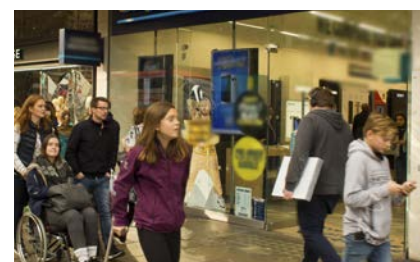




Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government Integrated Impact Assessment

Bus Services (Wales) Bill



OGL

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Title of proposal:	Bus Services (Wales) Bill
Official(s) completing the Integrated Impact Assessment (name(s) and name of team):	Lea Beckerleg Transport Legislation
Department:	Transport
Head of Division/SRO (name):	Jasper Roberts/ Simon Jones
Cabinet Secretary/Minister responsible:	Ken Skates, Minister for Economy and Transport
Start Date:	April 2019 (Revised December 2019)

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OVERVIEW OF THIS INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Context

This Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) relates to the proposed Bus Services (Wales) Bill. The legislative changes proposed in the Bill cover a number of areas relating to bus service provision. These include enabling provisions which would provide local authorities with more tools to help them secure the delivery of local bus services in Wales. These provisions relate to improved partnership working, franchising and local authority run bus services. They are intended to improve the legislative framework around local bus services, providing local authorities with the flexibility they need to better respond to local public transport needs. The legislation also includes proposals for improving the provision and management of data relating to bus services.

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

This Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been prepared using the provided Welsh Government template, which is used to summarise the main impacts of a proposal. In completing it, this IIA considers how the proposals described above:

- Fit with the priorities and vision of *Prosperity for All*¹;
- Can contribute to the social, cultural, economic and environmental well-being of Wales, in line with the Well-Being of Future Generations Act; and
- Might affect Wales and the people who live here, positively or negatively.

For other assessments that do not have an assessment template provided (for example, Health Impact Assessment), other relevant Welsh Government guidance has been used and referenced for further information (for example, the guidance provided by the Wales Health Impact Assessment Support Unit 'WHIASU'²).

Early conversations with internal expert advisors and the appropriate IIA Guidance document³ has helped to develop and complete this IIA. The IIA has been informed by desktop research and initial assessments undertaken by independent consultants (Arup).

The IIA Guidance explains that an assessor or assessors should assess the impact of a proposal as its policy is developed. This is often an iterative process and involves a proportionate approach to assessment, taking a rounded view of the main impacts and providing the basis for future evaluation.

The IIA is a tool for recording the impacts that can be identified and helps guide the various aspects of impact that need consideration. In some cases, there are screening questions to help decide whether a more detailed analysis of a particular topic is needed.

¹ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2017-10/prosperity-for-all-the-national-strategy.pdf>

² <https://whiasu.publichealthnetwork.cymru/en/>

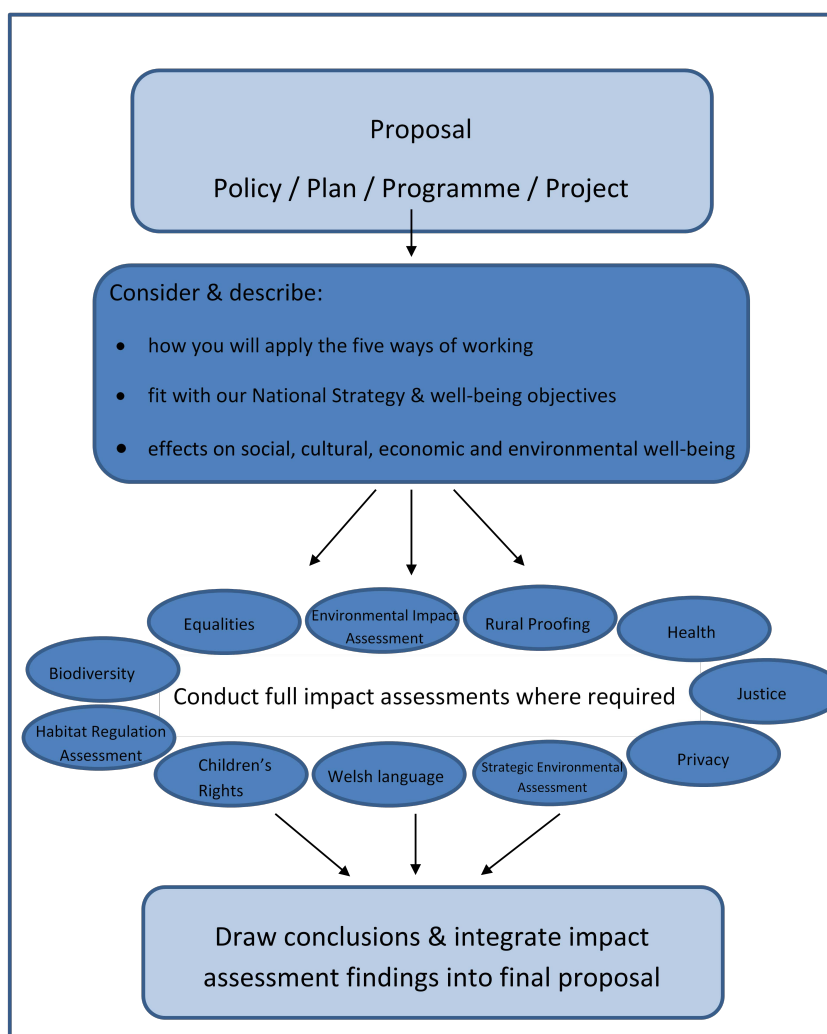
Some of the screening questions are clear cut while others are subject to some interpretation.

The policy rationale for the Bus Services (Wales) Bill has been developed with potential impacts in mind, culminating in this integrated impact assessment of the final proposals. It should be noted that the assessment of impacts in some areas is high level due to the fact that some of the proposed powers in the Bill are enabling powers, which may or may not be used by local authorities.

Where more detailed analysis and assessment is required in the future, an assessment is based on the information available at this stage, and provides advice to revisit assessments at implementation and delivery stages.

The IIA Guidance presents the required approach, which has been followed as part of this IIA and is as shown in the flow chart below:

Figure 0-1



Structure

This IIA is structured into the following sections:

- 1. What action is the Welsh Government considering and why?**
- 2. What will be the effect on social well-being?**
- 3. What will be the effect on cultural well-being and the Welsh Language?**
- 4. What will be the effect on economic well-being?**
- 5. What will be the effect on environmental well-being?**
- 6. Record of full impact assessments required and undertaken**
- 7. Conclusion**

Where appropriate, the above sections refer to the annexes to this report, where full impact assessments have been completed.

A Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) has also been published as part of the Bill documentation at introduction and the financial implications of the Bill are set out in Part 2 of an Explanatory Memorandum. Those should be read alongside this document for further context and information.

SECTION 1. WHAT ACTION IS THE WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSIDERING AND WHY?

Background

There are a range of issues facing local bus services in Wales. With a change in people's lifestyles, such as an increase in online shopping, the use of bus⁴ services is in decline, with passenger numbers falling steadily on most routes in Wales for a number of years. This means that there is a greater pressure on fare paying passengers, operators and the public purse to sustain the network.

Problems that have been identified are:

- A lack of coordination between bus operators on routes, ticketing, rail and active travel networks.
- High quality and up-to-date information is not consistently available across different services⁵.
- Several different stakeholders, including bus operators, local authorities and Welsh Government are responsible for the delivery of local bus services and infrastructure. There is a need for these stakeholders to work together more consistently to achieve more integrated and sustainable local bus services for communities in Wales.
- Considerable variance in the performance of local bus services and markets across Wales, in particular between rural and urban areas. As a result, the challenges with which local authorities are faced when considering bus service provision in their area also vary considerably.

Therefore, there is not a "one size fits all" approach to bus service delivery in Wales. The Welsh Government believes it is essential that local authorities have the right tools available to them to ensure appropriate provision of bus services within their area.

Due to the complexity of bus service delivery and the diversity of factors which influence how people travel, legislation alone cannot halt or reverse long-term trends in bus usage. Any solution requires a coordinated effort and investment from several stakeholders to help shape and influence the provision of bus services to ensure they meet the needs of individuals and communities. In some areas, this can be achieved through contracts between local authorities and operators, and in others, through effective partnership arrangements. The intention of improving the legislative framework through the Bus Services (Wales) Bill is to provide a range of additional tools for local authorities to

⁴ <https://inews.co.uk/news/long-reads/decline-bus-can-done/>

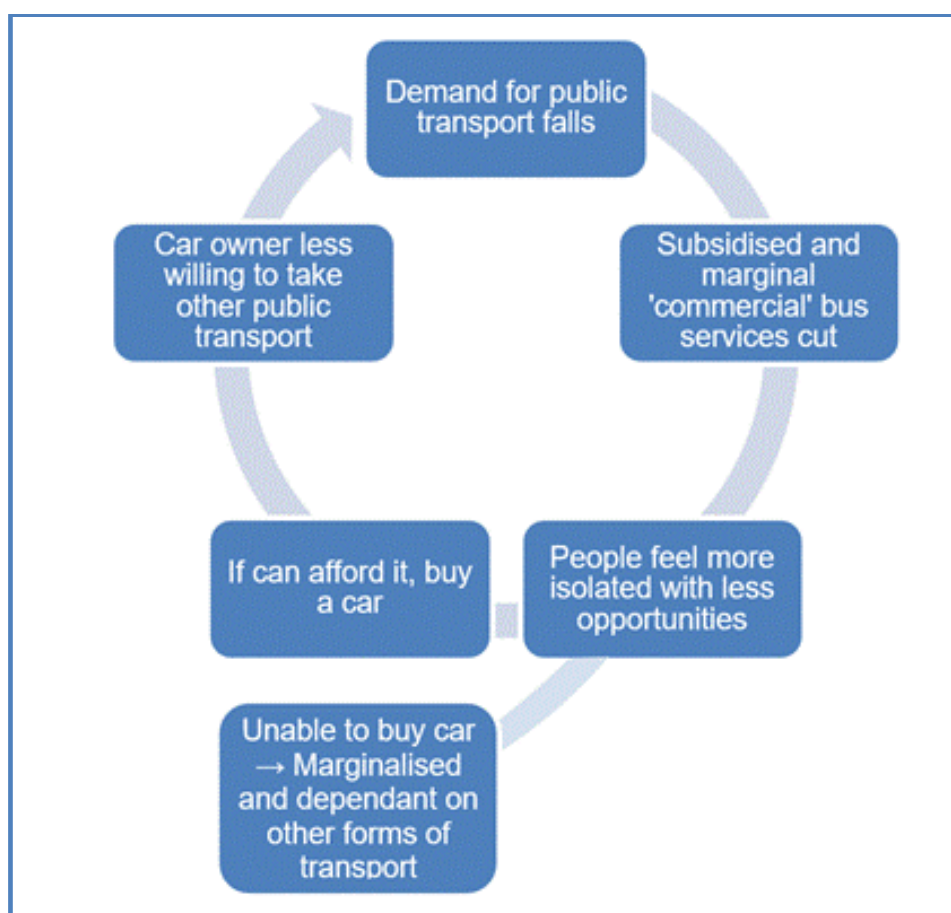
⁵ <http://www.assembly.wales/Laid%20Documents/CR-LD8412%20-%20Report%20by%20the%20Equality%20of%20Opportunity%20Committee%20on%20the%20Impact%20of%20Welsh%20Government%20Policy%20on%20the%20Acc-10022011-209812/cr-ld8412-e-English.pdf>

consider using when deciding how best to secure and sustain bus service provision in their area.

Given the year-on-year decline in bus patronage, it is fair to conclude, that without action passenger numbers will continue to decline which would have cost implications; with no change in policies, the UK Department for Transport estimates that Welsh bus patronage will fall by 10 percent between 2017/18 and 2035/36 (around 0.6% per annum)⁶.

A summary of likely effects of doing nothing above what is already planned or committed is shown below:

Figure 0-2 Consequences of doing nothing



⁶ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/public-transport-wales-bill-draft-regulatory-impact-assessment.pdf>

What is the intent of the Bus Services (Wales) Bill?

The Bus Services (Wales) Bill will make changes to the legislative framework relating to the planning and delivery of local bus services in Wales. It has several separate elements that taken together are intended to make bus services in Wales better, more efficient, affordable and sustainable. These are:

1. Welsh Partnership Schemes⁷, franchising and local authority run bus services:

- a. To improve partnership working arrangements by creating Welsh Partnership Schemes (WPSs) which will provide local authorities and operators with greater opportunity to develop partnerships for the delivery of bus services in an area. WPSs are aimed at making buses a more attractive proposition for the travelling public, by bringing together operators and local authorities to plan and implement a series of agreed measures and improvements to the quality and provision of buses services – such as coordination of timetables, better information and ticketing, higher quality vehicles and measures to speed up buses.
- b. To create franchising provisions in Wales that will provide an alternative workable system of franchising to address the limitations within current provisions. Under this option, local authorities would be able to develop a franchising scheme under which they would have the exclusive right to award contracts to run routes on a bus network to the most competitive bidders. For example, local authorities would have the ability to develop a single franchising scheme containing multiple delivery contracts as considered appropriate by the local authority.
- c. To remove restrictions in current legislation on local authority-run bus services so that local authorities would be able - either solely or working jointly - to provide local bus services in their area or collective areas. This will allow local authorities to directly run bus services either as an in-house service or through an arm's length company that is connected to the local authority, thus entering the market and operating services to make a profit in the same way as any other commercial operator (and therefore subject to the same competitive constraints as any other operator).

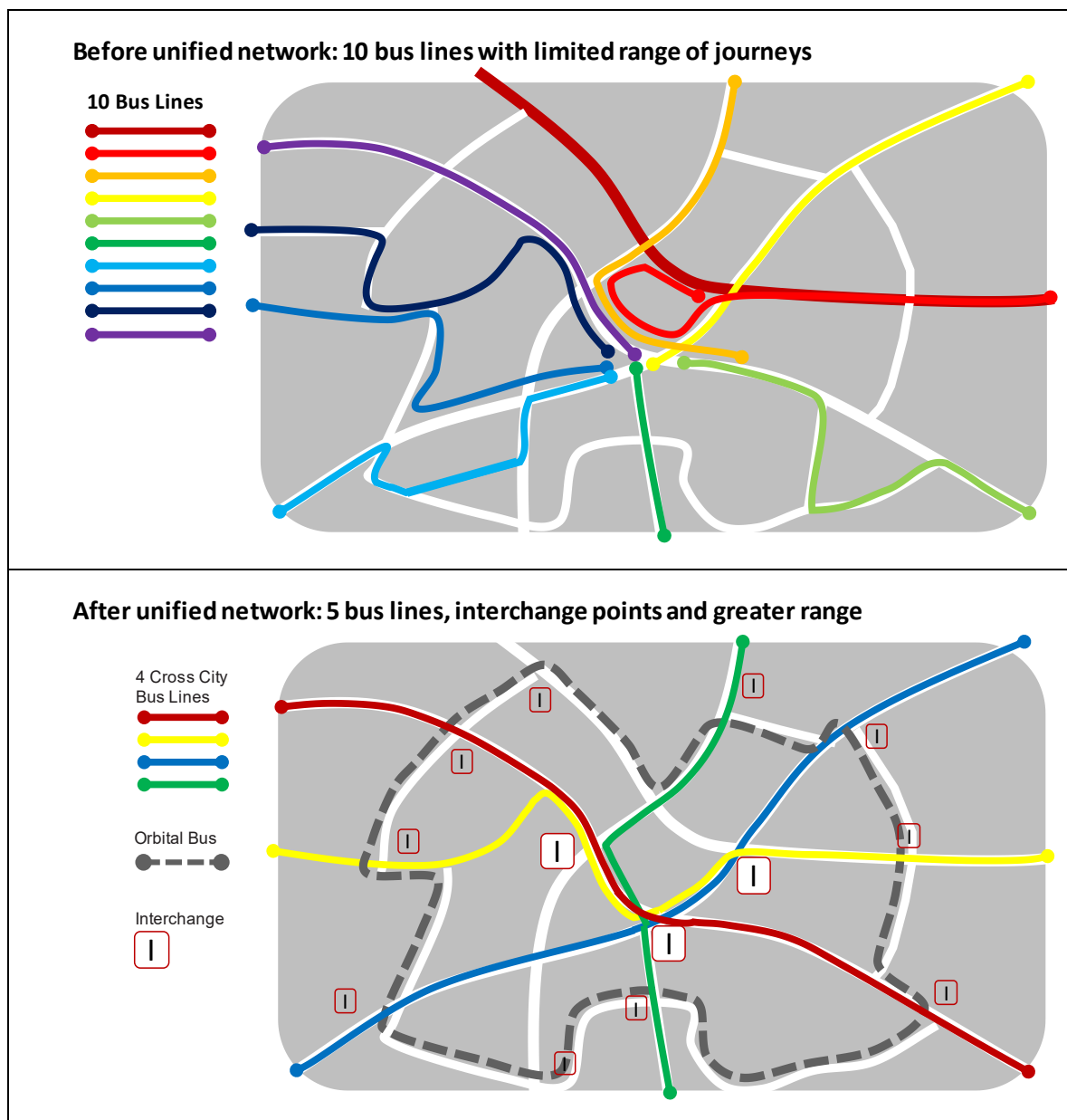
Which tools a local authority may need to use would depend on the different contexts, for example, rural versus urban bus routes, large cities versus smaller towns. Having this level of flexibility and influence would contribute towards local authorities' priorities of providing and integrating public transport services, increasing patronage, reducing car use, reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality.

The percentage of Local Authorities who will adopt Welsh Partnership Schemes, franchising, and provide services in their area cannot be stated at this stage of the assessment, as this will be a matter for determination by Local Authorities in the future. However, the assumption is made that the proposals will be adopted to a degree, thus

⁷ These were called Enhanced Quality Partnerships in the Consultation White Paper

facilitating the provision of an improved bus service which addresses local communities' specific needs and provides an overall enhancement to the area. It is also possible that a local authority may adopt a Partnership Scheme or franchise in only part of its area, thereby reducing the overall cost.

One of the key benefits of having these tools available to local authorities is the greater opportunity they present for achieving a unified network in an area. A unified network is one that runs fewer routes but to a wider range of destinations. The example below shows a unified network, where instead of 10 bus routes in a city, there are 5 bus routes with an orbital route that offers passengers a wider range of destinations, and quicker travel times for some trips:



2. Open Data and Service Information Provisions

Open data addresses the provision of accurate, up-to-date information about bus services; service information addresses the provision of information from bus operators when commercial bus services are withdrawn or varied and a local authority is considering options for retaining the level of service.

Open data

The purpose of the Open Data provisions is to enable Welsh Ministers to make regulations regarding the provision of information about Welsh bus services by operators, local authorities and the Traffic Commissioner to ensure consistent and comprehensive information about bus services for the travelling public. The type of information to which the regulations would apply includes:

- routes and stopping places;
- timetables;
- fares and ticketing; and,
- live information about how busy a bus is and whether it is running on-time.

The purpose of the provision is to set out requirements for a comprehensive open data set for the bus services that are available across Wales, which can be made easily accessible to the public. The information would also be available to App designers who would be able to use it to provide comprehensive travel information across digital platforms for all modes of public transport.

The Public Transport Users' Committee undertook a review of the provision of public transport information and published a report in April 2012. The report found that "current information across the public transport network is inconsistent, fragmented, largely historical / legacy based and not driven by input from users⁸".

The Welsh Government currently grant funds Traveline Cymru to provide comprehensive public transport information via their website, app and call centre. However, this service is reliant on operators providing accurate and up to date information.

The improvement in information provision to users and the subsequent increase in accessibility of services and passenger confidence in services would be likely to lead to an increase in patronage⁹. This increase in patronage would bring associated benefits, including reduction in car use and the subsequent reduction in congestion and carbon emissions, thereby contributing to wider priorities for the local authority.

⁸ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2017-09/provision-of-public-transport-information.pdf>

⁹ <https://bettertransport.org.uk/sites/default/files/pdfs/bus-services-act-guidance.pdf>

Service information

The service information provisions in the Bill is to enable local authorities to require bus operators to provide certain information when services are withdrawn or varied and the local authority is considering how best to maintain the level of service.

The availability of accurate information on withdrawn or varied services will assist local authorities when making decisions on their local bus services. If a local authority decides to subsidise a replacement service, the information will help secure cost effective replacement services. This policy was identified by the Competition Commission's Local Bus Services Market investigation. It recommended that local authorities should be enabled to obtain, and where appropriate disclose, information about the revenue and patronage of bus services that are being registered with the intention of enabling local authorities to better manage tenders for supported services. We propose that this element of the Bill will implement this recommendation, helping to make best use of public sector resources used to support the bus services that communities in Wales need.

Consultation and Summary of Responses

The Welsh Government has undertaken significant engagement with delivery partners, transport operators, local authorities and transport advisory groups to provide stakeholders with a platform to feed in relevant evidence to the preparation of the Bill.

The then Cabinet Secretary for the Economy and Infrastructure announced a five-point plan on the 15th of September 2016 outlining support to help the bus industry become more sustainable and better able to ride out temporary economic challenges¹⁰. This included working proactively with local authorities to identify vulnerable services and establish local strategies to respond to any planned withdrawal of services considered vital to the local community. Other topics were discussed, such as offering all bus companies assistance through Business Wales and Finance Wales.

In January 2017 the Welsh Government commenced engagement on possible bus reform, and in October and November of 2017 eight high profile workshops were undertaken across Wales. These workshops involved a diverse range of stakeholders across the industry and explored in detail the issues and solutions in the short to mid to long term, which could be implemented through existing legislation or through new legislation required.

Bus company engagement has been delivered through a series of collaborative seminars across Wales during 2018 and 2019 involving the industry, Business Wales, Driver Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), Traffic Commissioner for Wales and Welsh Government,

¹⁰ A copy of the written statement on Local Bus Service is available at: <https://gov.wales/written-statement-local-bus-services>

providing vital support on topics including working practices, legal requirements, succession planning and sustainable businesses.

In October 2017 the Welsh Government consulted on Discounted Bus Travel for Younger Persons¹¹ and on the Mandatory Concessionary Fares Scheme in Wales¹². These included questions such as

- a) Which categories of journeys should be eligible for discounted travel;
- b) Whether the age of eligibility and size of discount should be changed;
- c) Alternative payment methods, including a fixed contribution per journey or a monthly/annual pass for free travel at the point of use.
- d) Whether Welsh Government should become the Travel Concession Authority;
- e) An increase to the age of eligibility for older people to match the UK state retirement age;
- f) The issue of 'companion' passes for disabled people; and
- g) Extending the scheme to include volunteers.

The consultation for both the Discounted Bus Travel for Younger Persons and the Mandatory Concessionary Fares Scheme in Wales closed on January 2018 with outcomes published in May 2018.

Subsequent to that consultation, the Welsh Government published a White Paper Consultation Document¹³ 'Improving Public Transport' on 10 December 2018 and the consultation period remained open until 27 March 2019. An Easy Read and a Community and Youth version of the White Paper were also published. Large print, braille, audio CD and alternative language versions were available on request.

There were two parts to the White Paper which covered the following:

- Part 1 – Bus services
- Part 2 – Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs)

For the purposes of this assessment, the proposals set out in Part 2 (Taxis and PHVs) and the changes to the Mandatory Concessionary Fares Scheme have since been withdrawn from the legislative proposals, and are not a part of this Integrated Impact Assessment¹⁴.

Since completing consultation and engagement on the White Paper, the proposals for a Bill have been developed in full. Consultation papers and a Regulatory Impact Assessment are published on the Government's website¹⁵.

¹¹ <https://gov.wales/discounted-bus-travel-younger-people-wales>

¹² <https://gov.wales/mandatory-concessionary-fares-scheme-wales>

¹³ https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2018-12/improving-public-transport_0.pdf

¹⁴ <https://gov.wales/written-statement-update-public-transport-wales-bill-and-wider-bus-reform-agenda>

¹⁵ <https://gov.wales/improving-public-transport-0>

A total of 564 responses were received. 558 responses were in relation to the main consultation document. Of these 278 responses were received from the Cardiff Hackney Alliance in the form of a standard campaign response addressing the questions posed in relation to taxis and PHVs only (Part 2). 101 responded to questions on bus proposals only.

In addition to the written consultation, four engagement events were held at Conwy, Cardiff, Swansea and Llandrindod Wells, with a total of around 200 in attendance. The events took the form of presentations by officials, followed by facilitated round-table discussions with the opportunity for attendees to provide comments on flip charts, followed by a feedback session at the end.

Bus company engagement was delivered through a series of collaborative seminars across Wales during 2018 and 2019 involving the industry, Business Wales, Driver Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), Traffic Commissioner for Wales and Welsh Government; providing vital support on topics including working practices, legal requirements and sustainable businesses.

Specific engagement meetings have also taken place with a range of organisations and individuals sharing protected characteristics. This has included:

- a) Disability Wales, who were able to provide views expressed by disabled people with a broad range of impairments;
- b) Guide Dogs Cymru;
- c) Youth Parliament; and
- d) Children in Wales.

Briefing sessions were also held with the following groups:

- a) Future Generations Commission;
- b) the Welsh Local Government Association;
- c) Country Surveyors Society and the Association of Transport Coordinating Officers;
- d) South West Transport Portfolio Members;
- e) Transport Cabinet Members Advisory Group in North Wales;
- f) NBN Bus Workstream;
- g) Community Transport Association;
- h) Unite, Branch Secretary for the Hackney Carriage Association;
- i) Taxi and PHV Licencing Experts Panel;
- j) Institute of Licencing; and
- k) Uber in Wales.

The Public Transport (Wales) Bill: Draft Regulatory Impact Assessment was published on 23 July 2019¹⁶. Engagement on the draft Regulatory Impact Assessment was undertaken with key stakeholders including local authorities and bus operators up to September 2019 to finalise the document.

¹⁶ <https://gov.wales/public-transport-wales-bill-draft-regulatory-impact-assessment>

The extent of wider consultation undertaken between January 2017 and September 2019 on bus reform in Wales and the Improving Public Transport White Paper is summarised in the Regulatory Impact Assessment that supports and is separate from this IIA.

The summary below highlights some of the common themes picked up across the engagement events and meetings pertinent to this IIA:

- **General** – There was a strong agreement on the need for local authorities to work together and new structures should be built around those that are already in place. Collaborative working was an opportunity to introduce economies of scale, improve standards and introduce consistencies. There was concern over lack of resources and skill shortage within the areas. Overall there was a view that highway authority functions should remain with local authorities and careful consideration should be given to the management of education transport. There was a strong view that more engagement was necessary as proposals are developed.
- **Welsh Partnership Schemes (WPS)** – these were called Enhanced Quality Partnerships in the consultation White Paper. There was general support for the proposals in relation to WPSs and there was a feeling that partnerships could lead to improvements and better use of resources, as long as it is done properly as a true partnership. One of the issues consistently raised was the need for proper engagement with communities and passengers throughout the process to ensure their voices are heard and their needs met. Another issue consistently raised was recognising that there are very different challenges between urban and rural areas and what works for one area will not necessarily work in another. Some concerns were raised that EQPs could be time consuming and bureaucratic. Comments were also raised that there needs to be longer contract periods and more certainty.
- **Franchising** - There was some support for franchising, although others felt that it would not work. There was a feeling that it could work in some areas, but would not be suitable everywhere. There were concerns raised about the costs and skills required to implement and manage franchising. The issue of the potential impact on small and medium sized operators was an area that was consistently discussed, with mainly concerns raised about the need to ensure a level playing field in the tender process. There was also support for better network management to avoid bus congestion on popular routes whilst other services are withdrawn.
- **Local authority-run bus services** - There was some support for local authorities running bus services and some felt that it would be useful where there is a lack of competition or there are high costs of subsidising services. Some felt that it would not work at all whilst others felt that it could work in some areas, but would not be suitable everywhere. There were concerns raised about the costs, capacity and skills required. Concerns were also raised about pensions.
- **Information sharing and Open Data** - There was good support for the proposals in relation to information sharing, although there was also a feeling that the information is

already available. The Traveline Cymru service was raised at several meetings and the need to build on that and properly promote the service. Comments were raised about the opportunity for using funding conditions, such as Bus Services Support Grant, and registering of services through the Traffic Commissioner as ways of requiring information on services and fares. Comments were also raised about the importance of taking into account passengers who do not access information about services online and that information needs to be made available and accessible to everyone.

Some of the headlines among all the responses received in the outcome report were:

- 94% of respondents agreed that Local Authorities should set out how bus services should be delivered within their Local Transport Plans;
- 88% agreed that Welsh Government should have the power to set up regional and national ticketing schemes; and
- 75% agreed with the proposal that the TrawsCymru bus network should be managed by the Welsh Government under bus franchising agreements and that local authorities should be able to introduce bus franchising in their areas.

Development in accordance with the sustainable development principle

The seven Well-being Goals and the five ways of working under the Sustainable Development Principle as provided in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act') provide a framework for government decision-making and need to underpin everything we do. The Act prompts us to "show our workings" in the development and implementation of policy and legislation, making clear how the ways of working set out in the Act have been actively applied in order to maximise the contribution across the seven well-being goals and the Welsh Government's well-being objectives¹⁷.

The IIA Guidance explains that to find shared sustainable solutions, we need to:

- think laterally when developing policy;
- consider the potential impacts and long-term consequences of policy on a wider set of parameters;
- look to prevent problems occurring or getting worse;
- work collaboratively with a wider range of colleagues and stakeholders and involve people affected in all their diversity; and
- make the connections between social, economic, environmental and cultural challenges and integrate our planning and delivery with other policy areas for maximum good effect.

¹⁷ <https://gov.wales/well-being-wales-2019>

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2017-10/prosperity-for-all-the-national-strategy-well-being-statement-2017.pdf>

The Future Generations Framework for Projects¹⁸, developed by the Future Generations Commissioner, in collaboration with a range of stakeholders, has been considered as part of the development of this IIA.

