

Home to School – Post 16 Statement

Did you use the EIA Screening Tool?

Yes

1. Explaining the matter being assessed

Is this a:

- Change to an existing strategy or policy

Summarise the strategy, policy, service(s), or function(s) being assessed. Describe current status followed by any changes that stakeholders would experience.

Surrey County Council has a legal obligation to provide transport or otherwise facilitate access to education and training for young people aged 16-19 who are not yet subject to the adult duty, and for those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) up to age 25. This duty ensures that young people of sixth form age can continue their education or training, even if they have learning difficulties or disabilities.

The primary objective of reviewing the Post-16 Transport Policy Statement, which applies to young people aged 16 to 25, is to ensure that Surrey County Council's approach to post-16 travel assistance remains current, fair, and effective in supporting access to education and training. It is important to note that travel assistance for this age group is a discretionary service, and the review aims to ensure that any support offered continues to reflect both statutory guidance and the evolving needs of young people.

By regularly assessing and updating the Post-16 Statement, the Council can ensure that its policies are responsive to changes in demographics, educational requirements, and transportation options. This adaptability is crucial for providing timely and appropriate support to all eligible students.

The changes to the Post 16 Transport Policy Statement are intended to ensure clarity and consistency in policy, and to enhance environmental sustainability. Surrey County Council is committed to reducing emissions and promoting sustainable modes of transport. By incorporating environmentally friendly practices and encouraging the use of public transport, cycling, and walking, the Post-16 Statement can contribute to the Council's broader environmental goals and improve the quality of life for residents.

Finally, the revised policy aims to align with national policies and best practices. By staying updated with the latest guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and other relevant bodies, the Council can ensure that its policies are in line with national standards.

Changes to the post 16 statement

Equality Impact Assessment

Opening Page:

Current Statement: "Local authorities do not have to provide free or subsidised post-16 travel support but do have a duty to review, prepare and publish an annual transport policy by the 31st of May each year."

Proposed Change: This paragraph has been moved to the beginning of the statement, whereas it was previously located in the third paragraph.

Assessment of Eligibility:

Additional Text: "If there is a family member or carer who is willing and able to transport the student and if not, why it would not be possible or reasonable for them to do so. Circumstances such as a parent/carer's work schedule or having multiple children attending different schools are generally not considered sufficient reasons for a parent/carer being unable to facilitate their young person's journey."

Rationale: This addition helps clarify the criteria for evaluating applications, specifically whether the need for travel assistance has been demonstrated.

Post-16 Travel Assistance Policy Sub header:

Current Sub header: "Post-16 travel assistance policy"

Proposed Change: Reworded to "What Support can Surrey County Council offer"

Rationale: To provide clearer information about the support available.

Annual Reapplication Requirement:

Current Statement: "Where travel assistance has been demonstrated as necessary, the Council will offer support to children and young people to travel to their educational placement. If entitled, travel assistance may be in place until the end of a course, in which case an application will not be required for each year of study."

Proposed Change: "Where travel assistance is demonstrated as necessary, the Council will provide support to children and young people for their educational placement. If eligible, this assistance will be available for the academic year, and all pupils must reapply annually."

Rationale: To ensure that eligibility is reassessed annually as the policy is published annually, reflecting any changes in personal circumstances.

Eligibility Criteria:

Current Statement: "If the Council agrees that a student is eligible for assistance,"

Proposed Change: "If the Council is satisfied that a child/young person would be prevented from accessing education without support, the authority..."

Rationale: To emphasise the necessity of demonstrating the need for support.

Concessionary Seats:

Additional Bullet Point: "Applying for a concessionary seat on an existing service"

Rationale: To provide an additional option for travel assistance.

Contracted Travel Assistance:

Current Statement: "Only in exceptional circumstances connected to an individual's learning difficulties and/or disabilities and where no alternative mode of travel is available, will taxi travel be considered."

