

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
APPENDIX 3 to Draft Cabinet Report

Purpose of this appendix

1. The purpose of this appendix is to provide Cabinet with further detail of the Savings Programme 2025 (SP25) proposal on **Passenger transport**, and the specific recommendations relating to this proposal for Cabinet approval as part of the overarching decision report '**Savings Programme to 2025 Revenue Savings Proposals**'.

Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet approves the following recommendations:

2. To note the outcome of the 2024 Future Services Consultation in relation to the proposals on the future of the Passenger Transport provision.
3. To note the changes to the proposals that were set out in the Future Services Consultation, as detailed within this report as a result of the responses received.
4. To approve the removal of the following County Council revenue funding totalling £587,000 as detailed within this report and based on the results of the Consultation:
 - Connect: Taxi-share services saving £157,000 per annum
 - Supported local bus services saving £262,000 per annum
 - Other passenger transport savings £168,000 per annum
5. To approve a revised approach in which both community transport and school transport are jointly commissioned and delivered together, thereby maintaining a level of service to meet the transport needs of older and disabled people whilst reducing the funding required for school transport. This would generate a further approximate saving of £500,000 per annum for the County Council.
6. That authority is delegated to the Director of Universal Services to take all necessary steps, including entering into contractual arrangements in consultation with the Head of Legal Services, and fulfilling procurement requirements, to implement the proposed changes to passenger transport services as set out in this report.
7. That authority is delegated to the Director of Universal Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Highways and Waste, when implementing these decisions, to retain services or make minor variations to

the services, where it is more cost effective to do so than to withdraw the service.

Executive Summary

8. This appendix seeks to set out the background to the passenger transport savings proposals, summarise the feedback received through the consultation and propose a way forward.
9. As a result of both the feedback received within the Future Services consultation, in particular the potential impacts on older and disabled people, and work undertaken that established a link between changes proposed in the consultation and likely cost increases for the County Council's statutory school transport provision, changes have been made to proposals previously consulted on. The revised proposal, as set out in this paper, proposes lower levels of service reductions as well as the implementation of a revised approach that jointly commissions and delivers both passenger transport and school transport services. By proposing these changes, savings could be made whilst at the same time ensuring that the County Council is meeting its duties under the Transport Act 1985 to have a regard for the transport needs of older and disabled people.
10. These changes would result in the potential saving reducing from around £1.7m to £1.087m. £0.587m of this would be achieved through reductions to passenger transport services. The remaining £0.5m is expected to be achieved as a saving across the County Council through the implementation of the revised approach to jointly commission and delivers both passenger transport and school transport services. The table below sets out how the revised £1.087m would be made;

Area of Saving	Original options consulted on (range of values of around)	Revised Saving Proposal
Supported Local Bus	£ 800,000	£ 262,000
Community Transport: Connect Dial-a-Ride	£ 500,000	£ 3,000
Community Transport: Connect Group Hire	£ 142,000	£ -
Enhancements to the Concessionary Travel Scheme	£ 75,000	£ 75,000
Wheels to Work Scheme	£ 85,000	£ 85,000
Taxishare Schemes	£ 157,000	£ 157,000
Bus Stop Infrastructure	£ 5,000	£ 5,000
Jointly commissioned passenger and school transport	0	500,000
Total	£ 1,764,000	£ 1,087,000

11. The County Council currently spends around £2.7m per year through passenger transport budgets directly supporting community transport and

supported local bus services (including £1.1m funded by Bus Services Operators Grant but excluding contributions from developer and other Local Authorities).

12. The Transport Act 1985 (“the Act”) requires the County Council to identify passenger transport services which are not provided by the third party operators. It has a duty to provide those that it considers appropriate, to meet a passenger transport need that otherwise would not be met. The Act does not set out the level of provision required nor does it require the County Council to subsidise every need that is not met by commercial providers. When fulfilling this function, the Act states that the County Council must pay specific regard to the transport needs of older and disabled people. The Act places a further duty upon the County Council when incurring expenditure for the provision of public passenger transport services to cooperate with authorities responsible for education and social services functions, so as to secure the best value for money from their expenditure on public passenger transport.
13. The Transport Act 2000 addresses information provision and requires the County Council to implement the mandatory travel concession as set out in the Transport Act 2000, amended by the Concessionary Bus Travel Act 2007.
14. Following a review of the legal obligations the County Council has in terms of passenger transport provision, and to enable the County Council to provide an appropriate service, proposals were drawn up to make savings of £1.7m against the £2.7m that the County Council currently spends on passenger transport services. These proposed savings would come from the discretionary services the County Council funds.
15. The remaining £1.068m funding available for passenger transport services comes from the Bus Services Operators Grant (BSOG). This is a ringfenced government fund which can only be spent on providing bus or community transport services. As part of the consultation, respondents were asked their opinion on how the County Council should prioritise this funding. This feedback can be found from paragraph 42 of this report.
16. Between 8 January and 31 March 2024, the County Council consulted on the Passenger Transport proposals as part of the County Council’s wider Future Services Consultation. 5,518 responses were received in response to the Passenger Transport proposals.
17. Within the Future Services Consultation, proposals for savings on Passenger Transport services included;
 - withdrawing all Hampshire County Council funding (around £900,000) from the following services:
 - Connect: Dial-a-Ride and Call & Go
 - Connect: Taxi-shares
 - Connect: Minibus Group Hire Services
 - Wheels to Work

- withdrawing around £800,000 of Hampshire County Council funding for supported local bus services.
 - withdrawing around £75,000 of additional funding for the Concessionary Travel Scheme. This would mean that the County Council does not provide any additional entitlements above those prescribed by the national scheme. NB: central Government is currently consulting and may change the legal obligations for the English National Concessionary Scheme. This may mean that the County Council will need to reconsider the statutory requirements in due course, if the obligations do subsequently change.
18. The proposals focussed on County Council spend only. All of the Connect: Dial-a-Ride and Call & Go services, a small portion of the Minibus Group Hire Services and Wheels to Work are jointly funded by Other Local Authorities. These are Borough, City, District, Parish and Town Councils in the relevant operating areas of the services. This report does not comment on what would happen to this partner funding should a decision be made for the County Council to withdraw its funding as this is a decision for Other Local Authorities to make.
19. Respondents to the consultation particularly identified people who were older, had disabilities or lived in rural areas as those who would be most impacted by the original savings proposals. The reductions in the savings over the original proposals mean that, where possible, the impact would be significantly lower on these groups of people.

Contextual information

20. The vast majority of bus journeys in Hampshire, over 90%, are provided commercially. This means that they are funded through the revenue collected on buses. The services funded by the County Council are those that do not have sufficient numbers of passengers travelling to generate enough income to cover their operating costs and therefore would not otherwise be provided by Hampshire's bus operators as they would run at a commercial loss.
21. There are 58 bus service routes in Hampshire supported financially by the County Council as listed in sub-appendix A. The budget for these services is currently around £800,000 per annum. In addition, the County Council utilises BSOG to further subsidise the bus network, and contracts a further 35 services through funding received from other sources such as housing developers, other local authorities and the school transport budget.
22. Both the £1.1m BSOG funding, and the funding from other sources are outside of the scope of this savings proposal and will continue to be spent on passenger transport services for as long as they are available.
23. The County Council also provides funding for the following community transport services:
- Connect: Dial-a-Ride and Call and Go. A bookable door-to-door accessible transport service which provides an alternative to a bus network for individuals who cannot use conventional bus services. These services are

jointly funded by the County Council and borough, district, city, town and parish partners.

- Connect: Group Hire Services. Group Hire Services allow local voluntary and community groups, schools and local councils to hire fully accessible minibuses for regular or one-off trips, with or without a driver. These operate across all the districts of Hampshire and the schemes in New Forest, Eastleigh, Test Valley and East Hampshire also receive funding from the relevant borough and district Councils.
 - Wheels to Work. Wheels to Work is a moped loan scheme for people aged 16-25 living in the Test Valley or New Forest districts, or 16 and over who live in Winchester or East Hampshire districts who do not have access to their own private or public transport and need to get to work, training, apprenticeship or an interview. New Forest and East Hampshire District Councils contribute funding to this scheme for their areas.
 - Connect Taxishares. Hampshire’s network of Taxishare Services have predominately replaced bus services which were no longer economical to fund. These services run to a timetable, just like a bus, but a taxi or private hire vehicle collects the passenger once a booking has been made. The service only runs if someone books to travel. The majority of taxishares are solely funded by the County Council with some contributions from Basingstoke and Deane and Eastleigh Borough Councils.
24. The County Council has a legal duty to identify passenger transport services that it considers appropriate to secure, and which otherwise would not be met. Any areas of spend which are determined to be discretionary are being put forward as a savings proposal.
25. Areas of public transport that the County Council currently supports include:

Area	Hampshire County Council Budget provision
Supported Local Bus	£800,000
Community Transport: Connect Dial-a-Ride	£500,000
Community Transport: Connect Group Hire	£142,000
Connect Taxi-share Services	£157,000
Community Transport: Wheels 2 Work	£85,000
The Concessionary Travel Scheme (CTS)	£11.2m of which £75,000 is discretionary

Please note: these figures are taken from 2023/24 budgets to ensure consistency with figures declared within the consultation. These have since been inflated within 2024/25 budgets.

26. The government's English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENTCS) sets out the scheme that Travel Concession Authorities (TCA) must legally provide. The scheme sets out that TCA's such as Hampshire County Council must offer free bus passes to eligible older and disabled people and that those people are entitled to;
 - a) Free travel between 9:30am and 11pm Monday to Friday
 - b) Free travel all day at weekends.
27. The £11.2million budget for the ENTCS in Hampshire covers the Concessionary Travel provision detailed above and additional discretionary enhancements costing the County Council a total of £75,000 per year:
 - a) provision of free all-day travel for those people who hold a disabled persons bus pass Monday to Friday;
 - b) provision of a companion pass for those people who hold a disabled persons bus pass and cannot travel unaccompanied;
 - c) provision of free travel on routes which have an infrequent service, where there is a journey between 9am and 9.29am and then no subsequent journey until after 10:30am for holders of an Older Person's Pass.

