece of legislation. Within the Act, the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149) has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, by consciously thinking about equality when making decisions (such as in developing policy, delivering services and commissioning from others)
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, by removing disadvantages, meeting their specific needs, and encouraging their participation in public life
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not

The Equality Act identifies nine 'protected characteristics' and makes it a legal requirement to make sure that people with these characteristics are protected from discrimination:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Applying the equality duty to engagement

If you are developing a new policy, strategy or programme you may need to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment. You may be able to ascertain the impact of your proposal on different characteristics through desk-based research and learning from similar programmes, but you also need to carry out some primary research and engagement.

People with protected characteristics are often described as ‘hard to reach’ but you will find everyone can be reached – you just need to tailor your approach, so it is accessible for them.

Please feel free to contact the [Equality and Diversity mailbox](#) who will try to help you to assess the impacts of your proposals and will ensure that you help the Council to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Section 1 – Details of the service, service change, decommissioning of a service, strategy, function or procedure

(Please delete the guidance in italics once you complete a section)

Proposal Title	Local Transport Plan
Date of Assessment	16/10/2024
Assessment Lead Officer Name and other officers involved	Laura Prendeville along with contributions from officers in the project team.
Directorate/ Service	Place/ Highways and Transport
Details of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function or procedure.	<p>As the statutory Local Transport Authority, the Council is required to maintain an up-to-date Local Transport Plan (LTP) that provides a strategic framework for planning and delivery of improvements in local transport provision. The previous LTP was adopted in 2019 for the period of 2019-2024. Therefore, now the time is right for a new LTP document to ensure that the Council maintains a document that is robust and relevant to both national, regional and local priorities.</p> <p>The existing LTP 2019-2024 for Cheshire East was prepared pre-covid, and prior to many recent changes in transport policy. As a result, the current LTP is no deemed longer fit-for-purpose as a framework for local transport within Cheshire East.</p> <p>In addition several recent and emerging changes will have impacts on Cheshire East; for example, Bus Service Improvement Plan and Local Cycling and Walking</p>

	<p>Infrastructure Plans. There are potential implications and opportunities for local transport within Cheshire East.</p> <p>To ensure that the Council has a clear, evidence-based position on these matters there is a need for them to be considered as part of our next LTP.</p> <p>Therefore, the time is right for a new LTP document to ensure that the Council maintains a document that is robust and relevant to both national, regional and local priorities.</p> <p>A methodology has been prepared which ensures our planning is informed and influenced by robust data and stakeholder consultation. In 2024, we have developed an evidence base along with a vision and objectives document.</p> <p>An 8-week consultation is proposed in early 2025 to seek the views of stakeholders and residents on the transport challenges and opportunities facing Cheshire East.</p> <p>The consultation will also assess the extent to which stakeholders agree or disagree with the draft vision, objectives and will explore the role transport will play in achieving the vision and objectives, and the extent to which there is agreement or disagreement with our transport priorities.</p> <p>As the LTP is developed, consideration will be given to transport requirements of the borough across all modes of transport.</p> <p>Once the LTP strategy is drafted (anticipated in 2025) another round of consultation will take place on the draft document.</p>
<p>Who is impacted?</p>	<p>All residents of Cheshire East could be impacted by projects which are eventually delivered as part of the LTP.</p> <p>The LTP strategy provides a strategic framework to guide schemes and investment for the future.</p> <p>As such, future work will be undertaken to implement schemes and investment programmes.</p> <p>Further Equality Impact Assessments will be conducted for schemes and investment programmes as they come forward.</p> <p>At this stage, whilst a draft vision and objectives have been produced and will be consulted on, the LTP strategy is yet to be written.</p>

