

Equality Impact Assessment
Shetland Transport Strategy

ZetTrans - Zetland Transport Partnership
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Table of Contents

Equality Impact Assessment – Shetland Transport Strategy	2
1.1 Introduction	2
1.2 Equality Impact Assessment	2
1.3 References.....	10
Table: Impact of the Transport Strategy on Equality Target Groups.....	6

Equality Impact Assessment – Shetland Transport Strategy

1.1 Introduction

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that regional transport partnerships include provision about how transport will be provided, developed, improved and operated so as to, amongst other things, encourage equal opportunities and, in particular, the observance of the equal opportunities requirements.

Shetland Islands Council has developed a draft framework for equality impact assessments, and this has been applied to the Transport Strategy, as set out below.

1.2 Equality Impact Assessment

1. What is the aim of the service / strategy / project / policy?

The aim of the Shetland Transport Strategy is to set out the transport vision and objectives of the Zetland Transport Partnership (ZetTrans). It is intended to be a long-term document that will contain actions for the short, medium and long term. It will also provide a framework for the wider transport related activities of the Transport Partnership, Local Authority and other stakeholders. It has a principal implementation timeframe of 10-15 years, although responds to immediate ongoing actions, as well as longer term goals. It covers all links related to Shetland's transport – external links, inter-island links, and internal links.

The vision adopted for the Transport Strategy is “To develop an effective, efficient, safe and reliable transport system for Shetland. The transport system will comprise an integrated network of accessible, and affordable internal, inter-island and external links, which will contribute to the development of a safe, healthy, vibrant and inclusive society, a diverse, successful and self-sufficient economy, and enhanced environmental quality”.

The Strategy's objectives are based around the five national transport objectives: Economic Growth, Social Inclusion and Accessibility, Environmental Protection, Safety, and Integration.

2. List the main activities and outcomes of the project/policy (for strategies list the main policy areas and services the main functions):

Beneath the Transport Strategy vision and objectives sit a number of specific policies which set out the Transport Partnership's stance with regards to external links (air and ferry), inter-island links (air and ferry), and internal transport provision (i.e. walking, cycling, travel behaviour change, public transport, and roads etc).

3. Who will be the beneficiary(ies) of the strategy / project / policy? And in what ways?

At the highest level, this Transport Strategy has been developed with the aim to benefit the residents of Shetland and the users of Shetland's network of external, inter-island and internal transport links.

Theoretically, the Transport Strategy should also deliver benefits for society at the broadest level by outlining interventions designed to help Shetland play its full part in reducing carbon dioxide emissions related to transport, which is fuelling global climate change and is arguably the greatest challenge facing mankind today.

Specific elements of the Strategy that could have benefits for particular groups in society have also been identified. For example, for users of Shetland's external air services, support for the Air Discount Scheme will have benefits by enabling air users resident in Shetland access to

reduced air fares. The Transport Strategy also outlines various strategies designed to improve accessibility levels for those groups that do not have access to a car, particularly those individuals that may suffer from social exclusion caused by rural isolation. For instance, the Strategy supports the extension of Demand Responsive Transport services. The Transport Strategy also supports the national concessionary scheme that offers free public transport for anyone aged sixty or over and disabled groups, as well as the national concessionary scheme for 16 to 18 year olds. Lobbying for the extension of the Air Discount Scheme to include visitors to Shetland, and the promotion of tourist ticketing initiatives are also geared towards benefiting tourists travelling to Shetland.

Further analysis of how the Transport Strategy can deliver benefits to specific groups in Shetland is shown in Table 10.

4. How have they been involved in the development of this policy?

Extensive consultation has been a core element in the development of the Transport Strategy. The initial phase of consultation was started in October 2005 and continued until February 2006. During this time, meetings were held with a wide range of stakeholder groups, including mainland Community Councils, island communities, businesses, organisations, community groups, and the general public. Specific sectors of society were also targeted during these meetings. For instance, Strategy researchers were in attendance at the Flu Fair in Lerwick in order to capture the views of Shetland's elderly residents, while holding focus groups at the Brae Youth Event was a useful mechanism to gather the views of young people on transport in Shetland. Efforts were also made to investigate the transport related views of those involved with people with health problems and disabilities through consultation with NHS Shetland, local health centres, SIC Social Work department, and Disability Shetland. Notably, consultation was also held with a group of foreign students undertaking English Plus classes run through Shetland College. Furthermore, questionnaires were developed and distributed via Shetland Islands Council's Mobile Library Van to ensure that even residents based in some of Shetland's most remote communities were given the opportunity to air their views and inform the development of the Transport Strategy. The results from the consultation have been used to identify the key transport challenges that should be addressed by the Transport Partnership, which in turn has informed the development of the Strategy vision and objectives. Consultee suggestions on specific initiatives that should be taken forward by the Transport Strategy have also been taken on board.

