

As a public sector organisation, we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity. In all appropriate instances we will need to carry out an equality impact assessment. These are assessments that public authorities often carry out prior to implementing a policy, with a view to ascertaining its potential impact on equality. They are not required by law, although are a way of facilitating and evidencing compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

This form:

- can be used to prompt considerations when carrying out your impact assessment
- should be completed either during the assessment process or following completion of the assessment
- should include a brief explanation of where impacts are foreseen or why you do not consider an impact arises.

How to complete an SYMCA Equality Impact Assessment form:

- Section 1 – [Initial Screening](#) needs to be carried out for ALL SYMCA Impact Assessments;
 - If after completing initial screening, there are;
 - NO FORESEEN negative impacts,
 - The change proposed does not result in the reduction of a service
 - You DO NOT need to complete a Full Impact assessment.
 - Submit initial screening and obtain signatory approvals in section 4
- Section 2 – [Full Impact Analysis](#) is to be completed where initial Screening identifies;
 - There will be Negative impacts
 - The proposed change involves the removal or reduction of a service
 - There are compliance issues

Please FULLY complete Section 2, 3, 4, and 5 (where appropriate.)

- Section 3 – [Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan](#) - provide summary Action Plan, overcoming or mitigating any impacts arising from the analysis.
- Section 4 – [Signatory Approvals](#): Please obtain relevant signatures
- Section 5 – [Supporting Evidence](#): Please attach any supporting evidence documentation such as consultation documents.

Section 1 – Initial Screening

Title of function/service /policy/procedure:	Bus Franchising Assessment
Department function it belongs to:	Transport
Lead Officer Name:	Charlie Hamilton
Executive Leadership Sponsor Name:	Pat Beijer
Assessment Team: (please list names)	Jenny Holmes Molly Axelby, Mike Thomas, Tim Taylor, External Advisors – Grant Thornton LLP and ARUP.
Is this function/service/ policy/procedure:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing

What is the current function/service/policy/procedure?

Since the Transport Act 1985, bus services in South Yorkshire have been deregulated. This means that responsibilities for the vehicles, routes, service frequencies and fares rests with private sector bus operators. Responsibility for on-street bus infrastructure such as bus stops and signage sits with the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA).

The National Bus Strategy 2021 required all Local Transport Authorities in England (LTAs) to establish an Enhanced Partnership (EP) or franchising scheme in their areas to receive long-term government funding to improve their bus networks. In April 2022, the MCA entered an Enhanced Partnership (EP) arrangement with the region's bus operators and highways operators, following the process set out in the Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Bus Services Act 2017 (the Act). This arrangement was agreed as the optimal option available at that time to strengthen the MCA's ability to develop and secure investment in the region's bus services and deliver the actions set out in the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). Concurrently, it was also agreed that the MCA would issue a notice of intention to prepare an assessment of a proposed franchising scheme and subsequently commence that assessment. This notice was given on 22 March 2022 and the franchising assessment (Franchising Assessment) has now been completed.

How is it proposed this will change? What are the proposed changes?

The bus Franchising Assessment has considered four potential franchising scheme (Franchising Scheme) options against the existing EP arrangements and an EP Plus option, which represents the potential of the current EP under increased investment.

Following completion of the Franchising Assessment, officers will recommend that the proposed Franchising Scheme be considered further by the MCA. If this recommendation is approved, the Act sets out that the next step would be for the MCA to obtain a report from an independent auditor on the Franchising Assessment.

Under a Franchising Scheme, the MCA would have strategic control of the overarching network and would therefore be able to design and specify the network, routes and service provision. The

MCA will more easily be able to specify, monitor and enforce performance standards on each route, and can set consistent fare structures and prices across South Yorkshire. It would also own and operate overarching ITS infrastructure, including ticketing systems, real time travel information, contract and procurement/performance management systems.

The MCA would also specify requirements for operators to integrate and ensure interoperability. Fleet would be operated and maintained to MCA standards, as specified in franchise contracts, with the MCA also having ownership and control over depots and fleet under certain Franchising options.

Why is this being proposed?

(e.g. policy, deliverables, changes to systems and process, service delivery offer etc)

The bus Franchising Assessment has concluded that implementing a Franchising Scheme is the best option to fulfil the MCA vision for the future bus network of South Yorkshire.