	<p>This EIA will be updated following the development of the strategy.</p> <p>A new LTP strategy will impact all residents.</p> <p>The following are likely to be affected by a new LTP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public (including residents and visitors to the borough) • Cheshire East Council stakeholders • Public transport operators and staff • Local businesses / organisations • Schools and education establishments • Neighbouring local authorities • Governmental bodies (e.g. Local Enterprise Partnership) • Statutory transport bodies (E.g. Department for Transport, Transport for the North and Highways England) • Partner organisations • Business organisations incl. Chambers of Commerce • Town and Parish Councils • Manchester Airports Group • Ambulance Services • Umbrella organisations for people with specialist transport needs, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Age UK ○ Space4Autism ○ Disability Information Bureau (DIB) ○ Cheshire Centre for Independent Living ○ Deafness Support Network ○ ADCA Medical Transport Service ○ Congleton Disabled Club ○ Care4CE ○ Leonard Cheshire Disability ○ The Stroke Association ○ The Disabled Persons Transport Advisory ○ CEC adult and social care services ○ Disability Info Bureau • Transport interest groups, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Crewe & District Bus Users Group ○ Transition Wilmslow ○ Active Travel Congleton ○ Travel Cheshire ○ Campaign for Better Transport ○ Local Cycling Groups ○ Active Cheshire
--	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Crewe Bus Users group ○ NW Transport Activists Roundtable ○ Passenger Transport Consortium ○ Transport Focus ○ Alliance of British Drivers ● Environmental interests, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Campaign for the Protection of Rural England ○ Cheshire Wildlife Trust ○ Canals and Rivers Trust ○ The Environment Agency ○ Natural England ○ The Joint Nature Conservation Committee ○ Macclesfield Canal Society ○ Countryside Access Forum ● Transport Charities, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cycling UK ○ Living Streets ○ Sustrans ● Members of Parliament ● Freight transport operators ● National Trust <p>This list has been devised considering those that are impacted by transport across the borough who could be affected positively or negatively by the LTP strategy.</p> <p>Getting input from these groups at this early stage, particularly those who share one or more protected characteristics, will help to shape the LTP vision and objectives, which will eventually be being consulted on.</p> <p>Feedback will also help shape the LTP strategy when this is written. Until the LTP is written, it is difficult to assess the impact upon all stakeholders, but particularly those who share one or more protected characteristic.</p>
<p>Links and impact on other services, strategies, functions or procedures.</p>	<p>The Cheshire East plan recognises the importance of the transport network in supporting key strategic objectives. For example, the plan sets out a vision for a 'thriving and sustainable place', to achieve this vision one of the plan's priorities is to provide 'a transport network that is safe and promotes active travel'. This includes improving active travel routes and bus services, as well as providing improved connectivity across the local authority.</p>

	<p>Like the existing LTP, the new LTP strategy will outline the role transport will play in delivering the key strategic vision and objectives.</p> <p>Consultation on the draft LTP will take place in early 2025 to gain feedback on the proposed vision and objectives.</p> <p>Internal steering groups and the Member Reference Group will also be engaged throughout development of the LTP strategy.</p> <p>The Cheshire East Local Plan outlines the planning policies and proposals for development in the Cheshire East area. It guides decisions on where new housing, employment, and infrastructure should be located, while also protecting important open spaces and enhancing community facilities.</p> <p>The Local Plan aims to ensure sustainable growth and improve the quality of life for residents. It is important that the LTP and Local Plan are coordinated to enable sustainable development.</p> <p>Once the LTP strategy has been developed, this EIA will be revised specially outlining the impact of the LTP strategy on transport across the borough and its impacts upon those who share one or more protected characteristic.</p>
<p>How does the service, service change, strategy, function or procedure help the Council meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty?</p>	<p>The LTP vision and objectives draft development will involve producing a stakeholder list to contact regarding the consultation. This includes representatives and groups who share one or more protected characteristic. This direct engagement will help to foster good relations and ensure these groups are contacted about the LTP at this early stage and that they can use their experience and influence to help develop the LTP.</p> <p>The draft LTP vision will seek to develop a transport system that is safe and accessible to all. With this draft vision in mind for transport provision going forward, the aim will be to make a transport network more equitable including for those with one or more protected characteristics.</p> <p>One of the draft sub-objectives focuses on providing enhanced safety and sense of security for every journey, regardless of the mode of transport. With a goal to improve accessibility of public transport by having a safer environment</p>

	<p>and provide more equal opportunity for both those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.</p> <p>The LTP strategy will impact all residents, and once this is written, more will be understood about any impacts, positive or negative, on the protected characteristic groups.</p>
--	---

Section 2 - Information – What do you know?