The proposed legislation has been developed in light of the five ways of working as advocated by the Act. When thinking about the contribution that the proposals can make to well-being, it has also been important to consider the well-being goals and well-being objectives. These have been taken on board throughout the consideration of the likely impacts on social, cultural, economic and environmental well-being in sections 2 to 5 of this IIA.

Throughout the consideration of the different impacts in sections 2-5 and Annexes A-G of this IIA, reference is made as to how the proposed legislative changes respond to the need to think long term, prevent problems from occurring or getting worse, how stakeholders have been involved and opportunities for further collaboration alongside taking into account how economic, social, cultural and environmental issues have been considered in an integrated way.

This integrated impact assessment has taken into account the findings in the Wales Future Trends Report¹⁹ when considering potential impacts and contributions to the well-being goals and objectives

That report identifies the key social, economic, environmental and cultural trends that could affect Wales in the future, as well as some of the factors that could influence the direction of those trends. The report sets out the future trends under six themes:

1. Population;
2. Health;
3. Economy & infrastructure;
4. Climate change;
5. Land use & natural resources; and
6. Society & culture.

Pertinent issues and statistics relevant to this IIA are considered within each of the sections and annexes; in the following section, all references are sourced from the Future Trends Report (<https://gov.wales/future-trends-2017>) unless noted otherwise. An overview of the six themes is presented below to help set out the context and framework for the proposed legislation.

Population

¹⁸ https://futuregenerations.wales/resources_posts/future-generations-framework/

¹⁹ <https://gov.wales/future-trends-2017>

- a) Wales' population is also projected to increase over the next 20 years, possibly by around 3.6%²⁰ between 2018 and 2038
- b) Over the next 20 years, the percentage of over 65s in Wales is set to increase from around 21% in 2018 to around 27% of the entire population in 2038. The population aged over 75 in Wales is also projected to increase from 9% of the population in 2018 to around 14% in 2038²¹.
- c) The number of young people (aged under 16) is projected to increase up to 2023 and then fall slightly up to 2030, although continuing to account for around 18% of the population over this period.

Health

- a) Some illnesses such as heart conditions and arthritis demonstrate a slight decrease over the last 10 years, while others such as diabetes and mental illnesses have displayed increases.
- b) Mental illnesses have demonstrated a noticeable increase, rising from 9% of adults reporting being treated in 2009 to 13% by 2015.
- c) With an ageing population, if current trends continue, there could be a marked increase in dementia sufferers. By 2025 there could be 50,000 people aged 65 or over living with dementia in Wales, with nearly a quarter of them aged 90 or over.
- d) It is projected that smoking levels will continue to reduce, while obesity levels and the number of people eating less than five portions of fruit and vegetables per day look set to increase slightly.

Economy and Infrastructure

- a) Following the recession in 2008, a productivity slowdown sharply reduced growth rates; Wales was particularly affected.
- b) Wales's performance on GVA is less positive than on other measures, reflecting both demographic factors (including a higher dependent population relative to other parts of the UK) and the lack of 'economic mass'. However, over recent years, the labour market in Wales has performed well compared both to other parts of the UK and to the past.
- c) Across developed countries economic growth has been reflected in a shift towards a service-based economy. Over the long term, manufacturing's role has been decreasing in most developed economies, but the fall in the UK has been greater than in most other countries. Since the recession, this trend has reduced.
- d) Wales has great untapped growth potential to generate energy, including from renewable sources. There is currently significant growth in the community level low carbon energy sector in Wales.
- e) The provision of broadband infrastructure is developing rapidly after a slower start relative to the rest of the UK. This was in part due to Wales' demographics and the high level of rural households that are harder to connect to conventional wired broadband.

²⁰ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/nationalpopulationprojections2016basedstatisticalbulletin>

²¹ <https://gov.wales/national-population-projections-2016-based>

The rapid increase in mobile internet infrastructure looks set to continue, which should help to reach those households that cannot currently access higher speed internet.

- f) Current trends suggest that, despite growth in rail use, private vehicles are set to remain the dominant mode of transport in Wales in the short to medium term at least.
- g) The expected advent of autonomous or driverless vehicles in the next 10 to 15 years could in turn have implications for our transport systems.

Climate change

- a) Global temperature increases are likely to exceed the two-degree threshold, unless significant and rapid action is taken globally.
- b) The latest UK Climate Change Risk Assessment identified areas for priority action including flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses and infrastructure, risks to health, wellbeing and productivity from high temperatures, risk of shortages in the public water supply, and for agriculture, energy generation and industry, with impacts on freshwater ecology.
- c) Infrastructure across Wales is already exposed to a range of climate hazards, which are projected to increase both in frequency and severity. Such infrastructure includes transport networks.

Land Use and Natural Resources

- a) The decline in heavy industry has resulted in a reduction in emissions of some pollutants, such as particulate matter. Other sources of air pollution, such as transport, agriculture and domestic heating, have become more of a concern.
- b) Housing need in Wales is growing due to the number of households increasing faster than the number of available properties. In contrast, there is likely to be less suitable land available for development as flood plains and other lower lying land becomes increasingly prone to flooding.

Society and Culture

- a) Increases in online shopping, flexible working and the ability to work from home create an adverse impact on the demand for public transport. The effect of this wider trend is not as significant as other parts of the UK however, as our demographics mean that digital skills in Wales lag behind the rest of the UK.
- b) The number of households in Wales looks set to increase significantly. For example, the number of single person households in Wales is predicted to rise by over 21% in the next 20 years between 2017 and 2037. Between 2019 and 2023 Cardiff is expected to experience a population growth of 3.8%²², compared to a predominantly rural area such as Pembrokeshire, which has an expected growth of 0.3%²³. It is clear growth in population and housing will not be uniform across Wales.

²² <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Projections/Local-Authority/2014-based/populationprojections-by-localauthority-year>

²³ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Projections/Local-Authority/2011-Based/PopulationProjections-By-LocalAuthority-Year>

- c) Whilst poverty levels are a little higher in Wales than the rest of the UK, in terms of overall wealth, levels are higher in Wales than in most areas outside the South of England. Poverty levels remain stubborn, particularly for working age people. Poverty amongst older people has reduced in recent years. Generally, the percentage of the Welsh population in persistent poverty is falling slightly, although there has been an increase in the amount of under 18s in persistent poverty over recent years. Affordable public transport is considered beneficial for those in poverty, as it enhances opportunities to access services and education.
- d) Wales is becoming more diverse as a population although the sense of Welsh identity is broadly stable. Around 85% of those born in Wales self-identify as Welsh.
- e) The numbers of Welsh speakers declined in the 2011 Census and there remain challenges in ensuring young people retain the language post-compulsory education. More recent data suggest there has been an increase in those who speak Welsh but not fluently, and Welsh speakers of the future are far more likely to have learnt Welsh at school than at home.

Summary

Overall, it is clear there are significant opportunities for the proposed legislative changes to help address key challenges and issues in Wales, spanning:

- a) Social isolation, discrimination and matters of equality and access to communities, facilities and services;
- b) Access to culture and impacts on the Welsh language through connectivity and information provision associated with transport choices;
- c) Mental health and physical activity linked to travel choices and access to key services, leisure, recreation and employment opportunities;
- d) Jobs, skills and training and access to opportunities through sufficient transport infrastructure and services; and
- e) Environmental risks to human health and the natural environment taking into account climate change given its relationship to transport and vehicle emissions.

These issues are explored further and in more detail in the appraisals presented in the following sections.

Proportionality

As set out in the IIA Guidance, IIA requires a proportionate approach to assessment.

The proposed Bill allows for potential change to be made, primarily to the way bus services are managed and operated across Wales, but the scale of change and its possible specific impacts are currently unknown. Whilst assumptions have been made to help assist this IIA (as set out above), overall the case for government intervention is strong, and the effects in the round will be positive given the nature of the proposed changes in response to the current and likely future situation described above.

Overall, the proposals are likely to involve low-risk interventions albeit with a range of possible impacts which could be experienced by different groups. In the following sections, this IIA considers the risks, impacts and groups likely to be affected.

The assessment is largely high level as the powers in the Bill are enabling powers, which may or may not be used by local authorities and are based on the information available at this point in time, prior to the passing and implementation of the legislation.

SECTION 2. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON SOCIAL WELL-BEING?

2.1 People and Communities

Background

Bus services are a vital part of Welsh economic and social life. People rely on the bus to get to work, for hospital appointments, visiting friends, going shopping and to access leisure services.

Population growth in Wales is expected to continue; the population of Wales is projected to increase by 3.1% to 3.21 million by 2026 and by 4.6% to 3.26 million by 2041. The number of people aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 232,000 (36.6%) between 2016 and 2041.²⁴

Against this backdrop of population growth, there has been a long term decline in bus usage and services, with passenger numbers falling on most routes in Wales. Whilst this decline has stabilised in recent years (in 2017-18 the numbers of drivers and vehicles in operation increased by 7.7% and 4.2% respectively²⁵) the impacts of a long term decline in bus services on people and communities are still apparent.

With no change in policies, the UK Department for Transport estimates that Welsh bus patronage will fall by 10% between 2017/18 and 2035/36 (around 0.6% per annum)²⁶. This decline in services would likely lead to increased reliance on the private car and subsequent negative impacts on congestion and the environment.

Consequences of diminished or lost services are wide ranging, impacting wider transport networks and resulting in rising fares for fare paying passengers. As bus networks decline, so does the accessibility of jobs and services and opportunities to ease traffic congestion and reduce carbon emissions are also lost.

Bus services often connect to poorer or isolated areas and communities, so any reduction in services brings with it the risk of social exclusion and increasing loneliness, where people are left with few alternatives for getting around.

Without action, it is estimated that passenger numbers and local bus services will continue to decline over the long term, meaning there is a greater pressure on fare paying

²⁴ <https://gov.wales/national-population-projections>

²⁵ <https://gov.wales/public-service-vehicles-buses-and-taxis-april-2017-march-2018>

²⁶ The Department for Transport's NTEM (National Trip End Model) bus use projections are presented in a software package called TEMPro (Department for Transport. TEMPro & NTEM data release notes and frequently asked questions: Additional guidance. December 2016).

passengers, operators and the public purse to sustain the network; the Bus Services (Wales) Bill contains provisions that seek to address and stem the decline.

A literature review has helped consider the potential impacts on people and communities, with the following pertinent points relevant to this IIA:

- a) Whilst specific statistics for Wales are not publicly available, 91% of people in Great Britain are within 13 minutes' walk of a bus stop, and the bus is important in stimulating economic activity outside urban areas and connecting people to education, jobs, shopping and leisure facilities²⁷.
- b) Under the National Survey for Wales 2017-2018, people were asked about the facilities and services (like shops, parks, schools and GP surgeries) that were within 15 to 20 minutes' walking distance from their homes. 68% were satisfied that good services and facilities are available in their local area, but 3% said that there are no services or facilities in their area. 77% were satisfied with their ability to get to or access the facilities and services they needed. 86% reported that public transport links were available (meaning that they were not for 14%)²⁸.
- c) Loss of bus services can cut people off from jobs, services and education, damage local shops and businesses, and also affect people's physical and mental health²⁹.
- d) Rural bus services keep communities connected, provide rural tourism economy benefits, and help tackle problems with social exclusion³⁰.
- e) Restrictive legislation, and a lack of coordination between operators and low population densities contribute to challenges in providing sustainable bus services³¹.
- f) It is noted those of black ethnicity have higher rates of usage of their bus passes³².
- g) Those in the poorest income quintile experience a worse physical health score than those in the richest quintile³³. With increased public transport being shown to have a positive correlation with physical human health benefits, an effective accessible bus service is vital.
- h) More than one in five people do not have access to a car according to the National Survey for Wales' results³⁴. The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales has also

²⁷ <http://www.urbantransportgroup.org/system/files/general-docs/10210%20Pteg%20Benefits%20of%20the%20bus%20web%20FINAL.pdf>

²⁸ <https://gov.wales/national-survey-wales>

²⁹ Buses in crisis (2018)

³⁰ <http://www.urbantransportgroup.org/system/files/general-docs/pteg%20Case%20for%20bus%20report%20FINAL.pdf>

³¹ <https://bettertransport.org.uk/sites/default/files/research-files/integrated-transport-a-new-generation.pdf>

³² Ethnic Group differences in impacts of free bus passes in England: A national study (2018)

³³ https://www.jrf.org.uk/data?f%5B0%5D=field_taxonomy_poverty_indicator%3A872

³⁴ <https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Transport>

recently indicated that 25% of Welsh families have no access to a car³⁵. The Future Trends Report (2017) explains that private vehicles are set to remain as the dominant mode of transport in Wales in the short to medium term.

- i) Access to public transport is important for disabled people who typically travel a third less than others, largely because of the lack of access to a car³⁶.
- j) The most likely people without access to a car are younger, older, disabled, ethnic minorities, women and those on low incomes. Low-income individuals are more likely to travel by bus and more accessible public transport has the potential to alter overall distribution of disposable income and benefit social inclusion³⁷.
- k) Young people, particularly 17-20-year olds are more reliant on bus services than other age groups, primarily for journeys between school and home³⁸.
- l) Research reports, and consultation exercise discussions have demonstrated that disabled people and women in particular can face significant physical and/or attitudinal barriers or disincentives to using bus transport.

Impact of the Bus Services (Wales) Bill on People and Communities

The legislative proposals would provide local authorities with tools to better manage the organisation of bus services within their local area, allowing them to deliver the most appropriate model which fits to the local context. Use of the tools such as franchising or local authority run services would be subject to appropriate justification set out within local business cases.

The proposed legislation aims to provide local authorities with a greater level of flexibility and influence which would in turn help them to meet their priorities of providing and integrating public transport services, seeking to result in increasing patronage, reducing car use, reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality.

One benefit of having the proposed tools available to local authorities is the greater opportunity they present for achieving a unified network in an area. This would seek to provide greater connectivity, with associated improved access to communities, facilities, services and employment opportunities and in a more integrated way.

The measures proposed in the Bill could also enable improved standards - for example, in terms of staff training and behavioural requirements.

The proposals also will enable the creation of a comprehensive open data set for the bus services that are available in Wales, which is easily accessible to the public. The information would be available to App designers who would be able to use it to provide

³⁵ <https://futuregenerations.wales/news/commissioner-challenges-1bn-m4-road/>

³⁶ The effect of transport accessibility on the social inclusion of wheelchair users (2016)

³⁷ Fare's fair? Concessionary travel policy and social justice (2015)

³⁸ Is Britain fairer – the state of equality and human rights (2018)

comprehensive travel information across all modes of transport. This would assist people to plan their journeys using public transport, making it easier for people to use buses and access key destinations. This would also help operators / local authorities better plan their services to accommodate the needs and trends of passengers or potential users, providing better quality services.

The improvement in information provision to users and the subsequent increase in accessibility of services and passenger confidence in services would be likely to lead to an increase in patronage³⁹. This increase in patronage would bring indirect benefits, including reduction in car use and the subsequent reduction in congestion and carbon emissions, thereby contributing to wider priorities for the local authority.

For an efficient public transport network to be implemented, a holistic approach needs to be taken. There must be improved integration between different travel modes, with the encouragement of achieving a unified network of services, with easy interchange and door-door travel opportunities. For this to be achieved there would need to be improvements in both service patterns and coverage as well as improving the quality of service access.

Current policies and legislation promote a change in travel mode from private car to public transport, helping to promote environmental sustainability. However, it should be noted while an increase in patronage leads to a reduction in private car travel, in comparison one bus produces more greenhouse gas than one car⁴⁰. Therefore, for legislative proposals to create better air quality, there needs to be sufficient bus traveller occupancy to create an overall net loss of greenhouse gas.

In summary, the Bill proposals will result in positive impacts including:

- a) Improved quality, consistency, performance, information provision and reliability of journeys involving bus;
- b) Better connection of people to places (education, employment, health, leisure, tourism, community);
- c) Reduced pollution and congestion from vehicles through increased bus patronage and less reliance on the car;
- d) An integrated Welsh bus network coordinated with other transport modes, including active travel to help reduce reliance on the car and improve access to all groups of people; and
- e) Encouraging more people from a wider demographic to use buses with the aim of improved accessibility and attractiveness, including for people with protected characteristics.

Overall, the proposals are anticipated to result in a positive effect on people and communities.

³⁹ Improving bus service quality and information in Winchester (2007)

⁴⁰ <https://www.driving.co.uk/news/public-transport-worse-than-driving-for-exposure-to-air-pollution/>

2.2 Children's Rights

In 2011 Wales became the first country in the UK to incorporate children's rights into domestic law with the introduction of the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011. The Measure embeds consideration of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the optional protocols into Welsh law.

The main duty within the Measure, under section 1, requires Ministers to have due regard to the UNCRC when exercising any of their functions.

The process of having due regard can range from thinking about the impact of decisions on children in the course of day-to-day work, to the formal application of a structured impact assessment tool accompanied by a record of the outcome.

In place of screening questions, the appropriate flowchart set out in the Children's Rights Scheme has been considered, which identified that a full Children's Rights Impact Assessment is required⁴¹.

A Children's Rights Impact Assessment has been completed (please refer to Annex A).

2.3 Equality

The Equalities Act 2010 places a General Equality Duty on Welsh public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, as well as to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Welsh Government is required to have arrangements in place for carrying out Equality Impact Assessments across all of the protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is the formal, systematic and thorough analysis of an organisation's actions to assess those actions for the possibility of discrimination, and for the opportunity to promote equality and foster good relations.

At the time of the White Paper consultation, an initial EqIA was completed. This indicated the proposals as a whole were likely to be beneficial to people with protected characteristics, notwithstanding the identified impact on a specific age group of the change to the age of eligibility for the Mandatory Concessionary Fares Scheme. The information contained in the assessment was tested during the consultation exercise and the assessment has been updated to take account of the latest information as well as the responses to the consultation and the removal from the Bill of the change to the eligibility age for the Mandatory Concessionary Fares Scheme.

⁴¹ Page 22 <http://www.assembly.wales/Laid%20Documents/GEN-LD9732%20-%20Children's%20Rights%20Scheme%202014-22042014-255569/gen-ld9732-e-English.pdf>

Undertaking an EqIA is mandatory and the assessment has been completed and is at Annex B.

2.4 Rural Proofing

We are expected to ensure that the needs of the people who live, work, socialise and do business in rural areas are objectively considered. Completing a Rural Proofing Impact Assessment is a mandatory part of the policy making process.

Rural proofing is a government commitment, underpinned by the principles of social justice, sustainability, equality and fairness, and includes action to improve the quality of life for those residing in our Welsh rural communities.

A Rural Proofing Impact Assessment has been completed, and is available at Annex C.

2.5 Health

A Health Impact Assessment considers how the health and well-being of a population may be affected by a proposed action, be it a policy, programme, plan, project or a change to the organisation or delivery of a public service.

The Welsh Government has taken a keen strategic policy interest and an international lead in Health Impact Assessment and is committed to developing its use as a key part of improving health and reducing inequalities.

A Health Impact Assessment has been completed and is available at Annex D

2.6 Privacy

A Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) is an analysis of how personal information, related to groups or individuals, is collected, stored, protected, shared and managed. The PIA is a process for assessing the privacy implications of activities which involve the use, and changes to the use, of personal data.

A policy, project, legislation or ICT project that will process personal data, or require another organisation to do so, must comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Human Rights Act 1998. Formal assessment of privacy impacts is a requirement for all new activities which involve the use of personal data.

The proposals put forward under this piece of legislation do not require the processing of personal data and no Privacy Impact Assessment has been undertaken. However, if the implementation of the legislation later involves processing information that could be used to identify individuals, then the appropriate authority must complete the Privacy Impact Assessment template at Annex D below.

SECTION 3. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON CULTURAL WELL-BEING AND THE WELSH LANGUAGE?

3.1 Cultural Well-being

The Welsh Government's commitment to supporting cultural well-being is strengthened and supported through the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which outlines seven national well-being goals, including. 'A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language', seeking to create "a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation."

The following key documents, which have been considered as part of this IIA, support the Welsh Government's aspirations for a culture that encourages people to participate in the arts, sports and recreation:

- a) Light Springs through the Dark: A Vision for Culture in Wales⁴², which outlines the Government's vision for Culture in Wales. It explains that the Welsh Government is seeking for everyone across Wales to have equal access to the arts, music, literature and heritage in Wales, and to be encouraged and supported to take part;
- b) Specific guidance⁴³ on assessing the impact of a project on the built historic environment including historic buildings, landscapes, areas and archaeological sites is available by Cadw publication;
- c) Climbing Higher⁴⁴ is the twenty-year strategy for sport and physical activity in Wales. The strategy places sport and physical activity at the heart of Welsh life and sets out what and how Wales aims to achieve its goals for sport by 2025; and
- d) The Wales Future Trends Report⁴⁵ identifies how in Wales, digital skills lag behind the rest of the UK, poverty levels are higher than the rest of the UK, and there remain challenges in ensuring young people retain Welsh language skills post school age.

These documents help to clarify that culture includes museums, archives, libraries and the arts; heritage includes the built historic environment as well as intangible heritage such as traditions; arts encompasses performance and creative sectors including music, literature, theatre and art; whilst sports and recreation include both elite and community sports as well as opportunities to participate in wider outdoor recreation.

⁴² <https://gov.wales/written-statement-light-springs-through-dark-vision-culture-wales>
<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/arts-and-culture-vision-statement-light-springs-through-the-dark.pdf>

⁴³ <http://cadw.gov.wales/docs/cadw/publications/historicenvironment/20170531Heritage%20Impact%20Assessment%20in%20Wales%2026917%20EN.pdf>

⁴⁴ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/climbing-higher.pdf>

⁴⁵ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2018-12/170505-future-trends-report-2017-en.pdf>

Pertinent points relevant to this IIA include:

- a) There is real uncertainty and anxiety over EU funding and reductions in local authority support for Culture, which without mitigation is likely to result in the culture and heritage sectors losing further experienced and specialist staff, which is putting its professionalism at risk. As public funding falls, there is a clear need for the culture sector to increase fundraising, marketing, and income generation. Engaging with creative and cultural activities can have a positive impact on health and wellbeing. Therefore enabling people and communities to access creative activities is a key consideration when considering potential public transport reforms.
- b) The historic environment, including historic buildings, landscapes, areas of archaeological sites and identified monuments are considered to be of national importance to Wales, an important part of the wider cultural heritage of Wales. The ability for people and communities to access features of the historic environment is again a key consideration when considering potential public transport reforms.
- c) Safe routes to schools and development of a national cycle network are essential in promoting active living in towns, cities, villages, and the countryside. Supporting the sustainable travel agenda and encouraging people to choose alternative transport options are important in helping all groups of people access cultural assets.

Responses to the consultation on the White Paper has helped consider potential impacts on cultural well-being. For example:

Diverse Cymru has suggested interactive maps for bus services and better local information in towns and other key locations, such as shopping centres and libraries. An opportunity might be for agreements to be made with shops or community services for them to share public transport information and help people access bus services. Another suggestion is for community hubs to have interactive resources and staff available to help people access public transport. This could be co-located with tourist information. They consider it to be key that relevant information is clear and widely advertised.

The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales has suggested that our transport needs are changing, and existing solutions are no longer adequate. As our population ages over the next few decades the growing demand will be for accessible public transport services which allow people to live independently for longer, across all parts of Wales.

The Commissioner helpfully contributed to the consideration of new ways in which people are creating and consuming culture via digital technology. Looking at the long term, it will be sensible to consider how new technologies will affect how we travel and what sort of infrastructure for our transport system we need to invest in.

Battery-only cars and self-driving cars are predicted to become much more common alongside low-tech active travel alternatives such as walking and cycling, changing the way that our roads need to function and altering the patterns of where there is more or less demand for roads. It is crucial that Wales' approach to transport planning in the future is one that places low-carbon solutions at the heart of its strategy.

Opportunities to use the tools offered in the legislation should take into account steps to build resilient communities, culture, and Welsh language. This could be helped through connecting communities and tackling isolation if reliable and integrated bus services and other travel solutions result through the improvements.

Cytûn (Churches Together in Wales) submitted a response that has been consulted upon with the Church and Society Officers of all its member churches⁴⁶. The response highlights issues with the existing bus network and supports the proposals set out in the White Paper. The group stresses that while private operators have already taken huge strides in improving their vehicle stock and service levels, it is essential that they are encouraged to take the next steps towards providing an integrated service. As churches, the group express a particular interest in seeing a mechanism whereby improved bus transport could be provided on Sundays and evenings, when many have no option but to use cars to travel to church (and other activities), despite the environmental disadvantages of doing so.

The development of a planned network of bus services, which provides an easy to understand, co-ordinated network of routes and timings, integrated with rail services and community-based transport, will facilitate participation in our cultural life (whether the arts, sport or other types of recreation) by making these facilities more accessible.

An improved, responsive integrated transport system for people that live in rural areas could also improve access to such opportunities in more traditionally hard to reach areas, which typically rely more on the private car for travel.

Providing local authorities with a greater level of flexibility and influence would contribute towards their priorities of providing an integrated public transport service, with the greater opportunity for achieving a unified network in an area. Such a network would provide greater connectivity, with associated improved access to the arts, music, sport and heritage in Wales.

The proposals also seek to create a comprehensive open data set for the bus services in Wales utilising new and innovative technology, which would assist people to plan their public transport journeys, making it easier for people to use buses and access cultural destinations. This could also help reverse the technology skills lag in Wales, and if combined with an effective Welsh language strategy, could help increase the use of Welsh in digital communications⁴⁷.

Enhanced branding opportunities through franchising could encourage a branded network of bus services, which could add to the sense of pride and belonging in the country as well as promoting Wales.

One study identified the benefits of the TrawsCymru branding applied across all bus services, which could be used as an example of where the use of the Welsh language and

⁴⁶ Cytûn brings together the principal Christian churches of Wales together with a number of other Christian organisations, representing a total active adult membership of some 160,000 people across Wales, and meaningful contact with many additional children, young people and adults. A full membership list can be found at: <http://www.cytun.co.uk/hafan/en/who-we-are/>

⁴⁷ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2018-12/170505-future-trends-report-2017-en.pdf>

cultural identity could also be included as part of any collaboration, franchise or information sharing initiatives at the implementation stage. TrawsCymru longer distance bus services are an important part of the integrated public transport network in Wales. Funded by the Welsh Government, the buses provide vital public transport for many communities across Wales, while also giving visitors an accessible, affordable and environmentally friendly option for exploring Wales⁴⁸.

This could help strengthen an already strong sense of Welsh identity⁴⁹. However, there are restrictions regarding the differentiation of branding of different bus operators. Ticketing arrangements may be different, and considering the EU competition law, complex joint branding may occur. As there may be individuals who have difficulty understanding differences in branding, effort should be taken to develop cohesive branding/ signage and integrated ticketing arrangements between bus networks.

Any reduction in current local bus services will impact on the ability of people to access arts, sport and recreational opportunities. The proposed changes seek to help ensure the long-term provision of accessible and sustainable bus services, thus seeking to stem or avoid reductions in services.

Overall, the proposals are anticipated to result in a positive effect on cultural well-being.

3.2 Welsh Language

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 was passed by the National Assembly for Wales and was given Royal Assent on 9 February 2011. The Measure makes provision about the official status of the Welsh language in Wales, which amongst other things means that the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language in Wales.

The Measure establishes the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner, whose principal aim in exercising his or her functions is to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language by increasing the use of Welsh language in the provision of services and improving the opportunities people have to use it.

Cymraeg 2050⁵⁰ is Wales' national strategy for increasing the number of Welsh speakers to a million by 2050.

The Welsh Government is fully committed to the target of a million Welsh speakers included in the Taking Wales Forward programme for government, and Prosperity for All: the national strategy⁵¹. A thriving Welsh language is also part of one of the seven well-

⁴⁸<https://westminsterresearch.westminster.ac.uk/download/e89fe6a994e7118e537af4f366465d8ff7a65457904b18796904a8571c1c211d/3288759/IU%20Bus%20Rpt%20final%20version%20090318.pdf>

⁴⁹ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2018-12/170505-future-trends-report-2017-en.pdf>

⁵⁰ <https://gov.wales/cymraeg-2050-welsh-language-strategy>

⁵¹ <https://gov.wales/prosperity-all-national-strategy>

being goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, as explained above.

The Welsh Government also has a statutory obligation to fully consider the effects of its work on the Welsh language. Considering the impacts, both positive and negative, of its work on the Welsh language, and Welsh speaking people and communities is an essential part of the policy development and delivery process.

Cymraeg 2050 sets out that Wales wants to see:

- An increase in the range of services offered in Welsh, and an increase in the use of those services whether delivered by public, private or third sectors;
- Families using Welsh socially, which reinforces what happens in the home, and expands the contexts in which children regard the Welsh language as a relevant part of their everyday life;
- Those who visit to experience Welsh culture;
- Young people's using the language;
- Sustaining and growing communities with a high density of Welsh speakers;
- More to celebrate culture, or 'diwylliant', both within Wales and beyond;
- How technology will develop in future, and consider the way we communicate with one another will continue to change, which presents challenges as well as opportunities for minority languages; and
- That the Welsh language is at the heart of innovation in digital technology to enable the use of Welsh in all digital contexts.

In response to the Improving Public Transport White Paper, the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales wanted government to be clear how the Bill proposals could help to build resilient communities, culture, and Welsh language.

If a reliable and integrated bus service results from the tools provided for in the Bill, there will be better connections between communities, better access to services and a reduction in isolation.

The former Welsh Language Commissioner's consultation response draws attention to the fact that both the Welsh Government and local authorities are subject to Welsh Language Standards. The former Commissioner set out the areas where in her view, the Welsh Language Standards would need to be considered. The Welsh Language Commissioner's comments are set out as part of the consideration of the impacts the legislative proposals could have on the Welsh Language, in the Welsh Language Impact Assessment which is available at Annex E.

SECTION 4. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON ECONOMIC WELL-BEING?

