

Health and Equity Impact Assessment Tool

Equity and Diversity are fundamental to our overall vision of improving the quality of life of everyone who lives and works in the West Midlands and is embedded within our values and strategic aims and objectives.

This tool combines the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Health Equity assessment (HEAT) tools and has been developed to support our vision set out in the Equity and Inclusion scheme. It has been designed to facilitate the promotion of equity, diversity and inclusion throughout our work and encourage a holistic approach, helping us to realise the potential within our commitment to equitable outcomes.

Health equity is considered within the tool as health inequalities are unjust differences in health and wellbeing between different groups of people (communities) which are systematic and avoidable and by considering alongside equality in this evolution of the equality impact assessment, we will ensure that the proposed and existing policy can benefit a wide range of people and will not disbenefit anyone. Ultimately it enables us to take further strides to achieving our vision.

The tool guides the user with a series of questions and prompts to systematically assess implications for improving our work by promoting equity, diversity and inclusion, whilst at the same time supporting us to meet the legislative requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

It is intended for use in the development and/or renewal of policy, strategy and programmes and will help to mitigate against any potential negative impacts. It considers impact upon:

- The protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010 (Age, sex, race, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership)
- Socio-economic differences by individual socio-economic position
- Area variations by deprivation level
- Vulnerable and inclusion health groups

There are 4 stages within the tool

1. Prepare
2. Assess
3. Refine and Apply
4. Review

The Tool:

Directorate	Transport for West Midlands
People responsible for conducting and overlooking assessment	Mark Collins, Innovation Integration Lead
Name or title of policy, strategy, programme or project being assessed	Demand Responsive Transport – Coventry Co-mingling Trial
Date completed	Sept 2022
Date review due	
Person responsible for arranging review and monitoring	Mark Collins, Innovation Integration Lead

Prepare – agree the scope of work and assemble the information you need

About your work	
<p>Describe the main aims, objectives, activities, and outcomes of your work. Who is expected to benefit? How do you expect your work to reduce health and wider inequalities?</p>	<p>Trial</p> <p>A co-mingling trial has been proposed for two Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services in Coventry. Co-mingling refers to an approach which enables current demographics, who traditionally have had their needs met with a bespoke transport offering, grouped together under a singular service.</p> <p>Ring and Ride and West Midlands Bus on Demand (WMoD) have been selected to be combined as part of a live trial to gain insight into whether a long-term merge would be viable. This would involve the current Ring and Ride fleet, which is allocated to Coventry (8 vehicles in total), rebranding and adapting to become WMoD vehicles. This will increase WMoD capacity, bringing the total operational fleet to 13.</p> <p>It has been proposed that the trial will be conducted over a period of 10 months, whereby with the earliest start date being January 2023. The trial will be delivered across 3 phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1: Understanding co-mingling parameters – this will consist of maximum number of vehicles being utilised across the initial 3 months to understand efficiency • Phase 2: Fleet optimisation – Based on the learning from phase 1, fleet optimization will look at refining the number of vehicles, and their size, during the day. This will provide the trial with a more accurate estimate of running costs. • Phase 3: Planning ahead – Involves the evaluation of the live trial period to determine feasibility for expansion and next steps. <p>It's important to mention that there will be no changes to the shifts of the Ring and Ride fleet throughout the duration of the trial.</p> <p>Ring and Ride vs WMoD</p> <p>Ring and Ride is a DRT service which provides accessible, door-to-door, transport to anyone with a disability or mobility difficulty who struggles to use conventional public transport. WMoD is similar to Ring and Ride in the sense their vehicles are accessible, and it doesn't operate a specific route; relying on passengers to state where they want to be picked up and dropped off. Both modes are different to taxi hire whereby numerous passengers will also be picked up and dropped off on the way to a given destination. However, WMoD has not been developed to specifically meet the</p>

needs of disabled passengers, instead serving to support all demographics within the community.

WMoD and Ring and Ride operate on two different booking systems, the trial would involve Ring and Ride users having to be registered onto the WMoD Via system, in order to access WMoD. In addition, WMoD utilises a mobile app where customers can register, connect their bank account for payment and book their trip. However, there is the option to register and book a journey via telephone. Whilst the traditional WMoD service does not accept cash, for the duration of the trial, and to be inclusive of all passengers, cash will be accepted on board.

WMoD operates a distance pricing model, where the price passengers pay is dependent on the distance of their journey – the further the journey, the more they are charged. Concessions receive a 50% discount across all journeys with WMoD.

Ring and Ride on the other hand, operates different fares dependent on the day and time, these are not impacted by distance travelled but do need to be within the Ring and Ride boundary (which covers all of the West Midlands Metropolitan area). In addition to Coventry, WMoD also serves the areas of Kenilworth, Meriden, Leamington Spa, Warwick Parkway and Balsall Common.

Unlike Ring and Ride, which operates across 7 days, WMoD only operates Monday to Fridays. However, the merging of the two fleets for the purposes of the trial will enable WMoD to operate every day of the week.