Legal, financial and performance implications

28. The Transport Act 1985 requires the County Council to identify public passenger transport services which are not provided by the commercial providers. The Act requires the County Council to determine which passenger transport needs would not be met otherwise than by its provision. It must then secure those services that it considers appropriate to secure. The Act does not set out the level of support required, nor does it require the County Council to subsidise every need that is not met by commercial providers. When fulfilling this function, the Act states that the County Council must pay specific regard to the transport needs of older and disabled people. The Act places a further duty upon the County Council when incurring expenditure for the provision of public passenger transport services. This requires the County Council to cooperate with authorities responsible for education and social services functions so as to secure the best value for money from their expenditure on public passenger transport.
29. The Transport Act 2000 addresses information provision and requires the County Council to implement the mandatory travel concession as set out in the Transport Act 2000, amended by the Concessionary Bus Travel Act 2007.
30. Through these proposals, the County Council would continue to secure the passenger transport services that it considers appropriate to secure, taking into account the difficult financial position, the level of use of the services provided and the alternative provision that would be available.
31. This report proposes that the County Council continues to fund a network of supported local bus services and continues to provide a level of community transport thus having regard to the transport needs of older and disabled people.

32. The proposals with regards to the Concessionary Travel Scheme in Hampshire would still enable the County Council to meet the statutory requirements set out in both the Transport Act 2000 and Concessionary Bus Travel Act 2007.
33. The proposed new approach for Community Transport and the focus on where supported local bus provides best value for the Council's school transport provision further meet the duties placed upon the Council in the Act.
34. The County Council has a duty under the National Parks and Countryside Act 1949 (as amended by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023). This requires the County Council to seek to further the purposes of the National Park when considering proposals that relate to, or affect, land within a National Park. In this instance, the relevant purposes are of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the areas and of promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of those areas by the public.
35. The County Council recognises its duty in respect of the National Parks and continues to seek to further their relevant purposes through its services. The amended proposals seek to minimise the impact on the national parks. In addition, across the Highways service, there are other work programmes contributing to further its duty, for example investigations into low carbon solutions across the Highways which will support a future net zero with nature. Another example includes Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans including one along the waterside area of the New Forest and another in Winchester contributing to further the purposes of the South Downs National Park.

Future Services Consultation - Approach

36. This was one of 13 proposals included within the 'Future Services Consultation', which sought to understand the potential impacts of each proposal in more detail, to consult on the potential options being considered, and to clarify whether there could be other ways to deliver the savings.
37. An overview of the approach to the Future Services Consultation is set out within paragraphs 17 to 24 of the draft Cabinet report, including the approach taken to communicating and promoting the consultation (informed by a stakeholder analysis) to invite respondents to share their views on some or all of the proposals.
38. In addition to the promotional activities set out within the draft Cabinet report, the following proposal-specific promotion was undertaken;

Three Passenger Transport Forums were held

- Two online and one in person event
- Invites were sent out to a wide range of stakeholders with an interest in passenger transport including transport operators, Councillors, parishes, schools, colleges, charities, voluntary groups, environmental groups, disability groups, health organisations and more.

- Forums were attended by over 110 stakeholders.

Community Transport User Events

- Six events organised around the County for users of supported community transport services
- Over 100 passengers attended

Posters were placed on vehicles which operated services that could be impacted by the proposals.

The consultation was advertised on the County Council's Real Time Passenger Information Displays where this was technologically possible.

Future Services Consultation – Feedback

39. Broadly, respondents to the consultation disagreed with the proposals set out with between 21% and 26% of respondents disagreeing and between 46% and 49% strongly disagreeing giving a total percentage of disagreement between 68% and 76%.
40. Respondents displayed a high level of concern about the impacts that these proposals would have on the people who rely on the services making particular reference to the impacts on:
 - Older People
 - People with disabilities
 - Those who live in rural areas
 - Isolation and worsening mental health
 - Vulnerable people.
41. 27% of respondents who currently use these services stated that they would not be able to travel if the service was withdrawn with a further 23% stating that they would have no choice other to rely on lifts from friends, family and acquaintances.
42. When asked how BSOG funding should be used if the County Council were to continue to receive this, respondents prioritised the following;
 - Providing services in rural areas (34%)
 - Providing services for vulnerable people (34%)
 - Providing services used by the most people (25%)
43. The table below sets out the key themes and concerns that were raised throughout the consultation process and how the County Council proposes to address these concerns.

Key themes/concerns from consultation	Response from Hampshire County Council
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Concerns over increased isolation and poor mental health particularly in older and disabled people.	As set out in the report, when fulfilling the requirements set out in the Transport Act 1985, function, the Act states that the County Council must pay specific regard to the transport needs of older and disabled people. This need has been borne out further in the results of the consultation. In response to this, and how respondents prioritised the future use of BSOG, the proposals in this report retain as many supported local bus services as is possible and maintain some level of community transport in each borough or district of Hampshire. This is designed to mitigate the impact over isolation and worsening mental health as far as is possible within the funding available.
Impact on rural service users	The vast majority of the County Council's existing supported local bus services are in rural areas. By proposing to maintain as much of this network as is possible, the County Council is protecting the needs of rural bus users as far as is affordable. In the few areas that would be losing a supported local bus service, passengers would retain the alternative option of community transport.
Impact on younger people who are not able to access bus services	Again, the retention of the majority of the existing supported local bus network lessens the impact on Hampshire's younger people. Whilst the Wheels to Work scheme that is proposed to be withdrawn provides excellent value to those who use it, the scheme only helps very small numbers of younger people.
Environmental impact with increased car usage	The vast majority of bus services are provided commercially with no support from the County Council. This means that these savings would have no impact on how the vast majority of how Hampshire's bus users travel. For the minority who use the supported local buses, the proposal is to retain as much of the network as is possible.
Suggestion to use volunteers to provide a public transport service	The County Council already contracts community transport services using volunteers and would certainly look to expand on this where possible. It would be challenging to operate supported local bus services using volunteers due to the qualifications that bus drivers must hold and maintain.
Reducing rather than removing the services	This report proposes to reduce rather than remove all funding.
Making bus passes means tested	Currently, charging for either the provision or the use of a bus is prohibited by law and it would require a change in legislation for the County Council to be able to do this.
Encourage increased service use, making bus operators and drivers accountable	Operators of County Council funded passenger transport services are under contract with the County Council. These contracts set out the requirements on operators. Operators retain any fare revenue they collect on these services which provides a financial incentive to increase patronage.
Charging extra for existing services	The amount the County Council would need to increase charges by to maintain all existing services at the existing levels would be simply unaffordable for passengers.
Increased costs to statutory services	The link between the funding for these services and Adults Health and Care budgets are explored later in this report. Where possible,

e.g Adults Health and Care and the NHS.	the County Council works closely with NHS colleagues and this will continue with the aim of mitigating impacts as far as is possible.
Inequality divide (wealthier people are more likely to enjoy better health)	The County Council is aware that a high proportion of service users have lower income, and this report is proposing retaining as many of the passenger transport services currently provided as possible.
Concern the County Council will not be fulfilling its legal duties	This point is addressed throughout this report. The County Council has reviewed its legal responsibilities and considers that it would be continuing to meet its legal duties under the approach set out within this report.
Has enough been done to make efficiencies before reducing front line services?	The County Council has been making efficiencies to the way it operates since 2010 and by 2025, there are very few remaining areas in which significant efficiencies can be made whilst also meeting statutory obligations.

44. A petition was also received as part of this process, with 58 signatures, focussing on the 67 bus service between Petersfield and Winchester. Full consideration was given to the points raised within this petition, in particular the impacts on older and disabled people who live in rural communities, when drawing up the recommendations detailed within this report.
45. A more detailed summary of the responses to the consultation is shown in sub-appendix B.

Correlation Between Passenger Transport Spend and Other Budgets Within the Council

46. At the outset of the Future Savings Consultation, the County Council committed to reviewing the potential impacts of these proposals on both the County Council's school transport and Adults' Health and Care services to understand if any reduction in the passenger transport budget could result in a corresponding increase in the cost of providing the statutory aspects of these services.
47. This work has now been completed and has established a clear link between the supported local bus network and community transport services funded by the County Council and the school transport provision. In many cases the same vehicle and driver(s) are used to supply both services.
48. This means that in many cases, withdrawing a supported local bus or community transport service would have the effect of increasing the cost to Hampshire County Council of school transport by more than the saving that would be generated by these proposals.
49. In these instances, withdrawing these services would not generate a saving overall for the County Council and therefore this report proposes that the supported local bus and community transport services which have a direct link to school transport provision services are retained.

50. A direct and immediate link between supported local bus and community transport services and Adults' Health and Care services is not so apparent. Whilst it is clear removal of community transport services would very likely reduce independence and increase social isolation for some individuals, as born out in the feedback received in the consultation, it is unlikely to impact social care costs in at least the short term. Even where the users of community transport services are existing Adults' Health and Care clients, analysing sample data showed that the support they currently receive is typically low level.
51. Therefore, on balance and with due regard to the Council's current financial position, sufficient evidence was not found that making these savings would lead to an immediate net increase in Adult social care costs.
52. The Transport Act 1985 states that the County Council must pay specific regard to the needs of older and disabled people. Despite not being able to establish an immediate link between passenger transport service reductions and increased costs to Adults' Health and Care budgets, the impacts of service reductions on older and disabled people were made particularly clear in the responses to the consultation. These responses were taken into account in forming a proposal for a revised community transport model set out below, and have been considered in more detail within this report, within the accompanying Equalities Impact Assessment and when proposing the next steps.