The Welsh Government's commitment to supporting economic well-being is strengthened through the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which outlines seven national well-being goals, considered throughout this IIA. Of particular relevance to this section is the goal 'A Prosperous Wales', seeking to create "an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work."

The following key documents, which have been considered as part of this IIA, support the Welsh Government's aspirations for an economy that allows people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work:

- a) The Welsh Government's Programme for Government: Taking Wales Forward⁵², sets out the government's programme to drive improvement in the Welsh economy and public services, delivering a Wales which is prosperous and secure, healthy and active, ambitious and learning, united and connected.
- b) The National Strategy: Prosperity for All⁵³ and its Economic Action Plan⁵⁴ seeks to grow Wales' economy inclusively, spread opportunity and promote well-being. It contains actions that will work to grow the economy and reduce inequality. It has been developed to meet the needs of today and to prepare for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

A literature review has helped consider pertinent points associated with bus service improvements and the economy. This has found:

- a) To access high streets the main mode of travel is bus, bringing a combined retail and leisure spend of £27.2 billion across Great Britain. Therefore, a good bus network is vital in allowing those living in rural areas and urban conurbations be connected to local businesses, stimulating economic growth in not only rural areas, but towns and cities

⁵² <https://gov.wales/programme-government>

⁵³ <https://gov.wales/prosperity-all-national-strategy>

⁵⁴ <https://gov.wales/prosperity-all-economic-action-plan>

as well⁵⁵. This is particularly pertinent to Wales, where most of its land can be considered as rural in nature⁵⁶.

- b) For metropolitan areas in Great Britain the bus network is estimated to create over £2.5 billion worth of economic benefits against public funding of £0.5 billion. In Wales, buses are estimated to contribute £80m value a year to Welsh economy in wages and taxes⁵⁷.
- c) A key driver for disabled people's dependence on public transport is a lack of access to a car, meaning disabled people typically travel a third less than the general public and studies show this can isolate people⁵⁸.

Providing local authorities with a greater level of flexibility and influence over bus services would contribute towards their priorities of providing and integrating public transport services, seeking to result in increasing patronage, reducing car use, reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality.

One of the key benefits of having these tools available to local authorities is the greater opportunity they present for achieving a unified network (as per Figure 0.2 on page 9) in an area. This would provide improved connectivity, with associated better access to communities, facilities, services and employment opportunities in a more integrated way. This would help contribute positively to creating a more prosperous and connected Wales.

Bus services allow those seeking education and employment to access facilities and opportunities further afield and provide the potential to gain new skills and higher salaries. Sustainable local bus services provide access to employment and training opportunities and to economic activity, particularly local shops and services. This would be an important factor in helping Wales to improve its employment rates and productivity, helping to address changes in the service-based economy and other anticipated future trends⁵⁹.

Bus franchising arrangements could include provisions to set local bus fares thereby ensuring improved consistency and reduced variation between bus fares across Wales.

The proposals seek to create a comprehensive open data set for the bus services that are available in Wales, which is easily accessible to the public. This would assist people to

⁵⁵ Making the connections: The cross sector benefits of supporting bus services (2014)

⁵⁶ https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-08/appendix-02-data-and-definitions-report_0.pdf

⁵⁷ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-37276127>

⁵⁸ The effect of Transport accessibility on the social inclusion of Wheelchair users: A missed method analysis (2016)

⁵⁹ Wales Future Trends Report 2017

plan their journeys using public transport, making it easier for people and business to access employment, leisure services, labour and key markets.

The improvement in information provision to users and the subsequent increase in accessibility of services and passenger confidence in services would be likely to lead to an increase in patronage⁶⁰. This increase in patronage would bring associated benefits, including reduction in car use and the subsequent reduction in congestion and carbon emissions, thereby contributing to these wider priorities for the local authority.

In the Third Sector, Wales has a vibrant and diverse collection of registered charities, voluntary associations and community groups. Research by the Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) suggests that there are over 31,000 voluntary organisations in Wales⁶¹. This includes community associations, self-help groups, voluntary organisations, charities, faith-based organisations, social enterprises, community businesses, housing associations, development trusts, cooperatives and mutual organisations.

Regarding bus franchising, the proposals set out in the White Paper make provision to allow third sector providers in the community transport sector to bid for local bus services provided under franchising agreements. This would present an opportunity for some third sector organisations to grow.

Any changes to demand responsive transport in particular could have a positive impact on the third sector, as those services typically help support a wide range of people and typically those with barriers to accessing the car.

Overall, the proposals are anticipated to result in a positive effect, subject to the scale of change when the tools offered by the legislative changes are utilised.

A Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) has been undertaken for the Bill, which considers in detail the options considered and the cost benefit analysis of the different options. The RIA considers the impact of the Bills proposals on businesses, the public and individuals. The implications of the proposals on local government and other public bodies is also set out in the RIA. A summary of the Regulatory Impact Assessment is provided in Chapter 6 of the Explanatory Memorandum for the Bus Services (Wales) Bill, and the full document is available on the Welsh Government website.

4.4 Justice Impact

The proposals will be brought forward by way of primary legislation in the Bus Services (Wales) Bill. They seek to provide local authorities with more tools to help them plan and deliver bus services in Wales. The proposals in relation to improved partnership working, franchising and local authority run bus services are intended to improve the legislative framework around bus services, providing local authorities with the flexibility to

⁶⁰ <https://bettertransport.org.uk/sites/default/files/pdfs/bus-services-act-guidance.pdf>

⁶¹ <https://www.wcva.org.uk/>

better respond to local public transport needs. The Bill also includes improved information sharing provisions.

New offence

We propose to create a new summary offence in relation to information sharing (service information).

Where a bus service is being cancelled or varied, parties who have received information from a local authority about a bus operator's service provision (including revenue information) will commit a summary offence if they further disclose that information.

When a potential offence is identified, it will be a matter for the local authority to investigate. Certain individuals (senior management) of private and public institutions will be capable of prosecution in connection with the breach, as well as private and public institutions. However, the number of cases brought forward for enforcement action is anticipated to be minimal. This is because the offence, in connection with the unlawful disclosure of information, is considered to be a deterrent against onward sharing of information and that persons are therefore unlikely to onward share information with other competitors.

All other legislative proposals do not create any new offences.

Other possible impacts on the justice system

1. Welsh Partnership Schemes – the proposals include a right of appeal against the decisions of the Traffic Commissioner to the Upper Tribunal (a non-devolved Tribunal) in relation to registration, variation or cancellation decisions within a Welsh Partnership Scheme area. These appeal provisions would be similar to existing provisions and it is therefore anticipated that any increase in the volume of applications / cases to the HM Courts and Tribunals Service would be minimal.
2. Franchising - the proposals include a new right of appeal against the decisions of the Traffic Commissioner to the Upper Tribunal (a non-devolved Tribunal) in relation to a refusal to register a service, or the variation or revocation of a registered service, in accordance with section 6B of the Transport Act 1985. Again, it is anticipated that this will result in a minimal increase in the volume of applications / cases to the HM Courts and Tribunals Service.
3. Judicial review - the public sector may be subject to judicial consideration by means of judicial review in connection with use of their powers in the proposed Bill.
 - Welsh Partnership Schemes - due to the partnership approach and objection provisions included in the Welsh Partnership Scheme we consider the risk of challenge by way of judicial review, if and when these powers are used, to be low.
 - Franchising - a move to franchising in a local area could be controversial and there is a medium to high risk that a decision by a local area to move to franchising is judicially reviewed. However, it is anticipated that a low number of franchising

schemes would be pursued, therefore a low number of judicial reviews is anticipated.

- Local Authority Run Bus Services - the risk of judicial review proceedings being brought in connection with a decision to provide local authority run bus services on non-commercial bus routes is considered to be low, as in these circumstances there are unlikely to be other operators with an interest in providing the service concerned. A move to provide local authority run bus services on commercial bus routes may be more controversial. However, the take up of this form of service where the market is operating effectively is likely to be low and consequently the risk of a challenge being brought is also considered to be low.

Summary

The initial assessment identified low impact on the justice system. A full assessment is being prepared and will be published at a later date.

A Justice System Impact Identification form has been completed. Our anticipated impacts on the justice system are being considered by the Ministry of Justice.

SECTION 5. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING?

5.1 Natural Resources

The Welsh Government's commitment to supporting environmental well-being is supported through the seven national well-being goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Of particular relevance to this section are the goals:

- 'A resilient Wales', seeking to create "A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change)."; and
- 'A globally responsible Wales', seeking to create "A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being."

Supporting the Welsh Government's aspirations for an environment that enhances a biodiverse natural environment, and which makes a positive contribution to global well-being, is the Natural Resources Policy, which has been considered as part of this IIA.

The Natural Resources Policy⁶² focuses on improving the way we manage our natural resources. This is a key part of the delivery framework for the sustainable management of natural resources established by the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. It is also vital if current and future generations are to continue to enjoy the benefits they provide. As such, it is also key to the delivery of the Well-being Goals set out within the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and our international contribution to the delivery of the UN's Global Goals which aim to end poverty, fight inequality and address the urgency of climate change⁶³.

The Natural Resources Policy considers the challenges and risks to our natural resources, as well as the principles for Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR). The policy sets out three National Priorities which, when implemented, will help to achieve SMNR. The priorities help us to both tackle the big challenges facing Wales' natural resources and realise the opportunities Wales' natural resources provide across all the well-being goals. The priorities are:

1. Delivering Nature-Based Solutions

Nature-based solutions are about taking approaches which transform many of Wales' big challenges into opportunities for innovative solutions and help deliver across all the well-being goals. They include a wide range of approaches which can be applied in lots of different situations, including to:

⁶² <https://gov.wales/natural-resources-policy>

⁶³ <https://www.globalgoals.org/>

- Support climate change adaptation and mitigation;
- Improve infrastructure;
- Improve land and water management to improve habitat and biodiversity; and
- Support health and well-being.

2. Increasing renewable energy and resource efficiency

These help to both reduce the pressures on Wales' natural resources and also provide new jobs and market opportunities.

3. Taking a place-based approach

This is about supporting the new ways of working through involving local communities in designing and developing proposals, so that they benefit from the natural resources in their areas, and, because they understand their locality, recognising they are well placed to find practical solutions.

Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales⁶⁴ sets out the Welsh Government's approach to cut emissions and increase efficiency in a way that maximises wider benefits for Wales, ensuring a fairer and healthier society. It sets out 100 policies and proposals that directly reduce emissions and support the growth of the low carbon economy.

The Welsh Government is working to reform the bus industry in Wales, partly through the proposals in the Bill, but also with the introduction of a zero-emission bus fleet which will contribute to improving the attractiveness of bus travel.

The Welsh Government's goal is a shift towards active travel and a low carbon public transport system which is accessible to all and contributes to liveable and sustainable communities. This is backed by the goal of a zero-emission bus, taxi and private hire vehicle fleet by 2028. The proposals for metro style frequency and integrated services will make public transport more attractive and connected, which will help transform the image and the reality of public transport to make it a more desirable alternative to the private vehicle.

The most effective way of reducing CO₂ emissions in the near-term will be to replace car journeys with those using the existing public transport system and active travel. This will require a suite of infrastructure and behaviour change measures working in tandem. This Bill aims to give Local Authorities the powers to help to achieve this.

Decarbonising transport by increasing the use of green public transport and decreasing the use of fossil fuel powered vehicles will make a major contribution to climate change mitigation and improving air quality.

Planning Policy Wales Edition 10⁶⁵ sets out a sustainable transport hierarchy for planning and seeks to prevent car dependent developments that discourage the use of active and

⁶⁴ https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/low-carbon-delivery-plan_1.pdf

⁶⁵ <https://gov.wales/planning-policy-wales-edition-10>

sustainable transport. Increased cycling and walking, which as evidence referenced earlier in this report shows, is associated with the use of public transport services, improves health and tackles congestion and poor air quality as well as reducing CO₂ emissions.

The World Health Organisation suggests that public health approaches with health, social, economic and environmental benefits, such as safe green spaces and active transport, have been shown to be cost-effective with potential returns on investment⁶⁶.

Other research also suggests that⁶⁷;

- a) Business travel can account for 50% or more of a company's carbon footprint;
- b) If drivers switched to one car journey by bus a month this would save two million tonnes of CO₂ per year in the UK and reduce the demand for energy;
- c) There are opportunities to reduce bus fleet fuel consumption through training bus drivers to drive in a more fuel-efficient manner, maintaining a steady speed and minimising vehicle idling;
- d) The introduction of green and/or hybrid buses would also help reduce the demand for energy and support renewables;
- e) Transferring more journeys to bus reduces congestion around key rural beauty spots, enhancing people's enjoyment of these places and would help protect biodiversity; and
- f) Low carbon emission buses could cut emissions by 55,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases every year⁶⁸.

The 'Transport Fit for Future Generations Report' published by the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales⁶⁹, shows how Wales could transform its transport system by investing in public transport, active travel and ensuring delivery of all phases of the South Wales Metro. It supports any measures seeking to increase the use of public transport with its associated social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits.

The impacts of these legislative proposals on environmental well-being will mostly be indirect, as a result of the adoption of the enabling tools in the provisions.

Greener, lower emission buses could be secured as part of standards introduced either through the WPS or franchising proposals being taken forward in the Bill. An increased use of public transport which leads to a corresponding reduction in use of private cars would contribute to the Welsh Government's environmental well-being goals and the reduction of emissions. A reduction in vehicle emissions would help contribute to the

⁶⁶ https://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/888/PHW%20Making%20a%20difference%20ES%28Web_2%29.pdf

⁶⁷ Making the connections: The cross-sector benefits of supporting bus services (2014)
<http://www.urbantransportgroup.org/system/files/general-docs/10210%20Pteg%20Benefits%20of%20the%20bus%20web%20FINAL.pdf>

⁶⁸ <https://greenerjourneys.com/news/clean-bus-revolution-cuts-emissions-55000-tonnes-year/>

⁶⁹ <https://futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/20180912-Transport-Fit-for-Future-Generations-C-1.pdf>

Welsh Government's carbon reduction targets and would support reductions in air pollution with associated human health and biodiversity benefits.

Overall, the proposals are expected to result in a positive effect on environmental well-being.

5.2 Biodiversity

The Welsh economy and health and well-being in Wales depend on healthy, resilient ecosystems, which provide us with our food, clean water and the air we breathe, the raw materials and energy for our industries and protect us against hazards, such as flooding and the impacts of climate change. Therefore, biodiversity is essential to sustaining ecosystems that provide the vital services our lives depend on. Where biodiversity is lost and perhaps never fully recovered, it affects the capacity of ecosystems to adapt to changes and disturbances.

The Wales Future Trends Report (2017) identified concerns about species decline. Wildlife populations globally have already declined by 58% since 1970 and this is likely to reach 67% by 2020. Here in Wales there are specific threats to soils, freshwater resources, marine ecosystems, wildlife and habitats, and we are now among the most nature-depleted countries in the world, with 1 in 14 wildlife species facing extinction. Without healthy functioning ecosystems, we cannot resist, recover from or adapt to the changes facing our planet.⁷⁰

Section 6 in Part 1 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduced an enhanced Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty (the section 6 duty). This duty applies to public authorities (as listed in section 6(9) of the Act), including the Welsh Ministers, in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales. The section 6 duty requires the Welsh Ministers to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as consistent with the proper exercise of their functions, and in so doing, promote the resilience of ecosystems.

Complying with the section 6 duty will help the Welsh Government and Welsh Ministers to maximise the contribution to the Well-being goals, particularly the Resilient Wales goal.

In complying with the duty, the Welsh Government and Welsh Ministers must have regard to the United Nations Environment Programme Convention on Biological Diversity of 1992.

The Convention is enshrined into Welsh legislation through the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, and the Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP) for Wales sets out the commitments and objectives to meet the Convention's Strategic Goals in Wales.

The NRAP for Wales contains six objectives to reverse the decline of biodiversity which should be used to assess the impacts on biodiversity. Of particular relevance to the Bill is the objective to *tackle key pressures on species and habitats*. The objectives can also help

⁷⁰ <https://futuregenerations.wales/news/future-generations-commissioner-for-wales-welcomes-welsh-government-climate-emergency-declaration/>

develop and guide actions to comply with the section 6 duty. These should be considered as part of the IIA.

To demonstrate compliance with Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, a Biodiversity Impact Assessment has been prepared and is available at Annex F.

5.3 Climate Change

On 29th April 2019, the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths AM declared a climate emergency in Wales. The announcement highlighted the significance of the recent climate change protests and the evidence from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C⁷¹.

The Wales Future Trends Report (2017) identifies the risks to infrastructure from climate change, including the transport network. Climate change could also damage ancient woodlands, coastal areas and other natural assets, which are often key visitor destinations accessed by the transport network⁷².

The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales' response to the consultation on the White Paper sets out the Welsh Government needs to seek transport solutions that make the biggest contribution to improving our health, to improving the economic prospects of all our communities, to meeting our goals and obligations on climate change and to maintaining and enhancing nature.

The proposals should seek to drive sustainable growth and combat climate change, moving towards more low carbon forms of transport. Providing viable alternatives to the car is essential if Wales is to meet its carbon reduction targets and also tackle air quality. One of the steps to support this objective is to accelerate the decarbonisation of our public services, creating new opportunities for businesses in Wales in the transition to a low carbon economy.

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 sets a legal target of reducing emissions by a minimum of 80% by 2050 and places a duty on the Welsh Ministers to set a series of interim targets (for 2020, 2030 and 2040) and carbon budgets. The carbon budgets will set limits on the total amount of emissions in Wales over a 5-year period and act as stepping stones and ensure regular progress is being made towards the long-term target. Welsh Ministers have accepted the recommendation from the Committee on Climate Change that

⁷¹ <https://seneddresearch.blog/2019/05/09/wales-declares-a-climate-emergency/>

⁷² <https://futuregenerations.wales/news/future-generations-commissioner-for-wales-welcomes-welsh-government-climate-emergency-declaration/>

the 2050 target is increased to 95% and will bring legislation to the National Assembly in 2020⁷³.

As outlined in the section above, Prosperity for all: A low carbon Wales⁷⁴ sets out how Wales aims to meet the first carbon budget (2016-2020) and consequently the 2020 interim target through 100 policies and proposals across Ministerial portfolios. Other Welsh Government legislation and policies as previously referenced also seek to support the reduction of carbon and greenhouse gas emissions.

The Welsh Government is promoting a more sustainable road transport network and a modal shift away from roads for people and freight. This will help reduce emissions and the impact transport has on our environment and our health. The Bill proposals will contribute to this goal.

The Transport sector includes transport emissions within Wales along with Wales' share of emissions from international aviation and international shipping. Transport accounted for 16% of Welsh emissions in 2017. Transport is our third largest Greenhouse Gas emitting sector after the Energy supply and business sectors. Over half of all transport emissions are due to car usage and practically all transport emissions are emissions of carbon dioxide. Although vehicles are increasingly efficient, we are also travelling more, so overall sector emissions have changed little since the 1990 baseline⁷⁵.

Transport is a key contributor to carbon and greenhouse gas emissions. Greener, lower emission buses could be secured as part of any standards introduced through a WPS or a franchising scheme introduced in accordance with the legislative changes, which would help contribute positively to the decarbonisation agenda. Increased use of public transport leading to reductions in use of private cars would also contribute to the Welsh Government's environmental well-being duties and the reduction of emissions⁷⁶.

Effective climate change action is particularly pertinent to young people. With finite natural resources and the decline of the environment, it is essential young people have the opportunity to learn, as well as play a role in preventing and reversing the effects of climate change. The potential adoption of measures such as greener, lower emission buses could help raise awareness of the climate change to young people, helping to ensure the needs of future generations are met.

The proposals to be taken forward in the Bill would have indirect positive impacts on emissions.

⁷³ <https://gov.wales/written-statement-response-committee-climate-changes-net-zero-report>

⁷⁴ https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/low-carbon-delivery-plan_1.pdf

⁷⁵ https://naei.beis.gov.uk/reports/reports?section_id=4

⁷⁶ <http://www.unece.org/hk/sustainable-development/climate-change/home.html>

The relevant bodies may find it beneficial when planning for implementation of the tools provided for in the Bill to give detailed consideration to Climate Change including potential analysis using HM Treasury Green Book Greenhouse Gas valuation methodology.

Any potential future assessments of biodiversity impact should acknowledge that in addition to NRAP, the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 also requires public authorities other than Ministers or government departments to have regard to the section 7 lists of habitats and species of principal importance, the State of Natural Resources report (SoNaR) and Area Statements when they are published.

5.4 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The Strategic Environmental Assessment applies to plans, programmes and strategies required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions, and either subject to preparation and/or adoption at a national, regional or local level, or being prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure (for example, an Act of Parliament or regulation). A SEA is required if the plan, programme or strategy is likely to have an impact in certain key areas – agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, tourism, town and country planning or land use.

To determine whether a SEA is required, consideration is given to the following questions:

- a) Is what is being developed either a plan or programme?
- b) Will it have implications either for future land-use planning decisions or other development consents?
- c) Will it require an assessment under the Habitats Directive or have significant effects on the Environment?

Whilst proposals within the proposed Bus Services (Wales) Bill will not have relevance to land use and is designed to provide a framework to enable local authorities to better plan and deliver local public transport solutions in their areas, the Welsh Government's aim to reduce reliance on the private motor vehicle for transport, whether for education, work or leisure, is relevant to environmental objectives to reduce harmful emissions into the environment.

The approach being adopted to advance decarbonisation must be considered as one of the tools to modernise the Welsh economy and strengthen our ability to compete in the global market. Buses, and public transport more widely in Wales, contribute to the low-emission mobility strategy published by the European Union, which demonstrates how initiatives in related fields are linked and how synergies can be achieved to improve environmental sustainability.

Increasing the efficiency of the transport system by making the most of digital technologies, smart pricing and further encouraging the shift to lower emission transport modes will be vital to Wales' continued global success. The environmental impact of the enabling tools included in the Bill provision will be an important contributory factor to environmental sustainability.

On this basis, a SEA is not considered to be required but will be kept under review as and when Local Authorities use the tools that are provided to them in the Bill.

5.5 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

The purpose of an HRA is to avoid a plan or project having a significant detrimental effect on European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. European sites are designated under the Nature Directives as either Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) – collectively known as Natura 2000 (N2K) sites. HRA's also apply to Ramsar wetland sites (designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention for their internationally important wetlands), candidate SACs (cSAC), proposed Special Protection Areas (pSPA), and proposed and existing European offshore marine sites.

The proposals would not directly affect a European designated site and do not require a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) by virtue of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (consolidated in 2017). In so far as improved and more sustainable bus services would help reduce overall emissions, the overall effect on habitats would be beneficial.

5.6 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Where the impacts have a potential to significantly affect the environment, the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive requires that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) must be carried out and the EIA Directive sets out a procedure that must be followed for certain types of project before they can be given consent. This procedure, known as Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), is an assessment of a project's likely significant environmental effects. This helps to ensure that the predicted effects, and the scope for reducing them, are understood by the public and the relevant authority before it makes its decision.

The proposals would not require EIA by virtue of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017.

SECTION 6. RECORD OF FULL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS REQUIRED

The sections above have helped inform which areas need a more detailed impact assessment. A summary of the assessments subject to this IIA are listed below. The full impact assessments should be read alongside and within the context of the appraisal of economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being as presented in the preceding sections of this IIA.

Impact Assessment	Yes/No	If yes, you should
Children's rights	Yes	Complete the Children's Rights Impact Assessment below
Equality	Yes*	Complete the Full Impact Assessment below
Rural Proofing	Yes	Complete the Rural Proofing Impact Assessment below
Health	Yes ⁷⁷	Refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment Guidance
Privacy	No	Complete the Privacy Impact Assessment below
Welsh Language	Yes*	Complete the Welsh Language Impact Assessment below
Economic / RIA	Yes ⁷⁸	Refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment Guidance
Justice	Yes ⁷⁹	A full Justice Impact Assessment is being prepared and will be published at a later date.
Biodiversity	Yes*	Complete the Biodiversity Impact Assessment below
Climate Change	No	Refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment Guidance
Strategic Environmental Assessment	No	Refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment Guidance
Habitat Regulations Assessment	No	Refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment Guidance
Environmental Impact Assessment	No	Refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment Guidance

⁷⁷ Please refer to Annex G of this document for a Health Impact Assessment

⁷⁸ A Regulatory Impact Assessment has been separately prepared for the Bus Services (Wales) Bill by the Welsh Government

⁷⁹ A Justice Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Bus Services (Wales) Bill by the Welsh Government

* Mandatory for all proposals in order to meet statutory obligations.

SECTION 7. CONCLUSION

Involvement

In keeping with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the five ways of working, the Welsh Government has sought to collaborate with and involve children and their representatives, people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, Welsh speakers and Welsh language specialist groups and other people who may be affected by the proposal.

To help achieve this, the Welsh Government has undertaken significant engagement with delivery partners, transport operators, local authorities and transport advisory groups to provide stakeholders with a platform to feed in relevant evidence to the preparation of the Bill. The details of previous and more recent engagement are set out from page 12 of this IIA. The White Paper consultation⁸⁰ that closed in March 2019 involved an Easy Read and a Community and Youth version in addition to large print, braille, audio CD and alternative language versions available on request. The consultation sought a broad range of views through written responses, briefing sessions, engagement events and specific engagement meetings to ensure as many people as possible had the opportunity to voice their opinions on the proposals. A summary of the feedback from the events and meetings is provided under section 6 of the Consultation Document, and this IIA highlights some of the common themes and relevant points raised pertinent to the assessments that have been undertaken.

Impacts

A range of impacts have been identified throughout this IIA document and the full impact assessments as presented in Annexes A-G. These have considered:

- a) What action the Welsh Government can take to promote biodiversity, children's rights, equalities, the Welsh language and the other areas covered by the impact assessments;
- b) What action the Welsh Government can take to strengthen its contribution to a particular well-being goal or to contribute to additional goals; and
- c) What action the Welsh Government can take to avoid, reduce or mitigate a negative impact.

The table below helps to summarise these impacts, for the impact groups considered as part of this IIA.