Outcomes

It is expected that the trial will help support better environmental and health outcomes for the Coventry area. By encouraging residents to step away from using their cars and instead trialling an alternative approach to journeys, supporting a reduce in CO2 emissions and subsequently improving air quality. The standard bus model involves set routes whilst WMoD adapts it routes depending on the passengers and has the ability to pick up customers from their door or a convenient 'virtual bus stop' which is generated by the WMoD system. As a result, this can seem more attractive compared to traditional public transport.

There is the ambition for the trial to showcase the viability for DRT to serve as an effective replacement to bus usage, in the event of any commercial bus routes being withdrawn. This provides an opportunity to test

	<p>contingency measures should such decisions be taken in the future.</p> <p>It is hoped that, by merging Ring and Ride with WMoD, it will still meet the transport needs of Ring and Ride users whilst having the benefit of being cost effective, to help secure the longer-term delivery of a DRT service which fulfils this objective.</p> <p>As WMoD is already an established project, this Health and Equity Impact Assessment will predominantly focus on the proposal for Ring and Ride to be merged into WMoD and the impact this may have.</p>
<p>Does your work affect the public or employees directly or indirectly? In what ways?</p>	<p>The trial will have a direct impact on Coventry Ring and Ride users as well as members of the public who use WMoD.</p> <p>Ring and Ride in Coventry will cease to exist throughout the duration of the trial. Current users Ring and Ride users will instead have to use WMoD to accommodate their door-to-door journeys or seek alternative arrangements which may not be as financially viable or accessible – such as taxis.</p> <p>The merger will fundamentally change the deliverables of the Ring and Ride service. There will no longer be a mode of transport that is specifically tailored to meeting the needs of disabled residents and those who are most vulnerable. WMoD is open to anyone living with the Coventry and Warwickshire area, a drastically larger number of people compared to the targeted Ring and Ride model which only runs to serve those who are unable to use traditional public transport. There is undeniably a significant and direct impact on Ring and Ride users and, to a lesser degree, on existing DRT users.</p>
<p>Data and evidence</p>	
<p>What data, indicators and evidence are available on the equity, diversity and health equity issues in the key target groups? (Consider inequalities and discrimination in relation to the target groups. Consider national, regional and local data (e.g., census and local demographic data, national</p>	<p>Appendix A provides an in-depth breakdown of numerous equality and inclusion issues across the different protected characteristics, including from a socioeconomic perspective as well as an outline of the makeup of the West Midlands and Coventry population. Topics covered in Appendix A include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) findings- including Ring and Ride data • Transport inequalities • Deprivation

and regional reports, health profiles and local data such as JSNA, contract performance data and qualitative data from local research). Please use this section for a brief outline of the issues and include detailed data and information breakdown as Appendix A

- Digital inequalities
- Health inequalities, including mental health and physical activity

Some key points include:

- Across 2021 and 2022, Ring and Ride averaged 12,400 journeys per month¹
- Over 10% of these Ring and Ride journeys were completed by customers based in Coventry
- 30% of Coventry Ring and Ride journeys involve the use of a mobility device/ assistance, such as oxygen, scooters and tail lifts
- 11% of users have no alternative option to Ring and Ride, organisations who book on behalf of users state that alternative services are unsuitable due to the varied nature of disabilities their service users have.
- The majority of Ring and Ride trips are booked via telephone.
- The vast majority of Ring and Ride users are 80+ (the majority of which based on national stats are unlikely to have access to digital technologies or be digitally literate)
- Between January and July 2022, WMoD averaged 1699 journeys per month
- There is a fear amongst DRT non-users around sharing a vehicle with strangers

West Midlands

- The West Midlands has a higher-than-average percentage of residents with a disability and/or long term health conditions
- Deprivation influences health outcomes, increased deprivation correlates with poorer physical and mental health
- The region is one of the most inactive in the country. The following groups are more likely to be inactive – women, people from lower socio-economic groups, older adults, disabled people or people with long term conditions and people from minority ethnic communities
- Some demographics are more likely to experience deprivation than others, including disabled people, minority ethnic communities, care leavers and younger age groups.
- Deprivation also influences transport options. Those from more deprived backgrounds are less

¹ It is worth mentioning that this timeframe coincides with some Covid restrictions still being in place/ starting to ease which will have impacted on the patronage for Ring and Ride. Even though some restrictions will no longer have been in place, elderly and disabled people were still fearful of going out into society due to their significant vulnerabilities to Covid-19, as these demographics are the target Ring and Ride customers, this had a significant impact on uptake. Therefore, it is fair to say that on average, the Ring and Ride usage would be much higher.