Revised Community Transport Approach

53. Community Transport services are operated by Councils of Voluntary Services or CVS'. Should the County Council remove the Passenger Transport funding of £651,000 per annum that it provides to Hampshire's CVS' for the provision of community transport services, it is very unlikely that these organisations would be able to continue to provide the existing transport services.
54. One potential way to ensure the continuation of community transport services is to combine these services with school transport provision. This would create an efficient and effective transport system whilst being mindful of the public purse.
55. School transport is a statutory function of the County Council for those children who are eligible. By combining these services, detailed analysis has shown that this approach could provide best value for the County Council whilst at the same time meeting the County Council's duties under the Act to have a regard for the transport needs of older and disabled people.
56. This approach would be both beneficial to residents and ensure that the County Council has listened to the consultation feedback. It would enable the County Council to continue to provide the services that it considers it appropriate to secure, for passenger transport needs that otherwise would not be met.
57. Hampshire County Council and its funding partners fully own 17 minibuses and own a share in a further 7 minibuses.

58. Currently, these vehicles are contractually obliged to provide community transport services, predominately Connect: Dial a Ride/Call & Go and Fleet Link services, all day.
59. In addition, the CVS' who provide these community transport services own a further 32 minibuses which they use to provide a wide range of community based and contract activity. Many of these CVS' provide school transport contracts with their vehicles and analysis has demonstrated that this provides excellent value for money against the costs of alternative provision by commercial operators.
60. It is proposed that the majority of transport for community transport services are retained and the approach is adapted so that, where practical, Dial a Ride / Call & Go services are procured around a school run. This would mean that community transport services would provide a minimum of 8 further school transport contracts by repurposing 8 vehicles which are currently contracted to operate at school times.
61. At the times in between operating a school contract, for example, 09:00 and 14:30, it is proposed that these schemes would provide traditional community transport services.
62. Across all respondent groups, there were many comments within the Future Services Consultation that it would be better for services to be reduced rather than withdrawn. This proposed revised approach is in line with these suggestions.
63. By moving to this proposed approach, analysis suggests that this would save the County Council £500,000 each year.
64. In order to achieve maximum efficiency of the revised approach, it is proposed that the County Council continues to support the new software currently being piloted by community transport operators which will provide data in order to identify further efficiencies that the sector could potentially provide.
65. In the early 2000's, a bespoke software system for community transport operators to book journeys and share data reports with funders was developed. This same software is still being used and is no longer fit for purpose.
66. The County Council and existing community transport operators met with a wide range of software developers and spoke with other local authorities who commission similar services. This enabled the County Council to design a specification for the provision of revised software.
67. A tendering exercise was carried out for the provision of this software by Portsmouth City Council as part of the Solent Transport Future Transport Zone (FTZ) project. FTZ has funded a pilot of this software which was implemented in September 2024 and has enabled the County Council and community transport operators to trial the new system at zero cost.
68. For the duration of this pilot, up to June 2026, the costs of this software will be met by the Future Transport Zone funding or, if this is no longer available, a government grant ringfenced for use on community transport. During the pilot,

the efficacy of the software will be reviewed and if continued long term, the cost will be met by Community Transport operators.

69. This revised software enables the County Council to have live access to utilisation data of Community Transport schemes enabling the Council to take full advantages of opportunities and efficiencies in real time.
70. This same software will be used in the County Council's Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) pilot in Andover. DRT services are operated by a smaller vehicle with passengers booking by app, or telephone, prior to making their journey. The software allows for maximum vehicle utilisation over large geographical areas which would be challenging to serve by conventional bus.

Community Transport Services

Wheels to Work

71. It is proposed that the funding for the Wheels to Work Scheme is withdrawn. This would generate savings of £85,000 each year.
72. The Wheels to Work Moped Loan Scheme provides short term, affordable, moped loans to young people to help them access employment and training opportunities with the aim that, by the end of the moped loan period, users will secure employment and their own transport arrangements. The scheme currently runs in East Hampshire, New Forest, Test Valley, and Winchester district areas with New Forest District Council & East Hampshire District Council contributing towards the running of the scheme in their respective areas.
73. The current fleet is made up of 24 mopeds, of which 8 are electric. There are currently 19 hirers using the scheme. There was a total of 34 hirers that benefitted from using the scheme in 22/23.
74. East Hampshire and New Forest District Councils provide £23,000pa funding towards the provision of this service. This report only looks at the contributions made by Hampshire County Council and does not comment on what would happen to this partner funding should a decision be made for the County Council to withdraw its funding as this is a decision for other local authorities to make and outside the control of the County Council
75. The County Council would work with the above authorities to understand the potential of them stepping in to provide more funding to reduce the impact of this proposed saving.
76. 18 responses from Wheels to Work service users were received in the consultation. 9 of these were aged 16-24. Overall, 12 identified as male and 4 as female. 2 respondents declared that they had health or disability issues that do not impact day-to-day activities. 17 users disagreed with the proposal (16 strongly disagreed) and 1 user neither agreed nor disagreed. 13 users said that they would not make the journey if the service was removed and 3 users were not sure what they would do. 9 users commented on the impact of this proposal. Alternative suggestions involved encouraging increased service use and making cuts/savings elsewhere.

77. In order to mitigate some of the impacts of the withdrawal of County Council funding, discussions would be held with both the operator of the service, Communities First, and County Council's funding partners to understand what may be possible through utilising the existing assets, mopeds, used to operate the scheme. If there is a clear business case for some scale of scheme to continue and all parties are agreeable, it is proposed that the ownership of the mopeds are transferred to the operator of Wheels to Work to give best opportunity for continuation of scheme. This transfer has an estimated total value of £32,000 to the Council and its funding partners.
78. It is proposed that the County Council enter into a legal agreement with the operator of Wheels to Work to ensure that if the scheme folds within a twelve month period from April 2025, the mopeds are returned to the Council to be sold with the income generated split between any funding partners.

Connect: Dial a Ride/Call & Go and Fleet Link

79. It is proposed that the Hampshire County Council funding towards Connect: Dial a Ride/Call & Go and Fleet Link is retained and a new approach incorporating school transport services within community transport is implemented where operationally possible.
80. It is proposed that where this is not operationally possible, due to lack of vehicle availability, these services are withdrawn. This would impact two services, Yateley Connect and Denmead Connect and save the County Council £3,000 each year.
81. Connect: Dial a Ride / Call & Go and Fleet Link are bookable door-to-door accessible transport service providing an alternative to a bus network for individuals who meet one or more of the below criteria:
- They find it difficult to use or access public bus services.
 - They live more than 400 metres from an available bus service/stop.
 - They have no access to a car and there is no bus service when they need to travel.
82. Passengers do not need to be registered disabled, but need to live in the service area. These services cost the County Council around £500,000 per year. In 2022/23, around 54,000 individual trips were undertaken on these services. Currently users pay £6 for a local return journey and £7 for a longer return journey.
83. These services are jointly funded by other local authority funding partners who are the relevant borough, city, district, parish and town councils for each scheme. Currently the County Council receives around £475,000 per year from these partners to fund the schemes.
84. This report only looks at the contributions made by Hampshire County Council and does not comment on what could happen to this partner funding as this is a decision for other local authorities to make and outside the control of the County Council.

85. The County Council would work with its other local authority funding partners to understand the potential of them stepping in to provide more funding to reduce the impact of the proposed saving outlined in this report.
86. 145 responses to these proposals were received from users of the Connect: Dial a Ride services. 63% of these were over the age of 65 (24% 85 or over). Overall 65% of respondents selected that they had health or disability issues that impacted day-to-day activities a little or a lot (46% a lot). 62% of respondents were female and 23% were male. Of 142 who responded to the question, 96% disagreed with the proposal whilst 1% agreed. If the service wasn't available 56% said they would not make the journey with 19% relying on lifts (of 144 respondents). 86 comments were received on potential impacts with 57% referencing isolation and poor mental health, 36% on the impact on older people, and 30% on those with disabilities and mobility issues. 9 users suggested charging extra for existing services.
87. 54 responses to these proposals were received from Call and Go service users. 34 (63%) of these were over the age of 65, with 28 (52%) of overall respondents with health or disability issues that impact day-to-day activities a little or a lot (24% a lot). 29 (54%) of overall responses were from females and 18 (33%) from males. 49 (92%) users disagreed with the proposal (42 (79%) of these strongly disagreed) and 2 (4%) agreed. 30 users said they would not make the journey if the service was unavailable, with 10 stating they would rely on lifts. 30 comments were received on potential impacts and most referenced impact on isolation and poor mental health (20) and the impact on older people (13). Of the 5 that made suggestions most mentioned charging extra for existing services but also mentioned encouraging increased service use, using an alternative service provision and using smaller buses.
88. It is proposed that the revised community transport approach would see, where operationally possible, community transport service integrated with a school transport service for children who are eligible for school transport. This would see many Connect vehicles operating a closed service just for school children in the morning and afternoon to enable school pick up and drop off journeys to be made, and traditional Connect: Dial a Ride/Call & Go and Fleet Link services between these school journeys.
89. If implemented this would ensure that an element of Connect: Dial a Ride/Call & Go and Fleet Link service would continue. Given the impact that respondents to the consultation told the County Council withdrawing services would have, this ensures that, for the most part, the most vulnerable people within Hampshire are still able to make a journey.
90. This proposal is in line with how respondents to the consultation prioritised the use of government grant funding i.e. on rural areas and vulnerable people. In the majority of Hampshire, the Connect: Dial a Ride/Call & Go and Fleet Link cover whole boroughs and districts and those which do not, namely Test Valley and New Forest, still provide links for rural communities.
91. Existing contracts for Connect: Dial a Ride/Call & Go and Fleet Link services expire in March 2025. It is proposed that new contracts are tendered using

this revised approach to commence as soon as is operationally achievable after April 2025.

92. The two services which this report proposes are withdrawn, Denmead Connect and Yateley Connect, are the smaller of the Community Transport schemes with the lowest usage transporting a combined average of around 13 passengers each time they operate. The County Council does not consider it appropriate to continue to secure these services given the County Council's financial position and the infrequency of the journeys provided (once a week or less). If this proposal is approved, the County Council will work closely with the operators and any funding partners for these schemes to understand what, if any, mitigations could be made. Passengers who currently use Denmead Connect would be able to use Winchester Connect as an alternative, albeit they would not be able to travel to the same destinations. The Connect scheme in Yateley is only a small proportion of the services that Yelabus, the operator provide. Yelabus also received direct funding from Yateley Town Council which is outside of the scope of this report.