A second round of consultation was conducted between November 2006 and January 2007 focussing primarily on inviting written response to the Draft Transport Strategy. A number of public consultation meetings were also held, building on from the initial consultation programme. Copies of the Draft Strategy document were made available for public viewing at various locations throughout Shetland, including Council Offices, Libraries and Community Offices as well as on the Shetland Transport Strategy webpage. In addition, copies of the Draft Strategy were posted to a range of other key stakeholders, including all previous consultees. During the consultation period, articles were released in the local press to inform interested stakeholders of its publication and to provide information on where copies of the Strategy could be viewed. Adverts were also posted within the local press to raise awareness of public meetings on the Draft Strategy.

5. What resource implications are linked to this policy and/or function?

Resource implications of the Transport Strategy relate to the capital costs of some of the specific projects that the Strategy will seek to deliver, as well as ongoing operational and staffing costs.

6. How does the policy fit into broader corporate aims?

The Transport Strategy has been developed in consultation with the range of other Council Services. For example, a Transport Strategy Officer Working Group involving officers from the roads, public transport, ferries, planning, economic development, policy, and housing sections

of Shetland Islands Council (SIC) was established from the outset of the Strategy development process. This group has proved a useful sounding board on all decisions required to take the Transport Strategy forward, including, for example, agreement on the Strategy's vision and objectives, as well as the option generation/sifting, and appraisal stages.

A Scoping Report has also been prepared, highlighting the relevant policies within a range of other internal and external corporate documents that have been considered in developing the Transport Strategy. These include:

- Shetland Local¹ and Structure² Plans;
- Economic Development Strategy – Shetland 2012³;
- Shetland Enterprise Business Plan⁴;
- Local Housing Strategy 2004–2009⁵;
- Corporate Plan 2004–2008⁶;
- NHS Shetland 2020 Vision⁷.

Review of these documents highlighted that the Transport Strategy could help to deliver many of the objectives held within these. For example, the Transport Topic Goal in the Structure Plan is to deliver an integrated transport system that meets the needs of Shetland people and seeks to minimise impact on the environment. These key elements are in line with the Transport Strategy vision. The Structure Plan also contains policies (e.g. Sustainable Development GDS1; Existing Settlements GDS3) which promote the location of new developments in sustainable locations and discourages against isolated development in the open countryside areas. The Transport Strategy supports these policies by recognising the role that development control and sustainable land-use planning can have in supporting the development of a more sustainable transport system for Shetland. The Transport Strategy also contains an appendix on 'Land Use Planning', which emphasises that transport can no longer be an afterthought in the development control process.

Another example that demonstrates how the Transport Strategy supports wider corporate aims can be taken from the Economic Development Strategy. This Strategy includes policies to support Sumburgh as Shetland's principal airport, recognises the value of Scatsta as a diversionary airport, promotes the case for Public Service Obligations, and outlines the need for ongoing consultation and surveys to ensure that an accurate picture is held of Shetland's external transport needs. These elements are all covered in the Transport Strategy both through policies adopted in the Strategy and interventions proposed.

A wider corporate aim stated in many of the documents is to strengthen rural communities. Ongoing improvements to public transport services, such as through the extension of Demand Responsive Transport, should help to improve the accessibility of rural communities. The Transport Strategy also promote flexible working patterns and supports the development of community IT Hot Stops/Hubs and will consider locations accessible to rural communities that could help to support decentralised working.

Further details of the links between the Transport Strategy and Shetland's wider corporate aims and objectives are included in the Scoping Report which supplements the Transport Strategy. The individual STAG assessments (Appraisal Summary Tables) of the options generated within the Transport Strategy have also been appraised against the respective visions of the wider corporate documents.

7. What stage is the policy at?

The Transport Strategy has been finalised (*subject to Ministerial approval*) and outlines the ZetTrans' Strategy for the years 2007 to 2011.

8. What is the target date for completion?

Although the Transport Strategy has been developed with a four-year Implementation Plan in mind, ZetTrans views the Transport Strategy as a process rather than a document, and as such there is no target date for completion of the Strategy. In line with Scottish Executive

Guidance⁸, the Strategy adopts a 10-15 year strategy, reviewed, revised and refreshed every 4 years.

9.a. What do we know from existing data and research?