	<p>likely to be able to afford a car and be more reliant on public transport. Key groups that are more dependent on public transport include: younger and older people, disabled people, minority ethnic communities, unemployed and people on low income.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower income households tend to spend a relatively high proportion of their income on commuting costs in comparison to higher income households. • There are significant digital inequalities within the West Midlands, with the region having the highest proportion of people who are offline across England. • Nationally, approximately 3% of the population do not have a bank account. 12% of this demographic are West Midlands residents. <p>The greater level of deprivation experienced by residents in comparison to other regions can have a confounding impact on transport access and usage as well as health implications and a lack of digital skills. There is a clear need for Ring and Ride to support the independence of those who can't use traditional public transport and are at risk of social exclusion.</p>
<p>Have you consulted interested parties? (including employees, community representatives or/and residents from the target groups?) Detail who will be affected by the policy, outcomes of consultation. If you haven't conducted consultation, is there need for consultation and who are you planning to consult?</p>	<p>The Transport for West Midlands Senior Leadership team have been informed of the proposal as well as provided their approval for the trial to take place.</p> <p>It has been agreed, that should the number of unmet rides exceed a 20% threshold, then capacity will be reviewed with additional fleets being added to meet demand.</p> <p>In-depth analysis of the project will be conducted as part of Phase 3.</p>
<p>Is further research needed? (Consider if there is need for consultations, working groups, surveys, data etc) If yes, how will it be undertaken and by when?</p>	<p>There is a need to consult with existing Ring and Ride users in Coventry to understand their views on the trial.</p> <p>Fundamental changes are being made to service provision that is specifically designed to overcome access barriers for disabled people and elderly customers. Consultation must take place before the trial formally begins. Continuous engagement is also needed during the trial to help determine future options</p> <p>Conversely, it's also recommended to gain the views and opinions of current WMoD users at trial stagel. For example, whilst there will be a higher number of vehicles there is also the potential for journey times to increase (it's likely that disabled passengers would prefer a door-</p>

	<p>to-door service which would add onto the journeys of other passengers).</p> <p>The trial itself will serve as a useful mechanism for engagement and data monitoring. However, it's necessary to understand, prior to the trial starting, whether Ring and Ride users would use the WMoD service in the first place. Or whether they would seek alternative methods of transport</p> <p>It's also crucial that monitoring occurs throughout the duration of the trial. Should any negative equality impact be noted, measures must be taken immediately to address them.</p>
<p>Which measures does, or could the programme or policy include to help promote equality of opportunity for and or foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic?</p>	<p>Accessibility inc. cost</p> <p><u>Positives</u> Based off an initial sample test, it was estimated that the rides of passengers who qualify for ENCTS (likely the majority of existing Ring and Ride users) are likely to be 38p cheaper compared to current Ring and Ride prices.</p> <p>Group bookings are most likely to be cheaper, given the £1 addon for up to 10 people, per paying customer. Within the current Ring and Ride customer-base, approximately 1 in 5 organisations, who book on behalf of users, make a group booking.</p> <p>Existing Ring and Ride customers will still have the option to call up to book a service as well as pay with cash throughout the duration of the trial. Furthermore, whilst customers will be encouraged to register for the Via system themselves, should customers find this difficult they have the ability to do this on the phone through Customer Services.</p> <p><u>Negatives and Mitigations</u></p> <p>Whilst the sample test does indicate that prices are likely to be cheaper for Ring and Ride customers, they are losing out on the fixed pricing that is currently offered.</p> <p>The £1 addon for up to 10 people may seem attractive to current group bookings for Ring and Ride but it is essential that the process of utilising this isn't made overly complex for users. This may detract them from being able to user the service</p> <p>A suitable mitigation for confusion around the distance pricing model would be to confirm the total cost of the trip to customers prior to their journey. This is particularly important for customers who will be paying by cash to</p>

ensure they have the correct amount. Exploration could be done to see whether this can be done on the phone when a customer calls to book or via an alert within the mobile app.

The demographics of Ring and Ride users consist of groups that are most likely to be digitally excluded. Should there be an emphasis placed on having to utilise online services to access WMoD, there is a risk Ring and Ride customers will find it difficult to adapt to such practices. Leading to the likelihood of them failing to use WMoD and, even more worryingly, leaving them vulnerable to becoming excluded from society.

Affordability has the potential to be a significant barrier to uptake, particularly amongst current Ring and Ride users - especially if they are not ENCTS eligible. Exploring whether discounts can still be applied to Ring and Ride customers who are not in receipt of a concessionary pass will ensure that they are not put at an unfair disadvantage and at risk of isolation.

In order to provide a service that is accessible to all customers, commitment needs to be given to the retention of accepting cash as a payment method. Only accepting cash throughout the duration of the trial does not provide an indication to cash-based customers as to whether they will be able to continue to use the service after this time frame. This is something that needs to be implemented in particular if WMoD and Ring and Ride are to be merged in the longer-term to avoid excluding more vulnerable customers.

Journeys inc. drivers and reliability

Positives

There are no changes being made to the existing Ring and Ride shifts, meaning there will be no impact on driver working hours and pay etc.