Connect: Minibus Group Hire

93. It is proposed that the Hampshire County Council funding towards Connect: Minibus Group Hire is retained and a new approach is implemented.
94. Minibus Group Hire Services allow local voluntary and community groups, schools and local councils to hire fully accessible minibuses for regular or one-off trips, with or without a driver. These operate across all the districts of Hampshire and receive £142,000 in support from the County Council each year. In 2022/23, these vehicles were hired around 5,500 times, with around 59,000 individual trips undertaken on these services. Groups split the cost of the transport between the passengers travelling.
95. In East Hampshire, Eastleigh, New Forest and Test Valley, these schemes receive partner funding from the relevant Borough or District Council. Currently the County Council receives around £28,000 per year from these partners to fund the schemes.
96. This report only looks at the contributions made by Hampshire County Council and does not comment on what could happen to this partner funding as this is a decision for Other Local Authorities to make and outside the control of the County Council.
97. 66 responses to these proposals were received from Minibus group hire service users. The age of respondents varied but 58% of responses were received from those over 65. 16% were 55-64 and 16% were under 54 years of age. 56% selected their gender as female, and 31% as male. 53% noted that they had a health or disability issue that impacted their day-to-day activities a little or a lot. Of 64 who responded to the question, 59 (92%) disagreed with the proposal (with 53 strongly disagreeing), and 3 (5%) agreed. If the service was unavailable, of the 64 that responded, 37 (58%) said they would not make the journey. 31 users included comments on potential impacts raising concerns about isolation and poor mental health (16), and the potential impact on those with disability and mobility issues (11).

Out of the 7 users that comments on alternative suggestion, 3 of these mentioned encouraging increased service use.

98. It is proposed that the revised community transport approach would see, where operationally possible, community transport service integrated with a school transport service for children who are eligible for school transport. Whilst the same vehicles and drivers would be used to provide these services, in the vast majority of cases, the two would remain distinct and so community transport users and school children would not travel together. This is to ensure that there would be enough spaces on the vehicle for the eligible children.
99. If implemented this would ensure that an element of the Connect: Minibus Group Hire service would continue. Again, this ensures that the most vulnerable people within Hampshire are still able to make a journey which is in line with how respondents to the consultation prioritised the use of government grant funding i.e. on rural areas and vulnerable people. These schemes operate Borough/ City/District Council area wide and therefore provide a service for residents of rural and urban areas alike.
100. Existing contracts for Connect: Minibus Group Hire services expire in March 2025. It is proposed that new contracts are tendered using this revised approach to commence as soon as is operationally achievable after April 2025.

Connect: Taxi-shares

101. It is proposed that the funding the County Council provides for Connect: Taxi-shares is withdrawn. This would generate savings of £157,000pa.
102. Connect: Taxi share services run to a timetable, just like a bus, but a taxi or private hire vehicle collects the passenger once a booking has been made. The service only runs if someone books to travel. Passengers are collected from their home address or their nearest bus stop and taken to a designated drop-off point. Most services are available to anyone within the service operating area, though for some services passengers need to meet extra criteria. In 2022/23, around 18,000 individual trips were made on Connect: Taxi-shares across the County.
103. 50 responses from the users of Taxi-shares were received in the consultation. 49% were aged over 65+ and 33% were aged 45-64. 61% selected gender female and 31% as male. 43% selected that they had a health or disability issue that impacted day-to-day activities a little or a lot. 40 disagreed with the removal of the scheme (31 strongly disagreed), with 4 in agreement. 19 users (40%) said they would not make the journey if the service was unavailable and 13 (27%) would rely on lifts. 32 users commented on potential impacts focused on isolation and poor mental health (18), on those with disability/mental health issues (13) and older people (12). 7 users suggested charging extra for existing services.
104. The proposal set out in this report to continue with some community transport provision means that if the decision is made to cease funding the

Taxi-share services, the majority of these passengers will have the option to use their local community transport scheme.

105. This option would increase the costs to the individual passengers with fares going from £2 per return journey to an average fare of around £7 return. The alternative option would be that the taxi-shares were retained but passengers covered the full costs of their journey. If this option was proposed, passengers see a return fare increase from £2 return to somewhere between £13.24 and £460.66. This option has been discounted due to its unaffordability. The County Council would work with lower tier authorities in Hampshire to understand the potential of them contributing funding to some of the Connect: Taxishares in order to reduce the impact on service users.

Supported Local bus services

106. It is proposed that where a direct link is established between the reduction in funding towards supported local bus services and an increase in costs for the statutory provision of school transport, these services are retained.
107. It is proposed that where no link can be found between the costs of supported local bus services and the cost of the statutory provision of school transport, supported local bus services are withdrawn. This would impact ten services and save the County Council approximately £262,000 per annum.
108. A full breakdown of the services impacted can be found in the appendix of this report.
109. There are 58 bus service routes in Hampshire supported financially by the County Council. These are usually routes which do not have enough passengers travelling on them to cover the costs of providing them, most of which are in rural or semi-rural locations. The funding from the Council may supports them at certain times of the day, or for part of the route.
110. The budget for these services is currently around £800,000 per annum. In addition, the County Council utilises BSOG to further subsidise the supported local bus network and contracts a further 35 services through funding received from other sources such as housing developers, other local authorities and the school transport budget.
111. Combined, these 93 services provide around 9% of bus journeys in Hampshire.
112. This report only looks at the contributions made by Hampshire County Council and does not comment on what could happen to this partner funding should a decision be made for the County Council to withdraw its funding as this is a decision for other local authorities to make and outside the control of the County Council
113. 1397 responses from users of supported local bus services were received in the consultation. 90% disagreed overall (70% strongly disagreeing) and 5% agreed overall with the proposals to withdraw around £800,000 of County Council funding for supported local bus services (of 1339 responses). If their service was not available (of 1375 responses), 40% said they would travel by private vehicle (car/motorcycle), 30% would not make the journey and 23%

would rely on a lift. 464 comments were received from users on the potential impact of removing the funding raising concerns for isolation and poor mental health (35%), the impact on older people (31%) and the impact on rural service users (27%). Of the 194 users that commented with suggested alternatives, 32% mentioned encouraging increased service use. Other suggestions included charging extra for existing services (19%), encouraging reduced car usage (15%), using an alternative model of service provision (13%) and reducing rather than removing services (11%).

114. By ensuring that, where possible the supported local bus network provides maximum efficiencies towards the Council's statutory responsibility for school transport, the vast majority of the Council's supported local bus network would remain. This is further supported by the BSOG funding which the majority of consultation respondents prioritised as being used on services that serve vulnerable people and rural areas.
115. Of the ten services this report proposes that funding is withdrawn from, two (X7R and 46) are services that are predominately commercial and where the County Council only funds a contribution. These services may be able to continue in some form without County Council funding. The 44 service is also funded by Eastleigh Borough and Chandlers Ford Parish Council. The detail of the funding towards the ten services that would be removed can be found in the table below:

Service	Funding Contribution	Does funding cover all or part of service?
Overton Area Service 74	£14,114	All
61 – Eastleigh to Winchester	£37,293	All
44 Hilingbury to Chandlers Ford/Eastleigh	£7,400	Part
49 Damerham to Salisbury	£2,150	All
20 Fareham to Wickham	£61,912	All
X7R – Romsey-Sherfield English – Salisbury	£16,695	Part
7/7A: Andover to Newbury/Newbury to Burghclere	£54,407	All
Andover Villages C3, C4,C5,C6,C8	£30,000	All
Wednesday service – Soberton – Petersfield	£4,196	All
46 Winchester – Valley Park – North Baddesley	£23,634	Part

116. The County Council would work with the lower tier authorities within each of the areas that the services proposed for withdrawal operate in to understand the potential of them making a financial contribution to reduce the impact of these savings on passengers.
117. The Andover Villages service, which is proposed to be withdrawn, would be included in the County Council's DRT service plans, utilising the government's

Bus Service Improvement Plan Plus funding. Planning for this pilot service is underway and it is likely to be implemented prior to April 2025. If this is implemented, these passengers would continue to be able to travel.

118. Passengers who use the remaining services which the County Council proposes to withdraw would be able to travel using the repurposed community transport services proposed within this report.

Enhancements to the Concessionary Travel Scheme in Hampshire.

119. It is proposed that the enhancements to the concessionary travel scheme in Hampshire are withdrawn saving £75,000 each year.
120. The County Council administers the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme in Hampshire. This is where bus operators receive reimbursement for every person who travels with a bus pass. This scheme offers free travel between 9.30am and 11pm Monday to Friday and all day at the weekend. This is a statutory scheme and so not in the scope of these savings.
121. It is proposed that the savings are made in the areas in which the County Council goes beyond the legal requirement to allow:
- Holders of a disabled person's bus pass free travel before 9.30am and after 11pm, Monday to Friday, costing the County Council around £70,000 each year
 - Holders of a disabled person's bus pass the option to apply for a companion pass if they cannot travel alone, allowing free travel for their companion and costing the County Council around £3,000 each year
 - Holders of an older person's bus pass travelling on eligible infrequent services to use their bus pass between 9am and 9.30am, costing the County Council around £1,500 each year.
122. There were 2119 responses to these proposals received from respondents who would be most likely to be, or become, a holder of a bus pass (those that were aged 65+ or where their activities were limited by health or disability). 1088 of these respondents were female and 937 were male.
123. Of the 2034 that responded to this question, 75% disagreed with the proposal (55% strongly disagreed) and 16% agreed. For bus service users (1203 respondents) disagreement rose to 81% (64% strongly), whilst 12% agreed, and for supported bus service users (628 respondents) 81% disagreed and 10% agreed. For those whose activities were limited by health or disability, 79% disagreed overall (60% strongly) whilst 12% agreed to this proposal, and of those with a household income up to £20,000 (257 respondents) 80% disagreed and 12% agreed.
124. Of the 1331 from this group who responded to the question about alternative methods of transport, 43% would travel by private vehicle if any of these services were unavailable and 31% would not make these journeys, increasing to 49% for those with a household income of £20,000 or less.