Proposed Change: "If there are exceptional circumstances where the above options cannot be utilised to facilitate attendance, families can make representations to the Council via the travel assistance appeal process"

Rationale: To clarify the conditions under which contracted travel assistance is provided and ensure that it is clear all forms of contracted assistance will be considered.

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Financial Contribution:

Current Statement: "Where it is agreed that travel assistance is required, we will ask students aged 16-19 or their parents/carers to contribute towards the transport costs. For the academic year 2024/2025 the contribution will be as follows: £659.01 / £908.85"

Proposed Change: "Where it has been demonstrated that a child/young person would be prevented from accessing education without support, and the authority agrees to provide a contracted service in the form of a taxi or minibus, we will ask students aged 16-19 or their parents/carers to contribute towards the transport costs. For the academic year 2025/2026 the contribution will be as follows: £675.48 / £931.56"

Rationale: To ensure that contributions are based on demonstrated need.

Payment Dates:

Additional Information: "Payment Dates are: 31 July 2025 for Autumn term, 30 November 2025 for Spring term, 28 February 2026 for Summer term"

Rationale: To provide clear payment deadlines.

16 to 19 Bursary Fund:

Additional Information: "Parents/carers are advised to liaise with the educational setting to apply for a bursary on behalf of the pupil."

Rationale: To guide parents/carers on how to apply for additional financial support.

Transport Standards:

New Subheading: "Transport standards"

Rationale: To distinguish information regarding the provision of transport for part-time hours.

Provision of Transport for Part-Time Hours:

Current Statement: "When travel assistance is provided, it will only be provided at the start and end of the school/college day. For example, in a Further Education college setting, a shuttle bus service may be used, rather than individual taxi services. Pupils may have to wait for either the next shuttle bus or until the end of the school/college day to access homeward travel."

Proposed change: When contracted travel assistance is provided, it will only be provided at the start and end of the school/college day. Pupils may have to seek alternative travel arrangements such as public transport or wait until the end of the school/college day to access homeward travel.

Rationale: To clarify the conditions under which transport assistance is provided.

Post-16 Independent Travel Allowance (ITA):

Current Statement: "A Post-16 Independent Travel Allowance (Post-16 ITA) in the form of mileage reimbursement may be offered to parents/carers of all pupils who are entitled to travel assistance and aged 16 to 19 where this offers best value for money to the county council."

Proposed Change: "A Post-16 Independent Travel Allowance (Post-16 ITA) in the form of mileage reimbursement may be provided to parents/carers of pupils who have demonstrated a need for assistance aged 16 to 19 where this offers best value for money to the county council."

Rationale: To ensure that the allowance is based on demonstrated need.

Use of Data or evidence

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As of the 31st March 2025, the Surrey School Travel & Assessment Team supports families and young people aged 16-25 by providing travel assistance to educational settings for 742 pupils across the county. The breakdown of this assistance is as follows:

- **1% (5 pupils)** by coach
- **5% (35 pupils)** with educational seasonal passes
- **28% (209 pupils)** receiving an Independent Travel Allowance
- **68% (502 pupils)** using contracted transport, of which **31.8% (236 pupils)** have a solo taxi

For the Financial Year 2024/25, the service spent **£7,946,201** supporting this cohort of pupils.

As of February 2025, **97% (723 pupils)** of the young people receiving travel assistance hold an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Consultation and Insight

The School Transport Service launched a public consultation on the proposed amendments to the current policy which was live on Surrey Say from Monday 10th March and ran for 28 days closing on Wednesday 16th April at 23.59.

The consultation process sought to actively seek feedback from young people, parents/carers, schools, and other stakeholders on the proposed changes to the Post 16 Transport Policy Statement

The consultation aimed to target parents and carers who already are in receipt of travel assistance or plan to apply for Home to School Travel Assistance for their child, young people of sixth form age.

Communication activity included social media posts, CFLL Hub, the School Bulletin, , an email to AND partnership board, and the Service shared emails with families in receipt of Travel Assistance yr 10 and above, operators delivering travel assistance and schools with pupils in receipt of Travel Assistance.