WM on Demand covers more areas, opening up more destinations than Ring and Ride, including Kenilworth, Meriden and Balsall Common. This will address the concern Ring and Ride customers have around cross-boundary travel.

There will be no changes to the current Ring and Ride fleet, but additional capacity will be provided through the existing WMoD fleet.

It has been agreed, that should the number of unmet rides exceed a 20% threshold, then capacity will be

reviewed with additional fleets being added to meet demand.

It is a requirement for all drivers to have appropriate training in terms of carrying disabled and vulnerable passengers. The specifics of this training are yet to be defined, which can serve as an opportunity to ensure the training is fit-for-purpose and robust.

Negatives and Mitigations

The current Ring and Ride concern around journey time and reliability may not be addressed by the trial. Even though there is a higher number of vehicles, there will also be an increase in users. Should the trial fail to serve as an improvement to Ring and Ride, it increases the likelihood of Ring and Ride users no longer accessing the WMoD service.

It has been identified that a negative output of the trial could be longer journey times for users. Long journey times and reliability are already significant concerns for Ring and Ride customers. An increase in customers can cause longer journey times which will have a negative impact on the journeys of regular users from both services. The impact is especially significant for users with no alternative transport means.

Whilst likely a minimal risk, there is potential for tensions to arise as a result which may be taken out on the Ring and Ride customers, given the fact they're most likely to request door-to-door journeys which will lead to longer routes being taken. Customers may react negatively to the increase in journey time and take this out on the disabled/elderly customers, subsequently resulting in unlawful discrimination.

It's imperative that WMoD drivers are trained to a high standard and that the training is reflective of the training of Ring and Ride drivers. Drivers must be aware of their responsibilities to maintain a duty of care to the customer. Training that isn't sufficient leaves customers at risk of injury and WMoD vulnerable to legal action should any incidents occur.

Furthermore, it's important to bear in mind that Ring and Ride customers will have gotten used to their regular drivers – to the point they have built rapport and a sense of trust. Given the significant changes that the trial will introduce, coupled with the likelihood of regular passengers being introduced to unfamiliar drivers, this may have an impact on the level of anxiety and apprehension felt by Ring and Ride customers.

It's important to ensure all Ring and Ride drivers are fully competent on the Via systems before the trial begins, particularly as they will remain allocated to their respective fleets. The Via system will provide useful data on the trial rollout, if the Ring and Ride portion of the trial doesn't collate data effectively, it could have an impact on the evaluation process and any subsequent activities. It's crucial to emphasise the importance of having a robust monitoring and evaluation process overall.

Those who are more vulnerable are more likely to have a poor perception of safety when it comes to public transport, which is one of the benefits customers have noted of using Ring and Ride. The trial will open up the Ring and Ride model to everyone. The removal of a targeted service in itself is going to have a severe impact on our most vulnerable customers. Customers will need to use WMoD in order to access a similar door-to-door service as Ring and Ride but without the security of knowing that all passengers will be understanding of their needs. Moreover, WMoD is a mode of transport that is open to all members of the public, bearing in mind that the fleet is significantly smaller to a typical commuter bus, customers will be in closer proximity to one another. These factors could aggravate safety concerns and worries amongst such individuals, which may result in them using alternative methods of transport rather than WMoD.

There is the potential for Ring and Ride customers to be refused a journey due to capacity issues (refusal rates are already higher than previously). Those who use Ring and Ride currently do so because they are unable to use traditional modes of public transport. In many cases, Ring and Ride serves as their only option of transport. The impact of any refused journeys will be significantly more severe compared to someone who doesn't rely on Ring and Ride, such as isolation from society which can result in negative physical and mental health impact.

It's important that Ring and Ride customers are not unfairly treated as a result of the merger. A potential way to mitigate any negative equality impact is to ensure that disabled passengers and/ or Ring and Ride passengers are prioritised. If Ring and Ride users' book in advance, they should be guaranteed a slot on a vehicle.

In order to mitigate as negative an impact as possible on Ring and Ride users, consideration should be given to whether a small number of fleets could be allocated at any given time to Ring and Ride customers.

By doing so, it may put a significant amount of Ring and Ride customers at ease, knowing that, in essence, Ring and Ride will continue as it is but under a different name.

As a result, it may increase the patronage of Ring and Ride users throughout the duration of the trial, subsequently having a positive impact on the trial outcomes.

Communication

Negatives and Mitigations

The communications that are used to promote WMoD must be fully accessible for Ring and Ride users. Failure to do so can result in passengers not fully understanding the service or how it works, which will leave them without a suitable method of transport to meet their needs, as Ring and Ride will be removed for the duration of the trial. This will put already vulnerable customers at greater risk of exclusion.

It's imperative that an effective communication campaign is conducted. To ensure that all current customers of Ring and Ride in Coventry are fully aware of what the trial will involve. Placing an emphasis on how even though WMoD is recommending usage of their app, that there is by no means a need to adhere to this.