The underlying barriers to a thriving South Yorkshire bus network characterised as bus market failures suggest that the current bus market is not operating effectively. Instead, it is in a spiral of decline whereby a combination of unprofitability, lack of public funding and issues with the functioning of the bus market have led to a network that has been continuously shrinking in size and experiencing patronage decline over a sustained period of time. Therefore, the network is not effectively supporting the MCA's wider social and economic goals and is moving further away from delivering this over time.

Many residents of South Yorkshire are reliant on bus services as their main form of transport. These residents are often those most in need, including young people, people on low incomes, older people, disabled people and women. But the current bus network does not present a viable transport option for too many people, because of where the network runs, times of operation, affordability and issues of security and accessibility.

A Franchising Scheme has the potential to overcome many of these barriers and address the challenges described by providing the MCA with strategic control of the bus network in South Yorkshire, and the flexibility to make changes within a more sustainable investment model.

Will this proposal affect people with protected characteristics and if so, in which group?

<p>Age: <i>Select the level of impact below:</i> Positive impact</p>	<p>Why do you consider it will have this effect? State any evidence you have, and explain what you feel the financial/non-financial impact might be.</p> <p>DfT statistics find that the rates of bus usage are higher among older and younger populations than those of a middle age.</p> <p>Children and young people are a group with a more limited ability to travel without public transport than most other demographic groups and are one of the biggest users of bus services. A study carried out by the Government Office for Scienceⁱ found a correlation between social disadvantage and physical mobility inequalities because transport, particularly public transport can reduce access to education and training opportunities for children and young people, baking in existing inequalities. Customer segmentation research (see Appendix 1) in the region reinforced this view, with 72% of under 20s stating their bus journeys were for work or education purposes. They will benefit to a greater degree from the transport benefits of franchising as more bus services would be able to operate under a franchising model and, with the MCA monitoring operator performance against agreed performance standards, a more reliable service.</p> <p>Older people (aged 60 or over) are also a group with a more limited ability to travel without public transport than most other demographic groups. Our Bus Review found that older people are often reliant on bus services to access medical appointments and to conduct essential errands such as shopping, as well as for leisure purposes and to socialise, which is particularly important given older people are more likely to experience lonelinessⁱⁱ. The timetable and fares of the network will be set by the MCA, this means that operators will be required to provide sufficient vehicles and drivers to meet the demands of the timetable, resulting in a more reliable service as they may be incentivised / penalised for good / poor performance against the required timetable. The fare structure will be determined by the MCA providing the option of more affordable and simpler fares across the region. The benefits of the MCA controlling the frequency, timetable and fares has the potential to provide significant health, social and economic benefits to this group.</p> <p>As of December 2023, the proportion of recovery to weekly pre-Covid levels in South Yorkshire was 61% for ENCTS pass holders, 80% for fare payers and 85% for child travel. Under franchising, passenger surveys will be conducted across the network to increase the level of understanding the MCA has about its customer base with the ability to design and implement interventions and incentives to target these groups whom are travelling less.</p>
<p>Disability: <i>Select the level of impact below:</i> Positive impact</p>	<p>Why do you consider it will have this effect? State any evidence you have, and explain what you feel the financial/non-financial impact might be.</p> <p>The bus is the most commonly used form of public transport among disabled people, with disabled people less likely to have access to a car, and more likely to use bus services than non-disabled peopleⁱⁱⁱ. Notably, our Bus Services Improvement Plan identified disabled bus users as generally far less satisfied than other groups with their experience of using bus services in South Yorkshire.^{iv} Our Bus Review also uncovered that inconsistency in vehicle standards, information provision and journey experience</p>

