

Transport for all? An analysis of commitments to accessible transport in the statutory Equality Outcomes of Scottish Councils

David Hunter

Introduction

This report is the result of an analysis of the statutory Equality Outcomes published by all Scottish Councils. It indicates which Scottish councils have published commitments to improving access to transport for disabled people and others with mobility difficulties and what they say.

Since 30 April 2013, all Scottish Councils have had a number of statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duties associated with the 2010 Equality Act. Amongst these obligations are a specific duty requiring local authorities to publish equality outcomes and report progress, as well as to report on mainstreaming the equality duty and to assess and review policies and practices.

Accessible and inclusive transport benefits not only disabled people, but everyone including children, older people and anyone with luggage or shopping.

Methodology

The published equality outcome statements of all 32 Scottish councils were accessed online in early 2014. Every effort has been made to include all published outcome statements relevant to making any form of transport accessible, together with references to any detailed action plans, statements of departmental responsibilities, target dates for implementation and particularly relevant context statements. Unless in brackets, the material in the following section is quoted directly from published Council statements. A link to the website of the published report is also provided for each council.

Where “no reference to accessible transport” is reported below, this means that there are no outcomes or objectives making a specific reference to transport or mobility for disabled people. Most councils state some general outcomes relating to equal access to services, but unless these include a specific reference to transport, they are not recorded below.

Findings

Council equality outcomes take a variety of forms. Some published statements are long and detailed, making links to Single Outcome Agreements and containing detailed action plans, while others make short, broad statements of intent.

Only fourteen councils in Scotland (under half) made a positive statement about aiming to make public transport more accessible in their area. Typically, these statements took the form of:

- making bus services more accessible (Aberdeenshire, Edinburgh)
- providing door-to-door services (Aberdeenshire, Dundee, Shetland)
- aiming to improve infrastructure (Angus, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire)
- improving information (Highland, Shetland)
- assisting disabled motorists (Renfrewshire, South Lanarkshire).

Curiously, only one council (East Renfrewshire) referred to taxis, although these are the form of transport most directly controlled by local authorities.

There does not appear to be a clear geographic pattern of which councils do, and don't, address accessible transport issues. Of Scotland's four major city councils, two include such a statement (Dundee and Edinburgh) while two (Aberdeen and Glasgow) do not. While most of Scotland's most rural Councils make no reference to accessible transport, both Shetland and Highland do.

Conclusions

From this evidence, it is clear that most Scottish Councils have not made any link between their new equality duties and their policy with respect to transport services. While Councils no longer control public transport services in their areas, they have great influence from direct licensing of taxi and private hire services to supporting bus routes. Many councils provide door to door and community transport services. It may have been expected that all Scottish councils would have taken this opportunity to state a commitment to making the transport that serves their communities inclusive.

There are however some examples of imaginative use of the Public Sector Equalities Duty where Councils state in their statutory Equality Outcomes a commitment to making transport services that are accessible and inclusive for disabled people.

Councils are required to review their outcomes by 30 April 2015. This represents an opportunity for examples of good practice to be more widely adopted by councils throughout Scotland as they review and revise their statutory outcome statements and develop their approach to mainstreaming equalities into routine services such as transport planning, licensing and street maintenance.



City of Aberdeen

<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=49878&sID=22975>

(No reference to accessible transport)

Aberdeenshire

<http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/Equalities/MainstreamingReportanEqualityOutcomes.pdf>

13.1.6 Equality Outcome 2 - Members of the public are able to access our services with ease and confidence. Example outputs:

- Remote communities transport development
- Promote low floor bus initiatives

13.3.7 Aberdeenshire Community Transport Initiative (ACTI)

Aberdeenshire Community Transport Initiative (ACTI) grants provide funding of up to 75% of project costs for the provision of community based rural passenger transport such as community buses, dial-a-trip services and voluntary car schemes. ACTI currently provides grant funding to seven local groups. The budget for 2012/13 is £363K per annum. These groups provide services to help address issues associated with rural isolation that affects less mobile groups such as the very young, older people and disabled people.

There are other initiatives within the Local Transport Strategy which attempt to deal with cross-cutting accessibility issues that affect a number of groups. They include the low floor bus initiative which aimed to operate low floor buses on all town services in Aberdeenshire by 2010. This has been achieved. This makes it easier to get on and off buses for older people, disabled people as well as people with prams etc.