⁸⁰ https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2018-12/improving-public-transport_0.pdf

Impact Group	Summary of impacts	Contribution to the WFGA	Measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate any negative impacts
Children's rights	<p>Improved bus services could provide improved access to education and employment and provide independence for children who have a disability.</p> <p>Allow children to be able to socialise and take part in activities</p> <p>Help reduce child poverty through easy to pay fares</p>	<p>Positive contribution to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A prosperous Wales • A more equal Wales • A healthier Wales 	<p>Negative impacts of the legislation in the Bus Services (Wales) Bill on Children's Rights have not been identified.</p>
Equality	<p>Age: an easy to understand consistent service would improve access for older individuals to public buses.</p> <p><i>Younger People</i> will experience a positive impact as set out in the Children's Rights Assessment. With young people finding transport costs a particular barrier to education and jobs, as well as access to public transport in rural areas, the proposals may allow local authorities to provide cheap, easy to understand fare structures, improved travel opportunities, and better deals as well as a reliable service. Improved access to education and employment opportunities would benefit younger people.</p>	<p>Positive contribution to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more equal Wales • A Wales of cohesive communities 	<p>Any new ticketing services/enhanced technology will need to consider the impact on older people as well as other groups. It will be considered whether these types of measures should be implemented alongside more traditional methods of</p>

	<p>Integrated ticketing through on-line products and apps could leave older people at a disadvantage if they are unable to access the best tickets / information.</p> <p><i>Disabled People</i> - The reforms will assist in delivering inclusive public transport objectives for disabled people, there will be an indirect positive impact on disabled people by improving bus services for their carers in terms of reliability and consistency in services. No changes to the eligibility for disabled people are proposed.</p> <p><i>Gender</i> - With women more likely to use the bus than men⁸¹, the proposals would provide bigger indirect benefits for women as a result of</p>		<p>information sharing (e.g. physical timetables) to ensure older people do not feel excluded.</p> <p>It is considered that any negative impacts would be outweighed by the positive impact a long-term sustainable bus network would have for disabled users.</p> <p>Negative impacts of the legislation in the Bus Services (Wales) Bill by gender have not been identified.</p> <p>Negative impacts of the legislation in the Bus Services (Wales) Bill by gender reassignment have not been identified.</p>
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⁸¹ <http://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Transport-October-2018-w-cover.pdf>

	<p>improved sustainability, reliability of services on the basis that they statistically have more caring responsibilities.</p> <p><i>Gender Reassignment</i> - National standards and quality improvements to local bus services could provide opportunities for increased training for staff in respecting those with protected characteristics e.g. gender reassignment, and may create opportunities to diversify the workforce.</p> <p><i>Race</i> - Enhanced quality standards would include further support and protection for BAME groups and foster understanding. Additional standards and improved information sharing would improve services for those who do not have English/Welsh as a first language.</p> <p><i>Sexual Orientation</i> - Better information sharing and further data on services could help improve perceptions of safety on public transport for LGBT+ users.</p> <p>National standards and quality improvements to local bus services could provide opportunities for increased training for staff in respecting those with protected characteristics e.g. LGBT+</p> <p>There are no aspects that are expected to impact positively or negatively as the measures</p>		<p>It is considered that any negative impacts would be outweighed by the positive impact a long-term sustainable bus network would have for BAME users.</p> <p>Negative impacts of the legislation in the Bus Services (Wales) Bill by sexual orientation have not been identified.</p> <p>Negative impacts of the legislation in the Bus Services (Wales) Bill by pregnancy and maternity have not been identified.</p>
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	<p>affect all people irrespective of protected characteristics.</p> <p><i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i> - Improved quality standards would enable better opportunities for drivers to receive training in responding to the needs of pregnant passengers sensitively.</p> <p><i>Socio-Economic status</i> - Low income groups would benefit from a more coordinated approach to bus services and improved standards, routes, timetables and simpler fare structures given that they are more reliant on bus services than those on higher incomes. Whilst consideration of impacts on people on low income is not a current requirement of the Public Sector Duties under the Equality Act 2010, in April 2020 the socio-economic duty (part 1 of the Equality Act) will come into force in Wales. The duty requires public bodies to make decisions in a way that tackles inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage. This will need to be taken account of at implementation stages.</p>		<p>Negative impacts of the legislation in the Bus Services (Wales) Bill by socio-economic status have not been identified.</p>
Welsh Language	<p>The proposals provide strong opportunities for local authorities to strengthen their commitment to the Welsh Government's strategy for the Welsh language – Cymraeg 2050.</p> <p>The proposals have the potential to improve accessibility to Welsh medium education. Where school transport is not available, a good, reliable public transport service could improve</p>	<p>Positive contribution to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Wales of vibrant culture and Welsh language • A Wales of cohesive communities 	<p>Negative impacts of the legislation in the Bus Services (Wales) Bill on the Welsh Language have not been identified.</p>

	<p>accessibility of education to young people. Likewise, improved public transport could improve access to other educational institutions which offer Welsh language learning for all ages. Providing information to the public in Welsh would allow those who would prefer to access information in Welsh to do so as well as providing non-Welsh speakers with the opportunity to read and learn some of the Welsh language.</p> <p>Welsh speaking communities will benefit from improved accessibility which will help to reduce isolation and help communities to be more connected.</p> <p>The proposals would provide Local Authorities with the opportunity to enhance the bus service offering in terms of its integration with the Welsh language both in terms of providing information in Welsh and helping people access Welsh Language services. It would also serve as an opportunity to plan and deliver sustainable bus services allowing children to access Welsh medium education/ improved access to and from Welsh speaking communities.</p>		
	<p>The proposals will create a new summary offence in relation to the further disclosure of service information.</p> <p>Other potential impacts on the justice system include:</p>		<p>A Justice System Impact Identification form has been completed. Our anticipated impacts on the justice system are being considered by the Ministry of Justice.</p> <p>A full assessment is being prepared and will be published at a later date.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • various new and modified rights of appeal against the decisions of the Traffic Commissioner to the Upper Tribunal (a non-devolved Tribunal) in relation franchising and Welsh Partnership Schemes; and • the public sector may be subject to judicial consideration by means of judicial review in connection with use of their powers in the proposed Bill. 		
Rural Proofing	<p>The proposals will encourage more efficient and attractive bus services, which could help achieve annual decreases in travel costs for passengers. They would also bring indirect benefits to rural communities' mental well-being with increased access to rural services helping combat social isolation, allowing people to socialise and connect.</p> <p>People living in rural areas would have opportunities to access employment, education and socio-economic mobility. New technology will be able to be accessed, with an increase in confidence from individuals when using public transport.</p> <p>With greater frequency of services, the problem that elderly individual's specific transport requirements are often not accommodated through public transport will be met.</p> <p>There would be a positive impact on disabled individuals who live in rural areas through the provision of information, including potential</p>	<p>Positive contribution to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A prosperous Wales • A Wales of cohesive communities 	<p>Negative impacts of the legislation in the Bus Services (Wales) Bill by pregnancy and maternity have not been identified.</p>

	<p>installation of audio-visual next stop announcement systems, accessible information at bus stops as well as additional staff training.</p> <p>The proposals would give the local authorities the power to find an approach which best meets the needs of people and businesses in their area, assisting rural businesses to expand.</p>		
Biodiversity	<p>The proposals would have a positive impact on reducing emissions, therefore contributing to greater air quality providing benefits to biodiversity</p> <p>There would be a positive impact on the protection of biodiversity through promoting and raising awareness of biodiversity conservation.</p>	<p>A positive contribution to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A resilient Wales • A Globally responsible Wales 	<p>Negative impacts of the legislation in the Bus Services (Wales) Bill on Biodiversity have not been identified.</p>
Health	<p>Positive impact in providing opportunities to access active forms of travel and access to parks, leisure centres, gyms, or other areas which promote and provide opportunities for physical activity and exercise. Improved access to wider services and opportunities could also improve access to a wider range of food choices, including healthier or more affordable options.</p> <p>The provision of more affordable transport options, including methods such as the Concessionary Fares Scheme, would increase opportunities for groups who cannot afford private transport options. This would reduce feelings of isolation and exclusion for these individuals, allowing them to access a wider</p>	<p>A positive contribution to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A healthier Wales 	<p>No negative impacts were identified.</p>

	<p>range of opportunities and improve their social network</p> <p>The proposals will have a positive impact on improving air quality providing health benefits, especially in built-up areas which are typically more polluted. It would be of importance for groups more vulnerable to the health-effects of poor air quality, such as children or older people and those with existing health conditions.</p> <p>The proposals will improve access to employment opportunities, services and education having a positive impact on people on low incomes and unemployed, as well as older individuals, disabled and people living in isolated areas.</p> <p>Through improving the reliability of the transport network and using techniques such as apps could make it easier to access live data about the bus network, helping individuals to plan their routes to education or employment. This would have an indirect effect on health reducing feelings of stress and anxiety and providing direct access to health benefits associated with secure employment.</p> <p>Specifically, for older and disabled individuals the proposals would improve access and reliability would have direct health benefits by improving access to treatment and care.</p>		
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How will the impact of the proposal be monitored and evaluated as it progresses and when it concludes?

The Bill proposals cover a number of areas relating to bus service provision. As explained in the sections above, these include enabling legislative provisions, which would provide local authorities with more tools to help them plan and deliver bus services in Wales. These provisions relate to improved partnership working, franchising and local authority run bus services. They are intended to improve the legislative framework around bus services and provide local authorities with the flexibility to better respond to local public transport needs. The legislation also includes proposals for improving the provision and management of data relating to bus services.

Elements of this assessment are high level, as the powers in the Bill are enabling powers that create a range of tools. These may or may not be adopted by local authorities and therefore the impact assessments are based on the information available at this point in time, prior to the passing and implementation of the legislation.

Further detail is likely to emerge at the implementation stage of the legislation, with a greater understanding of the potential consequences associated with any changes then being proposed and updated impact assessments could be carried out by the appropriate authorities at that stage.

For example, should a local authority decide to implement all of the potential changes the Bill makes available, the potential impacts would be much greater than another local authority that decides to implement few or none of the changes available to it.

If a local authority wanted to implement a franchising scheme, it would need to make a detailed business case, taking on board all potential impacts, in order to do so.

For the Welsh Government, there is in place a full review process for each part of the Bill proposals. These are outlined in Chapter 10 of the Bill – Post Implementation review. This provides for formal post implementation review at five, ten and fifteen years (dependent on the measure) as well as ongoing review of data as appropriate.

Key matters for consideration at review stage will include impacts on bus patronage, frequency of services, quality of services (including punctuality and reliability), integration of services, hours of operation and subsidy requirements.

Feedback from passengers, and from passenger representative groups, will also be used to assess the effectiveness of the provisions introduced. The review process may consider, for example, whether there has been an impact on the number and percentage of older person journeys against total journeys. This information would be part of the ongoing monitoring of impacts on groups sharing protected characteristics, in accordance with requirements under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Given the details of any likely changes would only be able to be sufficiently understood for the purposes of preparing a tailored monitoring and evaluation plan at that stage, it is recommended that the authority responsible for proposing those detailed changes undertakes its own monitoring and evaluation plan.

However, there are several themes that Local Authorities may find it beneficial to monitor and evaluate the impact of any changes on:

- a) Children and young people;

- b) The elderly;
- c) People on low incomes or living in poverty;
- d) Disabled people;
- e) Women;
- f) BAME;
- g) People living in rural communities;
- h) People suffering poor health;
- i) Privacy;
- j) Welsh Language;
- k) Justice;
- l) Biodiversity; and
- m) Climate Change.

The Welsh Government's policy officials should consider accessing support from its statistics and research specialists to assist with relevant data collection and analysis⁸².

Data collection could also be assisted by utilising open source data⁸³ and that being collected by others for other relevant means, for example by the Wales Audit Office and Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales⁸⁴.

⁸² <https://gov.wales/statistics-and-research?lang=en>

⁸³ <http://lle.gov.wales/home>

⁸⁴ <https://gov.wales/well-being-wales>

SECTION 8. DECLARATION

Declaration

I am satisfied that the impact of the proposed action has been adequately assessed and recorded.

Name of Senior Responsible Officer / Deputy Director: Simon Jones/ Jasper Roberts

Department: Economic Infrastructure

Date: 31 January 2020

A. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Different transport options can offer welcome independence and freedom for young people. However, many of the concerns young people have come from a lack of confidence or not understanding the system, for example, what to do if the bus is late, drives past or does not arrive.

Research has helped understand the potential issues and opportunities associated with the proposals and children and young persons. Pertinent points include:

- a) Young people, particularly those aged between 17 and 20 are more reliant on buses than any other group, largely using services between school and home⁸⁵.
- b) Those who rely on bus services include young people, and affordable bus services enable young people from all backgrounds to access positive activities before and after school⁸⁶.
- c) The most likely to be without a car include younger people, and cost of travel is a key barrier to accessing employment (and contributing to youth unemployment)⁸⁷.
- d) 33% of young adults say they couldn't access employment without the service, compared to 8% of 55-64-year olds. 40% of young adults also said that the bus had given them greater independence⁸⁸.
- e) For many young people, public transport is their preferred mode of travel, largely due to the ability to use technology on buses, they are more aware of the benefits to physical activity linked to using public transport and to avoid the cost of running a car⁸⁹.

The Bus passenger survey (Autumn 2017), undertaken by Transport Focus on behalf of the Welsh Government, also shows that bus passengers between the age of 16-34 are less satisfied with the overall bus journey than people aged 35 to 59. And similarly, they are less satisfied with the value for money for bus travel.

⁸⁵ Is Britain Fairer? The state of equality and human rights (2018)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812921/is-britain-fairer-accessible__1_.pdf

⁸⁶ Making the connections: the cross sector benefits of supporting bus services (2014)

<http://www.urbantransportgroup.org/system/files/general-docs/10210%20Pteg%20Benefits%20of%20the%20bus%20web%20FINAL.pdf>

⁸⁷ Fare's Fair? Concessionary travel policy and social justice (2015)

https://researchportal.port.ac.uk/portal/files/5228276/Fare_s_fair.pdf

⁸⁸ Liberty Bus different thinking (2017) <http://www.hctgroup.org/uploaded/libertybus-social-impact-report-2017-spreads.pdf>

⁸⁹ On the move: Exploring attitudes to road and rail travel in Britain (2015) <http://www.theitc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/ITC-ORR-Road-Rail-Attitudinal-Report-Final.pdf>

Another study undertaken by Transport Focus (but not specifically for Wales) looks at young people's expectation of public transport⁹⁰. The main improvements to bus services that young people wanted were:

- a) Cheaper fares and easier to understand fare structures;
- b) Punctuality and reliability;
- c) Supporting better use of the time on buses by providing free wi-fi and at seat charging; and
- d) Using mobile technology to provide smart ticketing and journey planning.

Engagement was undertaken with young people on the proposed changes to bus services in Wales as part of the White Paper consultation exercise to make sure that young people's voices in Wales are heard as part of developing the specific proposals.

As part of the consultation, the Children's Commissioner for Wales highlighted the views of children and young people that she had gathered over the course of her term, regarding improvements required for public transport. This included the need for coherent and consistent national provision of good quality and reliable transport, particularly for children and young people due to their limited options for individual travel arrangements. The Children's Commissioner for Wales also shared the following relevant points for consideration:

- a) Young people living independently find things like transport costs a particular barrier to taking up a course or training that they may have wanted to pursue, due to the need to budget their finances to pay for bills and living costs as well as transport and the costs of the course materials.
- b) The Children's Commissioner for Wales Annual report 2016/17 highlighted the costs of bus travel for young people being a barrier to travel, particularly in relation to accessing education and leisure but also as a general point. Young people often express difficulties with transport in rural areas.
- c) Young people under 17 are particularly dependent upon public transport as they are unable to drive and even at age 17 and over the costs of learning to drive and maintaining a car with insurance and running costs can be prohibitively expensive.
- d) The most common barriers to accessing structured activities for children are finances, lack of variety and transport. Transport and getting to places are identified as a significant challenge in all contexts; going to play or hang out with friends or to take part in more structured activities. Lack of local provision for play, cultural and leisure activities meant that public transport becomes a necessity for many.

The legislative proposals could give local authorities more financial flexibility (setting prices, distribution of funding) in addressing challenges with bus service provision, including the ability to cross-subsidise. As a result of setting prices, local authorities could have the powers to lessen the cost of travel which is viewed as a barrier among young people. At implementation stage further exploration of how the proposed changes could impact children and young people could be undertaken

In 2018 the Children's Commissioner for Wales also worked with Community Action Research Policy (CARP) Collaborations to engage with children and young people with

⁹⁰ <http://d3cez36w5wymxj.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/02141502/Using-the-bus-what-young-people-think.pdf>

learning disabilities and their families. Young people who participated were very clear about the things they wanted help with as they moved towards independence as they got older:

- a) Questions were open ended but transport often featured. A survey of parents found that 83% replied 'yes' to the question 'Are you are worried that your child may be socially isolated?'. Transport was identified as a factor in this worry.
- b) Transport poses a massive barrier for young people with learning disabilities to see each other.
- c) Barriers including cost and availability apply to this group of young people too, but they also face additional barriers including accessibility, understandable information on times and routes, and support for travelling independently.
- d) Transport is an issue for more than just socialising. Transport to college and work placements can also be a barrier. Parents note the heavy reliance on them to provide transport and the impact that needing to be available to provide transport could have on their own ability to work.

The Children's Commissioner for Wales work has helped identify transitions projects and self-advocacy projects, which support young people with travel, often helping them to understand timetables and routes, working with local bus companies on disability awareness and accessibility, supporting young people to apply for a disabled person's bus pass and also providing travel buddies or lift share opportunities. However, these are not universally available across Wales. Skills taught in specialist settings during years 12 to 14 and within college were identified as positives during this work. However, most young people involved had not had support to travel prior to this, and had not been out alone, and therefore did not have much time or opportunity available to develop these skills.

The Children's Commissioner for Wales' Annual report 2017/18 identified that young people continued to raise concerns about access to reliable and affordable transport options across Wales. Access to transport is related to children's ability to attend education or training places, to access employment opportunities and to socialise.

In March 2019 the Children's Commissioner for Wales published A Charter for Change: Protecting Welsh Children from the Impact of Poverty. This was the culmination of work with 550 children and young people, as well as professionals and parents, seeking to find the practical changes that could be made in Wales to ease the impact of child poverty on families. The Welsh Government has been urged to consider the 'pinch points' of costs for families living on a low income, including transport costs. Children and young people and parents/ carers discussed the costs of after-school clubs where the option of a free bus from school is not available. This can mean that families on a low income, or who rely on public transport, are excluded from these activities. For families experiencing food poverty, and relying on donations from food banks, public transport can also be absolutely essential in order for them to access food.

The cost and availability of transport was something that children and young people felt passionately about. This was particularly the case for children and young people in rural areas, but was evident for those living in city or town suburbs too.

Parents also noted that some bus companies allow a child under the age of 5 to travel for free, but this only applies to the first child, so for families with more than one child under that age there is only an exemption for the first child.

Parents/ carers told the Children's Commissioner for Wales that the cost of public transport to leisure or cultural activities restricts their ability to provide stimulation for their children. There were also several reports of the high cost of buses in circumstances when children and young people have to pay for travel to school.

Free public transport or reduced fares, where available, were therefore very important to the families we spoke to. Several mentions were made of the Traws Cymru service, for example, which provides free travel at the weekend. Families from North Wales described using this service to travel from Wrexham to Barmouth in the summer, while the Merthyr Tydfil to Cardiff service was frequently used at the weekend by the children and young people the office spoke to in the South Wales Valleys.

The My Travel Pass scheme, which offers 1/3 off bus fares for 16-21-year olds, was mentioned by several professionals as a helpful reduction in costs but it is notable that young people didn't particularly mention this and may not be aware of the discounts available.

Professionals working with children and young people also found that the experience of using public transport was difficult for some young people with specific requirements, such as those on the Autistic spectrum. They highlighted the Orange Wallet scheme as a helpful tool valued by children and families, as it helps children and young people to communicate through words and pictures written and drawn in the wallet. The wallet also contains emergency contact details.

Amongst many recommendations that form part of a wider call for Government to have a concrete delivery plan on child poverty in Wales, the Children's Commissioner for Wales has made a specific recommendation in relation to transport, that "Welsh Government and local authorities should extend their investment in free or affordable and accessible transport schemes for children and young people, and look to make these more regular, covering both rural and more metropolitan settings."

The Children's Commissioner for Wales noted the proposal to establish a Joint Transport Authority (JTA), which would allow for distinctive regional approaches to transport, within a broader national context. However, she expressed her preference for a single JTA for the whole of Wales with regional delivery boards, rather than giving specific responsibilities to a number of regional or local structures. This is because young people have highlighted to her the importance of a consistent service across Wales. Joint Transport Authorities are now Corporate Joint Committees and are not in the Bus Services (Wales) Bill.

Those who travel across formal county or area boundaries, for example to attend specialist college courses or job opportunities may experience difficulty in accessing transport should there be regional variations in the decision making and performance of functions.

In addition, the Children's Commissioner for Wales noted that the Government is proposing to revise the current legislation to allow local authorities to run their own bus services but suggested that it was unclear whether there is the appetite or capacity within local authorities to do this and how this could assist in providing consistency across Wales.

The Children's Commissioner for Wales also reiterated the importance of engaging with young people with learning disabilities as part of the proposals.

Whilst only five responses to the Community and Youth and Easy Read versions of the Consultation Document on the proposed changes⁹¹ were received, Children in Wales facilitated a Young Carers meeting in Cardiff and the 30 young people attending welcomed the majority of the White Paper proposals, particularly in terms of coordination of effort and activity across local authorities, Enhanced Quality Partnerships being developed between bus companies and local authorities with a view to improved services, and local authorities being enabled to franchise or run bus services. Improvements to service information and access to it would also be welcomed, as were improving standards for taxi licensing, including on air pollution.

The proposals should help young people feel more confident in using the bus with improvements such as integrated ticketing and easy to pay fares, improved information provision both on the bus, at bus stops and on-line, and punctual buses. Improved local bus services should provide a sustainable long-term option for young people.

As is required by Children's Rights Impact Assessment, there has been careful consideration of the relevant Articles set out within the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011. The approach to progressing the legislation has and will continue to consider the rights of children and young people (for example, by helping ensure no discrimination takes place, with sufficient involvement in the proposals – i.e. Article 12 'right to say what you think should happen and be listened to'). However, the following articles are considered to be most relevant in terms of likely impacts on children and young persons:

Article 15 - Your right to meet with friends and join groups and clubs;

Article 23 - Your right to special care and support if you have a disability so that you can lead a full and independent life;

Article 28 - Your right to learn and go to school; and

Article 31 - Your right to relax and play.

A good, reliable bus network which is punctual will assist young people to meet with friends and join groups and clubs.

It is acknowledged that if young people start using public transport independently at a young age, and they have a positive experience, they are more likely to continue to use public transport as they grow into adulthood.

The proposals seek to improve the accessibility and quality of bus services through more effective management and operation, protecting the long-term availability and improvement of routes. Improved access to information about bus services could also help to help children and young people to understand their travel options better, thus improving their access to bus services.

An improved national bus network which provides easy to understand and use, co-ordinated network of routes and timings could also improve access to opportunities for children to relax and play.

⁹¹ <https://gov.wales/improving-public-transport>

In more rural areas, providing more flexibility could allow for an integrated responsive transport solution, which would provide better access to leisure services and other opportunities for children and young people to relax and play. Similarly, an integrated ticketing offer which is capable of use by rail, bus and park and ride will enable people to visit different areas as well as ensure that they are offered the best price for that journey. The proposals would help facilitate improvements in public transport services to help achieve such positive changes.

Affordability of public transport will determine whether children and young people can make the most of the opportunities that improved public transport offers them. Individuals and families living in poverty often rely on public transport to access services, health, education, leisure and other community services. If the cost of public transport is prohibitive then children and young people will find it more difficult to take advantage of their rights. The proposals could provide greater flexibility through collaboration and franchising, seeking to help make bus services sustainable and available in the long term for children and young people.

Overall it is anticipated there would be positive effects on children and young people as a result of the proposals.

More detailed consideration, including the potential need for an updated Children's Rights Impact Assessment, can be undertaken as and when local authorities choose to use any of the powers provided to them in the legislation. At that stage, further engagement with children and young people, including those with disabilities, could be undertaken to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how using the powers provided for within the legislation will impact children and young people.

B. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Background

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. Under the Act, all Welsh public authorities, including the Welsh Government have to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It also requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

The requirement to have due regard to these matters is reinforced in Wales through the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. One of the seven well-being goals included within the Act is the aspiration to create a 'More Equal Wales' defined as 'a society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances'.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a process by which analysis is conducted of any policy, service or proposal for change to help to identify and address potential unintended consequences of decisions. In Wales EIAs are part of the statutory requirements placed on public bodies in relation to the General Duty of the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Impact Assessment in Wales Practice Hub has identified that when conducting an EIA, there are four possible outcomes⁹²:

1. No major change. The EIA demonstrates that the policy is robust, there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.
2. Adjust the policy. The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. Adjust the policy to remove barriers or better promote equality.
3. Continue the policy. The EIA identifies the potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality. Clearly set out the justifications for continuing with it. The justification should be included in the EIA and must be in line with the duty to have due regard. For the most important relevant policies, compelling reasons will be needed.
4. Stop and remove the policy. The policy shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination. It must be stopped and removed or changed.

In consideration of the above, this EIA analyses the legislative proposals in the Bus Services (Wales) Bill and assesses them for the possibility of discrimination and opportunities to promote equality and foster good relationships between different groups.

⁹² <http://www.eiapractice.wales.nhs.uk/what-is-an-equality-impact-assessment->

The aim of the assessment is to identify whether people with protected characteristics would be disproportionately or differentially affected by the proposals. This can be defined as:

- **Disproportionate:** there may be a disproportionate equality effect where people with a particular protected characteristic make up a greater proportion of those affected than in the wider population.
- **Differential:** there may be a differential equality effect where people with a protected characteristic are affected differently from the general population as a result of vulnerabilities or restrictions they face because of that protected characteristic.

Research has been undertaken in order to understand the impact of the proposals on those with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 (Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation). In anticipation of the socio-economic duty coming into force in April 2020, evidence gathering and identification of socio-economic impacts has been undertaken as an adjunct to the statutory EIA.

In addition, this assessment considers the Improving Public Transport White Paper consultation responses, which were received from organisations including those with an interest in equality and representing those with protected characteristics such as Disability Wales and Guide Dogs UK, as well as independent and official champions such as the Older People's Commissioner for Wales.

This EIA has been carried out in accordance with the Welsh Government's Equalities Impact Assessment Guidance and best practice. The results of the assessment are presented around the following key themes:

- The transport related barriers faced by people who share protected characteristics and how these barriers could be reduced or removed by the proposals in the Bus Services (Wales) Bill;
- The impact the proposals would have on those with protected characteristics;
- The possible negative impacts on people in protected groups and how these could be reduced, removed and/or mitigated; and
- How the proposals would promote equality.

Evidence review

The following baseline data has been collected to help build up a picture of Wales in order to consider the issues pertinent to, and needs of those with protected characteristics within Welsh society.

Population and Age Structure

According to 2011 census data Wales has a total population of 3 million people. There is a slightly higher female population, representing 50.9% of the population with 49.1% being male⁹³.

⁹³ ONS (2019) Annual Population Survey [accessed from Nomis 27 August 2019]

Mid-level data show that overall the population of Wales is increasing, however there is a higher percentage change in the 65+ age group compared to both the age groups 0-15 and 16-64. There has been a 15.1% increase in the 65+ group, compared to 1.24% increase for 0-15 and -0.90% decrease for 16-64 from 2011 to 2018.

In the mid-year 2018, nearly a quarter of Wales' population is over 65 which is just below the number of usual residents aged 18 and below who make up 21.2% of Wales' population. Population estimates suggest that Wales is experiencing an aging population, According to mid-year 2018 data 20.1% of Wales' population was over 65 whilst mid-year estimates for 2011 showed 18.5% of the population was over 65⁹⁴.

The changes in population can in part be explained by the birth and death rate. Live birth rates have steadily declined since 2013 but the mortality rate over the same period has been more changeable with a low of 31,439 deaths in 2014. From 2017 to 2018, the population of Wales was 3,125,165. With a death rate of 34,476 and a birth rate of 31,853, there was a population decrease of 2623. However there was a net migration of 16,089 into Wales. Therefore, between 2017 and 2018, the overall population increase of Wales was 0.4%⁹⁵

Ethnicity

The most common and dominant ethnicity in Wales is White,⁹⁶ followed by Asian/Asian British. The majority of households in Wales have English as a main language. In approximately 1.4% of households at least one but not all persons over 16 have neither English nor Welsh as a main language and approximately 1.7% of households have no one who would have English or Welsh as a main language⁹⁷.

Religion

At the time of the 2011 census 32.1% of the Welsh population considered themselves to have no religion. This compares to 57.6% of the population stating that they were Christian, 1.5% of the population stating that they were Muslim with Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism each accounting for less than 0.5% of the total population.

Disability

⁹⁴ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Estimates/nationallevelpopulationestimates-by-year-age-ukcountry>

⁹⁵ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Components-of-Change/components-of-population-change-by-time-period-component>

⁹⁶ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Ethnicity/ethnicity-by-area-ethnicgroup>

⁹⁷ ONS (2011) Census Data KS206EW – Household language [downloaded from Nomis 23 August 2019]

Data from the Annual Population Survey estimates that there is a total of 397,600 people in Wales who are disabled. Of this population, 55.3% are female and 44.7% are male⁹⁸. The majority of those with a disability in Wales are over the age of 55 with numbers decreasing with age, most significantly for those aged 65 and over. There are an estimated 370,000 registered carers in Wales⁹⁹ with recent research by Carers Wales estimating that 220,000 carers are juggling this responsibility with paid work.¹⁰⁰

Marriage, Civil Partnership and Sexual Orientation

According to 2011 census data the bulk of the Welsh population is married (46.6%) whilst 0.2% of the population are in a same-sex civil partnership¹⁰¹. Data obtained from Diverse Cymru states that there is an estimated 34,500 people in Wales identifying as lesbian gay or bisexual¹⁰². ONS data has found that in the UK statistically 16-24-year olds are the most likely to identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual and a higher proportion of men identify as gay.¹⁰³

Economy & Labour Market

The Annual Population Survey (2018) records an employment rate in Wales of 73.1%. The economic activity rate is 76.7% of those of working age (16-64) whilst the economic inactivity rate is 23.3%.¹⁰⁴

The table below shows a breakdown of economic inactivity in Wales by reasons:

Reason for Economic Inactivity	% of Population Aged 16-64
Student	24.8
Looking after family/home	20.1
Temporary sick	1.9
Long-term sick	28.0

⁹⁸ StatsWales (2019) Disability by Age and Sex, available online at <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Disability/disabilitystatus-by-age-sex> [accessed 23 August 2019]

⁹⁹ Social Care Wales (2018) Preventative support for adult carers in Wales: rapid review

¹⁰⁰ Carers Wales (2019) Number of carers juggling paid work and care across Wales increases to 220,000

¹⁰¹ ONS 2011 Marital and civil partnership status [downloaded from Nomis 23 August 2019]

¹⁰² Diverse Cymru (2019) Sexual Orientation Inequality in Wales. Available online at: https://www.diverseecymru.org.uk/protected-characteristics/sexual-orientation/?doing_wp_cron=1566568103.3083140850067138671875#references

¹⁰³ ONS (2017) Sexual orientation

¹⁰⁴ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Employment/Persons-Employed>

Discouraged	0.4
Retired	15.1
Other	9.9

Source : Annual Population Survey - Economic Inactivity by Reasons¹⁰⁵

In terms of qualifications, 37.8% of the Welsh population have an NVQ Level 4 and above compared to 8.4% of the population who have no qualifications.¹⁰⁶ Average gross weekly earnings in Wales for full time workers were £509.00 per week in 2018. If broken down by gender the average weekly pay for full time male workers is £541.60 whilst for female workers, the figure is £469.50

There is also a considerable pay gap in relation to those with a disability. Research indicates that the size of the 'disability pay gap' varies depending on the exact type and nature of the disability. As an example, data shows that men with learning difficulties or disabilities have a pay gap of approximately 60% with non-disabled people. The difference between non-disabled female workers earnings and that of a woman with a physical impairment can vary between 8% and 18% depending on the type of employment¹⁰⁷.

Variations in earnings are also significant for BAME households with evidence suggesting that for example, typical Bangladeshi household incomes are 35% less than the White British median and typical Black African household incomes are 22% lower than the White British median¹⁰⁸.

From May 2019 to July 2019 the economic inactivity rate for Wales was 22.2% for those aged 16-64. Compared to May 2011 to July 2011, when the economic inactivity rate was 25.8%¹⁰⁹.

Prior to the introduction of Universal Credit, the DWP provided a breakdown of the total proportion of claimants by the type of benefit claimed and the most recent data is shown in the table below.

¹⁰⁵ ONS Annual Population Survey, year ending December 2018 [accessed from Nomis August 2019]

¹⁰⁶ <https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Post-16-Education-and-Training/Data-For-Regions-of-Wales/highestqualificationlevelofworkingageadults-by-region-localauthority>

¹⁰⁷ Equality and Human Rights Commission (2017) The Disability Pay Gap
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-107-the-disability-pay-gap-executive-summary.pdf>

¹⁰⁸ Corlett, A. (2017) Diverse Outcomes: Living Standards by Ethnicity

¹⁰⁹ <https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Economic-Inactivity/economicinactivityrates-by-ukcountryenglishregion-quarter>

Type of Benefit Claim	% of Total Claimants
Job Seekers	1.4
ESA and Incapacity Benefits	8.4
Lone Parents	1.2
Carers	2.2
Others on Income Related Benefits	0.2
Disabled	0.7
Bereaved	0.2

Source: DWP (2016) Benefit Claimants - Working Age Client Group [obtained from Nomis 27 August 2019]

Transport & Travel

Fewer than half (42%) of people in Wales have access to a car or van¹¹⁰. It is reported that 18.3% of Welsh households have one car or van in their household and 10.9% of households have two cars in their household.