	<p>has a disproportionate impact on passengers with mobility needs and certain disabilities^v.</p> <p>The MCA, as the single body responsible for the fleet standards, will ensure enhanced uniformity of standards to meet the specific travel needs of this group and improve their experience of bus services.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment: <i>Select the level of impact below:</i> No Impact</p>	<p>Why do you consider it will have this effect? State any evidence you have, and explain what you feel the financial/non-financial impact might be.</p> <p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Marriage or civil partnership: <i>Select the level of impact below:</i> No Impact</p>	<p>Why do you consider it will have this effect? State any evidence you have, and explain what you feel the financial/non-financial impact might be.</p> <p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Pregnancy or maternity: <i>Select the level of impact below:</i> No Impact</p>	<p>Why do you consider it will have this effect? State any evidence you have, and explain what you feel the financial/non-financial impact might be.</p> <p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Race: <i>Select the level of impact below:</i> Positive impact</p>	<p>Why do you consider it will have this effect? State any evidence you have, and explain what you feel the financial/non-financial impact might be.</p> <p>The Franchising Assessment has concluded that if the MCA implemented a Franchising Scheme more bus services would be able to operate than if the MCA continued with the status quo. The South Yorkshire Travel Survey 2022 uncovered that significantly more BAME people (80%) were recorded as a bus user (i.e. using the bus once a month) compared to the average figure (60%) across South Yorkshire. Notably, 27% of BAME people stated that they used bus 5+ days a week, while the average figure was 12%. This presents strong evidence that certain ethnic minority groups are more likely to rely on bus services to meet their transport needs. Government research suggests this is representative of various studies confirming that bus use amongst non-White groups is proportionately high and that significant benefits could be delivered to these groups if interventions can be designed to meet the needs of these communities^{vi}.</p> <p>Therefore, they will experience a greater level of transport benefits that will be delivered through franchising than average, and the MCA would be able to design specific interventions across the region tailored to supporting BAME bus users.</p>
<p>Religion or belief: <i>Select the level of impact below:</i> No Impact</p>	<p>Why do you consider it will have this effect? State any evidence you have, and explain what you feel the financial/non-financial impact might be.</p> <p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Sex (Gender):</p>	<p>Why do you consider it will have this effect? State any evidence you have, and explain what you feel the financial/non-financial impact might be.</p>

<p><i>Select the level of impact below:</i> Positive impact</p>	<p>According to National Travel Survey data^{vii}, women make significantly more bus journeys and are often reliant on buses to meet their transport needs. Our Bus Review reinforced this view, stating that poor bus services disproportionately affect women, with customer segmentation research revealing women are more likely to be less satisfied with the reliability and frequency of bus services in South Yorkshire (Appendix 1). They are also more likely to cite safety concerns as a barrier to their use – in the recent Transport Focus National Survey^{viii} over 36% of women and girls reported avoiding travelling on the bus because they do not feel safe. Furthermore, in the ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) 2022, 58% of women aged 16 to 34 years who felt unsafe using public transport alone after dark</p> <p>A consistent approach to personal safety concerns, such as CCTV standards (which will be specified by the MCA and mandated in all procurement exercises) will improve the level of safety on services. The MCA would aspire to also work closely with the Police and Crime Commissioner in South Yorkshire, in a similar way to the way Greater Manchester is doing, to reduce anti-social behaviour on their transport network.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation: <i>Select the level of impact below:</i> No Impact</p>	<p>Why do you consider it will have this effect? State any evidence you have, and explain what you feel the financial/non-financial impact might be.</p> <p>Click here to enter text.</p>

Is a FULL IMPACT ANALYSIS required?

No – There are no foreseen negative impacts.



Yes – You have identified that there are negative impacts, or a service is being removed/reduced that requires further analysis.

Please complete the Full Impact Analysis.

Please note: if this impact assessment refers to removal of a service or legal compliance issues a full impact analysis must be completed.

Assessment Summary – please provide a summary of the outcome here:

Click here to enter text.

Negative impact (please tick):	<input type="checkbox"/>	High	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium	<input type="checkbox"/>	Low
Assessor's Name:	Click here to enter text.	Signed		Date	Click here to enter a date.	
	If there are negative impacts or a removal of service identified please complete Section 2: Full Impact Analysis .					
	If there are no negative impacts identified please obtain the signatory approvals in Section 4 .					

Section 2 - Full Impact Analysis

Only complete this section if you have identified negative impacts, a service is being removed or if the impact is not clear from [Section 1: Initial Screening](#).

Proposed new /revised function/service/policy/procedure: Give further details of the arrangements being made if applicable.

Add details to the Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan ([Section 3](#))

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Consultation – Engagement is good practice and a useful tool to demonstrate that due regard has been paid.