It may be worth exploring whether a separate communications campaign is necessary, to be tailored to Ring and Ride customers. By doing so, it's likely to have a positive influence on WMoD patronage and thus the trial outcomes.

The predominant method of payment for WMoD is through card payment via the WMoD mobile app. It's important to not assume that all Ring and Ride customers will not want to utilise this. Therefore, it is important that guidance/ instructions on how to download and use the app/ input card information is provided and is accessible.

There is also a risk that, in the event the trial does not lead to further rollout, that once Ring and Ride is reinstated, customers may not return. This will be dependent on how effective any communications might be.

Continuation of Service

Positives

The current Ring and Ride provision is costly for the organisation, averaging 4x higher than the cost to deliver WMoD. The trial, if successful could potentially secure the delivery of a Ring and Ride-eqse service for the foreseeable future, due to the cost savings involved.

It's important to note that the current model of Ring and Ride doesn't meet the needs of all disabled people, even registered users have expressed a desire for the service to modernise and incorporate elements such as real time tracking and live booking, a gap which could be filled by the WMoD offer. This could increase the attraction of the service amongst disabled people – however this could also have an impact on demand which may lead to some capacity issues developing if not mitigated effectively.

With the financial implications that are still present from the pandemic, many bus operators are faced with the difficult decision to potentially reduce their services. DRT offers a mitigation to the negative impact service cuts can have on bus users, by helping to fulfil the demand for any journeys that would have been affected.

Whilst there is a short-term risk for a negative equality impact on Ring and Ride users during the trial, should the outcomes prove unsuccessful, Ring and Ride provision will be able to be reinstated quickly.

Environmental impact

Positives

Should the environmental ambition of the trial be successful, a longer-term benefit would be the positive impact WMoD would have on air quality within Coventry. This can help alleviate any illnesses which are aggravated/ caused by pollution such as respiratory illnesses.

Assess – examine the evidence and intelligence

Do you think that the policy in the way it is planned and delivered will have a negative, positive or no impact on any of the equality target groups (please detail in the table)

	Distribution of Inequalities Which populations face the biggest health and wider inequalities for your topic, according to the data and evidence above?	Causes of Inequalities What does the data and evidence tell you are the potential drivers for these inequalities?	Positive/Negative/Neutral Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive impact: where the impact on a particular group of people is more positive than for other groups • Negative impact: where the impact on a particular group of people is more negative than for other groups • Neutral impact: Neither a positive nor a negative impact on any group or groups of people, compared to others
Age	Older people and younger age groups	As per above and appendix	Positive & Negative
Socio Economic status or geographical deprivation	People from lower socio-economic backgrounds; people on lower salaries; NEET; unemployed people; people living in the most deprived areas	As per above and appendix	Positive & negative
Sex	Women are more likely to face transport inequalities	As per above and appendix	Neutral*
Disability	People with visible and hidden disabilities	As per above and appendix	Positive & negative
Race	People from ethnic minority backgrounds	As per above and appendix	Neutral*

	are more likely to face transport inequalities		
Religion/belief	N/A	As per above and appendix	Neutral
Sexual Orientation	N/A	As per above and appendix	Neutral*
Marriage and civil partnership	N/A	As per above and appendix	Neutral
Gender reassignment	N/A	As per above and appendix	Neutral*
Inclusion health and vulnerable groups (for example people experiencing homelessness, prison leavers, young people leaving care)	People experiencing homelessness/ insecure housing, prison leavers, care leavers	As per above and appendix	Neutral
	*Impact could be viewed as positive for these demographics from the overall WMoD perspective. As mentioned in Question 1, this Health and Equity Impact Assessment is looking at co-mingling from the lens of the Ring and Ride merge as opposed to WMoD overall.		
If adverse/negative impact is noted to any of the listed equality target groups, can it be justified i.e. on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for any other group/s?	<p>The most likely group to experience any adverse/ negative impact from the co-mingling trial is Ring and Ride customers, who are predominantly individuals with disabilities and long-term health conditions. Such impact cannot necessarily be justified on the basis of promoting equal opportunity for other groups.</p> <p>However, it is acknowledged that the co-mingling trial is a beneficial way to test an alternative DRT model which may have positive outcomes for all demographics, particularly if considerations highlighted within this assessment are taken on board.</p>		

