

Chesterfield Borough Council Equality Impact Assessment - Full Assessment Form

<i>Title of the policy, project, service, function or strategy:</i>	Section 137 grant – Shopmobility	
<i>Service Area:</i>	Corporate	
<i>Section:</i>	Policy and Partnerships	
<i>Lead Officer:</i>	Donna Reddish	
<i>Date of assessment:</i>	09.12.21	
<i>Is the policy, project, service, function or strategy:</i>		
<i>Existing</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Changed</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<i>New / Proposed</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Section 1 – Clear aims and objectives

1. What is the aim of the policy, project, service, function or strategy?

To consider the future funding arrangements for Chesterfield and District Shopmobility from 2022/23 onwards – Section 137 grant.

2. Who is intended to benefit from the policy and how?

Shopmobility currently receives £21,789 per annum in the form of a Section 137 grant from Chesterfield Borough Council. Section 137 is a provision within the Local Government Act 1972 which enables local councils to spend a limited amount of money for purposes for which they have no other specific statutory expenditure.

The Council Plan includes the priority to provide value for money services and an aim of becoming and staying financially self-sufficient. In 2018 officers met with Shopmobility and explained that Chesterfield Borough Council had over a number of years faced unprecedented levels of cuts in central government funding and most of our services have had to reduce their budgets significantly despite increasing demand. The need for Shopmobility to

develop a self-funding / alternative funding strategy was discussed with Shopmobility as the funding settlement from Chesterfield Borough Council is unsustainable in the medium to longer term. It is therefore important that we consider the issue of future funding, value for money and affordability.

3. What outcomes do you want to achieve?

Appropriate, effective, and sustainable use of Council funds linked to priorities and core service delivery.

4. What barriers exist for both the Council and the groups/people with protected characteristics to enable these outcomes to be achieved?

Section 137 is often (but not exclusively) used for emergency funding provisions and several authorities including Chesterfield Borough Council have used this power during the Covid-19 pandemic on a temporary basis. It is unusual for the power to be used for ongoing support.

In 2018 officers met with Shopmobility and explained that Chesterfield Borough Council had over a number of years faced unprecedented levels of cuts in central government funding and most of our services have had to reduce their budgets significantly despite increasing demand. The need for Shopmobility to develop a self-funding / alternative funding strategy was discussed with Shopmobility as the funding settlement from Chesterfield Borough Council is unsustainable in the medium to longer term. It is therefore important that we consider the issue of future funding, value for money and affordability.

Shopmobility have not met this requirement and have not developed a self-funding / alternative funding plan. Support is being provided via Links CVS and Chesterfield BC officers to assist with this action.

The Shopmobility service offers a range of services which are accessed by people with disabilities – mainly mobility and older people.

5. Any other relevant background information

N/A

Section 2 – Collecting your information

6. What existing data sources do you have to assess the impact of the policy, project, service, function or strategy?

Shopmobility website, previous reports

Section 3 – Additional engagement activities

7. Please list any additional engagement activities undertaken when developing the proposal and completing this EIA. Have those who are anticipated to be affected by the policy been consulted with?

Date	Activity	Main findings
09.09.21	Consultation meeting with Shopmobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmed reasons for the review – linking back to discussions in 2018, SLA requirements and current financial and service demand challenges • Confirmed that Shopmobility had not met the SLA requirement to develop a Self-funding/ alternative funding strategy • CBC offered assistance from CBC officers and Links CVS to help develop the strategy and consider alternative funding sources available / pricing review • Agreed Shopmobility stakeholders • Agreed service user consultation approach • Requested key information to support decision making
06.10.21	Consultation meeting with Shopmobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answered questions regarding the decision making process and timescale • Updated on support from CBC and Links – a number of alternative funds identified • Chair concerned about the time needed to complete funding application etc. – Links CVS and CBC can assist • Confirmed evidence received so far and what was still required • We discussed the Shopmobility constitution which is dated 2005 - confirmed that this is the latest version and that it remains correct. Looking to review for AGM