The National Survey for Wales shows that of those in the 20% most deprived households in Wales, only 65% of households have use of a car compared to 89% of households within the 20% least deprived.¹¹¹ Therefore people in low-income households are more likely to rely on public transport, especially the bus.

Car ownership varies considerably for those who share protected characteristics. DfT data shows that in the UK, car ownership levels are lower amongst BAME groups with 41% of black people having no access to a car or van compared to 18% of white people¹¹².

Amongst disabled groups 37% have no access to a car.¹¹³ It has also been reported that women only account for 35% of registered car keepers in the UK¹¹⁴ and that 27% of adults aged 17 years and over did not hold a full car driving licence in 2016.¹¹⁵

The majority of those in employment in Wales drive to work by car or van (38.4%), 5.7% travel to work on foot, whilst 2.7% commute by bus¹¹⁶.

¹¹⁰ ONS (2011) 2011 Census Data - QS416EW - Car or van availability

¹¹¹ Welsh Government (2014) National Survey for Wales - Transport

¹¹² Independent Transport Commission (2015) On the Move: Exploring attitudes to road and rail travel in Britain

¹¹³ DfT (2014) National Travel Survey, Disability and travel 2007-2014

¹¹⁴ DfT (2019) Vehicle Licensing Statistics: Annual 2018

¹¹⁵ Is Britain Fairer? — The state of equality and human rights 2018 Equality and Human Rights Commission 2018

¹¹⁶ ONS (2011) 2011 Census Data WD703EW - Method of travel to work

In terms of accessing other services (outside of employment), the National Transport Survey carried out by the Welsh Government surveyed how easy people found accessing key infrastructure. This research found that older people (particularly those aged 75 and over) found it more difficult to get to hospital compared to younger people and that getting to hospital was generally considered to be easier for those who had access to a car. For example, of those surveyed only 3% of those with a car said it was 'very difficult' to get to hospital, compared to 10% of those without¹¹⁷.

It has also been reported that public transport is a particular challenge for those from BAME backgrounds due to language barriers and not having the confidence to ask for help¹¹⁸.

The National Survey for Wales also surveyed feelings of safety when using public transport after dark and analysed key variables such as age and gender. It was found that overall, 34% of those surveyed felt 'very safe' compared with 46% feeling 'fairly safe', 15% feeling 'fairly unsafe' and 5% feeling 'very unsafe'. When these results were broken down by age, results showed that feelings of safety generally decreased with age with only 25% of those aged 75 and over feeling 'very safe'. There was also considerable variation by gender, 43% of males responded that they felt very safe travelling after dark compared to 24% of females. Whilst 2% of males responded that they felt 'very unsafe' travelling after dark compared to 9% of females.¹¹⁹

Feelings of safety on public transport are also an issue amongst those who are LGBT+ with it having been reported that nearly a quarter of transgender people avoid the use of public transport out of fear of being harassed or identified as transgender¹²⁰. The National LGBT Survey also found that 65% of LGBT adults report that they avoid being open about their sexual orientation on public transport¹²¹.

Consultation and Engagement

As noted in Section 1 of this IIA, the Improving Public Transport White Paper was open to public consultation from December 2018 to March 2019. In order to ensure that the consultation was inclusive and could be accessed by all, an Easy Read version of the consultation was published, and large print, braille, audio and alternative language versions were made available upon request. In addition to the written consultation, workshops were carried out across Wales and meetings were held with specific organisations which represent those with protected characteristics including Disability Wales and Guide Dogs Cymru.

¹¹⁷ Welsh Government (2014) National Transport Survey

¹¹⁸ British Red Cross (2019) Barriers to belonging: An exploration of loneliness among people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

¹¹⁹ National Survey - statistics located in table 41: <https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Transport>

¹²⁰ Equality and Human Rights Commission (2018) Is Britain Fairer? The state of equality and human rights

¹²¹ Government Equalities Office (2018) National LGBT Survey <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-lgbt-survey-summary-report>

The consultation responses received have been carefully considered and are referenced within this EIA in the section below, considering the results.

Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on people with protected characteristics as described in the Equality Act 2010

Assessment

Local bus services in Wales are currently facing major challenges with the number of passengers falling steadily and a resultant reduction in the number of services operating. The Bill proposals would give local authorities greater influence over bus services within their areas through allowing them to implement Welsh Partnership Schemes, franchising schemes and/or run local bus services. The proposals would also improve the availability of data and information sharing.

Maintaining and enhancing bus services in Wales is critical to the promotion of equality and diversity within our society given that those with protected characteristics are often more reliant on public transport services.

It is assumed that without intervention and given the current levels of decline that bus services in Wales will continue to operate at reduced frequencies with lower numbers of passengers.

The impact of each of the proposals contained in the Bill on those with protected characteristics has been addressed in turn and the results of this analysis are presented in the following sections of this EIA.

Each section considers the key barriers faced by those with protected characteristics in relation to the use of bus transportation and assesses how the proposals would mitigate, resolve or exacerbate these issues with appropriate references to existing data and academic literature on the subject, in addition to the White Paper consultation responses. The assessment also considers how the proposals would promote equality in line with section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

The assessment is summarised in the 'Record of Impacts' at the end of this EIA.

1. Legislating for Welsh Partnership Schemes, franchising and local authority run services

Welsh Partnership Schemes would create opportunities for improved co-ordination and create a clear vision for improvements in the delivery of bus services, whilst franchising and/or local authority run services would give local authorities the opportunity to have more influence over the way in which bus services operate. These proposals are considered to provide an overall benefit to those with protected characteristics as they will allow bus services to be adapted to meet the needs of specific groups and communities. Specific examples of how this could be achieved are set out below.

BAME groups have higher rates of bus and coach travel than any other group¹²², and in particular BAME students are more likely to commute to their educational institutions by public transport¹²³. Despite these statistics, historically the public transport needs of BAME people have not been met as bus services have not been adapted to respond to meet the needs of changing communities¹²⁴. These proposals offer the opportunity to address this issue by ensuring that there is a more integrated system to better connect areas with higher BAME populations to important public services such as schools, hospitals and primary employment areas.

Young people in the UK are more reliant on buses than any other age group particularly for journeys to and from school¹²⁵. However, despite this the consultation response from the Children's Commissioner for Wales highlights that in Wales young people continue to view bus transport as a barrier to their ability to attend school, college or other training both in terms of affordability and reliability. This is a particularly significant issue for young people as they often have more limited alternatives in terms of other transport.¹²⁶

Opportunities for **franchising or for local authorities to directly run bus services** would create the possibility for further services or initiatives targeted specifically at young people looking to attend employment, education or training to encourage participation and attendance to the benefit of the wider economy.

The consultation response from the Children's Commissioner also highlights that young people in Wales see bus timetabling as an issue, with limited services in the evening for example, acting as a barrier for children attending leisure and play activities¹²⁷.

Timetabling is also currently considered to be a barrier for those who wish to attend religious services given that they often have a need to travel on days when services are reduced, e.g. Saturdays and Sundays and in the evenings when bus services either do not operate, or are less reliable. This was identified, for example, by Churches Together in Wales within their consultation response to the White Paper, where they stated that many people were reliant on the use of the private car to attend church and associated activities despite the environmental disadvantage of this mode of travel¹²⁸.

¹²² National Travel Survey 2017

¹²³ Bevan foundation (2018) Class Dismissed

¹²⁴ Mott McDonald & University of Leeds (2013) Valuing the social impacts of public transport Final report,

¹²⁵ Equality and Human Rights Commission (2018) Is Britain Fairer? The state of equality and human rights

¹²⁶ See section B.1.7.

¹²⁷ Children's Commissioner for Wales (2018) Spotlight Report: Article 31. Available online at <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Play-FINAL.pdf>

¹²⁸ Churches Together in Wales 'Improving Public Transport' White Paper consultation response.

For older people, getting to and from hospital without the use of the private car has been identified as an existing issue¹²⁹. Age Cymru has identified that they have received feedback from older people that bus routes bypass hospitals and/or they have to make a number of changes on the bus to reach hospitals which can be stressful, particularly when people have specific appointment times.¹³⁰ Improved bus services to hospitals could also serve to benefit other protected groups such as women needing to attend maternity appointments.

Opportunities for franchising and for local authorities to directly operate bus services would provide local authorities with tools to increase/improve bus provision at weekends, during the evening and to and from hospitals.

Bus travel is of considerable importance to disabled people, not least due to the typically low levels of access to cars for that group of people¹³¹. The majority of disabled people state that their main reason for using bus services is that they don't have the option to travel by other means.¹³² This means that this protected group is often left more vulnerable to unreliable and poor-quality bus infrastructure and services.

As identified by Diverse Cymru within their White Paper consultation response, the proposals have the potential to create a more integrated transport system thereby potentially creating a reduction in journey times, a reduction in distances between key infrastructure, and improving safety and accessibility, all of which would benefit disabled people.

How would this promote equality?

Integration within the bus network and better joined up working would improve service reliability and allow further services to be introduced. This would make it easier for people to fully participate in society, for example, by allowing people to attend religious services and travel to hospital. This would serve to mitigate against disproportionate effects experienced by those who are disabled, religious groups and those with additional health needs such as women during pregnancy.

Additionally, it may help those with protected characteristics feel more valued and respected in their communities and allow them to feel their particular needs have been fully considered in the provision of bus services.

More tailored services based on community needs would ensure that protected groups are not disadvantaged due to lack of access to employment and education and would have a further indirect impact of diversifying the local labour market and making key centres more representative of the local community. This could indirectly contribute to ameliorating wider issues such as the pay gaps which exist for those with protected characteristics, as identified above.

¹²⁹ as set out in section B.1.7

¹³⁰ Age Cymru 'Improving Public Transport' White Paper consultation response

¹³¹ See B.1.7

¹³² Passenger Focus (2012) Bus Passengers with Disabilities

Research that has been undertaken demonstrates that there is lack of understanding and support for those with protected characteristics using public transport with many having faced issues such as harassment or exclusion. This is demonstrated by the statistics presented within this IIA.

The proposals would serve to potentially mitigate these types of issues as they would introduce the potential to create new quality standards based on local priorities and challenges. This could include for example codes of conduct for bus staff, further training for staff members to increase awareness of groups with protected characteristics and more robust complaints and feedback procedures which protect vulnerable groups.

Creating an environment where all people feel respected and understood would serve to both enhance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

2. Open data and service information

The proposals would allow for the development of a comprehensive open data set for the bus services that are available in Wales, which would be easily accessible to the public. This could also be used by app designers to create new platforms to provide up to date travel information across all modes, assisting people to more accurately plan journeys by public transport. It is considered that this would serve to enhance the use of the bus network for all users including those with protected characteristics, as described further below.

The service information provisions in the Bill are intended to enable local authorities to require bus operators to provide certain information to the authorities when services are withdrawn or varied and the local authority is considering subsidising to maintain the level of service.

The availability of accurate information on withdrawn or varied services will assist local authorities when making decisions on their local bus services. If a local authority decides to subsidise the service, the information will help secure cost effective replacement services. This will help make best use of public sector resources used to support the bus services that communities in Wales need.

Research suggests that a key issue which faces nearly all those who share protected characteristics is the perception of safety when using public transport.

Improvements to service information and more open data has the potential to directly improve safety and security in the bus network to the benefit of those with protected characteristics. Accurate journey time information would have the effect of ensuring that people are not left waiting at bus stops for long periods potentially avoiding feelings of vulnerability and insecurity, particularly at night. The use of apps and journey planning systems would allow people to plan ahead and share accurate details of their journeys with people they meet at their destination, all contributing to making the bus network feel safer for all users.

How would this promote equality?

By ensuring people feel safe in their surroundings this would remove differential effects (related to fear/insecurity) experienced by vulnerable groups. It would also have an indirect impact on promoting equality of opportunity. People with protected characteristics may consider different forms of employment (e.g. shift work) if they felt confident that they could

travel home safely and may be willing to consider travelling further by bus instead of being reliant on the private car.

This is particularly important in Wales given that car ownership is low and generally car ownership is even lower amongst those with protected characteristics e.g. BAME, disability and women.¹³³

Gender

There are an estimated 370,000 registered carers in Wales¹³⁴ with recent research by Carers Wales estimating that 220,000 carers are juggling this responsibility with paid work¹³⁵. Evidence suggests that women in the UK remain primarily responsible for caring responsibilities for both children and adults e.g. with 94% of all child benefit claims made in the UK being paid to women¹³⁶. This has a resultant effect on the labour market with 37% of UK mothers working part time compared to 6% of fathers.

The same is true of adult care, particularly in Wales where more women provide unpaid care to an adult than in any other part of the UK¹³⁷. As concluded in a research paper prepared by the Women's Budget Group 'as women are far more likely than men to live on low incomes, work part-time, live in poverty and to undertake unpaid work in the home and the community, poor quality, unreliable and expensive public transport has a far bigger impact on their lives than it does on the lives of men¹³⁸.' Data also suggests that more women commute to work by public transport compared to men which makes improvements to bus services particularly pertinent¹³⁹.

Improved information and data availability would therefore serve to mitigate against differential effects experienced by women. It would advance equality of opportunity by potentially improving women's ability to balance employment with additional responsibilities more easily. This could consequently have benefits for the older people, younger people and disabled people they care for.

Age

In 2019 only 47% of adults in the UK aged 75 and over stated that they were recent internet users compared with 99% of adults aged between 16 and 44¹⁴⁰, and Age Cymru

¹³³ See section B.1.7

¹³⁴ Social Care Wales (2018) Preventative support for adult carers in Wales: rapid review

¹³⁵ Carers Wales (2019) Number of carers juggling paid work and care across Wales increases to 220,000

¹³⁶ WEN Wales (2015) The Position in Wales today on unpaid care

¹³⁷ WEN Wales (2015) The Position in Wales today on unpaid care

¹³⁸ WBG (2018) Public Transport and Gender

¹³⁹ WBG (2018) Public Transport and Gender

¹⁴⁰ ONS (2019) Internet Users, UK: 2019 Statistical Bulletin

identified that a range of media to display information would be particularly important for older people, many of whom have specific additional needs due to, for example, hearing or sight loss. Therefore, whilst further information could provide an overall benefit to older people using bus services care should be taken to ensure that this is multi-format and accessible to all and that it avoids the use of 'online only' information.

Disability

These considerations would be similar for those with a disability. According to ONS data, 20% of people with disabilities had never used the internet in 2018¹⁴¹. In addition to access issues, disabled people may also require different types/methods of communication. For example, as noted by Guide Dogs for the Blind, the use of audio-visual technology on buses for those who are partially sighted requires further consideration which these proposals provide an ideal platform for.

Overall proposals to enhance open data and service information could serve to enhance opportunity and fairness within the bus network for those with protected characteristics provided that the media used is carefully considered and a number of different information sharing methods are implemented including digital technology alongside more traditional means. Improvements to open data and service information would have to be sensitively developed to ensure that they do not cause a disadvantage to those with protected characteristics.

Human Rights and UN Conventions

Overall it is considered that the proposals would have a positive impact on people's human rights for the reasons outlined below.

Adoption of the tools provided for in the Bill proposals will improve quality standards (such as safeguarding procedures put in place to manage potential risks to vulnerable transport service users) and enable additional staff training, helping to ensure that no one would be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment when using bus services in accordance with Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Improvements to services would also strengthen the right to freedom of movement in line with Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

¹⁴¹ ONS (2018) Internet Users, UK: 2018 Statistical Bulletin

Record of Impacts (by protected characteristic)

The below table summarises the findings of this EIA by protected characteristic.

Protected characteristic or group	What (if any) are the positive or impacts of the proposal?	What (if any) are the negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate Impacts?
Age	Older people:			
	Effective adoption and use of information provision and data sharing provisions would provide an easy-to-understand, consistent service improving legibility and understanding for older people who more reliant on public transport.	Integrated ticketing through on-line products and apps could leave older people at a disadvantage if they are unable to access the best tickets / information.	Information about bus routes and timetables must be provided in places where older people are most likely to see it, and must be readable. This is especially important in relation to changes to established routes and times. ¹⁴²	Any new ticketing services/enhanced technology will need to consider the impact on older people at planning and implementation. Consideration may be given as to whether these types of measures should be implemented alongside more traditional methods of information sharing (e.g. physical timetables) to ensure older people do not feel excluded.
	The adoption of franchising or Local Authority-run bus services as provided for in the Bill has the potential to improve routes to health and social services such as hospitals, identified as a particular barrier for older people.	Negative impacts have not been identified.	Age Cymru reported that older people (particularly those without access to a car) do struggle to reach key services by public transport e.g. hospitals. ¹⁴³	N/A
	Open data and up-to-date information sharing have the potential to enhance feelings of	Negative impacts have not been identified.	Safety is a serious concern for older people as they are likely to be more severely injured, take	N/A

¹⁴² http://ageactionalliance.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Older-People-and-Transport.exec_summary_marsden.pdf

¹⁴³ <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-cymru/documents/policy/buses---a-lifeline-for-older-people/buses---a-lifeline-for-older-people.pdf>

	safety for older people using the bus network.		longer to recover and suffer greater psychological impact than a younger person in a similar incident. In many cases, older people worry about their safety and are reluctant to take public transport due to factors such as fear of crime, or falling over and becoming injured. ¹⁴⁴	
	Children & Young People:			
	As young people are often more reliant on public transport to access educational and extra-curricular activities they are disproportionately affected by poor bus services. Improved public bus services as a consequence of adopting the tools provided for in this Bill would lead to improved access to education and employment opportunities which would benefit younger people.	Negative impacts have not been identified.	Young people, particularly 17-20 year olds, are more reliant on buses than any other age group, primarily for access to education, but also to employment/training and social/leisure facilities. ¹⁴⁵	N/A

¹⁴⁴ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12062-016-9168-9>

¹⁴⁵ <https://bettertransport.org.uk/sites/default/files/research-files/16.05.25.school-transport-matters.pdf>

	There is the potential for improved bespoke services to key employment or education sites and improved information provision and data sharing in a format geared to young people who value journey planning and confidence when using public transport.	Negative impacts have not been identified.	Real Time Information in particular provides reassurance to bus users (all users – not just young people). If the information is reliable then it builds trust and confidence. Information could be improved if it was more closely tailored to what the young person wants and needs, so, they can choose the channel they use to get the information and select the things they wanted. ¹⁴⁶	N/A
Disability	Indirect positive impact on disabled people by improving bus services for their carers in terms of reliability and consistency in services. Adoption of the tools provided for in the Bill proposals such as local authority-run bus services could improve door-to-door journeys on demand and on the day of travel for disabled people. Improved bus services would have a positive impact when traveling to see family, friends, access to shops and public services including health.	Negative impacts have not been identified.	Disabled people rely on public transport often because they have no other option and have low levels of car ownership. ¹⁴⁷ Whilst passes issued to passengers who are disabled account for about 10% of passes issued, the proportion of journeys undertaken by disabled people and disabled people with a companion accounts for 25% of the total number of journeys made in Wales in 2016/2017. ¹⁴⁸	N/A

¹⁴⁶ <http://d3cez36w5wymxj.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/16190124/Making-bus-a-better-choice-for-young-people-FINAL-WEB-VERSION.pdf>

¹⁴⁷ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/784685/future_of_mobility_access.pdf

¹⁴⁸ https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2018-02/mandatory_concessionary_fares_en.pdf

	National standards and quality improvements to local bus services – as part of any Welsh Partnership Scheme or franchise that is implemented local authorities and bus operators <i>could</i> be required to take measures such as installing audio visual next stop announcement systems, accessible information at bus stops, stations and other key interchange points, and providing additional staff training.	Negative impacts have not been identified.	Consultation responses received from groups such as Disability Wales and Guide Dogs UK suggests that there are improvements needed in the way information is presented for those who are disabled. ¹⁴⁹	N/A
Gender Reassignment (the act of transitioning and Transgender people)	National standards and quality improvements to local bus services as a result of the implementation of any Welsh Partnership Scheme or franchise could provide opportunities for increased training for staff in respecting those with protected characteristics e.g. gender reassignment and may create opportunities to diversify the workforce.	Negative impacts have not been identified.	Gender minorities can experience frequent harassment while accessing public transport. ¹⁵⁰	N/A
	Better information sharing and further data on services could help improve perceptions of safety on public transport for transgender users/users in the process of gender reassignment. This could have an indirect positive impact on improving access to	Negative impacts have not been identified.		N/A

¹⁴⁹ <https://gov.wales/improving-public-transport>

¹⁵⁰ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320085947_Transmobilities_mobility_harassment_and_violence_experienced_by_transgender_and_gender_nonconforming_public_transit_riders_in_Portland_Oregon

	employment/education for those experiencing gender reassignment by encouraging them to travel to different areas.			
Race	<p>Enhanced quality standards which may be introduced through a Welsh partnership Scheme or franchising could provide further support and protection for BAME groups and foster understanding.</p> <p>BAME people are generally higher public transport users, therefore improved information, services and the creation of a sustainable bus network would particularly benefit BAME users as this protected group are particularly reliant on public transport. These proposals offer the opportunity to address this issue by ensuring that there is a more integrated system to better connect areas with higher BAME populations to important public services such as schools, hospitals and primary employment areas</p>	Negative impacts have not been identified.	BAME groups have higher rates of bus and coach travel than any other group ¹⁵¹ and in particular BAME students are more likely to commute to their educational institutions by public transport. ¹⁵²	N/A

¹⁵¹ National Travel Survey 2017

¹⁵² Bevan foundation (2018) Class Dismissed

	Improved information sharing would improve the accessibility and attractiveness of services for those who do not have English/Welsh as a first language.	Negative impacts have not been identified.	Public transport is a particular challenge for those from BAME backgrounds due to language barriers and not having the confidence to ask for help. ¹⁵³	N/A
		Concessionary Fares Scheme Assume you want to delete this title? YES PLEASE		
Religion, belief and non-belief	Proposals may increase the potential for improved access for those who wish to attend religious services.	Negative impacts have not been identified.	As set out in the consultation responses ¹⁵⁴ , there is a reliance on the car to access religious services due to the timings of those services (generally evenings, Saturdays and Sundays) and improved access by public transport will help all groups of people practice their faith and access faith services.	N/A
Sex / Gender	Positive generally but in particular for female users as women are statistically higher users of public transport. New quality standards which could be implemented through a Welsh Partnership Scheme or franchising and better information sharing is considered to improve perceived and actual safety when using bus services. This may also foster opportunity to	Negative impacts have not been identified.	Despite female car ownership rising by 21% in the last ten years, women in the UK continue to have lower levels of car	N/A

¹⁵³ British Red Cross (2019) Barriers to belonging: An exploration of loneliness among people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds

¹⁵⁴ <https://gov.wales/improving-public-transport>

	enhance diversity within the transport workforce.		ownership than men ¹⁵⁵ and are therefore more reliant on public transport as noted in the evidence section above. Women also generally feel less safe using Public Transport, particularly after dark. ¹⁵⁶	
Pregnancy and Maternity	Improved quality standards would enable better opportunities for drivers to receive training in responding to the needs of pregnant passengers sensitively.	Negative impacts have not been identified.		N/A

¹⁵⁵ <https://www.smmmt.co.uk/2018/04/female-car-owners-up-20-in-a-decade-reveals-uks-biggest-automotive-motorparc-analysis/>

¹⁵⁶ https://www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/womens-safety-security_0.pdf

Sexual orientation (Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual)	<p>New quality standards which could be implemented through a Welsh Partnership Scheme or franchising and better information sharing is considered to improve perceived and actual safety when using bus services. This may also foster opportunity to enhance diversity within the transport workforce.</p> <p>Better information sharing and further data on services could help improve perceptions of safety on public transport for LGBT+ users. National standards and quality improvements to local bus services could provide opportunities for increased training for staff in respecting those with protected characteristics, including LGBT+ people.</p>	<p>Negative impacts have not been identified.</p>	<p>Research as presented above, suggests that LGBT groups generally feel less safe than other groups using public transport (particularly after dark) and have been subject to harassment causing them to avoid being open about their sexuality when using public transport.¹⁵⁷ Research indicates that the key priorities for LGB are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Reliability • Customer service and information • Personal safety. <p>A number of issues make personal safety a particular concern for the community, this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff roles and attitudes • Uncertain and unreliable services, especially at night • A lack of accurate, up-to-date service information, especially in isolated locations • Disorderly or threatening behaviour from other passengers or the public • Security concerns about travelling from stations and bus stops, particularly at night.¹⁵⁸ 	<p>N/A</p>
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¹⁵⁷ <http://marketingtherainbow.info/case%20studies/cs%20travel/public%20transport.html>

¹⁵⁸ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/36211/equality-action-plan.pdf

<p>Low-income households</p>		<p>Negative Impacts have not been identified at this stage</p>	<p>Those on low incomes rely more on bus services: half of the poorest fifth of the population don't have a car, rising to more than two-thirds of job-seekers. Improving transport services and making them affordable and accessible helps to tackle social exclusion.¹⁵⁹</p> <p>People from low-income communities are more likely to be killed or seriously injured on the roads, face worse air quality, and have higher exposure to other negative impacts of transport.¹⁶⁰</p>	
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¹⁵⁹ <http://www.poverty.ac.uk/report-social-exclusion-transport-necessities/lack-affordable-transport-hitting-low-income>

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

Conclusion

The Bill proposals cover a number of areas relating to bus service provision. These include enabling legislative provisions, which would provide local authorities with more tools to help them plan and deliver improved bus services in Wales. These provisions relate to improved partnership working, franchising and local authority run bus services and are intended to improve the legislative framework around bus services and provide local authorities with the flexibility to better respond to local public transport needs. The legislation also includes proposals for improving the provision and management of data relating to bus services.

Impacts have been assessed with consideration of the policy aim to improve bus services across Wales.

The Equality Impact Assessment has found that on balance and taking into account all of the proposals for the Bill, there would be positive impacts for groups sharing protected characteristics by enabling:

- An easy to understand, reliable and consistent bus service to improve access for disabled people (and their carers), older people and young people.
- provision of improved travel opportunities, simpler fare structures and better deals as young people find transport costs a particular barrier to education and jobs;
- improved access to education and employment opportunities for young people;
- national standards and quality improvements to local bus services, which could provide opportunities for increased training for bus staff in respecting those with protected characteristics, and may create opportunities to diversify the workforce;
- additional standards and improved information sharing, which would improve services for those who do not have English/Welsh as a first language; and
- better information sharing and further data on services. This could help improve perceptions of safety on public transport for several groups such as older people and LGBT+ users.

More detailed consideration of equality impacts can be undertaken as and when local authorities choose to use any of the powers provided to them in the legislation. At that stage, further engagement with representative groups and people sharing protected characteristics will facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of how using the powers provided for within the legislation will impact these groups. For example, should a local authority decide to implement all of the potential changes the Bill makes available, the potential impacts would be much greater than another local authority that decides to implement few or none of the changes available to it. If a local authority wanted to implement a franchising scheme, it would need to make a detailed business case, taking on board all potential impacts, in order to do so.

For the Welsh Government, there is in place a full review process for each part of the Bill proposals. These are outlined in Chapter 10 of the Bill – Post Implementation review. This

provides for formal post implementation review at five, ten and fifteen years (dependent on the measure) as well as ongoing review of data as appropriate.

Key matters for consideration at review stage will include impacts on bus patronage, frequency of services, quality of services (including punctuality and reliability), integration of services, hours of operation and subsidy requirements.

Feedback from passengers, and from passenger representative groups, will also be used to assess the effectiveness of the provisions introduced. The review process may consider, for example, whether there has been an impact on the number and percentage of older person journeys against total journeys. This information would be part of the ongoing monitoring of impacts on groups sharing protected characteristics, in accordance with requirements under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

C. RURAL PROOFING IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This Rural Proofing Impact Assessment considers the impacts of the Bill proposals on rural communities as well as how the proposals will address the needs of rural areas.

Rural proofing is a government commitment, underpinned by the principles of social justice, sustainability, equality and fairness, and includes actions to improve the quality of life for those living in rural communities in Wales. Good transport systems for people in rural areas improve access in more remote areas, which typically rely more on the private car for travel.

Public transport in rural and remote areas has a pivotal role in helping ensure people can access community and leisure services, facilities, employment opportunities and education and training.¹⁶¹ Because of the lower density and greater sparsity of the rural population, the provision of rural public transport services can be challenging as it is comparatively expensive to operate and difficult to design in a way that meets the diverse needs of rural communities. In rural areas, services are generally subsidised as they are often not commercially attractive to commercial providers. With challenging financial settlements for local authorities and the Welsh Government in recent years, these services have come under threat, with concerns over their long-term viability.

In response to the Improving Public Transport White Paper, the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales stated she would “expect to see an explanation of how you have considered how bus services can help tackle isolation in more rural areas, which in turn could improve mental health, also preventing inequalities for families that do not own a car. Encouraging people to choose to use public transport which prevents further deterioration of the environment and air quality problems.”

The impact on people, communities and businesses is considered below. In considering these impacts we have sought to respond to the requirements of the Rural Proofing Impact Assessment as set out in the Welsh Government’s IIA Guidance, as well as considering the consultation response of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales.

Impact on people and communities

Rural communities

Rural residents generally live in small towns and villages and more dispersed communities and can be more isolated than their urban counterparts. As a result, authorities with jurisdictions over rural areas need to be more innovative in how they ensure rural residents

¹⁶¹ <https://www.wcpp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/An-evidence-review-of-interventions-to-improve-transport-in-rural-areas.pdf>

have access to a range of goods, services and activities¹⁶². The Rural Development Programme for Wales¹⁶³ outlines the problem of public transport not meeting the specific needs of people who live in rural areas.