125. There were 542 comments made by this group of respondents about impacts. 45% raised concerns about isolation and poor mental health (of those on the lowest income, this percentage was higher at 57%), 39% mentioned the impact on older people, 26% the impact on rural service users and 23% the impact on those with disabilities/ mobility issues (of those on the lowest income, this was higher at 29%).
126. Of the 278 comments that suggested alternatives, 25% related to charging extra for existing services, 21% for increasing service use and 13% on using an alternative model of service provision.
127. If these proposals are approved, from April 2025, the concessionary travel scheme in Hampshire would be operating at the level required by our statutory obligations, but no longer providing additional benefits for pass holders.
128. Holders of a disabled persons' bus pass would need to pay for their journey if they travel prior to 9:30am or after 11pm Monday to Friday if this proposal is implemented. Many bus operators in Hampshire offer fare deals on evening services which may mitigate the impact of this increased cost. Where disabled people are using their pass to access employment and travelling early in the morning and home later in the day, they would only need to pay for their outgoing journey.
129. The County Council has approx. 5,388 companion passes issued in Hampshire yet has a relatively modest spend in this area of £5,000. This indicates that despite having a companion pass, only small numbers of passengers make use of it. This could be because many of the companions have their own bus pass which they use when travelling with the companion pass holder. At the time this report was written, the government are funding a £2 fare cap on all single journeys which could assist in mitigating the financial impact of this saving on those who are eligible for a companion pass.
130. The ability to use bus passes between 9 and 9:30am on Hampshire's infrequent services is used by a very small number of passengers. From April, holders of these passes would need to pay for outgoing journey but would still be able to use their bus pass on the return provided it is between 9:30am and 11pm Monday to Friday.
131. The government is currently consulting on what the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme should look like in the future. Should the scheme change, the County Council will only be able to implement savings on areas of the scheme they do not have to provide by law.

Financial impact of these proposals

132. The table below sets out the full savings that this report proposes.

Proposed Area	Proposed Saving
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Wheels to Work	£85,000
Connect: Dial a Ride/Call & Go and Fleet Link	£3,000
Connect: Minibus Group Hire	£0
Connect: Taxishares	£157,000
Supported Local bus services	£252,000
Enhancements to the Concessionary Travel Scheme in Hampshire.	£75,000
Other back-office savings which do not have an impact on service provision.	£15,000
Jointly commissioned passenger and school transport	£500,000
Total	£1,087,000

133. The back-office savings are made up of £5,000 which the County Council use to fund some bus stop infrastructure maintenance and a £10,000 contingency fund for supported local bus services.

134. These savings would mean;

- A reduction in the number of local bus services the Council would support.
- A reduction in the level of service that the County Council would fund for Community Transport where most services would reduce but still be provided in a different way.
- Removal of the enhancements the County Council funds towards the Concessionary Travel Scheme in Hampshire.

Risks

135. It is important to note that if these proposals are approved and the County Council undertakes a retendering exercise, it is likely that costs for all passenger transport services would increase significantly. This is because many of the services within this report have not been tendered since before the pandemic when costs for the provision of services such as these were lower.

136. The County Council has been utilising the government Local Transport Fund grant to fund these pressures, however, when this grant runs out this will no longer be possible.

137. If upon tendering, costs come back higher than the existing budget, the County Council would have no option but to reduce service levels. A full review as to the impact on school transport budgets would be undertaken prior to this.

138. There are further risks that the County Council's funding partners could reduce or withdraw their contributions towards the services within this report. If the proposals within this report are approved, the County Council would work with its funding partners to understand the impact and mitigate this where possible should this happen.

Equality Impact Assessment

139. As previously noted in paragraphs 32 to 38 of the draft report to Cabinet, a key part of the SP25 Programme is ensuring that the County Council understands the impact of the SP25 proposals on people with protected characteristics and has due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010; to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

140. Whilst councils are not mandated to conduct Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs), in keeping with good practice to record the steps taken in seeking to meet the County Council's Public Sector Equality Duty, Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) previously completed in relation to the proposals set out within this Appendix have been reviewed and updated. These reflect the feedback received through the Future Services consultation and incorporate any additional impacts identified, so that these can be considered as part of the final decision taken by the Cabinet. The EIA is provided as an Annex.

141. By the very nature of the services that the County Council provides, there are inevitably changes that impact those people with protected characteristics. Whilst this does not mean that a proposal cannot be implemented, it does mean that the County Council needs to have an understanding, both individually and collectively, of the impact on those groups of people and look at ways of mitigating that impact.

142. The proposals within this report mitigate, as far as is affordable, the impacts that respondents to the consultation fed back.

143. These impacts are explored further in the Equalities Impact Assessment. The main findings of the assessment process were that the proposed savings would have a medium negative impact on people who identified as falling within the following protected characteristic categories:

- a) Age
- b) Disability
- c) Sex

144. In addition, and whilst not specifically protected characteristics for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, impacts were identified on Poverty and Rurality. Hampshire's supported local bus network operates predominately in rural areas, thus generating a disproportionate impact on the people who live in these areas compared to those who live in urban areas.

145. These impacts were noted because the service users for passenger transport services tend to be older women with lower income levels. 74% of all registered community transport users are female with overall 80% of both male and female passengers being 80 years of age or over. In terms of disability, the enhancements to the Concessionary Travel Scheme in Hampshire that this report proposes are withdrawn only benefit older and disabled people therefore demonstrating the high disproportionate impact on these groups of people. The Wheels to Work scheme which this report proposes is withdrawn is only open to people aged 16-24 of which 72% stated within the consultation that they would not be able to travel without the scheme.
146. Maintaining a level of community transport, albeit a lower level than the existing provision, mitigates some of the impact on older and disabled people. It also ensures that there is still a service in most of Hampshire, including the rural areas, that passengers can use at a lower cost than a private transport service, for example a taxi.
147. The impact is considered to be low negative for people who identified as falling within the following protected characteristic categories:
- d) Pregnancy and Maternity
 - e) Race
 - f) Religion or belief
148. This recognises that more women than men use passenger transport services, and at times of pregnancy and maternity, there is an increased need to travel to attend medical appointments. In terms of race, people who have ethnic backgrounds which are not white are more likely to use public transport over owning a private car. In addition, there is a potential low negative impact on Religion as a protected characteristic. This is because access to places of worship and to activities related to religious practice or belief could be reduced.
149. The impact would be neutral for people who identified as falling within the following protected characteristic categories:
- a) gender reassignment,
 - b) sexual orientation
 - c) marriage and civil partnership.
150. No evidence could be found that identified the impact on these people being any different to those who do not fall within these categories of protected characteristic.
151. Reductions such as the proposal outlined in this report would have a negative impact on many groups of people who have protected characteristics. The assessment illustrates the cumulative impact on people who identify as having multiple protected characteristics. For example, Hampshire's supported bus and community transport services are predominately used by women over pensionable age. In this example, women

over pensionable age would see a disproportionately negative impact over people who do not have these protected characteristics. Again, women over pensionable age who also have a disability and low income would be disproportionately impacted by these proposals. However, where impacts have been identified above, retention of a high number of passenger transport services, with a reduced savings target following public consultation, mitigates the impacts to make them lower than those of original proposals.

152. In circumstances where the changes to the approach have a resultant workforce impact, this would be managed in accordance with HR policy.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

153. As noted in paragraph 39 of the draft Cabinet report, consideration is given to potential climate change impacts of decisions through the two decision-making tools which assess the carbon emissions and resilience impacts of a decision.

154. At this stage it is difficult to assess any specific climate change impacts relating to these proposals. However, as the implementation of these proposals progresses, we would continue to assess the potential impacts to ensure that consideration is given to how these would contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets.

Scrutiny Committee feedback

155. The recommendations set out in this appendix will be scrutinised by the Universal Services Select Committee, in advance of a decision by Cabinet.

156. To support the decision, written feedback will be separately provided by the Chairman of the Select Committee to the Cabinet, outlining any feedback and potential recommendations from the Select Committee, for consideration by Cabinet.

Rationale for the recommendations being made

157. As noted in the draft report to Cabinet, in response to a predicted two-year budget gap to 2025/26 of £132m, Directorates were asked last year to consider what savings could be made if they started to move towards a legal minimum service level. In October and November 2023, following a stage 1 consultation process on our options for balancing the budget, Cabinet and County Council respectively approved savings proposals totalling £90.4m. Since that time, following continued growth and high inflation across adults' and children's social care, special educational needs and school transport, the predicted budget gap for 2025/26 has increased to at least £175m, underlining the need for the County Council to secure recurring savings to help towards balancing the budget on a sustainable basis.

158. Through the Equality Impact Assessment process, it was identified that some of the proposals directly impacted on residents and users of the services and

therefore a consolidated stage 2 consultation process for 13 of the proposals (totalling £17.5m) was launched at the beginning of 2024.

159. The final recommendations made to Cabinet have been informed by the feedback received as part of the consultation, alongside other relevant factors. These recommendations will achieve total savings of £16.3million, which is a reduction from the £17.5million originally identified, albeit there is some further work to be undertaken on some proposals. The proposals set out within this appendix originally accounted for £1.7m of this total, however following consultation and further analysis the savings proposal has been revised to £1.087m.
160. By proposing these changes, savings could be made whilst at the same time ensuring that the County Council is meeting its duties under the Transport Act 1985 to have a regard for the transport needs of older and disabled people.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:

<p><u>Title</u></p> <p>Savings Programme to 2025 – Revenue Savings Proposals Executive Member for Universal Services</p> <p>Passenger Transport SP23 Savings Proposals Executive Lead Member for Transport and Environment Strategy</p>	<p><u>Date</u></p> <p><u>18 September 2023</u></p> <p><u>7 November 2022</u></p>
<p>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</p>	
<p><u>Title</u></p>	<p><u>Date</u></p>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out to determine the impacts of these recommendations on both residents / users of the service, and staff that would be affected should they be approved.