Action plan: What specific action can your programme or policy take to maximise the potential for positive impacts and or to mitigate the negative impacts identified above				
Issues to be addressed	Actions required	Responsible Officer	Timescales	How would you measure impact/outcomes in practice?
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could you consider targeting action on populations who face the biggest inequalities? • Could you design the work with communities who face the biggest inequalities to maximise the chance of it working for them? 	MC	Prior to trial rollout/ Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ring and ride user feedback and uptake
Customer prioritisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore whether a percentage of the fleet can be allocated as Ring and Ride-style vehicles (e.g., designated to journeys of Ring and Ride customers but sticking to other confines of the trial) • Consider prioritising journeys of Ring and Ride passengers to ensure those who are most vulnerable are less likely to be refused a journey 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fleet allocation throughout duration of trial • Customer feedback dependent on outcome
Driver training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop robust WMoD driver training to ensure disabled customers are treated correctly; training to be on-par with Ring and Ride drivers 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driver and customer feedback
Fares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider extending ENCTS discount to non-ENCTS Ring and Ride passengers • Explore affordable fares for those who are most vulnerable e.g., those in receipt of benefits (e.g., through incentives trial) • Explore ways to incorporate advanced notice of fare cost e.g., so cash-based customers have the correct fare beforehand. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer feedback on price of fares • Whether any further discount schemes are implemented/ extension of current schemes 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate ways to embed cash-purchasing over the longer-term if the trial is successful 		Part of Phase 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer engagement to determine best solution • Solution determined
Evaluation and monitoring: How will you quantitatively or qualitatively monitor and evaluate the effect of your work on different population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular monitoring of usage and customer feedback, particularly from those who are Ring and Ride users. • Analysis of Via system throughout the trial as well as outcomes from Phases 1 and 2. • Monitoring of demand will be continuous, increasing fleet availability if/when needed. • Phase 3 will serve as an opportunity for in-depth evaluation. 			

<p>groups at risk of inequalities? What output or process measures could you consider?</p>	
<p>Review Date: Recommended between 6 and 12 months from initial completion</p>	<p>Prior to the beginning of the trial as well as consistently throughout its duration.</p> <p>Measuring the impact of considerations should be embedded into Phase 3,</p>

APPENDIX A

Regional demographics

This gives us an understanding of regional demographics and the key groups affected by the implementation of the trial based on geography

Key West Midlands MET area data (demographics as per 2011 Census)

Ethnicity: 34% BME (46.9% in Birmingham, the most ethnically diverse city in the region. Solihull is the least diverse with 14.2% being BME). Asian British (Indian and Pakistani) are the largest minority groups, with strong presence especially in Birmingham, Coventry, Sandwell and Wolverhampton. They are followed by Black British (Caribbean), White other and Black British (African) and Mixed (White and Black Caribbean). The above figures relate to the 2011 Census and local/regional population estimates show that the figures are higher with Birmingham being a “Black majority city”. There are distinct concentrations of minority ethnic communities within the metropolitan area.

Religion and Belief: 53.8% of the MET population are Christian, 20.3% have no religion, 12.2% are Muslim, 4.3% Sikh and 2.2% Hindu. These figures change depending on where you live – so in Coventry, 21.8% of the population are Muslim and in Sandwell 8.7% are Sikh.

Gender: In line with national figures, 49.2% are male and 50.8% are female.

Age: The West Midlands Metropolitan area has one of the highest proportions of population aged under 16 and a lower proportion of people aged over 65 compared with other regions. The mean age is 37.4 which compares to 39.4 in England and Wales. The only districts that slant older are Solihull and Dudley. Walsall has got a higher proportions of younger aged groups but it also has a higher proportion of people above retirement age. Birmingham specifically is described as the youngest city in Europe, with under 25s accounting for nearly 40% of the population. The younger population, with the proportion of people aged 0 to 19, is projected to drop slightly from 26.7% in 2012 to 25.8% in 2037. The West Midlands Metropolitan area also generally has a lower percentage of people aged 65+ with the exception of Solihull and Walsall that have higher proportions of people above retirement age than nationally. The number of people aged 85 or more will double between now and 2041.

Sexual orientation: 1.3% of the West Midlands population identified themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual. However, key organisations such as Stonewall estimate the figure to be higher at 5-7%.

Disability: The West Midlands Metropolitan area has a larger percentage of people in households with a limiting long-term illness (6% of households compared to 4.7% in England and Wales). It also has a slightly larger proportion of disabled people than England and Wales (19% versus 18% in England and Wales). More and more people are living with impairments or with or beyond serious illness.

Demographics of Coventry

Age: Coventry has a median age of 32, lower than the national average of 40. 22% of residents are children and young people under 18 years old, whilst 65% are of working-age (18-64).

Disability: 17.7% of the population in Coventry have reported that their day-to-day activities are limited due to a long-term health condition or disability. This figure is reflective of the national average.

Ethnicity: 33% of the Coventry population are from a minority ethnic background, an increase of 11% compared to 2001. Just under half of the school aged population in Coventry are from a minority ethnic background.

Sex: Within the Coventry, the gender split is closely on-par with the national average at 49.7% Male to 50.3% Female.

Socioeconomic: 14.4% of neighbourhoods in Coventry are amongst the 10% most deprived nationally. 23% of children in Coventry, up to the age of 15, live in relatively low income families, this is higher than the 19% nationally.

Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)

Previous surveys conducted by Transport for West Midlands have highlighted some findings when it comes to uptake of DRT:

- There is a fear around sharing a vehicle with strangers. DRT vehicles are predominantly mini-buses which have significantly less space than traditional buses
- The opportunity to talk to other passengers within shared transport isn't something that encourages people to use DRT.

Ring and Ride Usage and Customer Demographics (as per data collated from July 2021/2022)

A total of 148,474 journeys were made on Ring and Ride across this timeframe, averaging 12,373 journeys per month. It is worth mentioning that this timeframe coincides with some Covid restrictions still being in place/ starting to ease which will have impacted on the patronage for Ring and Ride. Even though some restrictions will no longer have been in place, elderly and disabled people were still fearful of going out into society due to their significant vulnerabilities to Covid-19, as these demographics are the target Ring and Ride customers, this had a significant impact on uptake. Therefore, it is fair to say that on average, the Ring and Ride usage would be much higher.

Coventry Ring and Ride Statistics

Over 10% of these total journeys were completed by customers based in Coventry.

Of these journeys, 30% involved the use of a mobility device/ assistance such as, a scooter, wheelchair, oxygen, crutches and tail lift.

Only 1/5 of the journeys completed in Coventry were by customers under the age of 65.

The age of customers who used Ring and Ride in Coventry, within this time frame, was between 17 and 94.

Ring and Ride Survey Findings

Transport for West Midlands conducted a survey on Ring and Ride, running from December 2021 to January 2022. This survey was open to both users and non-users of Ring and Ride (almost two thirds of respondents were registered Ring and Ride users). Some key findings include:

- 87% of respondents use Ring and Ride at least once a week or more
- The majority of trips are booked via telephone (86%)
- 28% of trips are booked online amongst users under 60
- The biggest benefits of Ring and Ride highlighted by users were that it makes them feel safe, allows them to access vital services and is truly accessible. 11% of respondents also declared that they had no alternative option to using Ring and Ride.
- Organisations felt that some alternative services to Ring and Ride were seen as unsuitable due to the varied nature of disabilities their service users had, with Community Transport and taxi group bookings being the only alternatives that could potentially help them in future.
- 1 in 5 of the organisations who completed the survey did group bookings, of approximately 10 people in a group.
- Key suggestions for improvement of the service were increased reliability, vehicles arriving on time as well as enhanced knowledge of drivers
- 22% of registered users declared that improvements to technology/live booking/ real time tracking would be an added benefit to Ring and Ride.

West Midlands Bus on Demand

WMoD had 11,895 rides in total from January to Jul 2022, averaging 1699 journeys per month.

Transport inequalities

In the West Midlands, transport poverty is widely dispersed across the region but is more concentrated in urban peripheral areas (Lucas et. al, 2019). Transport accessibility is a key issue across numerous demographics.

Car ownership, transport dependence and mobility options: The percentage of car ownership within the West Midlands Metropolitan area positively correlates with the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Levels of deprivation impact the likelihood of being able to purchase a car. People on the lowest income centiles are much less likely to own a car and some of the most deprived wards have under 50% household car ownership. Groups much more likely to be reliant on public transport are: Single parents (primarily women); young and older people; black and minority ethnic people (minority ethnic people twice more likely to live in a household with no car ownership); people on low incomes; part-time workers; unemployed people (3/4 of jobseekers do not own a car); disabled people (only 38% of people with mobility difficulties are main drivers or have household access to a vehicle). The majority of bus and foot travel are made by individuals from the lowest income groups whereas train, metro and bicycle trips are mainly made by those who fall within the highest income groups. A significant percentage of West Midlands residents rely on public transport, primarily buses, to get around. White British people are more likely to live in a household with

access to a car or van than any other ethnic group. Black people are more than twice as likely as white people to live in a household with no access to a car or van; there has been a marked drop in car ownership amongst young people. Even though car ownership can pose an advantage to many, 67% of car-owning households in the lower income groups report experiencing car related economic stress as running costs can be prohibitive. Car owners and main drivers in households are the least mobility constrained across all social groups. They make more trips over longer distance for all journey purposes giving them higher levels of access to activity, employment and other opportunities. Mobility and accessibility inequalities are highly correlated with social disadvantage. Lower income households travel much less and travel over much shorter distances than higher income household. They make nearly 20% fewer trips and travel 40% less distance than the average household (Lucas et. al, 2019). People who depend more on bus for work tend to be lower paid, live in more deprived areas and are more likely to turn down jobs due to transport issues, than those on higher incomes, who tend to use cars and trains more often

Location: Inequalities in the provision of transport services are strongly linked with where people live, and the associated differences in access to employment, healthcare, education, and local shops. People with more money have more options in both where to live and how to travel and good transport links drive up the cost of housing. The lack of private vehicles in low-income households, combined with limited public transport services in many peripheral social housing estates, considerably exacerbates the problem.