<p>What do you know?</p>	<p><i>What information (qualitative and quantitative) and/or research have you used to arrive at the decision to commission/ change/ decommission the service, strategy, function, or procedure?</i></p>
<p>Information you used to arrive at the decision</p>	<p>As part of the LTP evidence base, numerous data has been collected. Some information which relates to the protected characteristics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patronage data for the Council’s supported bus network reveals that a significant number of passengers use concessionary passes. As of February 2024, this equates to over 24,000 passengers which is 36% of total travellers on supported bus services. These concessionary pass holders are likely to have one or multiple protected characteristics, including disabilities and being of young or old age. Consideration will be given to specific engagement with this group during consultation, this may include measures such as providing physical copies of documents, and engagement via the bus user groups. • According to the National Travel Survey 2021 there is little difference between the number of trips taken by bus for those with and without mobility difficulties. However, the number of trips by rail, car, cycle, and walking are significantly lower for those with a mobility difficulty compared to those without. • The Census 2021 shows that Cheshire East has a lower proportion of residents who have a registered disability compared to the Northwest, however it is similar to the national average of 17.3%. • Taken from the 2021 Census Cheshire East’s households speaking English as their first language is between 90 and 99.6%. The areas with a lower percentage are in and around Crewe, with around 60.9% to 90%.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the 2021 Census Cheshire East's population is 96.7% white, this is a larger proportion compared to the Northwest and England, being 6.5% higher than the North West and 10.7% higher than England. The percentage of all other ethnic groups is lower than the national average, the most significant difference is the 6% lower percentage population of Asian/Asian British people in Cheshire East compared to the national average. • The Census 2021 shows there is a significant proportion of the Cheshire East population in the 65+ age category which has increased since the 2011 Census. Cheshire East has a larger proportion of the population in the older age category of over 65 (22.3%) compared to Cheshire West (21.3%), the Northwest (18.7%) and England (18.4%) which demonstrates that Cheshire East has a higher ageing population. • UK Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, undertaken in 2021, shows that one in two women and one in seven men felt unsafe walking alone after dark in a quiet street near their home, with two out of three women aged 16 to 34 years having experienced one form of harassment in the previous 12 months. • The experiences of women and girls in a transport report¹ produced in March 2022 found that 85% of participants thought about safety when planning a journey which influenced routes, times travelled and avoiding certain modes. Furthermore, those that felt very safe across several modes was between 15-30%, much lower than those using a car (59%). Factors such as visible staff and lighting were suggested as elements that would improve safety, however the research has emphasised that it is often others behaviour that was the issue. <p>The LTP is an overarching policy for the borough and therefore the document will have the potential to impact everyone across the borough including those with protected characteristics. The draft LTP vision and objectives will be consulted on in early 2025, giving those with protected characteristics to have their say at an early stage. As part of developing the draft vision and objectives, engagement with wider teams within Cheshire East Council such as Public Health and Adults has been conducted to gain a more</p>
--	--

¹ [Experiences of women and girls on transport](#)

	<p>rounded view across the council of what is required from the LTP vision and objectives. As part of the consultation, a series of focus groups or similar will take place, for example with schools and other groups to get their input.</p> <p>The LTP strategy will be developed and will be consulted on in due course providing an opportunity to input and shape the strategy. Once developed, the impact on those with protected characteristics will be explored in greater detail in future iterations of this EIA.</p>
Gaps in your Information	<p>The LTP evidence base is comprehensive, however given the breadth of the LTP covering all forms of transport, there is some information on some of the protected characteristics that will be unavailable. The public consultation in early 2025 provides an opportunity to have greater engagement with these groups to improve knowledge on these protected characteristics and ensure the LTP impacts are understood and mitigated against. The consultation on the LTP strategy will be undertaken once the document is in draft.</p>

Section 3 - Information - What did people tell you?