Annual Population Survey data was analysed as part of the Rural Development Programme, concluding that “bus services that operated at peak hours were fairly limited for large parts of rural Wales with less than half of the communities having such services in population bands below 1000 people¹⁶⁴” and there was frustration with the lack of reliability of the services as well as the poor frequency.¹⁶⁵

Individuals in rural areas without a car have much poorer access to key services, compared with rural car owners and individuals residing in urban areas¹⁶⁶. Young people, people on lower incomes, older people, disabled people or people claiming Job Seeker’s Allowance¹⁶⁷ are more likely to use and rely on bus services, therefore it is fair to assume that these groups experience the negative effects of poor bus services more acutely. The cost of car ownership is prohibitive for some of these groups, and for some disabled people may not be possible and they are entirely reliant on other modes of transport or other people to access goods and services.¹⁶⁸

The combination of high fuel prices and the longer distances which often have to be travelled to access employment and services¹⁶⁹ are factors which contribute to worse

¹⁶² Johnson, Parker and Craig (2010). Rural Accessibility: A bus, a man a van and a sofa. Scottish Transport Applications Research (STAR) Conferences.

¹⁶³ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/rural-development-programme-document-2014-to-2020.pdf>

¹⁶⁴ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/rural-development-programme-document-2014-to-2020.pdf>

¹⁶⁵ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/rural-development-programme-document-2014-to-2020.pdf>

¹⁶⁶ UCL, 2014. Transport and Poverty. A Review of Evidence.

¹⁶⁷ Making the Connections: The Cross-Sector Benefits of Supporting Bus Services. Urban Transport Group (July 2014). <http://www.urbantransportgroup.org/system/files/general-docs/10210%20Pteg%20Benefits%20of%20the%20bus%20web%20FINAL.pdf>

¹⁶⁸ Commission for Rural Communities, 2012. Barriers to education, employment and training for young people in rural areas

¹⁶⁹ <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/888/RuralProfile.pdf>

health outcomes as well as deprivation in rural areas¹⁷⁰. For example, distance is an important factor when it comes to maintaining and improving health. Issues that arise include time and distance for cases of heart attacks and the ability to make and keep hospital and doctors' appointments¹⁷¹.

Furthermore, poor rural transport has been recognised as a key factor influencing a lack of poverty alleviation¹⁷². The Bill proposals, which involve legislating to give local authorities the power to establish Welsh Partnership Schemes and franchise bus services in their areas, as well as enabling them to provide bus services directly, have the potential to improve the transport networks in rural areas.

If the measures in the Bill are taken up by local authorities this will enable more efficient and attractive bus services, leading to an increase in patronage. Over time, there may be decreases in travel costs for passengers, thus increasing their disposable income and contributing to a reduction in both isolation and rural poverty.

Social isolation

Research shows those living in rural areas and without access to a car are more likely to find themselves socially isolated¹⁷³. Social isolation has an impact on a person's mental health and social well-being, and evidence published by Greener Journeys¹⁷⁴ indicates around 20% of 18-24-year olds and 15% of 65+ year olds catch a bus either daily or weekly to help achieve human contact¹⁷⁵ and reduce their level of social isolation.

The British crime survey found 25.5% of disabled individuals do not go out, compared to 1.5% of non-disabled individuals¹⁷⁶ - access to transport is a significant factor in this. This problem is amplified in remote and rural areas due to the lack of public transport infrastructure.

¹⁷⁰ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/rural-development-programme-document-2014-to-2020.pdf>

¹⁷¹ <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/888/RuralProfile.pdf>

¹⁷² House of Commons Transport Committee. 2014
<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmtran/288/28802.htm>

¹⁷³ The future of rural bus services in the UK 2018 <https://bettertransport.org.uk/sites/default/files/research-files/The-Future-of-Rural-Bus-Services.pdf>

¹⁷⁴ <https://greenerjourneys.com/publications/>

¹⁷⁵ Greener journeys- Loneliness Poll. 2018 <http://www.comresglobal.com/polls/greener-journeys-loneliness-poll/>

¹⁷⁶ Transport accessibility for wheelchair users: A qualitative analysis of inclusion and health 2019
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S204604301730117X>

The Improving Public Transport White Paper response from Guide Dogs Cymru also highlighted that individuals with sight loss find it difficult to access bus services in the evenings and are not happy with the frequencies of buses after 6pm, therefore there is a heavy reliance on taxis as the main mode of transport. Furthermore, research shows there is a perception among wheelchair users of public transport being “inaccessible”¹⁷⁷. There are issues around the need to use taxis and the associated costs due to the inaccessibility of public services causing disabled people to become socially isolated¹⁷⁸.

Bwcabus is an example of a local bus service which is designed around meeting the needs of the local people in North Carmarthenshire, South Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. It is a successful scheme which provides easy access vehicles serving rural and isolated areas¹⁷⁹.

If the powers in the Bill proposals given to local authorities are adopted they would bring benefits to the mental well-being of residents in rural communities, with increased access to community and leisure services, thus helping to combat social isolation. For those living in rural areas who may experience low levels of social contact, improved bus services would allow people to socialise and connect.

The impact on different types of people in rural areas is considered further below.

Lower Income or Unemployed Individuals in Rural Areas

Statistics demonstrate there is more economic inactivity in rural areas than urban. According to 2019 figures, 25.7% of people aged 16-64 were economically inactive¹⁸⁰ in Mid and South West Wales where the areas are predominantly classed as rural village or rural village in a sparse setting.¹⁸¹ In Cardiff¹⁸², this figure was 21.0%.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁷ Ibid

¹⁷⁸ Ibid

¹⁷⁹ <https://www.bwcabus.traveline-cymru.info/>

¹⁸⁰ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Economic-Inactivity/economicinactivityratesexcludingstudents-by-welshlocalarea-year>

¹⁸¹ https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-08/appendix-02-data-and-definitions-report_0.pdf

¹⁸² https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-08/appendix-02-data-and-definitions-report_0.pdf

¹⁸³ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Economic-Inactivity/economicinactivityratesexcludingstudents-by-welshlocalarea-year>

A survey conducted by Liberty bus found 33% of young adults consider that without the bus service they could not access employment¹⁸⁴ and that the cost of travel is a key barrier to accessing employment as well as education and other community and cultural activities. This highlights the importance of a high-quality flexible and affordable bus network in delivering economic security and sustainability for the populations of rural areas.

Through Welsh Partnership Schemes and franchising abilities, Local Authorities will have the opportunity to provide bus services which best meet the needs of individuals in their area, including those on lower incomes, providing opportunities to access services, employment and education, which, over time, will improve socio-economic mobility¹⁸⁵.

Young people

In response to the White Paper, the Children's Commissioner for Wales stated that "The cost and availability of transport was something that children and young people felt passionately about. This was particularly the case for children and young people in rural areas".

With bus fares in Wales experiencing an increase of 3.6% in 2017- 2018¹⁸⁶, the Children's Commissioner further highlighted the issue of how young people spend a substantial amount of their generally lower wages on transport costs and the difficulties they have with transport in rural areas.

The proposals outlined in the Bill will allow local authorities to develop schemes such as partnerships, or franchising, or to run their own services to provide improved services to cover more rural routes and networks. These improvements would provide more opportunities for young individuals to access secure employment, different educational opportunities and develop new skills. Better public transport can also assist in attracting new businesses in and growing existing businesses within rural areas¹⁸⁷. This will help to retain skills and talents in these areas, creating socially sustainable communities, as well as retaining the economic benefits locally.

Young individuals, particularly 17 to 20-year olds, are more reliant on buses than any other age group¹⁸⁸. In terms of equality, affordable frequent bus services enable young individuals from all backgrounds living in rural areas to access positive activities before and after school or college³.

¹⁸⁴ Liberty Bus different thinking, growing impact, social impact report 2017.2017

¹⁸⁵ Valuing the social impacts of public transport final report March 2013.2013

¹⁸⁶ <https://gov.wales/public-service-vehicles-buses-and-taxis-april-2017-march-2018>

¹⁸⁷ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2017-10/prosperity-for-all-the-national-strategy.pdf>

¹⁸⁸ Literature article 20- Is Britain fairer? – The state of equality and human rights 2018. Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2018

A more frequent and reliable bus service would benefit younger individuals living in rural areas connecting with urban areas where there are generally greater levels of economic, education, training, social and cultural opportunities.

Effective climate change action is particularly pertinent to young people, including those living in rural areas. With finite natural resources, it is essential for young people to have the opportunity to play a role in preventing and reversing the effects of climate change. The potential adoption of measures such as greener, lower emission buses will decrease the environmental impact of buses as well as raising awareness of climate change to young people.

The Bill proposals in relation to information provision and data sharing aim to improve connectivity, helping people to access and use new technology and increase their confidence in using public transport services. Accurate and reliable real time information is important to young people and the development of such tools would benefit young individuals both economically and socially - in particular young people in rural and remote areas.

Older people

In 2018 in Wales there were around 189,700 people aged 60 – 64 and around 652,000 people aged 65+, so collectively approximately 841,600 aged 60+. By 2035 this will have risen to around 192,600 people aged 60 – 64 and around 846,400 people aged 65+, so in total over 1m people aged 60+. This represents an increase of 23 per cent amongst the population aged 60+ between 2018 and 2035¹⁸⁹.

One study¹⁹⁰ estimated that 5-10% of older individuals living in rural areas felt some degree of social exclusion.

The proposals in the Bill include measures that would encourage greater frequency and reliability of services, addressing some of the problems of the transport requirements of elderly individuals not currently being accommodated through public transport, due to income, physical limitations or changes in trip purpose¹⁹¹. Such measures as provided for in the Bill also reduce the risk of bus networks becoming less accessible for elderly individuals due to less frequent services⁴.

¹⁸⁹ <https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Projections/National/2016-based/populationprojections-by-year-age>

¹⁹⁰ Shergold I. and Parkhurst, G., 2012. Transport-related social exclusion amongst older people in rural Southwest England and Wales. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 28, 412-421

¹⁹¹ The social and economic benefits of community transport in Scotland. Case studies on Transport Policy, Volume 5 (2), June 2017

In response to the White Paper, the Older People's Commissioner for Wales highlighted the importance public transport has to the lives of older people, calling it a "lifeline" to "provide access to key services and amenities". Age UK¹⁹² gave a similar view, recommending that in areas where public transport does not fully serve the needs of older individuals in the area, Local Authorities should provide financial support towards community transport or taxis.

The legislative proposals would provide local authorities with greater flexibility in terms of the planning and delivery of bus services; improved bus services would allow older people to more easily access services, visit friends and relatives and allow them to travel further afield to access health, cultural and community services and facilities. For example, there may be opportunities for local authorities to make improvements to key bus services such as those to hospitals, access to which was identified earlier in this assessment as an issue for older people¹⁹³.

The proposal in the Bill in relation to information provision and data sharing would also provide an easy-to-understand, consistent service improving legibility and understanding for older people living in rural areas who are heavily reliant on public transport. Using open data and up to date information sharing, older individuals would have opportunities to become increasingly confident when using the public transport system.

Disabled people

There is an estimated total of 397,600 disabled individuals¹⁹⁴ and an estimated 370,000 registered carers in Wales¹⁹⁵.

Department for Transport statistics¹⁹⁶ identify the following trends:

- There are nearly 40% fewer trips undertaken by individuals aged 16+ with mobility difficulties compared to those with no mobility disability;
- A similar proportion of people with and without mobility difficulties use a car for trips, however people with mobility difficulties make a higher proportion as a passenger;
- Access to private cars for disabled people is lower in rural areas;

¹⁹² Age UK, 2012. Missed opportunities: the impact on older people of cuts to rural bus services.

¹⁹³ Welsh Government (2014) National Transport Survey

¹⁹⁴ StatsWales (2019) Disability by Age and Sex, available online at <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Equality-and-Diversity/Disability/disabilitystatus-by-age-sex> [accessed 23 August 2019]

¹⁹⁵ Social Care Wales (2018) Preventative support for adult carers in Wales: rapid review https://socialcare.wales/cms_assets/file-uploads/Preventative-support-for-adult-carers-in-Wales.pdf

¹⁹⁶ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/661933/tsgb-2017-report-summaries.pdf

- Public transport is the least used travel mode by disabled people; and
- Disabled people mainly travel for leisure or shopping purposes.

The proposals in the Bill will offer the opportunity for providers to improve bus services for disabled individuals who live in rural areas through improved provision of information. Where local authorities introduce partnership or franchising schemes, improvements could be made as part of these arrangements such as installation of audio-visual next stop announcement systems, accessible information at bus stops as well as additional staff training.

Better information provision proposals would help disabled people feel more confident to access public transport services, helping to achieve the policy objectives for accessible and inclusive public transport¹⁹⁷ such as assisting disabled people to make successful door-to-door journeys on demand and on the day of travel. The proposals would also benefit carers in rural areas by improving the reliability and consistency of bus services, which would help carers commuting by bus be able to communicate their journey to their dependents with knock on benefits to the children, older people or disabled people who they may care for. Improved access to public transport would also increase their choices about how to travel to and with their dependants.

A consultation response from Carers Wales stated, “local authorities should also work together to facilitate cross border voluntary community transport services”. This could help enable carers within rural communities to visit someone in hospital or in another area outside their Local Authority area, which they would previously have had to spend a long time travelling to. Due to the heavy reliance on car travel as a means of transport in rural areas, having consistent and integrated cross-border bus network between local authorities in Wales and into England where necessary would allow an efficient ease of movement between rural communities. Cross-border bus networks will be a matter for the local authorities when using the tools provided for in the Bill proposals.

The proposals have the potential to help an increased number individuals within rural communities to gain independence and access a more convenient means of travel.

At the point at which local authorities plan to utilise any of the tools provided for within the Bill, they can consider in detail how best to achieve this, for example, by considering how disabled people with different impairments can access new technology, read information, and get on and off vehicles to ensure the information is accessible to all.

Impact on Businesses

One of the seven well-being goals advocated in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is for a “A Prosperous Wales”, which seeks “An innovative, productive

¹⁹⁷<https://beta.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2017-12/policy-statement-accessible-and-inclusive-public-transport-objectives.pdf>

and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work¹⁹⁸”.

This goal includes helping small businesses in rural areas grow and flourish, thereby reducing inequality between outcomes for urban and rural areas.¹⁹⁹ Many of the problems faced by businesses in rural areas are similar to those faced by those in urban ones.

Planning Policy Wales states that development decisions need to promote feasible rural retail and commercial centres as sustainable locations to live, work, shop, socialise and conduct business. These areas need to be sustained, and access to these centres should be improved by all modes of transport, with public transport being one of the key priorities.²⁰⁰ It also states that “small-scale enterprises have a vital role to play in the rural economy and contribute to both local and national competitiveness and prosperity”.

Bus services are the main mode of public transport in rural areas, bringing a combined retail and leisure spend of £27.2 billion to Great Britain²⁰¹ from those living in rural areas and conurbations.

It is important therefore that any new transport proposals help stimulate economic growth in rural areas²⁰² including small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and micro-enterprises. This is particularly pertinent to Wales, where the majority of businesses are SME or micro.²⁰³

Between rural and urban areas within Wales the performance of local bus services and markets varies considerably. As a result, the challenges which local authorities are faced with when considering bus service provision in their area also vary considerably. Therefore, there cannot be one approach only to bus service delivery in Wales. It is essential that local authorities have the right tools available to them to ensure appropriate

¹⁹⁸ <https://futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-en.pdf>

¹⁹⁹ <https://futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FGCW-Framework.pdf>

²⁰⁰ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-02/planning-policy-wales-edition-10.pdf>

²⁰¹ <http://www.urbantransportgroup.org/system/files/general-docs/10210%20Pteg%20Benefits%20of%20the%20bus%20web%20FINAL.pdf>

²⁰² Ibid

²⁰³ https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-08/appendix-02-data-and-definitions-report_0.pdf

provision of bus services within their area²⁰⁴. Providing these tools is the aim of the proposals in the Bill.

With the rural economy being largely made up of SMEs and micro businesses²⁰⁵, ensuring better local authority control of the bus network through partnerships, franchising or running their own services will provide benefits to employers in being better able to plan for their workforce (even down to simple arrangements, such as drawing up staff rotas) as well as providing a greater chance of appointing staff from local and nearby areas²⁰⁶. This is particularly relevant in Wales, as in 2007 and 2010 surveys 64% of employees were recruited locally, and within 10 miles of the workplace²⁰⁷.

The legislative proposals would help combat the problem of the poor quality of local transport connections which are seen to be a barrier to one in four businesses in the UK²⁰⁸.

The White Paper consultation response from Diverse Cymru supported this view, and stated “ensuring that SMEs are considered, and franchising enables SMEs to participate increases the range of potential service providers and therefore options to enhance well-being, services and their use by everyone”.

With the uncertainty of what impact the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union will have on businesses within rural communities, promoting economic resilience will be vital to the economic and social sustainability of rural areas²⁰⁹. If a ‘business as usual’ approach is taken, the economic and social sustainability of rural areas could be at risk.

The legislative proposals will allow commercial operators to tender to run local authority-run bus services, giving local authorities the flexibility to devise services that best meet the needs of people and businesses in their area assisting rural businesses to expand.

Having an integrated public transport network which is safe, reliable, punctual, environmentally sustainable and accessible²¹⁰ will help the development of small

²⁰⁴ The case for the urban bus (2013)

²⁰⁵ https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-08/appendix-02-data-and-definitions-report_0.pdf

²⁰⁶ The social and economic benefits of community transport in Scotland. 2017

²⁰⁷ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/rural-development-programme-document-2014-to-2020.pdf>

²⁰⁸ Making the connections: The cross-sector benefits of supporting bus services. 2014

²⁰⁹ <https://gov.wales/prosperity-all-national-strategy>

²¹⁰ https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-08/appendix-02-data-and-definitions-report_0.pdf

businesses, providing the essential services and access to the premises which they need to grow²¹¹.

Some respondents to the Improving Public Transport White Paper raised concerns over the collaboration between neighbouring local authorities as well as between bus operators in delivering an improved service²¹². For the proposals to benefit rural businesses to their maximum potential, there needs to be the introduction of economies of scale, improvement in standards and consistency in service delivery²¹³.

The proposals in the Bill will assist in tackling transport poverty by improving the available services and enabling better access to employment and markets. With the main mode of transport to access employment and services being motor vehicles (including for rural businesses), those who do not have access to a car are particularly excluded in rural areas.

This situation is made more difficult by the wide dispersal of jobs and services in rural areas as well as rising fuel price trends²¹⁴. With an improved bus service, public transport could help tackle inequalities, as well as help reach the areas which could only previously be reached by car. Small businesses will benefit from being able to diversify and utilise supply chains effectively, increasing their processing capacity which would add greater value to the business as a whole²¹⁵.

The Future Generation's Commissioner's White Paper response expects an acceleration of the "decarbonisation of our public services, creating new opportunities for businesses in Wales in the transition to a low carbon economy". The tools provided for in the Bill would make bus travel more accessible to rural and remote areas. This would make bus travel a viable competitor to car travel in these areas, giving businesses opportunities to reduce travel expenses and fuel costs.

Transferring more journeys to public transport also reduces congestion around key rural towns and areas of interest (such as beauty spots), which enhances people's experience of these places²¹⁶. This could encourage more visitors and tourists to an area and decrease travel times. A growth in visitors would increase economic activity in rural areas.

²¹¹ https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-08/appendix-02-data-and-definitions-report_0.pdf

²¹² <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-08/improving-public-transport-summary-of-response.pdf>

²¹³ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-08/improving-public-transport-summary-of-response.pdf>

²¹⁴ <https://futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/20180912-Transport-Fit-for-Future-Generations-C-1.pdf>

²¹⁵ <https://gov.wales/prosperity-all-national-strategy>

²¹⁶ Making the connections: The cross-sector benefits of supporting bus services. 2014

Infrastructure

For areas to attract businesses and provide jobs, there needs to be a more equal investment in infrastructure²¹⁷. In rural areas, people, local shops and businesses can be cut off from jobs and economic growth due to a loss of bus services²¹⁸.

The transport system is vital to improving access to such opportunities in more traditionally hard to reach areas, which rely more on the private car for travel.

In Wales there is a high level of rural households that are harder to connect to conventional wired broadband. The increase in wireless and mobile internet infrastructure looks set to continue, which should help to reach those households that cannot currently access higher speed internet. The impact from new mobile telecommunications infrastructure in rural areas should therefore be carefully planned.²¹⁹

Improved telecommunication infrastructure will help to deliver the White Paper proposals, allowing for a shift to lower emission transport modes through new, improved methods of sharing travel information, including digital.

This would help to improve economic competitiveness for rural businesses, with increased opportunities for flexible working²²⁰.

The delivery of local bus services and infrastructure is the responsibility of several stakeholders, including bus operators, local authorities and the Welsh Government. There is a need for stakeholders to work together more consistently to achieve more integrated and sustainable local bus services for communities in Wales. Reliable, high-quality transport infrastructure allows groups of people, visitors, and businesses to be connected to key services and places.

Looking to the future, electric vehicle infrastructure would need to be created and supported. Strategic routes and priority areas for new and innovative infrastructure would need to be identified, and provisions and the effects on rural businesses and SME's would need to be considered²²¹.

Highlighted in the literature, a reduction in fare prices of buses does not necessarily mean an increase in patronage on public transport in rural areas. To reduce the reliance on car travel there needs to be the development of effective transport infrastructure and

²¹⁷ Taken for a ride: How UK public transport subsidies entrench inequality. 2015

²¹⁸ Buses in crisis: A report on bus funding across England and Wales 2010-2018. 2018

²¹⁹ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-02/planning-policy-wales-edition-10.pdf>

²²⁰ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-02/planning-policy-wales-edition-10.pdf>

²²¹ https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-08/appendix-02-data-and-definitions-report_0.pdf

services²²². In time there will need to be provision for this, for example improved road connections in rural areas, catering for bus travel and fast broadband to enable digital technologies such as live timetable updates.

These improvements in transport infrastructure would help rural businesses and sectors to grow and be more responsive to changes in the market²²³.

Conclusion

Given ongoing funding pressures on the current configuration of bus services in rural Wales, adopting a 'business as usual' approach would mean bus services in rural Wales would continue to decline and operate at reduced frequencies with lower numbers of passengers.

The decline of bus services in rural areas would further prevent young people from accessing jobs, act as a barrier to businesses accessing markets and growing, and the level of social isolation among individuals within rural communities would remain or get worse.

The proposals in the Bill will give local authorities the tools to ensure appropriate provision of bus services within their area, catering to the needs of their rural communities.

The introduction of easy-to-understand, consistent and more frequent bus services would allow for people in rural communities to access more and better education, employment and social opportunities. Young people can improve on and gain valuable skills which would in turn help with future employment, increasing economic activity in rural areas.

In rural areas, disabled and older people can be particularly at risk of being socially isolated, causing major negative impacts on their mental well-being.

If the tools afforded by the Bill to improve local bus services are adopted by local authorities this would encourage the uptake of public transport by various groups sharing protected characteristics by providing improved accessibility and live information systems. Through the encouragement of better transport opportunities for rural communities, these areas would become well connected and inclusive, adhering to the Well-being Goal of 'A Wales of cohesive communities'²²⁴.

²²² Integrated transport: A new generation of interchanges. 2018

²²³ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/rural-development-programme-document-2014-to-2020.pdf>

²²⁴ <https://futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/>

The improved service information and data availability the reforms would bring would provide small rural businesses with the opportunity to expand, with the ability to access markets, a wider recruitment pool and retain staff²²⁵.

The proposals would help contribute to the well-being goal 'A prosperous Wales'²²⁶ maximising employment and social opportunities in rural areas through enhanced public transport provision. The legislative proposals would also help to satisfy the Future Generation Commissioner's expectations for creating an opportunity for public transport to address social isolation in rural areas, help achieve reduced mental health problems, reduce transport poverty, and encourage sustainable services fit for future generations.

Additionally, improvement in broadband and mobile internet infrastructure²²⁷ would be needed to allow for open data and live timetable updates.

Overall, the legislative proposals in the Bill would provide local authorities with the opportunity to secure and sustain improved bus services within their area. Due to there not being a 'one size fits all' solution, the proposals would give local authorities the power to provide bespoke services for their areas, which otherwise might not be delivered. With an improved transport network, problems in rural communities such as high bus fares and social isolation could be better tackled²²⁸.

²²⁵ The social and economic benefits of community transport in Scotland. 2017

²²⁶ <https://futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/>

²²⁷ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-02/planning-policy-wales-edition-10.pdf>

²²⁸ <http://ppi.w.org.uk/files/2016/06/An-introduction-to-Rural-Poverty.pdf>

D. PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

Please send your assessment to the Information Rights Unit (DataProtectionQueries@gov.wales) copied to your Information Asset Owner.

Name of Information Asset Owner	
PIA reference number (A unique number to identify this PIA such as DivDate or this document's ishare id)	
<p>Please describe your proposal:</p> <p>(i) <i>If this is a change to an existing system/ project/ process/ policy then please outline the present arrangements and how personal data is currently processed.</i></p> <p>(ii) <i>Detail how the new system/ project/ process/ policy will work, including how the personal data will be processed and whether the personal data will be shared with 3rd parties.</i></p>	
<p>Has privacy impact screening or assessment already been carried out?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes: please provide date and outcomes • No 	
<p>Please tick the personal data items that will be processed:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Personal</p>	
Name	Telephone numbers
Name address	Date of birth
Business address	Driving licence number
Postcode	Passport / ID card number
Email address	Photographs / images (which could be used to identify an individual)

	Other (please specify)
Sensitive	
Racial / ethnic origin Political opinions Religious beliefs Trade union membership Physical / mental health conditions Sexual life Criminal & court records (inc. alleged offences) Educational records	Biometric data e.g. DNA, finger-prints Personal financial information (e.g. bank or credit card details) Mother's maiden name NI number (or equivalent) Tax, benefits or pensions records Health or social service records e.g. Housing or Child Protection Employment records (inc. self-employment and voluntary work) Other (please specify)
<p>If sensitive personal data is being processed, is this data being collected mandatorily (i.e. without the data subjects having an option to not provide it)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	
For the personal data being processed, please indicate	
Who the data controller is?	Details:
Any data processors	Details:
Will the data be shared	Details:
What is the legal basis for processing the data?	
<p>Have legal Services confirmed that the basis outlined above provides the necessary gateway for processing (including any proposed sharing)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	

<p>Will the proposal involve new or significantly changed processing of personal data about each individual?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (please provide details) • No
<p>Data Handling</p> <p>Will the personal data be consolidated, linked or matched with data from other sources?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (please provide details) • No
<p>Does the proposal involve new or changed data collection, retention or sharing policies/practices for personal data?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (please provide details) • No
<p>Technology</p> <p>Will the proposal involve the introduction of privacy-intrusive technologies such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart cards • RFID tags • Biometrics • Visual surveillance (e.g. CCTV) • Digital image and video recording • Profiling, data mining or logging electronic traffic • Locator technologies (e.g. GPS, mobile phone tracking) • Other
<p>Identity</p> <p>Will the proposal involve new or changed identity management or authentication processes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (please provide details) • No
<p>Will the proposal have the effect of enabling identification of individuals who were previously anonymous?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (please provide details) • No

E. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Welsh Language Impact Assessment clearance number: 03/11/2019

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) is being carried out in line with the Welsh Government's statutory obligation under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. The Welsh Language Measure sets statutory duties on the Welsh Ministers to consider the impacts, both positive and negative, of their policy decisions on the Welsh language, Welsh speaking people and communities. The assessment is an essential part of the policy development and delivery process.

Policy and Legislative Context

This assessment commences with an overview of the relevant policy and legislative context as follows.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 ("the Welsh Language Measure") was passed by the National Assembly for Wales and given Royal Assent on 9 February 2011. Amongst other things the Welsh Language Measure:

- Makes provision about official status of the Welsh language in Wales;
- Establishes the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner; the Commissioner's principal aim in exercising his functions is to promote and facilitate the Welsh language and work towards increasing the use of Welsh language in the provision of services and other opportunities people have to use the Welsh language.
- Makes provision about Welsh language duties known as Welsh language standards;

Section 33 of the Welsh Language Measure sets out that in order to be liable to comply with Welsh Language Standards a body must be listed in Schedules 5 and 6 or 7 and 8 of the Welsh Language Measure.

Welsh Language Standards

Welsh Government and Local Authorities

The Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015 specify Welsh Language Standards for the Welsh Ministers, county and county borough councils and National Park authorities. In accordance with the Welsh Language Measure, the Welsh Language Commissioner has served a compliance notice on the Welsh Government and each local authority detailing the standards that apply to that particular organisation. The compliance notices place a number of duties on the Welsh Government and local authorities in relation to services they provide to the public and their staff and also contain policy making standards which place duties on the Welsh Government and local authorities to:

- consider the effects or impacts of our policy decisions on the Welsh language (both positive and negative)

- consider how to increase positive effects, mitigate or reduce adverse effects and take all opportunities to promote the use of Welsh
- seek views on the effects on the Welsh language when engaging or consulting and to seek the view of Welsh speakers and users of the language.

The Welsh Language Standards made applicable vary amongst the local authorities in order that they are reasonable and proportionate to each local authority. The Welsh Language Measure places a duty on the Welsh Language Commissioner to monitor compliance with Welsh Language Standards.

Bus operators

The Welsh Government is able to make regulations to make Welsh Language Standards specifically for bus operators as they are named in Schedule 8 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. The first step in this process has been undertaken. In October 2016 and following consultation with train operating companies and bus operators, known as a Standards Investigation, the Welsh Language Commissioner submitted proposals to the Welsh Ministers in relation to proposals for regulations which would make Welsh Language Standards for train and bus operators providing services in Wales. The Welsh Government has yet to bring forward such regulations and at present there is no timetable for doing so.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, public bodies in Wales are required to work towards the seven well-being goals, one of which is 'A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving language'.