04.11.21	Consultation meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion across all information gathered so far • Agreed that information was accurate • Stressed the importance of trustees / organisation responding to consultation and encouraging service users to do so
Oct – Dec 21	Stakeholder consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder consultation responses received from Shopmobility trustees, Midlands Association for Amputees, Shopmobility UK, Chesterfield Access Group, Chesterfield Royal Hospital and Links • All referred to the importance of the services particularly for people with mobility disabilities - isolation and independence were key points
Oct – Dec 21	Service User consultation	<p>48 service users completed the user survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 respondents used Shopmobility to hire scooters or wheelchairs for a day or half day. Almost half of these users hire scooters and wheelchairs less frequently than once a month • Across all the categories of hire, Shopmobility users use scooters and wheelchairs for a variety of purposes with the top three uses being shopping in Chesterfield Town Centre (29 users), seeing friends and family (19 users) and to help them get to appointments such as doctors and dentists (17 users) • A range of alternative provision is available, survey respondents identified barriers which prevent them from using alternatives. The top three reasons included only requiring hire for a short period (15 users), cost of hire of scooters or wheelchairs (13 users) and tied with 11 users each – cost of purchasing scooters or wheelchairs, unaware of alternatives and service not as good as Shopmobility • Shopmobility have not increased their prices for several years and prices are generally lower than in other areas. The survey asked respondents what impact it would have if Shopmobility had to increase prices to reflect rising costs, so for example increasing daily scooter hire from £6 per day to £7.50 per day, or wheelchair weekly hire from £15 per week to £17 per week – 84% of respondents said they would continue to use the service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many of the respondents commented about the need for Shopmobility to strengthen their advertising to increase awareness of the services offered and increase customer numbers

Section 4 – What is the impact?

8. Summary of anticipated impacts.			
	Positive impact	Negative impact	No disproportionate impact
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	√	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability and long term conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	√	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender and gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Marriage and civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Pregnant women and people on parental leave	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Religion and belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√

9. Details of anticipated positive impacts.

a)	<p>The positive impacts affect the residents of Chesterfield as a whole regarding the appropriate, effective, and sustainable use of Council funds linked to priorities and core service delivery. However this is not a disproportionate positive impact on any specific protected characteristic.</p>								
		<input type="checkbox"/> Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion

10. Details of anticipated <u>negative</u> impacts.		
a)	<p><i>Negative impact:</i></p>	<p>The Section 137 grant currently provides over a third of Shopmobility’s income. If the decision is taken to withdraw the grant Shopmobility is likely to need to make some adjustments to services, prices and start to apply for alternative sources of funding.</p> <p>The service is mainly used by older people and people with disabilities – mobility. There are currently 229 members, of which 44 are Chesterfield Borough residents.</p>

	<i>Mitigating action:</i>	Recommending to go beyond the contractual 3 month minimum notice period for withdrawing funding in order to facilitate a managed and steady withdrawal of funding, which will enable Shopmobility to continue to work with Links CVS and Chesterfield Borough Council officers to develop a self-funding / alternative funding plan and begin its implementation. There are a number of alternative providers within the market particularly for purchasing equipment and long and short term hire.					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Ethnicity

11. Have all negative impacts identified in the table above been mitigated against with appropriate action?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	N/A	<i>If no, please explain why:</i> While the impact will be minimised by the managed and steady withdrawal there may be some residential impact as Shopmobility still need to develop with the assistance of Links CVS and Chesterfield BC officers the self-funding/ alternative funding strategy. The outcome of funding bids is also unknown at this point.

Section 5 – Recommendations and monitoring

12. How has the EIA helped to shape the policy, project, service, function or strategy or affected the recommendation or decision?

The EIA helped to established the importance of a managed and steady withdrawal of the grant – rather than the contractual and statutory minimum. Also established the importance of support from Links CVS and CBC officers regarding funding and potential re-shaping of services.

13. How are you going to monitor the policy, project, service, function or strategy, how often and who will be responsible?

Officers will continue to offer advice and assistance during the 12 month transition period.

Section 6 – Knowledge management and publication

Please note the draft EIA should be reviewed by the appropriate Service Manager and the Policy Service **before** WBR, Lead Member, Cabinet, Council reports are produced.

Reviewed by Head of Service/Service Manager	Name:	Donna Reddish – Service Director Corporate
	Date:	09.12.21
Reviewed by Policy Service	Name:	Katy Marshall
	Date:	16.12.21
Final version of the EIA sent to Policy Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Decision information sent to Policy Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	