What did people tell you about your proposals?	<p>Consultation and engagement are yet to be undertaken. Future updates to this EIA will be made following the public consultation in February and March 2025.</p>
Details and dates of the consultation/s and/or engagement activities	<p>At this stage a period of consultation is planned to run for 8 weeks during February and March 2025.</p> <p>Groups representing those who share one or more protected characteristics will be included within the stakeholder list and contacted when the consultation goes live. Whilst the specific detail is being worked through, several focus groups are expected to be undertaken, for example with schools and transport user groups to allow them to feed into this process.</p>
Are there any gaps in consultation and engagement feedback?	<p>As part of the preparation for the consultation, a list of key stakeholders will be drawn up and engagement will be ongoing throughout the consultation. This consultation will be undertaken through email and online, as well as a several focus groups and promotional material provided across the borough.</p>

Section 4 - Review of information, consultation feedback and equality analysis

<p>Protected characteristics groups from the Equality Act 2010</p>	<p>What do you know? <i>Summary of information used to inform the proposal</i></p> <p><u>Refer to Section 2</u></p>	<p>What did people tell you? <i>Summary of customer and/or staff feedback</i></p> <p><u>Refer to section 3</u></p>	<p>What does this mean? <i>Impacts identified from the information and feedback (actual and potential).</i></p> <p><i>These can be either positive, negative or have no impact.</i></p>
<p>Age</p>	<p>The Census 2021 shows there is a significant proportion of the Cheshire East population in the 65+ age category which has increased since the 2011 Census.</p> <p>Cheshire East has a larger proportion of the population in the older age category of over 65 (22.3%) compared to Cheshire West (21.3%), the Northwest (18.7%) and England (18.4%) which demonstrates that Cheshire East has a higher ageing population.</p> <p>Patronage data for the Council’s supported bus network reveals that a significant number of passengers use concessionary passes. As of February 2024, this equates to over 24,000 passengers which is 36% of total travellers on supported bus services. These concessionary pass</p>	<p><i>Engagement yet to be undertaken.</i></p>	<p>It is necessary to ensure residents can access the key services and facilities that are needed in everyday life, such as GPs, hospitals, supermarkets and leisure opportunities. This is increasingly important for older people and more vulnerable groups, helping to reduce social isolation. It is important to recognise that different ages groups have differing needs, of transport.</p> <p>More elderly adults face mobility issues, and therefore rely on more specialised transport services such as community shuttles to maintain their independence.</p> <p>Therefore, it is essential that well connected, accessible bus routes are provided around Cheshire East to better serve those with mobility difficulties.</p>

	holders are likely to have one or multiple protected characteristics, including disabilities and being of young or old age.		
Disability	<p>According to the National Travel Survey there is little difference between the number of trips taken by bus for those with and without mobility difficulties. However, the number of trips by rail, car, cycle, and walking are significantly lower for those with a mobility difficulty compared to those without.²</p> <p>According to the 2021 Census Cheshire East has a lower proportion of residents who have a registered disability compared to the North West, however it is similar to the national average of 17.3%.</p>	<i>Engagement yet to be undertaken.</i>	<p>It is essential that well connected, accessible bus routes, active travel routes, rail stations and services are provided around Cheshire East to better serve those.</p> <p>There is a need for a cohesive, accessible public transport network for all in the borough – including those with disabilities whom suffer a higher risk of social isolation and poor standards of living with mobility difficulties.</p>
Gender reassignment	No information reviewed at present	<i>Engagement yet to be undertaken.</i>	<i>Impact of the forthcoming LTP not understood at this stage (not yet written).</i>
Pregnancy and maternity	No information reviewed at present	<i>Engagement yet to be undertaken.</i>	<i>Impact of the forthcoming LTP not understood at this stage (not yet written).</i>
Race/ethnicity	Taken from the 2021 Census Cheshire East's households speaking English as their first language is between 90 and 99.6%. The areas with a lower percentage are in	<i>Engagement yet to be undertaken.</i>	It is important transport information is provided in alternative languages, as appropriate, to promote inclusivity.