Please indicate the consultation/engagement carried out below:

Peer research?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	Summary:
Data study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	Summary:
Statistics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	Summary:
Other research?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	Summary:

Which protected groups should be consulted with (tick all that apply) and identify numbers of people affected:

<input type="checkbox"/> Age	Number of people asked: Click here to enter text.	Number of people affected: Click here to enter text.	How are they affected? Click here to enter text.	Financial impact? Click here to enter text.
	Add in summary comments if needed: Click here to enter text.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Disability	Number of people asked: Click here to enter text.	Number of people affected: Click here to enter text.	How are they affected? Click here to enter text.	Financial impact? Click here to enter text.
	Add in summary comments if needed: Click here to enter text.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Gender Reassignment	Number of people asked: Click here to enter text.	Number of people affected: Click here to enter text.	How are they affected? Click here to enter text.	Financial impact? Click here to enter text.
	Add in summary comments if needed: Click here to enter text.			

	Add in summary comments if needed: Click here to enter text.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage or civil partnership	Number of people asked: Click here to enter text.	Number of people affected: Click here to enter text.	How are they affected? Click here to enter text.	Financial impact? Click here to enter text.
	Add in summary comments if needed: Click here to enter text.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy or Maternity	Number of people asked: Click here to enter text.	Number of people affected: Click here to enter text.	How are they affected? Click here to enter text.	Financial impact? Click here to enter text.
	Add in summary comments if needed: Click here to enter text.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Race	Number of people asked: Click here to enter text.	Number of people affected: Click here to enter text.	How are they affected? Click here to enter text.	Financial impact? Click here to enter text.
	Add in summary comments if needed: Click here to enter text.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief	Number of people asked: Click here to enter text.	Number of people affected: Click here to enter text.	How are they affected? Click here to enter text.	Financial impact? Click here to enter text.
	Add in summary comments if needed: Click here to enter text.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Sex (Gender)	Number of people asked: Click here to enter text.	Number of people affected: Click here to enter text.	How are they affected? Click here to enter text.	Financial impact? Click here to enter text.
	Add in summary comments if needed: Click here to enter text.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation	Number of people asked: Click here to enter text.	Number of people affected: Click here to enter text.	How are they affected? Click here to enter text.	Financial impact? Click here to enter text.
	Add in summary comments if needed: Click here to enter text.			
Give details of any consultation undertaken. Add resulting actions to the Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan (Section 3) Click here to enter text.				

Section 3: Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

PTAP theme it relates to: <small>Select one from the drop down:</small>	Protected group it impacts:	Impact Assessment Details:	Mitigating Action(s) identified:	Outcome(s) required:	Financial/resource implications (if applicable):	Target Date:	Person responsible for identified action(s)
Choose an item.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter a date.	Click here to enter text.
Choose an item.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter a date.	Click here to enter text.
Choose an item.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter a date.	Click here to enter text.
Choose an item.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter a date.	Click here to enter text.

Section 4: Signatory approvals

Executive Leadership Sponsor responsible for Impact Assessment:	Click here to enter text.		
Signed		Date	Click here to enter a date.



Please retain this final version as it may be required for audit purposes.

Section 5: Supporting Evidence

Please attach any supporting evidence such as consultation documents here.

- i. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/784685/future_of_mobility_access.pdf
 - ii. <https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/getmedia/2b2b8b2d-718d-485d-8c81-179535fbf335/Bus-Review-Report-June-2020.pdf>
 - iii. [UTG – Bus Sector Benefits report WEB.pdf \(urbantransportgroup.org\)](#)
 - iv. https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/SheffieldCityRegion/media/PDF-library/Transport%20pdfs/37770_Bus-Service-Improvement-Plan_FINAL.pdf
 - v. <https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/getmedia/2b2b8b2d-718d-485d-8c81-179535fbf335/Bus-Review-Report-June-2020.pdf>
 - vi. [Valuing the social impacts of public transport: final report \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
 - vii. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/nts03-modal-comparisons>
 - viii. <https://d3cez36w5wymxj.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/07160541/Women-and-girls-experiences-of-safety-on-transport-FINAL.pdf>
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Customer Segmenta