The main findings of the assessment process were that the proposed savings would have a medium negative impact on people who identified as falling within the following protected characteristic categories:

- g) Age
- h) Disability
- i) Sex

In addition, and whilst not specifically protected characteristics for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, impacts were identified on Poverty and Rurality. Hampshire's supported local bus network operates predominately in rural areas, thus generating a disproportionate impact on the people who live in these areas compared to those who live in urban areas.

These impacts were noted because the service users for passenger transport services tend to be older women with lower income levels. 74% of all registered community transport users are female with overall 80% of both male and female passengers being 80 years of age or over. In terms of disability, the enhancements to the Concessionary Travel Scheme in Hampshire that this report proposes are withdrawn only benefit older and disabled people therefore demonstrating the high disproportionate impact on these groups of people. The Wheels to Work scheme which this report proposes is withdrawn is only open to people aged 16-24 of which 72% stated within the consultation that they would not be able to travel without the scheme.

Maintaining a level of community transport, albeit a lower level than the existing provision, mitigates some of the impact on older and disabled people. It also ensures that there is still a service in most of Hampshire, including the rural areas, that passengers can use at a lower cost than a private transport service, for example a taxi.

The impact is considered to be low negative for people who identified as falling within the following protected characteristic categories:

- j) Pregnancy and Maternity
- k) Race
- l) Religion or belief

This recognises that more women than men use passenger transport services, and at times of pregnancy and maternity, there is an increased need to travel to attend medical appointments. In terms of race, people who have ethnic backgrounds which are not white are more likely to use public transport over owning a private car. In addition, there is a potential low negative impact on Religion as a protected characteristic. This is because access to places of worship and to activities related to religious practice or belief could be reduced.

The impact would be neutral for people who identified as falling within the following protected characteristic categories:

- d) gender reassignment,
- e) sexual orientation
- f) marriage and civil partnership.

No evidence could be found that identified the impact on these people being any different to those who do not fall within these categories of protected characteristic.

Reductions such as the proposal outlined in this report would have a negative impact on many groups of people who have protected characteristics. The assessment illustrates the cumulative impact on people who identify as having multiple protected characteristics. For example, Hampshire's supported bus and community transport services are predominately used by women over pensionable age. In this example, women over pensionable age would see a disproportionately negative impact over people who do not have these protected characteristics. Again, women over pensionable age who also have a disability and low income would be disproportionately impacted by these proposals. However, where impacts have been identified above, retention of a high number of passenger transport services, with a reduced savings target following public consultation, mitigates the impacts to make them lower than those of original proposals.

In circumstances where the changes to the approach have a resultant workforce impact, this would be managed in accordance with HR policy.

Sub-Appendix A– Summary of the Services Impacted by Proposals Within This Report.

Service	Service Area	Annual Cost to HCC 2022/23	Annual passenger Journeys 2022/23	Cost per Passenger Journey	Proposal
205	East Tisted, West Tisted, Monkwood, Newton Valence, Upper Farringdon and Farringdon into Alton.	£6,158	248	£24.83	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
43	Flexford or Valley Park into Chandlers Ford and Eastleigh	£1,368	0	£ -	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
113	East End, East Boldre, Beaulieu and Hill Top into Hythe	£2,485	76	£32.70	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
26	BurrIDGE and Curbridge into Hedge End	£4,213	208	£20.25	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
27	BurrIDGE and Curbridge into Swanwick and Park Gate	£2,184	132	£16.54	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
54	Wherwell, Chilbolton, Longstock, Stockbridge, King's Somborne & Houghton to Romsey	£24,640	2606	£9.46	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
46	Chilworth, Balmoral Way and Upton Crescent to Lord's Hill	£3,277	296	£11.07	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
15/17	Over Wallop, Andover, Stockbridge	£2,776	12	£231.33	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
70	Crondall/Ewshot and Crookham Villages to Clare Park Hospital, Farnham and Fleet.	£10,428	1001	£10.42	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
96	Swanmore, Shirrell Heath, Shedfield and Wickham into Fareham	£14,257	651	£21.90	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport

Service	Service Area	Annual Cost to HCC 2022/23	Annual passenger Journeys 2022/23	Cost per Passenger Journey	Proposal
38	Southwick, North Boarhunt, Newtown or Soberton Heath to Wickham or Cosham/QA Hospital	£7,204	724	£9.95	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
44	Campbell Road and Chalvington Area Shopper	£6,216	702	£8.85	These services are jointly funded by Eastleigh Borough Council. Discussions would take place with this funding partner over the future of the services.
n/a	Hamble-le-Rice, Bursledon, Butlocks Heath, Old Netley, Netley Abbey to various hospitals, medical centres or GP surgeries.	£9,707	1170	£8.30	
333	The Bramshill, Hartley Wespall, Heckfield, Mattingley, Rotherwick and Stratfield Turgis Parishes Carshare	£2,872	102	£28.16	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
210	Long Sutton- Basingtoke (Long Sutton, South Warnborough, Upton Grey, Greywell, Up Nately, Mapledurwell and Hatch into Basingtoke).	£10,496	409	£25.66	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
200A/B/F	200A Hart to Alton (Crandall, Ewshot, Dogmersfield, Winchfield, Fleet, Pondtail, Odiham, Mattingley, Hook, Well, North Warnborough, Hartley Wintney, Church Crookham, Mapledurwell, Upton Grey, South Warnborough, Greywell, Long Sutton.)	£9,891		£38.04	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
	200B/200F Long Sutton, Well, Upton Grey, South Warnborough.		260		
C1	Andover Villages C1 - from Ragged Appleshaw and Penton Mewsey into Andover	£7,530	504	£14.94	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
42	Stoke Common - Eastleigh	£1,173	63	£18.62	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
31	Fritham, Nomansland, Bramshaw, Brook and Minstead Taxishare	£2,616	21	£124.57	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
35	Burley - to and from Lyndhurst, Burley and Ringwood	£6,219	280	£22.21	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport

Service	Areas of Operation	Annual Cost to HCC 2022/23	Journeys	Cost per journey	Proposal
61/62	Mockbeggar, Hyde, Frogham, Blissford, Godshill, Woodgreen, Harbridge, Parsonage Park, Sandleheath, Breamore, Whitsbury, Rockbourne, Ashford, Damerham and Martin into Fordingbridge.	£11,548	886	£13.03	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
57	Warsash - Locks Heath	£1,626	204	£7.97	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport
X57	Linden Lea - Fareham/ Porchester	£4,402	578	£7.62	Service Withdrawn - Passengers to utilise community transport

Wheels to Work

Service	Areas of operation	Annual Cost to HCC (23/24)	Annual Cost to Funding Partner (23/24)	Number of hirers (22/23)	Proposal
Wheels to Work	East Hampshire District, New Forest District, Test Valley Borough and Winchester City Council administrative areas	£85,000	£22,865	34	Withdraw Service

Community Transport

Service	Area Served	Annual Cost to Hampshire County Council (23/24)	Annual Cost to funding partner(s) (23/24)	Annual Passenger Journeys 22/23	Overall Cost per Passenger Journey to all Funders	Cost to Hampshire County Council per Passenger Journey	Proposal
Basingstoke Connect: Dial-a-Ride	Within the Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council administrative area	£110,355	£171,375	12,357	£22.80	£8.93	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
East Hampshire Connect: Call and Go (including Alton Dial a Ride)	Various trips within the East Hampshire District Council Administrative Area	£17,008	£13,213	1,733	£17.44	£9.81	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
Eastleigh Connect: Dial a Ride and Parish Link	Within the Eastleigh Borough Council Administrative Area	£80,651	£83,314	7,697	£21.30	£10.48	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
Fareham Connect: Dial a Ride	Within the Fareham Council Borough Council Administrative Area	£26,143	£26,143	2,999	£17.43	£8.72	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service

Gosport Connect: Dial a Ride	Within the Gosport Borough Council Administrative	£22,974	£22,974	1,981	£23.19	£11.60	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
Havant Connect: Call and Go	Within the Havant Borough Council administrative area and Horndean, Clanfield and Rowlands Castle Parishes. Hayling Island on Thursdays only.	£20,744	£16,972	1,258	£29.98	£16.49	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
Rushmoor Connect: Dial a Ride	Within the Rushmoor Borough Council Administrative area	£29,891	£34,360	4,359	£14.74	£6.86	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
Fleet Connect: Link	Within Fleet Town, Elvetham Heath Parish, Church Crookham Parish and Crookham Village Parish Council Administrative Areas	£18,511	£16,405	3,894	£8.97	£4.75	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
Yateley Connect	Within Yateley, Eversley, Blackwater and Hawley Parish Council Administrative Areas	£2,317	£0	396	£5.85	£5.85	Hampshire County Council funding withdrawn
New Forest Connect: Call and Go	Within the New Forest District Council Administrative area	£24,502	£28,556	5,642	£9.40	£4.34	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
Test Valley Connect: Call and Go	Within the Test Valley Borough Council administrative area	£13,254	£14,746	4,721	£5.93	£2.81	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service

Winchester Connect: Dial a Ride	Within the Winchester City Council administrative area	£46,053	£46,053	6,960	£13.23	£6.62	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
Denmead Shopper	Denmead Parish Administrative Areas and the Naval Cottages in Southwick to Fareham and Waterlooville	£1,086	£1,327	467	£5.17	£2.32	Hampshire County Council funding and service withdrawn.