Voluntary Welsh Bus Quality Standard

Separate to the system of Welsh Language Standards, the Voluntary Welsh Bus Quality Standard²²⁹, sets policy conditions on local authorities and bus operators to improve the use of the Welsh Language in the delivery of local bus services. The report states that to achieve the core requirements of the standard related to Welsh Language, bus operators need to ensure clear and accessible bilingual notices are displayed on-board and online. This advises passengers how and to whom a complaint or an appeal in relation to their Welsh Language services, or about bus services generally can be made for example to the public transport operator and/or Welsh Government. However, it is important to note this appeal process is different from the complaints process relating to a possible breach of Welsh Language Standards.

The former Welsh Language Commissioner's Standards Investigation sets out that 10 of the 42 companies that responded to that investigation operated a Welsh Language Scheme under the Welsh Language Act 1993 or policy.

Cymraeg 2050

²²⁹ <https://gov.wales/voluntary-welsh-bus-quality-standard>

Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers, sets out the Welsh Ministers' strategy for the promotion and facilitation of the use of the Welsh language, with the aim of creating a Wales whereby the Welsh language is an integral element of all aspects of everyday life. Specifically, the strategy aims for there to be a million Welsh speakers by 2050, and amongst those who do not speak Welsh, there is goodwill and a sense of ownership towards the language and a recognition by all of its contribution to the culture, society and economy of Wales.

Cymraeg 2050 is supported by the first of several work programmes that will be published during the lifespan of the Cymraeg 2050 strategy. The current work programme sets out what the Welsh Government intends to do between 2017 and 2021 in order to deliver the strategy.

According to the 2011 census there were 562,000 Welsh Speakers, and it is projected that there will be 666,000 Welsh speakers by 2050²³⁰. Cymraeg 2050 therefore aims to build upon this figure substantially by reaching 334,000 additional speakers compared to the current forecasts over the next three decades. It is currently estimated that of those aged 16 and over, 12% speak Welsh daily and of more than a few words²³¹.

Consultation

In accordance with the Welsh Language Standards (policy making standards) local authorities are under a duty to consider the Welsh language when making policy decisions or policy changes about franchising and local authority bus services.

This matter was included in the White Paper consultation, wherein two questions related to the impact of the proposed legislation on the Welsh Language. A summary of the consultation responses was published in July 2019.

Question 36: *We would like to know your views on the effects that the legislative proposals set out in this paper would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English. What effects do you think there would be? How positive effects could be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?*

Question 37: *Please also explain how you believe the proposals could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.*

²³⁰ StatsWales: Welsh Language - <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Welsh-Language>

²³¹ National Survey for Wales 2018-19: Percentage of adults (16+) who speak Welsh daily and can speak more than just a few words of Welsh - <https://gov.wales/well-being-wales-progress-reports-against-well-being-goals>

59 responses were received for question 36 and 35 responses were received for question 37. Many responses covered the taxi and PHV perspective of the White Paper only and are not relevant to the Bill as proposed here.

Of these responses, many commented that they would not expect there to be any impact of the proposals on the Welsh language. Other respondents, including many local authorities, referred to existing legislation around Welsh language and the Welsh language standards, noting that obligations are already in place. There were also some comments relating to the importance of the provision of bilingual information and that there would be benefits from increased use of the Welsh language in the public transport industry.

There were no recommendations for changes to the Bus Services (Wales) Bill and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language or on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language were identified.

That notwithstanding, one respondent stated that there should be specific provision within *any* legislation to ensure that operators provide a good service in the Welsh Language in all parts of Wales and enforceable rights for Welsh speakers. This remark makes a general suggestion regarding all Assembly legislation. The Welsh Government's position is that Welsh Language Standards will address these matters and no changes have been made to the Bus Services (Wales) Bill.

The former Welsh Language Commissioner provided a letter in response to the White Paper proposals rather than specific responses to questions. The Commissioner commented that consideration should be given to how the Welsh language standards which currently apply to the Welsh Government and local authorities and any future standards that could be placed on providers of bus services would apply to new Joint Transport Authorities (now Corporate Joint Committees). The former Commissioner also noted that Welsh language standards should be considered in:

- setting quality standards for bus services;
- implementing Welsh Partnership Schemes;
- assessment and delivery of franchising; and
- local authority run bus services.

The provisions in the Bill that the Commissioner responded to are all enabling tools that may or may not be adopted by Local Authorities. Therefore consideration has been given to how these proposals *in and of themselves* impact the Welsh Language in developing them to this stage. It has been concluded that it is in the adoption and enactment of the provisions that impacts on the Welsh Language and requirements under legislation will need to be addressed.

These responses and considerations have been noted for action at the relevant point in the implementation process. Some matters will require work when drafting guidance and setting up processes within Government, other obligations will fall to Local Authorities at the point of setting up and delivering the tools enabled within the Bill provisions.

The Bill Proposals

In the sections below, this WLIA considers the proposals in this context and their possible contribution to the Welsh Government's Well-being goal for the Welsh language and its strategy, Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers.

The Bill proposals do not set out specific provisions in relation to the Welsh Language. The impacts identified in this assessment are as a consequence of opportunities presented for the Welsh Language Standards to set additional duties.

1. Enhanced partnerships, franchising and local authority-run buses

A number of challenges and issues are currently faced by local bus services in Wales, such as services in decline and passenger numbers falling steadily on most routes. By improving the legislative framework, we can provide a range of additional tools for local authorities to consider using when deciding how best to secure and sustain bus service provision in their area. It is fair to conclude that without action, passenger numbers will continue to decline, with cost implications including for the Welsh Government.

Without the proposals outlined in the Bill, a continuous decline in availability of bus services is likely, leading to a risk of increased social isolation; this includes communities with Welsh-speaking populations. Currently, more than one in five people does not have access to a car according to the National Survey for Wales²³², and it is evident that a loss of bus services can cut people off from jobs and education, damage local shops and businesses and affect people's physical and mental health²³³. Legislating for enhanced partnerships, franchising and local authority buses would provide local authorities with greater opportunities to plan and deliver integrated solutions to improve and sustain connectivity and help to tackle problems with social exclusion including for Welsh speaking populations. These provisions can improve access to opportunities to use the Welsh language, as well as being better able to access services through the medium of Welsh.

When looking at the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008, Section 10 states when implementing functions under this measure, each local authority, as well as the Welsh Ministers, must promote access to education and training through the medium of the Welsh Language²³⁴. Alongside the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure, local authorities have a statutory duty to prepare and submit Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

Therefore any decisions local authorities make about Welsh Partnership Schemes and franchising need to consider, the requirements and aims of the Learner Travel Measure and Welsh in Education Strategic Plans in addition to their duties under the Welsh Language Standards

²³² <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Transport>

²³³ Campaign for Better Transport: Buses in crisis (2018) Available for download at <https://bettertransport.org.uk/read-our-report-future-bus-funding>

²³⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2008/2/section/10>

The proposals under this part of the Bill would help contribute to the relevant duties, requirements and aims, helping to promote the use of Welsh in day to day lives. The aim of the Bill to improve bus services in Wales means there is potential for improvements to be made to accessibility to, from and for rural Welsh speaking communities.

Legislating for enhanced partnerships, franchising and local authority buses would provide Local Authorities with a range of tools that would provide greater ownership, control and influence over bus services in their authority as Welsh Language Standards may apply to a broader range of local authority functions.

For example, an indirect impact of local authorities adopting the tools in the legislation – such as setting up local authority-run bus services will mean that standards applicable to local authorities could be extended to such bus service and there could be an increase in staff learning Welsh or of other training around the Welsh Language. However this would be a matter for the local authority when they do choose to adopt one or more of the tools provided for.

Through providing greater ownership, control and/ or influence over bus services, local authorities have greater opportunities to work towards achieving ‘a Wales of thriving Welsh language’ through their involvement with the procurement, operation and branding of bus services.

2. Open data and service information

While the legislation does not set out specific provisions in relation to the Welsh Language, open data and service information would provide an opportunity for creating bilingual platforms to access information about bus services. By creating a comprehensive open data set for the bus services available in Wales and ensuring that this data is easily accessible to the public and App designers, the opportunities for improving journey planning are significant. With improved access to information, accessibility to Welsh language could also improve e.g. to Welsh-medium schools, post-compulsory school age education and learning.

Bilingual journey planner platforms would help to create favourable conditions for the Welsh language to thrive and would also be in line with the Cymraeg 2050's aim to ‘ensure the future vitality of Welsh-speaking communities as places that facilitate the use of the language in every aspect of life’. Improving the tools and enhancing the environment for authorities and operators to provide information in Welsh, should they wish to do so, or should they be required to do so under future Welsh Language Standards would give many users improved choices in how they consume the information, whilst also promoting the Welsh language.

Bus service operators in Wales would provide information to local authorities and the traffic commissioner about routes and stopping places, timetables, fares and ticketing, and patronage.

Providing information to the public in Welsh and English languages would help ensure:

- a) Those whose first language is Welsh are provided with information in their first language;

- b) Those who would prefer to access the information in Welsh could choose to do so; and
- c) Non-Welsh speakers and learners would be provided with the opportunity to read and learn some of the Welsh language.

It is appreciated that various platforms already provide bilingual information; the proposed legislation nonetheless provides the opportunity for improvements to the Welsh language provision and also would provide the opportunity to bring more reliable, up to date information to the Welsh speaking population.

As part of stakeholder consultation, All Wales People First stated they would advocate that service operators and local authorities provide bi-lingual easy read information about services and any changes to services. They also supported an easy read alternative of any document to be produced in full in both English and Welsh Languages for the benefit of the public.

This proposal, if adopted, would contribute to increasing the use of Welsh and creating favourable conditions by providing opportunities for individuals to practice and learn Welsh. The strategy emphasises the importance of giving people opportunities to use Welsh in a variety of situations and that such opportunities and services must be offered proactively, so that the individual does not have to request the Welsh language.

Bilingual open data and service information provision also demonstrates respect for the community (Cymraeg 2050) and would contribute to achieving Cymraeg 2050's vision to see the Welsh language as a normal part of everyday life, with goodwill towards it and an increase in use. The option and the presence of Welsh language would also contribute to the vision by making it more relevant for everyone in Wales, regardless of the language they speak and to also inspire a respect and appreciation of the language among people who move into Wales.

Enhancing the presence of the Welsh language within data and service information would also enhance the place of Welsh in the world and emphasise the language as a key component in Welsh contemporary culture. Language is a key and integral part of culture and serves as a way of presenting a unique image of Wales to tourists. By providing bilingual information on various platforms, the Welsh language is celebrated and promoted, and becomes a visible part of 'Brand Cymru' as cited within Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers.

A literature review has also helped identify the benefits of Traws Cymru branding applied across all of its services²³⁵, which could be used as an example of where the use of the Welsh language and cultural identity could be included as part of any collaboration, franchise or information sharing initiatives at the implementation stage. The Equality and

²³⁵ Campaign for Better Transport: Integrated transport: a new generation of interchanges (2018). Available at <https://bettertransport.org.uk/sites/default/files/research-files/integrated-transport-a-new-generation.pdf>

Human Rights Commission (2009)²³⁶ also found that greater staff awareness and availability of Welsh language services is important for future developments; and that it is important services do not discriminate against Welsh speakers.

A report by the Welsh Language Commissioner on 'Using the Welsh language on social media'²³⁷ underlines the importance of ensuring the Welsh language is included from the outset and assessing the workforce's linguistic skills in order to identify translators to draft bilingual messages on social media accounts.

Impacts on the Welsh Language - General

The tools provided for in this legislation, enable local authorities to have greater ownership, control and influence over bus services. This can allow them to implement and work with these tools as appropriate to overcome current problems with the bus network, such as the existing lack of coordination between bus operators with routes, ticketing, rail and active travel networks.

Welsh speaking communities could benefit from such improvements, helping to reduce isolation and connecting communities better.

Many Welsh speaking communities are in rural and more remote areas and improvements to bus services, connectivity, information, journey planning would become easier and therefore bus travel more convenient for these users.

Under the provision for franchising, there would also be opportunities for local authorities to step in and provide services to rural communities that are important to local communities but not currently delivered. As reported within Cymraeg 2050, many challenges face rural Welsh-speaking communities and it is important that these communities are economically and linguistically viable. Improved access for rural communities via public transport will improve accessibility to employment opportunities and thus contribute to their economic viability.

Enhanced partnership working and franchising, can also give local authorities a greater ability to protect and enhance the Welsh Language by improving the availability of a range of services for citizens, especially young people and those living in rural areas. These may include access to learning and education, healthcare, personal and professional services, and other types of support through the medium of Welsh.

Welsh medium education and Welsh learners

²³⁶ Victoria Winckler, Equality and Human Rights Commission (2009): Equality issues in Wales: a research review. Available at <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-11-equality-issues-in-wales-research-review.pdf>

²³⁷ Welsh Language Commissioner – Using the Welsh language on social media: A practical guide for businesses and charities. Available at <http://www.comisiynyddygymraeg.cymru/hybu/SiteCollectionDocuments/Using%20Welsh%20on%20Social%20Media%20SA.pdf>

The tools provided for in the Bill have the potential to improve school transport to Welsh medium education services as well as increasing accessibility to other institutions which offer Welsh language learning for all ages.

The enabling tools in the Bill provide Local Authorities with the ability to enhance bus service provision through the medium of Welsh as the Welsh Language Standards could apply to a broader range of Local Authority functions, including better information in Welsh and better access to Welsh Language services. It would also serve as an opportunity to plan and deliver sustainable bus services allowing children to access Welsh medium education and improving access to and from Welsh speaking communities.

Conclusions and Monitoring

In conclusion, it is anticipated that there would be some positive effects on the Welsh Language as a result of the proposals for all age groups, but in particular opportunities are more significant for rural communities which include many Welsh language heartlands where barriers to public transport are more prevalent.

The scale of change resulting from the Bill proposals is not known at this stage, therefore it is recommended that further Assessments are undertaken at implementation and delivery stages, when the scope of the change at a regional or local level is better known. At that stage, Local Authorities can engage further with Welsh speakers and/ or representative bodies and groups as appropriate.

To monitor the impact of the policy on the Welsh Language, information should be gathered in the long-term; for example, monitoring the availability of public transport, particularly in rural communities where the opportunity and take up of bus travel is often more limited would be of value.

As required by the policy making standards, the Welsh Government and local authorities must also continue to consider the impact of policy decisions on the Welsh language. This is of particular relevance in relation to implementing and delivering Welsh Partnership Schemes (WPS), franchising, and local authority-run buses.

F. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Biodiversity supports the functioning and resilience of ecosystems in oceans, wetlands, lakes, rivers, mountains, forests and agricultural landscapes.

Overall, biological diversity is declining, which is evidenced by the loss of habitats and species²³⁸. The extent of some habitats has also declined significantly. This means that unless action is taken to halt and reverse these declines, the benefits that we derive from our natural resources are at risk. The legislative proposals provide many indirect opportunities for Local Authorities to take steps to help reverse existing trends.

Evidence shows that air pollution, including that from transport, affects the condition of ecosystems and the biodiversity of an area,²³⁹ therefore good air quality is important for the protection or enhancement of ecosystems. Improving air quality is primarily where the Bill proposals can create impacts on biodiversity. Local authorities have a duty to comply with a variety of environmental legislation of which aims to ensure biodiversity is considered, protected and/ or enhanced in proposals, including:

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 states that a public authority must: “seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions in relation to Wales, and in doing so promote the resilience of ecosystems, so far as consistent with the proper exercise of those functions”.

In following the Section 6 duty, public authorities should embed the consideration of biodiversity and ecosystems in their early thinking and business planning, including any policies, plans, programmes and projects, as well as their day to day activities.

Adopting the tools made available in the Bill proposals, traffic emissions can be reduced, with positive associated impacts on biodiversity, helping local authorities meet the section 6 duty.

Nature Recovery Action Plan 2015²⁴⁰

Objective 1 of the Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP) states;

“Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels”

This places responsibility on the Welsh Government to embed biodiversity values in their strategies and programmes. The NRAP places a duty on public bodies and decision makers to consider and account for biodiversity on local, regional and national scales. The

²³⁸ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/natural-resources-policy.pdf>

²³⁹ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/natural-resources-policy.pdf>

²⁴⁰ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-05/nature-recovery-action-plan-2015.pdf>

Nature Recovery Action Plan also outlines how private companies should also be held responsible for the safeguarding of Wales' biodiversity. The tools that are provided in the Bill would allow local authorities to franchise bus services in their areas. Franchise requirements for local authorities can include measures to protect and enhance biodiversity, promoting the Nature Recovery Action Plan's needs.

Natural Resources Wales Policy

Natural Resources Wales sets out priorities which include;

- a) Delivering nature-based solutions, such as supporting climate change adaption and mitigation;
- b) Increasing renewable energy and resource efficiency; and
- c) Taking a place-based approach.

By taking into account the biodiversity and the environment of the area, the priorities outlined above will help to support action towards and tackle economic inequalities, as well as supporting and securing stable employment.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The 2015 Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales and those listed in the Act to work to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. To help do this they must set and publish well-being objectives and give greater consideration to the long term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach.

One of the seven Well-being goals is to achieve 'a resilient Wales'; a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change). Another of the Well-being goals is 'a globally responsible Wales' which relates to creating a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes into account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to well-being.

The legislative proposals that provide for Welsh Partnership Schemes, Franchising and local authority-run bus services all aim to improve bus services, thereby making them more attractive and leading to an increase in patronage. This increase in patronage would reduce reliance on private cars, thus reducing the negative impact of vehicles on the environment.

Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, it is the duty of public bodies to take steps towards 'a resilient Wales' and 'a globally responsible Wales', as well as seeking to achieve 'a prosperous Wales'. Therefore, Local Authorities' decisions regarding their bus services will need to take into consideration the environment and the proposal's impact on global well-being.

A Clean Air Zone Framework for Wales²⁴¹ is currently being progressed. On publication, this framework will help Local Authorities to address local air quality issues which currently have adverse implications for biodiversity. Similarly, local authorities could take steps to green their bus fleet or bring forward incentives for local bus providers to transition more swiftly to low emission buses. This could be taken forward under a Welsh Partnership Scheme and would lead to reductions in vehicle emissions from buses such as nitrogen oxides which are known to have adverse impacts on habitats.

It is not possible to fully anticipate the impacts of the UK's exit from the European Union on public transport, but there could be changes to the relevance of the EU Emissions Trading Schemes within the UK²⁴². However the Road to Zero Strategy²⁴³ states that the UK Government will pursue a future approach as we leave the European Union that is at least as ambitious as the current arrangements for vehicle emissions regulation and Welsh Government has set more ambitious greenhouse gas reduction targets than the EU's pledge under the Paris Agreement. Therefore while it currently seems unlikely that Brexit will impact on these goals, this is a position that will need to be monitored as scenarios emerge for that exit.

One of the potential benefits of the proposals is the greater flexibility for local authorities and other operators to develop a national bus network which is better able to evolve to become more environmentally friendly.

The proposals in the Bill provide the opportunity for local authorities to build a cohesive and integrated public transport network, which would meet the needs of the local areas whilst being able to protect and/ or enhance biodiversity. For example, there would be greater flexibility and control in planning and delivering bus services, with greater scope for procurement of sustainable vehicles and strategies to reduce reliance on the private car, a modal shift that will lead to improvements in air quality

With greater opportunities for Local Authorities to have ownership and / or influence over bus networks, local authorities could promote and plan bus services which are less polluting and more sensitive to the unique biodiversity of their area. For example, this could be done by planning bus network routes that take account of environmental sensitivities.

When deciding to adopt any of the enabling measures in the Bill proposals, local authorities will need to ensure that impacts on biodiversity are considered, and enhancements are put in place where appropriate and possible.

²⁴¹ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2018-04/180424-clean-air-zone-framework-en.pdf>

²⁴² https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/low-carbon-delivery-plan_1.pdf

²⁴³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reducing-emissions-from-road-transport-road-to-zero-strategy>

There are opportunities for Local Authorities to seek funding to 'green' bus services in their areas so that the services can become more environmentally friendly and reduce impact on biodiversity. For example by accessing the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership's Clean Vehicle Retrofit Accreditation Scheme for buses, coaches, HGVs, vans and black cabs. The scheme enables local authorities, drivers, manufacturers and businesses to be confident of the emissions status of their vehicles, providing the appropriate emissions reductions for free entry to Clean Air Zones.

The Welsh Government is taking key steps to decarbonise the transport sector, which would bring benefits to the biodiversity of Wales²⁴⁴. The key steps are as follows:

- a) A Wales Transport Strategy is currently being prepared and will set out how the transport sector can be decarbonised;
- b) The Welsh Government aims for the public sector in Wales to be carbon neutral by 2030, expecting ultra-low emission vehicles to play a key role in achieving this vision; and
- c) A Clean Air Zone framework is being developed for Wales which will encourage the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles.

The proposals in the Bill will give more power to local authorities to influence the provision of bus services in their areas; providing key opportunities to improve the bus services and how information is promoted and shared.

With fewer cars on the road, emissions can be reduced leading to improvements in air quality and protection of habitats. Ultra-low emission buses would provide the greatest benefit in terms of emission reduction whilst also reducing congestion issues.

A growing number of people are making lifestyle changes to be more environmentally sustainable. An indication of this is the number of people buying electric vehicles in Wales with an increase of new electric and hybrid car registration of 35% in 2017 compared to 2016²⁴⁵. An effective education and promotion programme has the potential to have positive impacts on sustainable travel, therefore improving air quality and providing benefits to biodiversity. This could be facilitated as part of the information provision proposals sought by the Bill proposals.

The duty in Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 only applies to public authorities, however, the Bill proposals will give local authorities the ability to form partnerships and/or franchise services and as such influence private companies and other, non-public authorities through procurement/franchise contracts.

²⁴⁴https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/739460/road-to-zero.pdf

²⁴⁵ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-42628787>

Conclusion

This assessment applies high level assumptions on the likely positive or adverse impacts that may occur to biodiversity, such as improvement of air quality and reduction in pollution affecting local habitats. The detail of impacts can only be fully assessed as and when the Welsh Government and local authorities choose to use the tools provided for in the Bill.

There would be positive impacts on biodiversity due to improvements to the sustainability of bus services and opportunities for infrastructure to be enhanced. The proposals seek to encourage greater patronage and reduced reliance on cars, which would help to improve air quality with associated wider benefits.

Promoting the use of public transport as part of a more sustainable lifestyle can raise public awareness of how reductions in emissions can protect biodiversity. Positive behaviours and attitudes can be fostered by the general public, including a potential increased uptake of public transport, helping to live in a more sustainable way and supporting the protection of the environment and biodiversity of the local area.

Currently, there are no proposals to monitor air quality, or changes in the habitat quality of the local area as a result of the proposals in the Bill. However, the protection of biodiversity through increased use of public transport and reduction in emissions would have a positive impact on biodiversity.

As some of the proposals in the Bill are enabling powers, which may or may not be used by local authorities, consideration has been given to how these proposals *in and of themselves* impact on Biodiversity in developing them to this stage. It is in the adoption and enactment of the provisions that impacts on the Biodiversity and requirements under legislation will need to be addressed.

Some matters may require work when drafting guidance and setting up processes within Government, other obligations will fall to Local Authorities at the point of setting up and delivering the tools enabled within the Bill provisions.

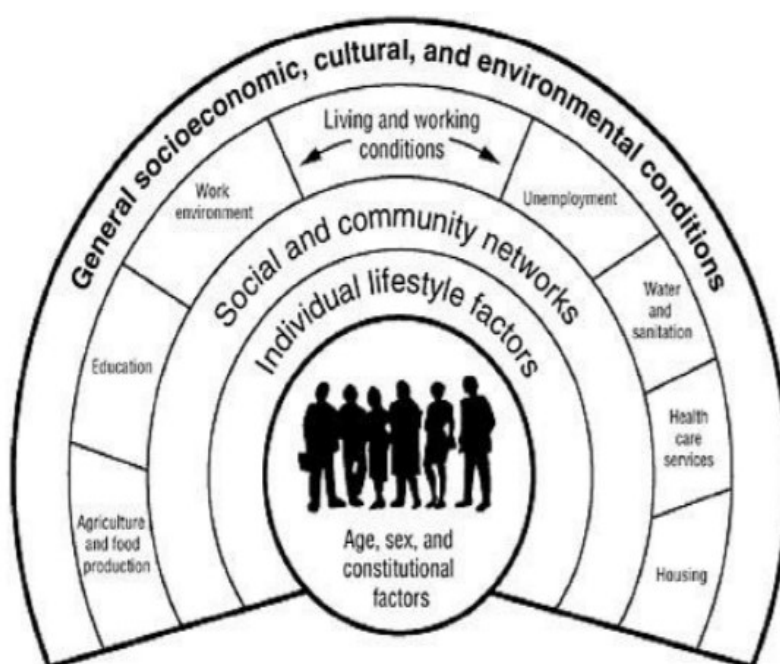
G. HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a process to consider how the health and well-being of a population may be affected by the implementation of a plan or policy. The overarching aim is to ensure that plans and policies minimise negative impacts and maximise positive health and wellbeing impacts. This HIA is based on the approach developed by the Wales Health Impact Assessment Support Unit (WHIASU) and set out in the Unit's Practical Guide to HIA²⁴⁶.

When considering the effects of a plan or programme, health is viewed in a broad sense, encompassing both physical and mental wellbeing, as influenced by a wide range of environmental, social and economic determinants. The WHIASU Guidance captures this broader understanding of health through the use of the World Health Organisation (WHO) definition of health: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity".

The model shown below in Figure G-1 is called the Dahlgren and Whitehead Model. It illustrates the wide range of health determinants to be considered in an assessment, ranging from individual characteristics and lifestyles to wider economic, cultural, social and environmental conditions.

Figure G-1 Social Model of Health



²⁴⁶ https://whiasu.publichealthnetwork.cymru/files/1415/0710/5107/HIA_Tool_Kit_V2_WEB.pdf

Methodology

The methodology has been adapted from the WHIASU practical guide and is undertaken in the following stages:

Population Profile

An overview of the existing population profile, its health profile and general socio-economic conditions in Wales. The profile is built on publicly available data, which includes data and statistics from the Census, StatWales reports, the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) and Public Health Wales.

Inequality of health outcomes is an important consideration in the HIA process and Appendix 2 of the WHIASU Guidance provides a list of population groups who are particularly vulnerable to the causes of ill-health. Following the preparation of the population profile, the most disadvantaged and/or vulnerable groups present are identified and considered in the assessment.

Evidence Review

The evidence review considers available primary and secondary literature to provide an overview of the scientific consensus on the types of health outcome associated with impacts on health determinants (environmental, social and economic factors known to influence health) and the resulting effects on health and wellbeing.

Assessment

Appendix 1 of the WHIASU Guidance sets out a range of health determinants to consider in a HIA. Considering those determinants most relevant to transport and access, this assessment has focused on the most relevant health determinants identified in relation to the proposals in the Bill. These include:

- a) Lifestyle;
- b) Social and community influences;
- c) Living and environmental conditions;
- d) Economic conditions; and
- e) Access and quality of services.

The assessment is undertaken in a tabular format using an assessment framework based on the most relevant health determinants and vulnerable groups identified. This is based on Appendix 3 of the WHIASU Guidance.

For each health determinant, guiding questions are provided to ensure the assessment considers the wide range of aspects related to that determinant. The assessment identifies whether the impact on each health determinant is positive or negative and which vulnerable groups are most affected by the health impact.

A commentary is also provided explaining the rationale for the scoring. This commentary will relate to the relevant health issues identified in the population profile and the evidence described in the evidence review to provide justification for the assessment.

The Bus Services (Wales) Bill proposals contain enabling provisions which cover the whole of Wales rather than specific groups or areas. The HIA does not make specific recommendations but rather it clearly describes the positive and negative implications of the Bill in and of itself at this stage. Much of the detail regarding impacts on Health can only be fully assessed as and when the Welsh Government and local authorities choose to use the tools provided for in the Bill.

The HIA will closely align with other assessments in this Integrated Impact Assessment which also consider vulnerable groups, including the equality impact assessment, the children's rights assessment and the rural proofing impact assessment.

Population Profile

This section provides a high-level health and wellbeing profile for Wales, including data related to access, transport and active travel.

Population

The population of Wales for mid-2018 is 3,138,631, with a population density of 151.4 persons per square km²⁴⁷. Life expectancy is estimated to be 78.3 years for males and 82.3 years for females²⁴⁸.

The latest population projections estimate that:

- The number of children aged under 16 is projected to decrease by 6.8% to 524,300 between 2018 and 2028.
- The number of people aged 16-64 is projected to decrease by 1.7% to 1,890,400 between 2018 and 2028.
- The number of people aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 13.8% to 742,200 between 2018 and 2028.
- The number of people aged 75 and over is projected to increase by 29.0% to 377,300 between 2018 and 2028.

In terms of ethnicity, approximately 95% of the population of Wales state they are from a white background²⁴⁹.

Deprivation

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) measures relative deprivation for smaller areas of Wales (measured as Lower Super Output Areas -LSOA). The WIMD is drawn together using eight separate indicators (called domains) of deprivation (income, employment, health, education, access to services, community safety, physical environment and housing).

²⁴⁷ Stats Wales. Population and Population density by local authority and year – Mid year 2018.

²⁴⁸ Public Health Wales Observatory. Interactive health map. 2010-2014 life expectancy data.

²⁴⁹ StatWales. Ethnicity by area and ethnic group, 2019.

The 2014 WIMD shows that there are pockets of high deprivation in the South Wales Valleys, larger cities and in some North Wales border towns²⁵⁰.

The health domain specifically measures lack of good health, considering the population of residents with long-term illness, higher death rates, low birth rates and cancer incidence. Across Wales, there were high pockets of health deprivation in the South Wales Valleys, larger cities and in some North Wales coastal and border towns. Merthyr Tydfil had the highest proportion of LSOAs in the most deprived 10% in Wales for the health domain. The Isle of Anglesey, Ceredigion and Monmouthshire had no LSOAs in the most deprived 10%.