As of the 17th April, 430 responses had been received, of which:

- 63.49% of respondents identified as a parent / carer for a young person with additional needs.
- Of the 391 respondents who answered the question around currently being in receipt of travel assistance, 81.86% said yes.
- Out of 357 respondents, 56.74% had a child / young person aged between 11-16 years.
- 355 respondents answered if they / the child / young person received a mobility component of either Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) of which 23.49% are in receipt of the higher rate and 24.88% are in receipt of the lower rate.
- 389 respondents answered the question if they were applying for Travel Assistance for the next academic year, 65.12% said yes. Of which 65.58% hold an EHCP
 - Use of public transport saw 387 answer the question with 68.14% not using public transport to and from school or college

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- 413 respondents answered the question around the overall agreement of the proposed revision of the policy, 47.9% either strongly agree, agree or neither agree or disagree.
- 430 respondents answered the question on the proposed addition to the eligibility criteria 33.26% strongly agree, agree or neither agree or disagree.
- 429 respondents answered 36.05% as strongly agree, agree or neither agree or disagree to the cohort needing to reapply for Travel assistance each academic year.
- The necessity of demonstrating the need for support was answered by 430 respondents with 68.15% strongly agree, agree or neither agree or disagree.
- 428 respondents answered the question on clarified conditions for providing contracted travel assistance of which 63.03% % strongly agree, agree or neither agree or disagree.
- The proposed contribution rates saw 429 responses with 53.72% strongly agree, agree or neither agree or disagree
- 70.46% strongly agreed, agree or neither agree or disagree that travel assistance should only be provided at the start and end of the school / college day.

The consultation asked respondents to share any additional comments or thoughts regarding the proposed changes to the post 16 policy, the main feedback is detailed below;

Concerns About Proximity and Accessibility: Many respondents highlighted the need for closer and more accessible educational provisions to reduce long travel times. Comments suggested that better local provisions would be more acceptable to parents and reduce the burden of travel.

Impact on Family and Work Commitments: A significant number of comments expressed frustration over the policy not considering parents' work schedules and other family commitments. There is a strong sentiment that ignoring these factors is unfair and adds unnecessary stress to families already dealing with challenging circumstances.

Annual Reapplication Process: The requirement for annual reapplication for travel assistance is seen as a major source of stress and administrative burden. Respondents feel that this process is inefficient and often leads to delays in approval, causing children to miss out on education and parents to face employment issues.

Financial and Socioeconomic Factors: Comments indicated concerns about the financial implications of the policy, particularly for families with lower incomes. There is a perception that the policy may disproportionately affect families based on their socioeconomic status, which is viewed as unfair.

Responsibility of the Council: Several comments pointed out that the council should take more responsibility for providing transport and not shift the burden onto families. There is a call for the council to ensure that transport assistance is reliable and does not place additional strain on families.

How does your service proposal support the outcomes in [the Community Vision for Surrey 2030](#)?

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- Children and young people are safe and feel safe and confident.
- Everyone benefits from education, skills and employment opportunities that help them succeed in life.
- Everyone lives healthy, active and fulfilling lives, and makes good choices about their wellbeing.
- Everyone gets the health and social care support and information they need at the right time and place.
- Communities are welcoming and supportive, especially of those most in need, and people feel able to contribute to community life.
- Residents live in clean, safe and green communities, where people and organisations embrace their environmental responsibilities.
- Journeys across the county are easier, more predictable and safer.
- Well connected communities, with effective infrastructure, that grow sustainably.

Are there any specific geographies in Surrey where this will make an impact?

- County-wide

Assessment team – A key principle for completing impact assessments is that they should not be done in isolation. Consultation with affected groups and stakeholders needs to be built in from the start, to enrich the assessment and develop relevant mitigation.

Detail here who you have involved with completing this EIA. For each include:

- Debs Smith, Clare Wiggin-Feak - Travel and Assessment Team Managers
- Gerry Hughes, Assistant Director Business Support & Surrey School Travel &

Assessment team

- Surrey County Council, Surrey School Travel & Assessment Team, CFLL

2. Service Users / Residents

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Who may be affected by this activity?