Connect Minibus Group Hire Service	Permitted Journeys	Annual Cost to Hampshire County Council (23/24)	Annual Cost to Funding Partner (23/24)	Annual Minibus Hires 22/23	Overall Cost per Group Hire to Funders	Cost per Group Hire to the County Council	Proposal
East Hampshire	East Hampshire District Council administrative area	£11,038	£5,687	235	£71.17	£46.97	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
Eastleigh	Eastleigh Borough Council administrative area	£33,501	£3,333	978	£37.66	£34.25	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
Fareham	Fareham Borough Council administrative area	£8,442	£0	921	£18.33	£18.33	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
Gosport	Gosport Borough Council area	£8,731	£0		£18.96	£18.96	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service

Rushmoor, Hart and Yateley	Rushmoor Borough Council and Hart District Council administrative area	£18,225	£0	1070	£17.03	£17.03	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
Havant	Havant Borough Council administrative area	£20,118	£0	575	£34.99	£34.99	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
New Forest	New Forest District Council administrative area	£8,835	£13,671	268	£83.98	£32.97	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
Test Valley	Test Valley Borough Council administrative area	£20,353	£5,032	1132	£22.42	£17.98	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service
Winchester	Winchester City Council administrative area	£12,759	£0	343	£37.20	£37.20	Combined with School Transport - reduced level of service

Supported Local Bus

Service	Route	Annual cost to Hampshire County Council (23/24)	Annual passenger journeys 23/24 (projected)	Cost per passenger trip 22/23	Projected Cost per passenger trip to Hampshire County Council 23/24	Proposal
7/7A	Andover to Newbury	£ 54,407	28,233	£ -	£ 1.93	Funding withdrawn
Andover Villages Service	St Mary Bourne/Enham, Barton Stacey, Kimpton, Vernham Dean and surrounding areas to Andover	£ 30,060	2,244	£ -	£ 13.40	Funding withdrawn
74	Overton Local Service	£ 14,114	3,084	£ -	£ 4.58	Funding withdrawn
44	Hiltingbury to Winchester**	£ 10,222	1,248	£ -	£ 8.19	Funding withdrawn. This Service also receives funding from Eastleigh Borough Council and Chandlers Ford Parish Council
61	Eastleigh to Winchester	£ 37,293	75,000	£ 3.10	£ 0.50	Funding withdrawn
20	Fareham to Wickham	£ 61,912	45,096	£ -	£ 1.37	Funding withdrawn

49	Damerham to Salisbury	£ 2,150	1,704	£ 3.10	£	1.26	Funding withdrawn
X7R	Southampton to Salisbury*	£ 16,695	53,760	£ -	£	0.31	Hampshire County Council only fund a small proportion of these services. The rest is provided commercially.
46	Winchester to North Baddesley	£ 23,634	2,364	£ 14.11	£	10.00	
MV3	Meon Valley Community Bus - Soberton to Petersfield	£ 4,196	468	£ 2.56	£	8.97	Funding withdrawn

Sub-appendix B – Future Services Consultation 2024 Passenger Transport Proposal Insight Summary

Background

From 8 January to 31 March 2024, Hampshire County Council invited residents, partners, and stakeholders to provide their views on options to change and reduce some local services to help the Authority address a £132 million budget shortfall faced by April 2025.

One of the options proposed was to make three changes relating to Passenger Transport, namely:

- 1) Withdrawing all funding from community transport services (around £900,000).
- 2) Withdrawing around £800,000 of County Council funding for bus services.
- 3) If permitted by law, withdrawing around £75,000 of additional funding for enhancements to the Concessionary Travel Scheme (older and disabled persons' bus passes).

Who responded to the proposal?

In summary, 5,518 responses to this proposal were received via the consultation Response Form, including 5,336 responses from individuals, 102 from organisations and 42 responses from democratically Elected Representatives. Respondents were invited to add further comments to support their views on this proposal via an open-ended question. This allowed people to expand on impacts they felt the proposed changes would cause and suggest alternative courses of action. 2,207 respondents chose to provide comments on the Passenger Transport proposals. A further 247 comments were submitted relating to passenger transport in the 'Further comments' section at the end of the survey. In addition, 112 unstructured written contributions were received about these proposals via email or letter (of these, 61 were only concerned with PT and no other proposals in the FSC). Of these responses:

- 66 were submitted by members of the public
- 41 were submitted by organisations (including businesses and public bodies)
- 5 were submitted by democratically elected members

In order to help capture the views of young people about the consultation, members of the Hampshire Youth Forum (aged between 11 and 18) were invited to consider the proposals and attend a discussion group to share their feedback. The themes within these unstructured responses reflected those in the structured responses.

Who responded: demographics of individual responses

- Just over one third (38%) of responses from individuals were from those aged 45 to 64, with another third (34%) aged 65 or over. Just over 2% were from those aged under 25, and 16% were aged 25 to 44.

- Over half of the respondents were female (51%) compared to 36% who were male and less than 1% who were of non-binary gender.
- The majority of respondents were from non-ethnic minority groups (i.e. White British, English, Welsh, Scottish or Northern Irish) with 7% of responses from an ethnic minority group.
- While the majority (54%) reported no health or disability issues, around 1 in 5 (21%) reported a health or disability issue that impacted their day-to-day activities either a little or a lot.
- Responses were received from residents of all districts in Hampshire, ranging from 137 in the borough of Gosport to 758 in the district of East Hampshire.
- 37% of respondents lived in an urban area, whereas 20% lived in a rural location.
- 5% of respondents came from households with the lowest income (up to £20,000), 27% had an income of £20,001 to £60,000 and 20% were from households with higher incomes (£60,001 or more).
- 22% of respondents lived in households where there was at least one child or young person aged 18 or less.

No demographics were captured about the individuals who provided unstructured responses to this proposal.

Please note this was an open consultation the respondents were self-selecting so do not provide a representative sample of the total Hampshire population.

Who responded: Types of organisation responding

Of the 102 organisations that responded via the response form:

- 52 were from charity, voluntary or local community groups
- 27 were from other local authorities (City, Borough, District, Parish or Town Councils)
- 12 were from local businesses or business representatives
- five were from nurseries, schools, colleges or places of organisation
- four were from other types of organisation

Who responded: Responses from service users

There was representation from a wide range of affected service users:

Type of transport	Number of respondents
Bus	2677
Supported bus services	1397
Community transport schemes	271
Dial-a-Ride	145
Minibus Group Hire	66
Call & Go	54
Taxishare	50
Wheels to Work scheme	18

Please note that respondents were able to select all of the different modes of transport they used so these categories were not exclusive.

Levels of agreement with the proposals

There was more opposition than support for all three proposals.

Proposal	Disagree overall	Neither agree nor disagree overall	Agree overall
Withdrawing all funding from community transport services (around £900,000)	73%	12%	15%
Withdrawing around £800,000 of County Council funding for bus services	76%	9%	15%
If permitted by law, withdrawing around £75,000 of additional funding for enhancements to the Concessionary Travel Scheme (older and disabled persons' bus passes)	68%	11%	21%

Of the 2,207 respondents who commented on these proposals, 1,315 mentioned an impact, of which the most frequently mentioned were:

- isolation and poor mental health (37%)
- impact on older people (33%)
- impact on rural service users (26%)
- impact on vulnerable people (22%)
- impact on those with disabilities/ mobility issues (20%)

Proposal 1

There was strong opposition to this proposal across all respondent groups, with 73% of all respondents disagreeing with it, of which 46% strongly disagreed. In every respondent group, more than half of those who disagreed did so strongly. Certain groups of people disagreed with the proposed funding withdrawal more strongly than others, in particular:

- Community transport users were the most likely to disagree with the proposal (93%), with 81% of these respondents strongly disagreeing: 96% of Dial-a-Ride customers; 94% of Wheels to Work¹ customers; 92% of Call & Go users and; 92% of minibus groups hire users opposed the proposal.
- Most responding organisation also stated their opposition (87%, of which 73% strongly disagreed), regardless of type. Disagreement was particularly high amongst charity, voluntary & local community group organisations opposing the proposal (94% disagreed with 84% doing so strongly).

¹ The sample size for this group of respondents was lower than 50 responses, so this figure should be treated with caution.

- There were high levels of disagreement across all geographic areas, highest in Rushmoor (78%), Winchester and Hart (75%) and East Hants (74%).
- Rural residents (74%), especially those in the most isolated rural areas (77%), were more opposed than those living in urban areas (71%).
- In terms of age categories, the youngest and oldest respondents were most opposed (85% of 16 to 25 year-olds and 83% of over 85s).
- Female respondents (77%) were notably more likely to disagree with the proposal than males (66%).
- 85% of lower income households, especially those with an income of £10,000 or lower disagreed with the proposal.

Of the 3,772 respondents who disagreed with the proposal, 1,093 provided comments about impacts of the proposal. Of these, the most frequently mentioned were:

- isolation and poor mental health (39%)
- impact on older people (35%)
- impact on rural service users (26%)

“Withdrawing this funding will increase social isolation and loneliness, impact on physical and mental health wellbeing.”

While the overall response to this proposal was negative, a minority of respondents (15%) agreed with the proposed withdrawal of funding for community transport services.

- 7% of organisations agreed with the proposal, with 36% of local businesses or businesses representatives² agreeing.
- 24% of those aged 25-34 also agreed with the proposal, along with 20% of 35-44 year-olds and 19% of 45-54 year olds.
- Males (20%) were more likely to agree than females (12%).
- Other groups that showed some level of **support for the proposal** were ethnic minority groups and households with children or young people under the age of 19 (both 20%).

58 of the 799 respondents who agreed with this proposal left a comment mentioning impacts. This suggests that, despite their agreement, they still had some outstanding reservations about the impact the proposed change could have, most notably:

- 22% were concerned about the impact on older people
- 21% with the environmental impact
- 17% with the impact on rural service users and
- 17% with isolation and poor mental health
- Only 14% believed that the proposed changes would have no impact

70 of these respondents also suggested ways to minimise the impact, such as by reducing rather than removing services altogether (24%) and using alternative

² Only 11 organisations of this type responded, so this figure should be used with caution.

models of service provision (19%), perhaps indicating that their support was conditional and they would prefer an alternative if one could be found.