Angus

<http://www.angus.gov.uk/ac/documents/equalityoutcomes/equalityoutcomesreport.pdf>

Outcome: People will find it easy to travel in Angus

How we will measure progress:

- Number of bus boarders at bus stops
 - Number of bus stops with raised kerbs
 - Implement the accessible transport plan
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Argyll and Bute

http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/equalities_mainstreaming_report_and_equality_outcomes_for_council_25th_april.pdf

(No reference to accessible transport)

Clackmannanshire

<http://www.clacksweb.org.uk/document/4089.pdf>

Equality Outcome 10: People with disabilities have better access to Council buildings, public space, streets and public transport.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Outer Hebrides)

<http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/equalityanddiversity/documents/eomr.pdf>

(No reference to accessible transport)

Dumfries and Galloway

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=12337&p=0>

Improve the availability of accessible transport for women, older people and disabled people

City of Dundee

<https://www.dundee.gov.uk/equanddiv>

<http://www.crer.org.uk/attachments/DundeePSED.pdf>

Equality Outcomes:

- Dundee's people with disabilities and the frail elderly will have access to transport choices that supports their access to health services and social opportunities
- Dundee's travel network will be responsive to the needs of those with limited mobility

Departmental Action Plan

- Introduce Demand Responsive Travel and ensuring appropriate Public Transport Network will allow older people to access treatment and support from wherever they live in Dundee
- Produce a plan to deploy Demand Responsive Transport to aid accessible transport for social inclusion
- Introduce Demand Responsive transport citywide on a phased basis

City Development Department: Target date 2017

East Ayrshire

<http://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/Resources/PDF/E/EqualityOutcomes.pdf>

Women, older people and disabled people have access to safe and sustainable transport (Indicators: to be developed)

Context:

A lack of regular, accessible, and direct transport disproportionately prevents disabled people and older men and women from being able to participate in all aspects of life – employment, health, shopping and local activities. Disabled people are more likely to use and rely on a bus service than non-disabled people, particularly in rural areas of East Ayrshire, and are more likely to use a bus service than a train service. Adults with impairments are significantly more likely than adults without impairments to experience difficulties getting in and out of local buses and trains. There are gender differences in travel and transport needs: women tend to rely on public transport more than men, especially low-income women; and women are more likely to make complex journeys, often travelling to childcare, school, work and shops. Poor public transport and lack of childcare facilities and shops near employment locations impacts on women's ability to participate in the labour market.

East Dumbartonshire

<http://www.scrutiny.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/pdf/CROD-CPP%20Equality%20Outcomes%20and%20Mainstreaming%20Report%202013-2017.pdf>

(No reference to accessible transport)

East Lothian

<http://www.crer.org.uk/attachments/EastLothianPSED2.pdf>

(No reference to accessible transport)

East Renfrewshire

<http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=9084&p=0>

Intermediate Outcome: Wheelchair users are confident that they can hire a wheelchair-accessible taxi at a fair cost when they need one.

Lead: Chief Executive's/Legal Services

City of Edinburgh

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/2011/equality_and_rights_outcomes_and_mainstreaming_action_plan

Equality Outcome ER22: There are accessible and inclusive transport systems ensuring people feel safe using the City's public transport, road, footway and cycle networks.

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Actions (Services for Communities):

- introduce low-floor access Clearway markings at all public transport interchanges in the city;
- new buses to have 'low floor' capability;
- improved partnership working with voluntary sector and other partners to improve demand responsive transport;
- improve quality and availability of public transport information for older people and those with a visual impairment.

Community transport services have a significant positive impact on the lives of some of the city's most vulnerable and least physically able people. They help to ensure independence and improved quality of life by allowing greater participation in the wider community and access to services.

Falkirk

http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/corporate_neighbourhood/human_resources/PDFs/2013/eom_report_13.pdf

(No reference to accessible transport)

Fife

<http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=publication.pop&pubid=5A16D70D-CEB9-0C1D-E7EA77A5B3B62C4C>

(No reference to accessible transport)

City of Glasgow

<http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=15516&p=0>

(No reference to accessible transport)

Highland

<http://www.highland.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/B10BF1AC-EFA5-4F52-885B-97E7A3CBA80F/0/Outcomesreport.pdf>

Intermediate Outcome 10: Disabled people, older/younger people and women experience have improved access to public transport (through the provision of more accessible information on transport and better information about accessible services).