There are 9 protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010) to consider in your proposal. These are:

1. Age including younger and older people
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
6. Religion or belief including lack of belief
7. Sex
8. Sexual orientation
9. Marriage/civil partnerships

Though not included in the Equality Act 2010, Surrey County Council recognises that there are other vulnerable groups which significantly contribute to inequality across the county and therefore they should also be considered within EIAs. If relevant, you will need to include information on the following vulnerable groups (Please **refer to the EIA guidance** if you are unclear as to what this is).

- Members/Ex members of armed forces and relevant family members (in line with the Armed Forces Act 2021 and [Statutory Guidance on the Armed Forces Covenant Duty](#))
- Adult and young carers*
- Those experiencing digital exclusion*
- Those experiencing domestic abuse*
- Those with education/training (literacy) needs
- Those experiencing homelessness*
- Looked after children/Care leavers*
- Those living in rural/urban areas
- Those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage*
- Out of work young people)*
- Adults with learning disabilities and/or autism*
- People with drug or alcohol use issues*
- People on probation
- People in prison
- Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers
- Sex workers
- Children with Special educational needs and disabilities*
- Adults with long term health conditions, disabilities (including SMI) and/or sensory impairment(s)*
- Older People in care homes*
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities*
- Other (describe below)

(*as identified in the Surrey COVID Community Impact Assessment and the Surrey Health and Well-being Strategy)

3. Age

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

The policy is designed to provide clear guidelines and support for young people aged 16-19 and adult learners aged 19+ with an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan. This targeted support ensures that these age groups receive the necessary assistance to access education.

By offering specific guidelines on the support available, the policy helps young people, and their families understand their entitlements and how to access them. This clarity is crucial for ensuring that eligible students can access education without barriers.

Pupils may be attending educational settings further from home leading to an increase in demand for Travel Assistance due to longer travel times or limited public transport links.

The requirement for annual reapplication for travel assistance may place an additional administrative burden on families and students. This could be particularly challenging for families with limited resources or those unfamiliar with the application process, potentially causing stress and uncertainty.

Young people transitioning from compulsory education to post-16 education may face additional challenges in understanding and navigating the new policy requirements. This transition period can be stressful and may require additional support.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

Offering additional support and guidance to young people and their families during the transition from compulsory education to post-16 education. This includes information sessions with internal colleagues and external partners and one-on-one support to help families along with guides to help navigate the new policy requirements.

The reapplication process aims to minimise the administrative burden on families. In time, this will involve an online eligibility checker, an enhanced online application, clear instructions, and dedicated support services to assist with the process.

Additionally, the need to reapply supports the young person's needs, which may change and require assessment on a case-by-case basis. This ensures that we are providing the best possible support tailored to each pupil's unique circumstances.

Furthermore, the reapplication process includes reassessing the needs as a discretionary service for the post-16 cohort. This ensures that pupils being allocated the service are those

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most in need, using council funds accordingly. It also involves monitoring and ensuring capacity within the market for all statutory-aged pupils, thereby promoting efficient use of resources and equitable access to travel assistance.

The service aims to ensure all changes and requirements are communicated clearly and well in advance to avoid confusion. Effective communication can help families understand the process and requirements, reducing uncertainty.

Families will have access to comprehensive guidance and resources to help them understand the reapplication process. This will be included within the parent guide and FAQs.

The option for dedicated assistance services, such as drop-in sessions, where families can receive help with completing their reapplication forms could be made available in conjunction with Family Voice Surrey. This is particularly beneficial for families who may struggle with the administrative aspects of the process.

By notifying families in advance of the reapplication deadlines, this gives them ample time to gather the necessary documentation and complete their applications. This helps reduce stress and ensures timely submission of applications.

The service will work with colleagues, where possible, to evaluate the availability and accessibility of local educational provisions to minimise travel distances for students.