Proposal 2

This proposal attracted the strongest disagreement of the three, with 76% of all respondents opposing it, of which 49% strongly disagreed. Again, in every respondent group, of those who disagreed, the majority strongly disagreed. Certain groups of people disagreed with the proposed funding withdrawal more strongly than others, in particular:

- Strongest opposition (90%) came from users of supported bus services, with 70% of these users strongly disagreeing with the proposal.
- Users of other forms of public and community transport were also opposed: Call & Go (92%), Dial-a-Ride (91%), bus (86%); Minibus Group Hire (86%); ferry (81%); taxi (79%) and train (79%).
- 80% of organisations disagreed with the proposal (65% strongly disagreed), including 96% of responding local authorities (of which 62% strongly disagreed) and 90% of charity, voluntary or local community group organisations (of which 68% strongly disagreed).
- The age groups most likely to disagree with the proposals were the 16-24 year-olds (87%) who were concerned about the impact on younger people (33%) and the 75-84 year-olds (80%) who were concerned about isolation and mental health (26%) and the impact on older people (25%). At the Youth Forum, it was suggested that the money saved by the age threshold for older people's bus passes being raised should be spent on providing free bus passes for children, young people or anyone else going to a places of education.

"Priority should be made to bus services for colleges as children aged 16-18 must remain in education".

"A lot of older people rely on the bus service and otherwise would be confined to home without them."

- Respondents with disabilities also disagreed with the proposal (81%), raising concerns about isolation and poor mental health (29%), impact on older people (23%) and the impact on disabled people (20%).
- 89% of respondents from lower income groups with a household income up to £10,000 (89%) disagreed, raising concerns about isolation and mental health (31%) and the impact on older people (25%) and those with disabilities or mobility issues (24%).
- There was greater opposition from residents in rural areas (78%), and especially rural hamlets and isolated dwellings (84%), than urban areas (75%) who were both concerned about isolation and mental health.

Despite the majority of respondents disagreeing with this proposal, there were a minority of respondents (15%) who agreed. These were notably:

- households with an income over £60,000, who were most supportive (23%)
- males (20%)

- people of working age (19% of 24 to 44 year-olds and 17% of 45 to 64 year olds)
- residents of Fareham (20%) and Test Valley (19%)

47 of the 765 respondents who agreed with the proposal chose to provide comments via an open-ended question which mentioned impacts.

19% of these respondents believed there would be no impact from the proposals, due, in part, to declining use of buses, less need for services with more people working from home, increased levels of car ownership, and the current bus service not being fit for purpose.

However, many recognised that there would still be impacts on vulnerable people (36%), older people (30%), rural service users (17%) and isolation and poor mental health (17%) despite agreeing that funding for services should be reduced. Therefore, a number (64 respondents) made alternative suggestions that they hoped could keep services running, whilst still making some savings. Of these:

- 22% suggested using alternative models of service provision including using volunteers to provide a public transport service
- 16% suggested reducing rather than removing services
- 14% suggested using smaller buses or only providing services to those who really need them
- 13% suggested making bus passes means tested or making all services means tested

“The traditional bus services simply are not efficient. The county should investigate a call on demand system.”

“Limit bus times, rather than removing services altogether - don't completely cut off communities.”

Proposal 3

This proposal was slightly less negatively received by the public, although it was still opposed by the majority of respondents (68%), with over half of those who disagreed, strongly disagreeing (46%).

Some groups who had higher disagreement included:

- those on a lower household income of up to £10,000, who were the most strongly opposed (89% disagreed, of which 68% strongly disagreed)
- community transport users (82% with 62% strongly disagreeing)
- those whose daily activities are limited a little or a lot by a long-term health issue or disability (75%, of which 55% strongly disagreed)
- 71% of organisations disagreed with the proposal (of which 49% strongly disagreed), with local businesses or business representatives having the strongest opposition at 82% (63% strongly disagreeing)
- 74% of bus users and 76% of supported bus services users disagreed with the proposal (55%/58% strongly disagreed)
- significantly more females (71%) disagreed with the proposal than males (64%) with both groups sharing concerns about isolation, mental health and the impact on older people

- respondents aged 65 or over were the most likely age group to disagree with the proposal (74%), of which 54% strongly disagreed
- sentiment for this proposal was similar regardless of whether respondents lived in urban or rural areas, although disagreement was higher in Rushmoor (76%) than other Hampshire districts

Of the 3,565 respondents who disagreed with the proposal, 1,010 provided a comment mentioning an impact of the proposal, of which:

- 41% were concerned with isolation and poor mental health
- 36% mentioned the impact on older people
- 26% had concerns about the impact on rural service users
- 25% mentioned the impact on vulnerable people

“Ensure there are alternative means of reaching, banks doctors etc. Also that social contact is possible. Unwanted isolation must be avoided. Isolation can lead to depression and other mental health issues.”

“Please don't reduce the extension to disabled bus passes, they are a life line for so many. Being able to travel before 9:30am makes it easier to get to appointments.”

Overall, agreement with this proposal was higher than the other proposals at 21%, although this was still significantly lower than the level of disagreement. Notable groups who showed some support for the proposal included:

- those with a household income over £60,000 (34%)
- those aged 35-44 (31%)
- males and ethnic minority groups (both 25%)
- respondents resident in Gosport (27%)

Of the 1,091 respondents who supported the proposal, 130 mentioned potential impacts of the proposals, with particular concerns for rural service users (27%), about potential increases in isolation and poor mental health (25%), the environmental impact of people seeking alternatives (22%), and the impact on older people (22%); only 5% thought that there would be no impact.

To help counteract these impacts, 145 respondents provided an alternative solution:

- 19% thought the Council should charge extra for existing services
- 16% suggested using an alternative model of service provision
- 12% suggested reducing services rather than removing them, making bus passes means tested or encouraging increased service use

“As a holder of an older person's bus pass I would be happy to pay towards my trip.”

“The age-related concessionary bus pass scheme is essential for some, but many older people could, and would, be able to contribute to the cost.”

Alternative transport arrangements

When respondents who used bus or community transport services to get around Hampshire were asked what alternative transport they would use if the proposals went ahead, 43% said that they would use a private vehicle, with 23% relying on lifts from others. 27% of respondents said they would not make the journey.

Those most likely to use private vehicles were those with a higher household income over £60,000 (59%).

Young people (16 and under) were most likely to rely on lifts from others (50%).

Those most likely to not make the journey were those on a household income below £10,000 (57%), those with a health issue or disability that impacts their day-to-day activities a lot (55%), and elderly people aged 85 or over (49%).

50% of community transport users would not make the journey if services were stopped, including 72% of those using Wheels to Work, 58% of Call & Go and Minibus Group hire users, 56% of Dial-a-Ride customers and 40% of Taxishare customers.

Prioritisation of services

When asked which services should be prioritised if funding could be secured from government, there was split opinion amongst respondents. 34% of respondents thought it should be spent on both services in rural areas and services for vulnerable people, whilst 25% thought it should be spent on services that are used by the most people.

Community transport users (59%) and organisations (54%) were most in favour of prioritising services for vulnerable people, especially charity, voluntary and local community groups organisation (65%).

Elected representatives (59%), rural respondents (54%), and younger people aged under 25 (53%) thought services in rural areas should be prioritised.

Impacts on protected characteristics

Those who commented were asked whether their comments related to any protected characteristics. They were most likely to indicate that the withdrawal of funding would impact people because of:

- age - 66% (concerns about the impact on older people's physical and mental health and wellbeing)
- disability - 61% (concerns about isolation)
- rurality- 57% (concerns around the impact on rural areas)
- poverty - 42% (with the impact on lower income people/ families being highlighted)
- the environment - 42% (concerns around extra cars on the road and the associated environmental impact)

Other characteristics were also mentioned but at much lower levels.

Suggested alternatives to the proposal

628 of the 1,310 respondents who chose to provide comments on this proposal gave an alternative suggestion for how the savings could be delivered. The most frequently mentioned were:

- encourage increased service use (to increase income), mentioned by 23% of respondents giving an alternative suggestion, as well as the Youth Forum. To support this, the Youth Forum suggested making bus operators and drivers accountable to ensure that no stops on a route/ areas of a route are missed out and that buses run to their timetable, they also

requested improved reliability and regularity of buses and better integration of public transport systems

- charge extra for existing services, (18% of all respondents, 59% of community transport users)
- use alternative models of service provision (14% of all respondents and 35% of organisations providing an alternative suggestion). Suggestions included:
 - a scheme where volunteer drivers could drive people, claiming a small fee to cover fuel and vehicle maintenance
 - supporting organisations to take over community services
 - allowing Town and Parish councils to operate a dial-up small bus service
 - implementing a county-wide demand responsive travel service
 - contracting a different bus operator
 - encouraging sponsorship of services
 - re-nationalisation of bus services
 - making greater use of smaller and community operators
 - adopting a transport system similar to London (suggested by the Youth Forum)
- encourage reduced car usage (10%)
- use smaller buses (10%)
- reduce rather than remove services and make cuts/ reductions elsewhere (both 9%)

There was a wide range of additional and detailed suggestions which have been passed to the Department for consideration, both in relation to preparing recommendations on this proposal and for managing the service generally.

Additional responses

Please note, an additional 69 paper responses to the Passenger Transport proposals were returned to us by Rushmoor Voluntary Services more than a week after the consultation closing date. Of these responses, 68 were from Community Transport users and one was blank. The delayed arrival of these forms has meant that their data has not been included as part of the consultation analysis.

However, given the expectation of those respondents that their forms would be passed on in good time, we have read & considered these separately. Sentiment within these responses was similar to sentiment from other community transport users, with strongest feelings of disagreement to proposal one, as well as disagreement with proposals 2 and 3. The impacts reported in these responses were the same as were seen elsewhere, namely isolation and impacts on mental health. There were only a few respondents who provided alternative solutions to the proposals and they all suggested charging more for services.

Comments on the consultation

Some concerns were expressed about the consultation, including:

- additional information that would be useful to help respondents provide an informed response to this proposal

- for the 67 service it would have been helpful if we knew the amount without the school budget figure rather than just the gross amount
 - statistics needed to make harsh choices
- additional response options that could be added to specific questions:
 - Include NeighbourCare as an example of accessible community transport
- the need for more data to inform decisions:
 - A study should be undertaken to determine needs and then apply services accordingly
 - Accurate surveys monitoring bus routes -v- passengers should prove where cuts could be made