Through consultation and background research, a sound understanding of the key issues and problems that the Transport Strategy should seek to address has been developed. In addition to national sources that provide demographic information on residents in Shetland, such as the Census⁹ and Scottish Household Statistics¹⁰, the relationship between transport and social exclusion in the Shetland context is better understood following local work conducted by SIC into “Deprivation and Social Exclusion in Shetland”¹¹.

A key finding of the research was the relationship between deprivation, social exclusion and access, as the following extract from the report illustrates:

“The greatest issue in terms of access in Shetland is people’s inability to afford to run a car (or two cars if a partner has the car each day). Although the public transport system is appreciated, it delivers for full-time commuters and is not able to alleviate access issues for those without a car sufficiently for people to feel they are able to access opportunities. This restricted people’s ability to learn; find employment or better employment; purchase healthier food at a reasonable cost; take part in community events and access social opportunities, for example. Reliance on others for transport is common, hindering people’s feeling of independence and increasing humiliation.

This form of exclusion is predominantly felt by women with family responsibilities, particularly those living in remote areas of Shetland, young people, and those with a disability. For the former, lack of childcare and transport to access childcare in other areas augments isolation. For the latter the situation can be particularly acute as they are physically unable to access any public transport”.

9.b. What gaps in knowledge are apparent?

No gaps in knowledge are apparent with regards to equality impact assessment. The Transport Strategy does however contain proposals for various studies designed to develop ZetTrans’ information or evidence base; crucial in making future decisions by the Partnership. One example is the proposal to undertake a Transport Stocktake to identify the various public and community transport services that operate in Shetland, in order to examine opportunities to improve efficiency with a view to introducing more demand responsive and community bus services.

9.c. If there are any potential difficulties in getting the data to fill these gaps, please describe these.

There are no difficulties anticipated.

10. Use the table to indicate:

(a) Where you think that the service / strategy / project / policy could have a negative impact on any of the equality target groups i.e. it could disadvantage them/unlawful racial discrimination.

(b) Where you think that the service / strategy / project / policy could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving/promote good relations within equality target groups.

Table: Impact of the Transport Strategy on Equality Target Groups

Target Group	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Reason
Gender			
Women	✓		Delivery of the Transport Strategy vision and objectives will improve accessibility for all groups in society, through the range of measures proposed (i.e. improved provision for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users). Investigating measures which seek to increase the amenity of public transport waiting facilities and to increase feelings of safety on board public transport will have a positive impact, particularly for women who may wish to use public transport but are discouraged due to perceived safety concerns.
Men	✓		Delivery of the Transport Strategy vision and objectives will improve accessibility for all groups in society, through the range of measures proposed.
Race			
Asian or Asian British people	✓		Delivery of the Transport Strategy, particularly the objectives related to social inclusion and accessibility, and integration will deliver transport improvements ensuring equal opportunities to all.
Black or Black British people	✓		As above
Chinese people	✓		As above
People of mixed race	✓		As above
White people	✓		As above
People whose first language is not English	✓		The Transport Strategy has not been published in different languages, although consideration will be given to providing essential transport information in foreign languages, to tie in with other initiatives that look to improve information for those arriving in the country and to whom English is not their first language.

Target Group	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Reason
Disabled people			
Learning Disabilities	✓		The Transport Strategy has been developed using simple language as far as possible. Policy documents such as the Transport Strategy and other information sources, such as timetables can be made available in large text.
Physical Disabilities	✓		Policies such as continuing to provide dedicated parking spaces for disabled users, improving the network of footpaths (including the provision of dropped kerbs), as well as ensuring that the relevant external, inter-island and internal transport services are provided in accordance with Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) policy should help to improve the accessibility of Shetland's transport network for those with physical disabilities. The Transport Strategy also supports the concessionary fares scheme for elderly and disabled groups and will lobby for the extension of this scheme to the inter-islands ferries.
Sensory Impairment	✓		Ensuring compliance with the relevant DDA policies and offering large print timetables and other transport information for those with sensory impairments will help to improve the accessibility of Shetland's transport network for these groups.
Elderly / Infirm	✓		The Transport Strategy supports the concessionary fare initiatives for the elderly and outlines the proposal to lobby for the extension of the scheme to the inter-island ferries. The Strategy also supports the development and extension of Demand Responsive Transport and other Community Transport, which in some instances can provide access for the infirm and those who cannot access conventional public transport services.
Mental Health	✓		The Transport Strategy supports Transport Scotland's concessionary travel scheme, which provides free transport for those with mental health problems. People who feel uncomfortable using conventional public transport could benefit from the Transport Strategy's proposal to support and develop Demand Responsive Transport and other Community Transport initiatives.
Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and Transgender	✓		Delivery of the Transport Strategy, particularly the objectives related to social inclusion and accessibility, as well as integration will deliver transport improvements ensuring equal opportunities to all.