Lead departments: Transport, Environment and Community

Inverclyde

<http://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/equality-and-diversity/equality-diversity>

Equality Outcome: The condition of roads and pavements do not prevent older people and those with mobility impairment from accessing shops, services and transport.

Midlothian

http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/news/article/917/equality_outcome_and_mainstreaming_report_2013_2017

(No reference to accessible transport)

Moray

<http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file85427.pdf>

(No reference to accessible transport)

North Ayrshire

<http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/equality-policy-and-performance.aspx>

(No reference to accessible transport)

North Lanarkshire

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=26438>

(No reference to accessible transport)

Orkney

http://www.orkney.gov.uk/Files/Council/Council-Policies/Orkney_Islands_Council_Equality_Outcomes_2013_2017.pdf

(No reference to accessible transport)

Perth and Kinross

<http://www.pkc.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=19460&p=0>

(No reference to accessible transport)

Renfrewshire

<http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/81c835cc-e95e-4799-824d-b1917fd8c591/ce-Progressonmainstreamingequalitydutyandequalityoutcomes.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>

Outcome 2: Women, older people and disabled people have access to safe and sustainable transport.

Actions: Actively enforce the Disabled Parking Bay Act and implement traffic orders to prevent the misuse of disabled parking bays.

Involve equality groups to identify needs and barriers.

Ongoing planning, implementation and review of transport schemes such as lighting upgrades, new or improved bus shelters, raised kerbs along key bus corridors and the first Statutory Quality Bus Partnership in Scotland where compliance to a set of standards must be met.

Context 4.1: The Council's Planning and Transport services has implemented a Statutory Quality Bus Partnership, the first in Scotland which requires bus operators to use low floor buses, helping to improve access to public transport particularly for people with mobility problems.

Scottish Borders

http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/5881/appendix_4-equality_outcomes_and_indicators

Outcome 5: Our citizens have the freedom to make their own choices and are able to lead independent, healthy lives as responsible citizens

Indicator 5.2: % of disabled people satisfied with the local bus service

Shetland

<http://www.shetland.gov.uk/communityplanning/documents/ShetlandsEqualitiesMainstreamingReportandEqualityOutcomes2013to2017FinalVersion6.pdf>

(No outcomes on accessible transport; however, the following statement is included:)

9. Mainstreaming Equality in ZetTrans

Many of the general steps the Council is taking to mainstream equality cover the whole of the Council's work. This section details specific steps on transport. We operate demand responsive transport in rural areas. During consultation exercises we try to reach people from different equality groups. We are considering how we can make timetabling information more accessible to people with disabilities.

South Ayrshire

<http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/equalities/publications/equality%20and%20diversity%20strategy-sac-25%20april%202013%20final.pdf>

(No reference to accessible transport)

South Lanarkshire

[Download Now - South Lanarkshire Council](#)

Outcome 3: Improve the road network and influence improvements in public transport

To help us achieve this change, we will...

- Ensure there are adequate provisions for the community to ensure they can travel within South Lanarkshire;
 - monitor the parking requirements for disabled users on an ongoing basis;
 - ensure the transport provision reflects the needs of the community.
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Stirling

http://www.stirling.gov.uk/_documents/temporary-uploads/chief-executives-office/sc20130502item10equalitystrategyapp1-1.pdf

(No reference to accessible transport)

West Dunbartonshire

http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/2502909/wdc_equality_mainstreaming_report_2013_2017.pdf

Equality Outcome 14: Improve the accessibility of transport for women, older people and disabled people

Lead Department; Housing, Environmental And Economic Development

West Lothian

<http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/downloaddoc/1799563/1846123/2398118>

No accessible transport-related outcomes; however, transportation is noted as an issue in the context of enhancing independence for disabled people (equality outcome 5).

References

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2012/162/regulation/4/made>

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Not for Profit Planning
117 Gilmore Place
Edinburgh
EH3 9PP

Tel 07810 444080

nfpplan@gmail.com