By implementing a sliding scale for financial contributions based on household income, the service ensures that low-income families are not disproportionately affected. Additionally, offering payment plans supports families in need, which promotes equity and prevents financial barriers from impacting students' access to education. In addition, a process is in place where the management team can waive the contribution for families in financial hardship who provide evidence that they are unable to pay.

There will be regular monitoring of the impact of the policy changes on different groups, particularly those with protected characteristics. This involves collecting data on the number of applications received, the outcomes of those applications, and any feedback from families and stakeholders.

We will establish feedback mechanisms to allow families and stakeholders to provide input on the policy and its implementation. This may include surveys, focus groups, and regular consultation meetings.

We will conduct an annual review of the policy to assess its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. This review will consider feedback from families and stakeholders, as well as data collected through the monitoring process.

We will provide training for staff involved in the assessment and administration of travel assistance applications. This training will cover the new policy changes and how to provide effective support to families.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

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Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

Some families may still face challenges due to the stringent criteria for eligibility and the annual reapplication requirement. These impacts may be difficult to fully mitigate but can be addressed through ongoing support and review.

4. Disability

Describe here the considerations and concerns in relation to the programme/policy for the selected group.

The policy includes provisions for learners with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, ensuring they receive essential travel assistance to access education. This is particularly important for students with disabilities who may encounter additional barriers to accessing educational opportunities.

The policy outlines clear criteria for assessing eligibility for travel assistance, which helps ensure that support is directed to those who need it most. This clarity can prevent misunderstandings and ensure equitable access to resources.

The additional criteria for assessing eligibility may inadvertently create barriers for some students with disabilities if not applied flexibly. This could result in certain students not receiving the necessary support, thereby hindering their access to education.

The policy's clarification of conditions under where contracted travel assistance is provided may limit the availability of this support for some students with disabilities. If alternative transport options are not suitable, this could negatively impact their ability to access education.

Pupils with complex medical or learning needs may be attending educational settings further from home leading to an increase in demand for Travel Assistance due to longer travel times or unable to access public transport links.

Additional travel time can interfere with parents' work schedules, disrupt family routine and possible increase in stress.

Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.

The service will apply the eligibility criteria with flexibility, considering individual circumstances, particularly for students with disabilities. This ensures that the unique needs of each student are considered.

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Case-by-Case assessment take place for each application for travel assistance individually, considering factors such as the severity of the student's disability, availability of alternative transport options, and other relevant personal circumstances.

Families will have comprehensive guidance and resources to help them understand the reapplication process. This will be included within the parent guide and FAQs.

The option for dedicated assistance services, such as drop-in sessions, where families can receive help with completing their reapplication forms could be made available in conjunction with Family Voice Surrey. This is particularly beneficial for families who may struggle with the administrative aspects of the process.

The reapplication process aims to minimise the administrative burden on families. In time, this will involve an online eligibility checker, an enhanced online application, clear instructions, and dedicated support services to assist with the process.

Additionally, the need to reapply supports the young person's needs, which may change and require assessment on a case-by-case basis. This ensures that we are providing the best possible support tailored to each pupil's needs.

Furthermore, the reapplication process includes reassessing the needs as a discretionary service for the post-16 cohort. This ensures that pupils being allocated the service are those most in need, using council funds accordingly. It also involves monitoring and ensuring capacity within the market for all statutory-aged pupils, thereby promoting efficient use of resources and equitable access to travel assistance.

By notifying families in advance of the reapplication deadlines, this gives them ample time to gather the necessary documentation and complete their applications. This helps reduce stress and ensures timely submission of applications.

Implementing regularly monitoring the impact of the policy changes on different groups, particularly those with protected characteristics. This involves collecting data on the number of applications received, the outcomes of those applications, and any feedback from families and stakeholders.

Establish feedback mechanisms to allow families and stakeholders to provide input on the policy and its implementation. This could include surveys, focus groups, and regular consultation meetings.

Conducting an annual review of the policy to assess its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. This review will consider feedback from families and stakeholders, as well as data collected through the monitoring process.