Target Group	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Reason
Age			
Older people (60+)	✓		The Transport Strategy supports Transport Scotland's Concessionary Travel Scheme for residents in Scotland aged over 60. The operation of low-floored buses in Shetland will also have benefits for older members of society. The implementation of dropped kerbs will also benefit older people.
Younger people (17-25), and children	✓		The Transport Strategy supports the introduction of the national led concessionary travel scheme for 16 to 18 year olds. The Strategy also outlines the proposal to investigate the introduction of a range of road safety initiatives which target younger people in society specifically, such as the 'Safe Drive, Stay Alive' campaign.
<i>Faith groups</i>	✓		Delivery of the Transport Strategy, particularly the objectives related to social inclusion and accessibility, as well as integration will deliver transport improvements ensuring equal opportunities to all.
<i>Equal opportunities and/or improved relations</i>	✓		A commitment to consultation through a range of means is given within the Transport Strategy. The Transport Strategy also proposes some specific interventions to build on existing research methods, including the development of a Transport Partnership Consultative Forum, and Area Bus Forums. Annual Progress Reports will also help to make the Transport Strategy a more visible document and improve relations.

Notes:

Faith groups cover a wide range of groupings, the most common of which are Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Sikhs, Hindus. Consider faith categories individually and collectively when considering positive and negative impacts.

The categories used in the Race section are those used in the 2001 census. Consideration should be given to the needs of specific communities within the broad categories such as Bangladeshi people and to the needs of other communities such as Turkish/Turkish Cypriot, Greek/Greek Cypriot, Italian and Polish that do not appear as separate categories in the census.

11. If you have indicated there is a negative impact on any group, is that impact:

Legal? N/A

Intended? N/A

Level of impact N/A

12. a) Could you minimise or remove any negative impact that is of low significance? Explain how:

N/A

b) Could you improve the strategy, project or policy's positive impact? Explain how:

N/A

13. If there is no evidence that the strategy, policy or project promotes equality, equal opportunities or improved relations – could it be adapted so that it does? How?

N/A

14. Do you have any further comments to make:

N/A

Projects, strategies and policies must go through the Second Stage if there is a danger that the negative impact they have on any equality target groups falls into one (or more) of the following categories:

- It is assessed as of high impact
- It is not intentional.
- It is illegal or possibly illegal

1.3 References

- ¹ Shetland Islands Council (2004), *The Shetland Local Plan*, Lerwick.
Available at <http://www.shetland.gov.uk/developmentplans/ShetlandLocalPlan.asp>
- ² Shetland Islands Council, (2000), *The Shetland Structure Plan 2001 – 2016*, Lerwick.
Available at <http://www.shetland.gov.uk/developmentplans/ShetlandStructurePlan1.asp>
- ³ Shetland Islands Council (2002), *Shetland 2012 – The Economic Development Strategy*, Lerwick.
Available at <http://www.hie.co.uk/SHE-Shetland-LEF/SHE-lef-economic-strategy.pdf>
- ⁴ Shetland Enterprise, *Shetland Enterprise Business Plan 2005-2008*, Lerwick.
Available at <http://www.hie.co.uk/shetland/business-plans.html>
- ⁵ Shetland Islands Council, (2005), *Local Housing Strategy 2004–2009*, Lerwick.
Available at <http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/LocalStrategy.asp>
- ⁶ Shetland Islands Council, (2004), *Shetland Corporate Plan*, Lerwick.
Available at <http://www.shetland.gov.uk/corporateplan/>
- ⁷ NHS Shetland (2005), *Shetland 2020 Vision*, Lerwick.
Available at <http://www.shb.scot.nhs.uk/initiatives/2020Vision/index.asp>
- ⁸ The Scottish Executive (2006), *Scotland's Transport Future: Guidance on Regional Transport Strategies*. Scottish Executive, Edinburgh.
Available at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/03/06145237/0>
- ⁹ Available at www.scrol.gov.uk
- ¹⁰ Scottish Executive, Scottish Household Surveys.
Available at www.scotland.gov.uk
- ¹¹ E Perring (2006), *Deprivation and Social Exclusion in Shetland*. Shetland Islands Council, Lerwick. Available at <http://www.shetland.gov.uk/communityplanning/SocialExclusion.asp>