Commuting costs and transport affordability: Lower income households tend to spend a relatively high proportion of their income on commuting costs (25% compared to 13% for higher income households). Transport costs can even exceed wages for some on very low incomes, after tax and benefit withdrawal. Public transport costs has been reported to be the biggest issue faced by young people when accessing employment, education or training. Research has shown that there is a marked relationship between job accessibility by bus and employment outcomes. Issues with transport have been linked to low participation in post-16 education and college dropouts – which mostly impacts low income households. One consequence of having no access to a car and poor transport links is an increased reliance on taxis, which tend to be more expensive per mile than other options. The poorest households take more taxi journeys than other income groups. Similarly, people relying on cash to buy daily tickets as and when required and not affording weekly/month/annual passes end up spending more on an annual basis in comparison to those who are more financially secure and can invest in a travel pass. A number of groups are especially affected as they are more likely to live in more deprived areas on lower incomes or be unemployed (Single parents, young and older people, black and minority ethnic, part-time workers, disabled people).

Network accessibility: Disabled people are more reliant on public transport in comparison to other groups, yet 1 in 5 disabled people within the West Midlands have reported having difficulty accessing the public transport network. Barriers such as a lack of integration between different modes of transport, inaccessible railway stations, poor staff and passenger attitudes, safety concerns and inadequate, inaccessible information provision contribute to difficulties for disabled people when it comes to using public transport.

Perceptions of safety: Perceptions of safety is a key barrier when it comes to accessing public transport. Young, minority ethnic people, LGBTQ+, disabled people and women are more likely to feel unsafe using public transport. Young people in particular feel anxiety around public transport safety. LGBTQ+ groups and women feel vulnerable and fearful of crime when waiting at stations, shelters and interchanges. Within the West Midlands, disabled and young people are more likely to be concerned by the behaviour of other passengers, such as rowdiness, abusive behaviour, smoking and the consumption of alcohol.

Digital inequalities

Digital skills are typically lower for those who are from deprived backgrounds. As society shifts more towards online systems and phasing out face-to-face interaction, those who do not possess sufficient skills or knowledge will struggle to adapt. As a result of this, the inequality gap will widen, with these individuals becoming more isolated. Just under 60% of individuals from lower income groups do not have access to the internet whereas 99% of individuals within higher income groups do.

3% of the population within the West Midlands do not have a bank account. These individuals rely solely on cash as a means of purchasing goods and accessing services, such as public transport. Interestingly, even though over 90% of adults own a debit card, the percentage of those who utilise online transactions is much less. Nationally, 7.5% of adults have never used the internet and within the West Midlands Metropolitan area, 13% of residents have never sent an online message or email.

95% of non-disabled adults were listed as recent internet users whereas this was only 78% for disabled adults. Contrastingly, this is not consistent with the internet usage of young disabled adults in the 16 to 24 demographic; 98% of disabled young adults were listed as recently using the internet which is close to the 99% of non-disabled young adults. This suggests that disabled people from older age groups are more disadvantaged when it comes to digital inequalities. Moreover, this is applicable to the overall older demographic, regardless of disability. Almost half of people aged 75 and over are not recent internet users.

Nationally:

- 4.1 million adults living in social housing are offline
- 5.9 million adults have never used the internet
- 20% of disabled adults have never used the internet
- Adults aged 16 to 24 have the highest rates of internet use
- 67% of those not in paid work or full/part time education said they had never paid for public transport tickets online (compared to 52% in full time work; 53% in part time work and 60% in education).

Health Inequalities

- The life span of people in the most deprived areas are 10 years shorter than well-off households.
- Nearly a quarter of adults are experiencing a mental health problem but the risks of poor mental health are not uniformly distributed. They are influenced by social, economic and physical environmental factors and social inequalities.
- 25% of children in the WMCA area are obese by Year 6.
- Women living in poorer households are three times as likely as men living in the most well off households to be diagnosed with a common mental health problem.
- Mental health disorders for children are high (within the 20% for England).
- People with an increased risk of developing mental health problems are : looked after children and young people leaving care; homeless people and people living in poor quality housing; unemployed people; people from BME backgrounds; lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people; people with disabilities; carers; people experiencing multiple disadvantage.
- Black/ Black British men are five times more likely to be diagnosed and admitted to hospital for schizophrenia; have disadvantageous pathways into mental healthcare; higher than expected rates of detention under the Mental Health Act (MHA); are more likely to be prescribed medication; and have difficulties accessing services and poorer outcomes when they do. Black Caribbean young men are also twice as likely to die as a result of suicide as White psychiatric in-patients

- BME groups are more likely to report ill health and experience ill health earlier than white British people.
- Disability: Disabled people are more likely to experience health inequalities and major health conditions, and are likely to die younger than other people. Disabled adults are more likely to report poor mental health and wellbeing than non-disabled adults. Disabled people are more likely to be inactive because of their impairment or medical condition and more likely to develop secondary conditions such as diabetes, mental health conditions and metabolic dysfunction as a result of sedentary behaviour. 49% of disabled adults in the West Midlands are inactive