Healthy behaviours

Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy in Wales are lower than England. Females in Wales on average spend almost 20 years living in poor health, compared to almost 17 years for males.²⁵¹ Life expectancy in Wales continues to rise but at a slower rate than England, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Wales is consistently lower than the top international comparators and England.²⁵²

Data from the Public Health Wales Observatory shows that 75.9% of working-age adults (aged 16-64) and 56.7% of older people (aged 65 and over) in Wales were reported to be in good health²⁵³.

In Wales 59% of adults are classified overweight or obese and the prevalence is higher in males (66%) than females (52%).²⁵⁴ In the 45-64 age category, 68% of adults are overweight or obese. For children aged 4-5 years, 26.4% are overweight or obese, compared to 22.4% in England.²⁵⁵ There is a 6.0% difference between the prevalence of obesity in children living in the least deprived quintile compared to children in the most deprived²⁵⁶.

²⁵⁰ Statistics for Wales, 2014. Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014. Revised. <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/statistics/2015/150812-wimd-2014-revised-en.pdf>

²⁵¹

[http://www2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/PubHObservatoryProjDocs.nsf/85c50756737f79ac80256f2700534ea3/99a9490d2e6d05268025820b005851de/\\$FILE/Health&determinantsinWales_Report_Eng.pdf](http://www2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/PubHObservatoryProjDocs.nsf/85c50756737f79ac80256f2700534ea3/99a9490d2e6d05268025820b005851de/$FILE/Health&determinantsinWales_Report_Eng.pdf)

²⁵² Ibid

²⁵³ Public Health Wales Observatory. Working age adults in good health, 2016/17 - 2017/18

²⁵⁴ <https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/National-Survey-for-Wales/Population-Health/Adult-Lifestyles>

²⁵⁵ <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/page/67795>

²⁵⁶ <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/page/67795>

17% of adults smoke and 18% drink more than the recommended weekly guidelines²⁵⁷. Although Wales has a lower smoking prevalence than Scotland for females, it is higher than England and Northern Ireland. Wales has the second lowest smoking prevalence of any UK nation for males.²⁵⁸ Alcohol-related mortality rates are much higher in the most deprived fifth compared to the least deprived fifth of Wales²⁵⁹

Only 53% of adults were reported to be meeting recommended physical activity guidelines, with more men (58%) meeting guidelines than women (47%). Only 24% of adults are reported to eat the recommended five fruit or vegetables per day, which falls to 19% of adults in the most disadvantaged areas in Wales.

For children, only 18% of adolescents aged 11-16 met the recommended guidelines of 60 minutes of exercise a day. This was considerably higher in males (23%) than females (14%).²⁶⁰

Mental health and wellbeing

The Annual Population Survey (2017) found 84% of respondents reported a high sense of life being worthwhile and 81% had high levels of life satisfaction²⁶¹. Over 62% of respondents reported low levels of anxiety.

Results from the 2015 Welsh Health Survey indicated that 13% of adults in Wales received treatment for mental health problems, with a higher proportion of women (16%) than men (10%)²⁶². Between 2015 and 2017, Wales had a suicide rate of 12.7 (per 100,000 persons)²⁶³, which was higher in males (20.6) compared with females (5.1).

²⁵⁷ <https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/National-Survey-for-Wales/Population-Health/Adult-Lifestyles>

²⁵⁸

[http://www2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/PubHObservatoryProjDocs.nsf/85c50756737f79ac80256f2700534ea3/99a9490d2e6d05268025820b005851de/\\$FILE/Health&determinantsinWales_Report_Eng.pdf](http://www2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/PubHObservatoryProjDocs.nsf/85c50756737f79ac80256f2700534ea3/99a9490d2e6d05268025820b005851de/$FILE/Health&determinantsinWales_Report_Eng.pdf)

²⁵⁹ Ibid

²⁶⁰ <https://gov.wales/student-health-and-well-being-survey>

²⁶¹ Public Health Wales Observatory, 2017. Mental wellbeing in Wales.
https://publichealthwales.shinyapps.io/MentalWellbeingInWales_Phase1/

²⁶² Mental Health Foundation, 2016. Mental Health in Wales: Fundamental Facts 2016.

²⁶³ Office for National Statistics, 2019. Suicide in Wales.
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/suicideinwales>

The 2017 National Survey for Wales indicates that 16% of people surveyed were lonely²⁶⁴. Material deprivation and age were identified as two characteristics strongly associated with those who identified as lonely. Those who were considered materially deprived were found to be three times as likely to identify as lonely as those who were not. In terms of age, those aged 65+ were less likely to identify as lonely than those in the 16-64 age category.

The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee's 2017 Inquiry into Loneliness and Isolation found that 25.3% of older people in Wales reported being lonely and 26.9% socially isolated. However, evidence to the inquiry also highlighted other groups of people who experience higher levels of loneliness and isolation. These include young people (18-34 years), service veterans, disabled people, people with mental health problems, carers, LGBT people and people from Black and minority ethnic (BME) communities, who may face additional barriers to overcoming loneliness and isolation, including language²⁶⁵.

Education and employment

The Annual Population Survey records an average employment rate in Wales of 73.1%²⁶⁶. The economic activity rate is 76.7% of those of working age (16-64) whilst the economic inactivity rate is 23.3%. The table below shows a breakdown of economic inactivity in Wales.

Reason for Economic Inactivity	Percentage of Population Aged 16-64
Student	25.1
Looking after family/home	20.0
Temporary sick	1.9
Long-term sick	28.0
Discouraged	0.4
Retired	14.7
Other	9.8

Just under 4% of the Welsh population claim some type of out-of-work benefits²⁶⁷ with the majority being those being aged 18-21.

The Annual Population Survey also identified that:

²⁶⁴ Wales Centre for Public Policy. Loneliness in Wales. Available at: <https://www.wcpp.org.uk/commentary/what-does-the-evidence-say-about-loneliness-in-wales/>

²⁶⁵ <https://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld11310/cr-ld11310-e.pdf>

²⁶⁶ ONS (2018) Annual Population Survey

²⁶⁷ ONS (2019) ONS Claimant Count – seasonally adjusted July 2019

- 27.2% of unemployed people in Wales had been unemployed for 12 months or more. This compares with 25.2% in the UK.
- The economic inactivity rate for the population aged 16 to 64 in Wales was 23.5% compared with 21.3% in the UK.
- Since 2001, the economic inactivity rate fell by 5.5 percentage points in Wales and by 2.6 percentage points in the UK.
- The lowest estimated economic inactivity rates were in Vale of Glamorgan (18.1%), Wrexham (20.0%) and Isle of Anglesey (20.0%).
- The highest estimated economic inactivity rates were in Ceredigion (31.0%), Swansea (28.0%) and Blaenau Gwent (26.1%)²⁶⁸.

The employment WIMD domain aims to capture lack of employment across Wales²⁵⁰. The 2014 WIMD shows that there are pockets of high employment deprivation in the South Wales valleys, large cities and in some North Wales coastal towns.

In terms of qualifications, 35.4% of the Welsh population have an NVQ Level 4 and above compared to 8.6% of the population who have no qualifications²⁶⁹. The education WIMD domain considers the extent of deprivation relevant to education, training and skills²⁵⁰. Blaenau Gwent had the largest proportion of LSOAs in the most deprived 10% in Wales for education.

In relation to physical access to employment, the majority of those in employment in Wales drive to work by car or van (38.4%), 5.7% travel to work on foot, whilst 2.7% commute by bus²⁷⁰. The average distance to work is 16.7km, but this increases in rural areas. The National Survey for Wales²⁷¹ showed 58% of adults walked more than once a week for active travel purpose and this was more likely in urban areas.

For education, the National Survey showed 54% of children walked or cycled to primary school, falling to 34% for secondary school. Children were more likely to travel to secondary school by bus.

Transport and access

The National Survey for Wales shows that of those in the 20% most deprived households in Wales only 65% of households have use of a car compared to 89% of households within the 20% least deprived²⁷².

²⁶⁸ <https://gov.wales/annual-population-survey-july-2018-june-2019>

²⁶⁹ ONS (2019) Annual Population Survey

²⁷⁰ ONS (2011) 2011 Census Data WD703EW - Method of travel to work

²⁷¹ National Survey for Wales. 2017 Survey results. Available at: <https://gov.wales/national-survey-wales>

²⁷² Welsh Government (2014) National Survey for Wales - Transport

The National Survey for Wales found that 52% of people felt that they had good access to services²⁷³. However older people (particularly those aged 75 and over) found it more difficult to get to hospital compared to younger people and getting to hospital was generally considered to be easier for those who had access to a car²⁷⁴.

The 2014 WIMD access to services domain looks at access to nine different services (including education, post offices, libraries, GP surgeries etc.). The results showed that deprivation is widespread across rural Wales, with some pockets near large urban areas.

Transport safety

The National Survey for Wales surveyed feelings of safety when using public transport after dark and analysed key variables such as age and gender²⁷⁵. It was found that overall, 34% of those surveyed felt 'very safe' compared with 46% feeling 'fairly safe', 15% feeling 'fairly unsafe' and 5% feeling 'very unsafe'. When these results were broken down by age, results showed that feelings of safety generally decreased with age with only 25% of those aged 75 and over feeling 'very safe'. There was also considerable variation by gender; 43% of males responded that they felt very safe travelling after dark compared to 24% of females.

Air quality

Each year in Wales an equivalent of 1604 (5.4%) deaths can be attributed to PM_{2.5} exposure and 1108 (3.7%) deaths to NO₂ exposure²⁷⁶. Air pollution has been shown to vary across Wales and those living in the most deprived areas typically experience the highest mean concentration of air pollutants.

Vulnerable groups

Based on the characteristics of the population described above, the table below summarises the most disadvantaged and/or vulnerable groups present. This is based on Appendix 2 of the WHIASU Guidance. It should be noted that the most disadvantaged and/or vulnerable groups are those that will exhibit a number of characteristics, for example, children living in poverty. Those groups that have been included in the scope of this assessment are those that are identified as likely to be differentially affected by the proposals in the Bill.

Group	Sub-group	Applicable (Y/N)
Age related groups	Children and young people	Y
	Older people	Y
	People on low income	Y

273 National Survey for Wales. 2014/15 results – access to health services. Available at: <https://gov.wales/national-survey-wales-nhs-and-social-care>

274 Welsh Government (2014) National Transport Survey

275 National Survey for Wales. 2017 Survey results. Available at: <https://gov.wales/national-survey-wales>

276 Welsh Government. Air Quality in Wales health advice.

Group	Sub-group	Applicable (Y/N)
Income related groups	Economically inactive	Y
	Unemployed	Y
	People who are unable to work due to ill health	N (inherently covered in other income-related groups)
Groups who suffer discrimination or other social disadvantage	People with physical or learning disabilities/difficulties	Y
	Refugee groups	N (inherently covered in age or income-related groups)
	People seeking asylum	
	Single parent families	
	Religious groups	
	Lesbian and gay and transgender people	
	Black and minority ethnic groups	
Geographical groups	People living in areas known to exhibit poor economic and/or health indicators	N (inherently covered in income-related groups)
	People living in isolated/over populated areas	Y
	People unable to access services and facilities	Y

Evidence Review

Active travel and physical activity

Active travel applies to modes of transport that require physical activity (such as cycling and walking) in contrast to modes that require little physical effort such as motor vehicles. It is therefore the physical activity associated with active travel that brings about health effects.

The positive effects of physical activity on health are summarised in the Department of Health's 2011 report²⁷⁷ which suggests that: "Regular physical activity can reduce the risk of many chronic conditions including coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer, obesity, mental health problems and musculoskeletal conditions. Even relatively small increases in physical activity are associated with some protection against chronic diseases and an improved quality of life."

There is a large body of evidence linking physical activity with improved physical and mental health. The WHO²⁷⁸ defines physical activity as "any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure" and states that "physical activity has

²⁷⁷ https://www.sportengland.org/media/2928/dh_128210.pdf

²⁷⁸ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity>

significant health benefits and contributes to prevent non-communicable diseases". These benefits are identified as reduced risk of hypertension, stroke, diabetes, coronary heart disease, breast and colon cancer, depression and the risk of falls, improved bone and functional health and weight control.

The WHO also states that: "beyond exercise, any other physical activity that is done during leisure time, for transport to get to and from places, or as part of a person's work, has a health benefit. Further, both moderate- and vigorous-intensity physical activity improve health."

A study of 100 participants recording their steps when taking the same journeys by bus and car found that bus usage resulted in more walking than the equivalent door-to-door car journey²⁷⁹. Studies showed that people with a free bus pass are more likely to walk frequently and take more 'active travel' journeys²⁸⁰. A longitudinal study of 9,000 people in England found that free bus passes for older people had increased their public transport use and that older people who used public transport had reduced odds of being obese compared with those who did not²⁸¹. It found that those who used public transport, or took advantage of free bus travel, were 25% less likely to be obese than those who did not.

Access to services and social networks

Public transport can provide direct access to a wide range of facilities, services opportunities and social networks. It has been found that a 10% improvement in local bus service connectivity²⁸² is associated with a 3.6% reduction in deprivation²⁸³.

Access to services and community facilities

Access to services and community facilities can affect health and wellbeing directly through access to treatment and care and indirectly by increasing access to social and support networks.

A study by Iwasaki et al in 2010²⁸⁴ suggests that access to social infrastructure including leisure and cultural opportunities plays a key role in the recovery of people with mental illness and has a positive impact on health and wellbeing.

Evidence demonstrates the link between public transport and the ability to access services, particularly healthcare services. The likelihood of missing an appointment

²⁷⁹ <https://greenerjourneys.com/news/why-taking-the-bus-is-good-for-your-health/>

²⁸⁰ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3477933/>

²⁸¹ <https://jech.bmj.com/content/66/2/176.short>

²⁸² As measured by public transport journey times to access employment centres, GPs, hospitals and town centres where buses are the only public transport.

²⁸³ <https://greenerjourneys.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Greener-Journeys-Value-of-Bus-to-Society-FINAL.pdf>

²⁸⁴ Iwasaki, Y. Coyle, C. and Shank, J. (2010), Leisure as a context for a ctive living, recovery, health and life quality for persons with mental illness in a global context, Health promotion international

increases with levels of deprivation and is more common for the young and old²⁸⁵, groups for which buses are an important transport mode. Additionally, a study by Defra showed that 44% of people without access to a car find it difficult to get to the doctors or to hospital²⁸⁶. A study by the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority looked at one 'Ring and Ride' service in the West Midlands serving 31,000 active registered blind and disabled users. It is estimated to save the health sector between £13.4m and £58.5m in reduced need for care, home help and meals; reduced use of taxi and other district, community or NHS transport, escorts and improved access to employment²⁸⁷.

Access to social networks and social capital

A 2014 ONS paper, Measuring Social Capital²⁸⁸, provides the following definition of social capital:

"In general terms, social capital represents social connections and all the benefits they generate. The benefits for people having these social connections can occur either at an individual level (for example, through family support) or at a wider collective level (for example, through volunteering). Social capital is also associated with values such as tolerance, solidarity or trust. These are beneficial to society and are important for people to be able to cooperate."

The ONS has looked at social capital as part of its Measuring National Well-being (MNW) programme. This identifies four aspects of social capital, based on work undertaken by Scrivens et al in 2013 for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)²⁸⁹. These aspects are:

- personal relationships;
- social network support;
- civic engagement and trust; and
- cooperative norms.

The ONS paper includes a review of academic studies on social capital and its effects on health. The evidence suggests that social capital makes a positive contribution to a range of well-being aspects such as personal well-being, health and crime rates, and that these benefits occur at individual, community, regional and national level.

Access to education and employment

²⁸⁵ Doctor Foster Health and the NHS Information Centre, 2009. "Outpatient appointment no-shows cost hospitals £600m a year"

²⁸⁶ Defra, 2009. Sustainable Development Indicators in your Pocket

²⁸⁷ West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority, internal briefing

²⁸⁸ Siegler, V. and Office for National Statistics (2014), Measuring Social Capital, Office for National Statistics

²⁸⁹ Scrivens, K. and Smith, C. (2013), Four interpretations of social capital: an agenda for measurement, OEDC http://commons.ch/wp-content/uploads/OECD_Social_Capital_2013.pdf

There is a large body of evidence linking education, employment and income levels with health outcomes. The WHO identifies a list of health determinants²⁹⁰ that combine to affect the health of individuals and communities. Education is included in this list, noting that—low education levels are linked with poor health, more stress and lower self-confidence.

An evidence review by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation²⁹¹ identified that improved qualifications can lead to better wages and employment, providing greater access to the health benefits associated with good and secure employment.

A University of London report by Feinstein et al in 2008²⁹² on the social and personal benefits of learning states that “people with better qualifications are more likely to have healthy lifestyles, to be fitter and slimmer – and such health advantages can be transferred to the next generation at the earliest age”.

Unemployed people are almost twice as likely as those in employment to have a limiting long-standing illness or disability (LSI), according to figures released by the Office of National Statistics (ONS). The study found that 17% of unemployed people (those not working but looking for work) had a limiting LSI, compared to just 9% of those in employment²⁹³.

In terms of employment and income, the Marmot Review, published in 2010²⁹⁴, was commissioned by the Department of Health to look into health inequalities in England and focused on correlations between health and wellbeing and the socio-economic status of communities. The report identified six evidence-based policy objectives to reduce health inequalities, one of which was to create fair employment and good work for all. The Review stated that “being in good employment is protective of health. Conversely, unemployment contributes to poor health”. This study also identifies links between educational attainment and physical and mental health.

Transport and health

Outdoor air pollution is defined as a mixture of gases and particles that have been emitted into the atmosphere by man-made processes²⁹⁵ which has an adverse effect on human health. The WHO recognises outdoor air pollution as a major environmental health problem for all countries including high-income countries²⁹⁶. By 2035, it is estimated that

290 <https://www.who.int/hia/evidence/doh/en/>

291 Rowntree, J. (2014), Reducing Poverty in the UK: A collection of evidence reviews, Joseph Rowntree Foundation <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/reducing-poverty-uk-collection-evidence-reviews>

292 Vorhaus, J., Duckworth, K., Budge, D. and Feinstein, L. (2008), The Social and personal benefits of learning: A summary of key research findings, Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning, Institute of Education, University of London, London.

293 <http://tiny.cc/zdwtgz>

294 Marmot, M. et al (2010), Fair society, healthy lives: Strategic review of health inequalities in England post-2010

295 Air Quality England. <https://www.airqualityengland.co.uk/air-pollution>

296 WHO Topic Sheet. (2018) Ambient (outdoor) air quality and health. [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-\(outdoor\)-air-quality-and-health](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-(outdoor)-air-quality-and-health)

the health and social care costs of air pollution could reach up to £5.3 billion in England alone²⁹⁷, this includes diseases that have a strong association with air pollution such as childhood asthma, coronary heart disease, lung cancer and stroke. In the UK alone, the overall population burden of air pollution is estimated to be equivalent to nearly 23,500 deaths per year²⁹⁸.

According to the Lancet Commission on pollution and health²⁹⁹ children are at high risk of pollution related disease and even extremely low-dose exposures to pollutants during windows of vulnerability in utero and in early infancy can result in disease, disability, and death in childhood and across their lifespan.

An evidence and policy review by the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change (2018)³⁰⁰ notes that transport is a major cause of air pollution. In 2016, emissions from road transport accounted for 12% of PM¹⁰ and PM^{2.5} in the UK and were the third largest source after industrial processes. Furthermore, road transport is responsible for 80% of NO² levels near roadsides.

Outdoor air pollution has also been shown to influence productivity and contribute to social costs such as increasing days off work and school due to restricted health³⁰¹. Additionally, where there is a perception that there is air pollution this appears to constitute a barrier to participating in outdoor physical activity and active transport³⁰².

According to the WHO³⁰³, “excessive noise seriously harms human health and interferes with people’s daily activities at school, at work, at home and during leisure time. It can disturb sleep, cause cardiovascular and psychophysiological effects, reduce performance and provoke annoyance responses and changes in social behaviour”.

The 2018 WHO guidelines on Environmental Noise for the European Region³⁰⁴ undertook a series of systematic reviews synthesising exposure and associated impacts on health in order to develop a set of guidelines on how to protect human health. The systematic reviews concluded that there was evidence for an association of railway noise and road traffic noise on cardiovascular disease (CVD), sleep disturbance, annoyance and cognitive

297 http://www.ukhealthalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Moving-beyond-the-Air-Quality-Crisis-4WEB-29_10-2018-final-1.pdf

298 DEFRA and Public Health England (2017) Air Quality. A briefing for Directors of Public Health. <https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/assets/63091defraairqualityguide9web.pdf>

299 Landrigan, P.J., et al (2018), The Lancet Commission on pollution and health, The Lancet 391:462-512

300 UK Health Alliance on Climate Change (2018). Moving Beyond the Air Quality Crisis. Realising the health benefits of acting on air pollution. http://www.ukhealthalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Moving-beyond-the-Air-Quality-Crisis-4WEB-29_10-2018-final-1.pdf

301 IOM Working for a Healthier Future. Scotland’s Environment (2015) Air Quality, Health, Wellbeing and Behaviour, <https://www.environment.gov.scot/media/1133/iom-seweb-aq-health-behaviour-review.pdf>

302 Annear, M., Keeling, S., Wilkinson, T., Cushman, G., Gidlow, B., & Hopkins, H. (2014). Environmental influences on healthy and active ageing: A systematic review. Ageing & Society, 34 (4), 590-622

303 World Health Organization (2017), Noise, <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/noise>

304 World Health Organisation Regional Office for Europe (2018) Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region. http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/383921/noise-guidelines-eng.pdf

impairment with suggestive but weaker evidence (often due to lack of studies) for effects on mental health and birth weight.

Assessment

The table below sets out a high-level health impact assessment of the proposals set out in the Bus Services (Wales) Bill.

Health determinant Key guiding questions (will the Transport Bill...)	Positive (+) or Negative (-) impact	Relevant vulnerable groups	Assessment
<p>Diet and physical activity.</p> <p><i>Provide opportunities to access to active forms of travel?</i></p> <p><i>Increase access to physical exercise and outdoor space?</i></p> <p><i>Increase access to healthy and affordable food choices?</i></p>	+	<p>People on low income</p> <p>People living in isolated/over populated areas</p> <p>People unable to access services and facilities</p>	<p>The population profile demonstrates that a large percentage of adults and children in Wales are overweight or obese and levels of physical activity are low.</p> <p>Integrating the bus network with other networks, such as walking or cycling routes, would encourage active travel, increasing levels of physical exercise and enabling the associated health benefits.</p> <p>Additionally, integrating the bus network with other transport options (including railways, walking and cycling), and providing a more accessible and reliable bus service, would increase access to wider services and opportunities. This could include access to parks, leisure centres, gyms, or other facilities which promote and provide opportunities for physical activity and exercise.</p> <p>In some locations, improved access to wider services and opportunities could also improve access to a wider range of food choices, including healthier or more affordable options.</p> <p>As shown in the evidence review, there is a large body of evidence to demonstrate the benefits increased physical activity has on physical and mental health and wellbeing. Improving direct access to physical exercise (gyms, parks etc.) would deliver health benefits. Bus travel has been associated with increased active travel and any form of exercise has been demonstrated to improve health.</p>

Health determinant Key guiding questions (will the Transport Bill...)	Positive (+) or Negative (-) impact	Relevant vulnerable groups	Assessment
Social networks and social isolation. <i>Reduce social exclusion?</i> <i>Increase opportunities to access social networks?</i> <i>Reduce isolation?</i>	+	People on low income People living in isolated/over populated areas Children and young people Older people Economically inactive people People with physical or learning disabilities/difficulties or poor mental health	<p>The provision of improved transport services which offer more affordable transport options, including methods such as the Concessionary Fares Scheme, would increase opportunities for groups who cannot afford private transport options. This would reduce feelings of isolation and exclusion for these individuals, allowing them to access a wider range of opportunities and improve their social network. An individual's social capital is closely linked to mental health and wellbeing and therefore improving access to socialising could result in positive health impacts on many vulnerable groups.</p> <p>Ensuring an effective bus network in rural and urban areas which is co-ordinated and fully integrated with other forms of public transport would also improve access for more vulnerable and isolated groups. This is of particular importance for individuals in rural areas and would help to reduce severance and feelings of isolation, which is shown to negatively impact health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Improvements to bus services around information provision, such as the use of audio or visual announcements, would help to make travelling on the public bus network easier for many groups, including older people and those with a disability. This could support individuals to feel less isolated and increase their confidence in the public transport networks, allowing them to access wider social networks and the associated health benefits.</p>

Health determinant Key guiding questions (will the Transport Bill...)	Positive (+) or Negative (-) impact	Relevant vulnerable groups	Assessment
<p>Living environment.</p> <p><i>Contribute to improvements in air quality?</i></p> <p><i>Reduce the number of people exposed to poor air quality?</i></p> <p><i>Reduce the number of people exposed to high levels of traffic noise?</i></p>	+	<p>People living in isolated/over populated areas</p> <p>Children and young people</p> <p>Older people</p> <p>People with physical or learning disabilities/difficulties</p>	<p>Encouraging the use of buses could help to reduce private vehicle use. Alongside investment in sustainable options, such as electric buses, these measures would help to reduce pollution and improve air quality. A wide range of evidence is available to demonstrate the negative impact pollutants have on health. Therefore, this intervention would provide health benefits, especially in built-up areas which are typically more polluted. It would be of particular importance for groups more vulnerable to the health-effects of poor air quality, such as children or older people and those with existing health conditions.</p> <p>Reducing private vehicle use and encouraging a modal-shift to the public transport network would also help to reduce the number of overall vehicles on the road. This could reduce the impact of traffic-related noise which is shown to negatively impact health by increasing disturbance and causing annoyance and sleep deprivation. This would be of particular importance in more urban areas and those who live near large roads.</p>

Health determinant Key guiding questions (will the Transport Bill...)	Positive (+) or Negative (-) impact	Relevant vulnerable groups	Assessment
<p>Access to employment and education.</p> <p><i>Allow individuals to access places of work and employment opportunities?</i></p> <p><i>Increase the range of employment opportunities for individuals?</i></p> <p><i>Allow individuals to access a range of educational opportunities?</i></p>	+	<p>People on low incomes</p> <p>Unemployed</p> <p>Children and young people</p> <p>Older people</p> <p>People living in isolated/over populated areas</p> <p>People with physical or learning disabilities/difficulties</p>	<p>There are shown to be pockets of deprivation across Wales related to employment and educational opportunities.</p> <p>The provision of an improved transport service which offers more affordable transport options, including methods such as a Concessionary Fares Scheme, could increase access to wider employment and educational opportunities for those who rely on public transport. This would include low income groups, young people and older people, particularly for those in more isolated and rural areas. Similarly, ensuring an effective bus network across rural and urban areas, which is co-ordinated and fully integrated with other forms of public transport would increase physical access to a much wider range of employment. In most cases, it would increase the number of places reached by public transport and would reduce the time taken to reach them. This could provide access to a wide range of employment and educational opportunities, including a greater variety of jobs, schools, training courses, learning centres and apprentice schemes.</p> <p>Unreliable public transport networks also limit people's access to employment if they are unable to reliably attend a place of work or education. Improving the reliability of the transport network and using techniques such as apps could make it easier to access live data about the bus network, helping individuals to plan their routes to education or employment.</p> <p>The evidence review demonstrates that access to education and employment has positive impacts on both physical and mental health and wellbeing. It can reduce feelings of stress and anxiety and provide direct access to health benefits associated with secure employment.</p>

Health determinant Key guiding questions (will the Transport Bill...)	Positive (+) or Negative (-) impact	Relevant vulnerable groups	Assessment
<p>Access to services.</p> <p><i>Improve access and equity of access to health and social care services and facilities?</i></p>	+	<p>People on low incomes</p> <p>Children and young people</p> <p>Older people</p> <p>People living in isolated/over populated areas</p> <p>People with physical or learning disabilities/difficulties</p> <p>People unable to access services and facilities</p>	<p>The population profile shows that poor access to services particularly affects those in rural areas, low income groups, young people and older people. BAME groups, disabled people, young people, older people and women are all statistically more reliant on the use of public transport.</p> <p>The provision of more reliable, affordable bus services, could increase direct access to healthcare and social services and facilities, for those who rely on public transport. It could also help to provide more reliable services for carers and healthcare professionals who rely on public transport for visiting those in need of at-home care and support.</p> <p>The proposals in the Bill provide the tools to make improvements to routes and services, further reducing barriers to health and social care across Wales. A more reliable network and the use of open data and up-to-date information sharing could also help to reduce the number of missed medical appointments by improving the reliability of local bus routes that provide access to services. Nevertheless it would be important not to completely rely on electronic information as this is not necessarily accessible for everyone and could isolate groups further if they feel they cannot get the information they need in a format they can access.</p> <p>Improved access and reliability would generate health benefits by improving access to treatment and care. It would also help to improve wellbeing by increasing access to community services and social/ leisure opportunities and thereby reducing isolation due to the improved access to a wider range of services.</p>

Conclusion

Overall, this assessment of the health impacts of the Bus Services (Wales) Bill demonstrates a generally positive effect on health.

Improving the reliability of bus networks, increasing the provision of public transport and optimising routes to meet local needs would improve access to a wide range of services, opportunities, education, employment social networks and recreational spaces, all of which can contribute positively to health and well-being.

It is important to ensure that service provision and information sharing meet the needs of different groups, so they are not further isolated from services and opportunities and instead benefit from the improved transport services the Bill will facilitate.

More detailed consideration of health impacts can be undertaken as and when local authorities choose to use any of the powers provided to them in the legislation. At that stage, further engagement with relevant groups or organisations such as Public Health Wales will facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of how using the powers provided for within the legislation will impact on health.