² [National Travel Survey: 2021 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/national-travel-survey-2021)

	<p>and around Crewe, with around 60.9% to 90%.</p> <p>According to the 2021 Census Cheshire East's population is 96.7% white, this is a larger proportion compared to the North West and England, being 6.5% higher than the North West and 10.7% higher than England. The percentage of all other ethnic groups is lower than the national average, the most significant difference is the 6% lower percentage population of Asian/Asian British people in Cheshire East compared to the national average.</p>		
Religion or belief	No information reviewed at present	<i>Engagement yet to be undertaken.</i>	<i>Impact of the forthcoming LTP not understood at this stage (not yet written).</i>
Sex	<p>UK Opinions and Lifestyle Survey³, undertaken in 2021, shows that one in two women and one in seven men felt unsafe walking alone after dark in a quiet street near their home, with two out of three women aged 16 to 34 years having experienced one form of harassment in the previous 12 months.</p> <p>The experiences of women and girls in a transport report⁴ produced in March 2022 found that 85% of</p>	<i>Engagement yet to be undertaken.</i>	<p>Cheshire East need to improve the perception of safety on public transport through inclusive design. This would encourage more women and girls to access the public transport network for example.</p> <p>Factors such as visible staff and lighting were suggested as elements that would improve safety, however the research has emphasised that it is often others behaviour that was the issue.</p>

³ [UK Opinions and Lifestyle Survey](#)

⁴ [Experiences of women and girls on transport](#)

	<p>participants thought about safety when planning a journey which influenced routes, times travelled and avoiding certain modes.</p> <p>Furthermore, those that felt very safe across several modes was between 15-30%, much lower than those using a car (59%).</p>		
Sexual orientation	No information reviewed at present	<i>Engagement yet to be undertaken.</i>	<i>Impact of the forthcoming LTP not understood at this stage (not yet written).</i>
Marriage and civil partnership	No information reviewed at present	<i>Engagement yet to be undertaken.</i>	<i>Impact of the forthcoming LTP not understood at this stage (not yet written).</i>

Section 5 - Review of information, consultation feedback and equality analysis

Mitigation	What can you do to mitigate any negative impacts or further enhance positive impacts?
<i>Please summarise the impacts listed in section 4 and what will be done to mitigate these impacts</i>	<p>Consultation will be undertaken in early 2025 on the vision and objectives and in due course on the LTP strategy which is yet to be written.</p> <p>These consultations will help to understand the potential impact of the LTP on residents including the protected groups and help to identify any mitigation / actions in relation to the protected characteristics.</p>


Section 6 – Monitoring and review

Details of monitoring activities	The LTP will be subject to KPIs, monitoring and review. This monitoring will consider whether any negative impacts mitigation has been successful.
Date and responsible officer for the review of the EIA	<i>Please include the date of review, responsible officer role and service.</i> <i>It is recommended that the EIA be reviewed approximately 6 months after it has been signed off.</i>

Section 7 – Sign off

When you have completed your draft EIA, it should be sent to the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mailbox](#) for review.

If your EIA is approved, it must then be signed off by a senior manager within your Department (Head of Service or above).

Name	Richard Hibbert
Date	13/01/2025
Signature	

Once the EIA has been signed off, please forward a copy to the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion mailbox](#) for it to be published on the website.

For Transparency, we are committed to publishing all Equality Impact Assessments relating to public engagement.

Help and support - For support and advice please contact the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion mailbox](#)