Provide training for staff involved in the assessment and administration of travel assistance applications. This training should cover the new policy changes, the importance of flexibility in application, and how to provide effective support to families.

What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?

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Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?

Some families may still face challenges due to the stringent criteria for eligibility and the annual reapplication requirement. These impacts may be difficult to fully mitigate but can be addressed through ongoing support and review.

The proposed changes to the Post-16 Transport Policy Statement aim to provide clear and equitable support for eligible students. While there are potential negative impacts, particularly for students with disabilities and their families, these can be mitigated through flexible application of the criteria and additional support during the reapplication process. Regular monitoring and consultation will ensure that the policy remains fair and effective.

5. Recommendation

Based your assessment, please indicate which course of action you are recommending to decision makers. You should explain your recommendation below.

- **Outcome One: No major change to the policy/service/function required.** This EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or negative impact, and all opportunities to promote equality have been undertaken
- **Outcome Two: Adjust the policy/service/function** to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better advance equality. Are you satisfied that the proposed adjustments will remove the barriers you identified?
- **Outcome Three: Continue the policy/service/function** despite potential for negative impact or missed opportunities to advance equality identified. You will need to make sure the EIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You need to consider whether there are:
 - Sufficient plans to stop or minimise the negative impact
 - Mitigating actions for any remaining negative impacts plans to monitor the actual impact.
- **Outcome Four: Stop and rethink the policy** when the EIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination. (For guidance on what is unlawful discrimination, refer to the [Equality and Human Rights Commission's guidance and Codes of Practice on the Equality Act](#) concerning employment, goods and services and equal pay).

Recommended outcome:

Outcome Two: Adjust the policy/service/function

Explanation:

Based on the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA), the service believes the proposed adjustments, along with the mitigations, will effectively support these cohorts of pupils with protected characteristics. The mitigations include assessing applications on a case-by-case basis, providing comprehensive user guides and FAQs, engaging with key stakeholders, conducting regular reviews and monitoring, and offering staff training. These measures will aid families and young people in transitioning to the updated policy.

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5. Action plan and monitoring arrangements

Insert your action plan here, based on the mitigations recommended.

Involve you Assessment Team in monitoring progress against the actions above.

Item	Initiation Date	Action/Item	Person Actioning	Target Completion Date	Update/Notes	Open/ Closed
1	By 31 st May	Update Post 16 policy on website and share with key stakeholders	Debs Smith	By 31 st May		
2	Autum 2025	Review feedback on updated policy	Debs Smith	Oct 2025		
3	Oct 2025	Conduct annual review of Post 16 policy for 2026/27 academic year	Debs Smith	Nov 2025		

6a. Version control

Version Number	Purpose/Change	Author	Date
1			

The above provides historical data about each update made to the Equality Impact Assessment.

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Please include the name of the author, date and notes about changes made – so that you can refer to what changes have been made throughout this iterative process.

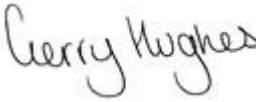


For further information, please see the EIA Guidance document on version control.

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6b. Approval

Secure approval from the appropriate level of management based on nature of issue and scale of change being assessed.

The level of EIA sign off will depend on who the change affects. Generally speaking, for strictly internal changes, Head of Service/ Exec Director sign off should suffice. For changes affecting residents, the Cabinet Member is required to approve completed EIAs.

Approved by	Date approved
Head of Service	 6 th May 2025
Executive Director	 2 nd June 2025
Cabinet Member	 4 th June 2025
Directorate Equality Group/ EDI Group (If Applicable) (arrangements will differ depending on your Directorate. Please enquire with your Head of Service or the CSP Team if unsure)	

Publish:

It is recommended that all EIAs are published on Surrey County Council's website.

Please send approved EIAs to: equalityimpactassessments@surreycc.gov.uk

EIA author:

6c. EIA Team

Name	Job Title	Organisation	Team Role

Equality Impact Assessment

If you would like this information in large print, Braille, on CD or in another language please contact us on:

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