

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: the initial impact assessment

1. Process and guidance

The purpose of an EqIA is to make sure that the council is meeting the needs of all our residents by ensuring we consider how different groups of people may be affected by or experience a proposal in different ways. EqIAs help us to meet our [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) and where applicable the [Armed Forces Duty](#)

The council has a two stage EqIA process:

- Stage 1 - the initial impact assessment
- Stage 2 - the full impact assessment.

This form is for use at Stage 1 of the process. This must be completed when undertaking a project, policy change, or service change. It can form part of a business case for change and must be completed and attached to a Project Initiation Document. The findings of the initial impact assessment will determine whether a full impact assessment is needed.

Guidance and tools for council officers can be accessed on the council's Tackling Inequality Together intranet pages.

Date started:	9/9/2023	
Completed by:	Emily Higson	
Service:	Insight, Strategy & Inclusion	
Project or policy EqIA relates to:	Interim Council Plan 2024-25	
Date EqIA discussed at service team meeting:		
Conclusion (is a full assessment needed?):	No	

Signed off by (AD):		
Sign off date:		

2. Summary of the policy, project, or service

This section should be used to summarise the project, policy, or service change (the proposal).

What is the purpose of the proposal, what are the aims and expected outcomes, and how does it relate to service plans and the corporate plan?

The Council Plan forms part of the council’s strategic framework and sets out the priorities that the council has set in order to achieve the community vision. It forms part of the golden thread that enables service planning and strategy development, and ultimately leads to team and individual work plans.

The current Council Plan was published in 2020 and was refreshed in February 2022. It is aligned to the 2020 vision, and it is due to end in March 2024. Normally, a new Council Plan would be developed to start in April 2024.

However, significant work is underway with partners and communities to co-produce a new Community Vision for the Borough that will set the direction of travel for many years to come. The new community vision is expected to be launched in July 2024.

The new council plan must be developed after this, so that it can be aligned to the outcomes in the vision.

Therefore, an extension to the current plan for 2024-25 is needed to provide direction and continuity for staff, members and residents.

How will the proposal be delivered, what governance arrangements are in place and who are the key internal stakeholders?

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The Interim Council Plan will be published alongside a one-year SMART delivery plan. CLT are accountable for the delivery of the plan and progress will be reported in the Annual report 2025.

Who will be affected by the proposal? Think about who it is aimed at and who will deliver it.

All staff working for the council contribute to the delivery of the council plan. All residents and businesses in the borough receive a service from the council on some level.

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3. Data & Protected Characteristics

This section should be used to set out what data you have gathered to support the initial impact assessment.

The table below sets out the equality groups that need to be considered in the impact assessment. These comprise the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 and other priority areas defined by the council.

Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy/Maternity
Religious belief	Race	Sex	Sexual Orientation	Socio-economic disadvantage

The Armed Forces Act 2021 also requires consideration of the [impact on Armed Forces Communities](#) when exercising certain housing, education or healthcare functions (excluding social care). Further guidance can be found [here](#).

What data and information will be used to help assess the impact of the proposal on different groups of people? A list of useful resources is available for officers on the Council’s Tackling Inequality Together intranet pages.

A series of borough profiles have been developed by the council’s insight team. These help us to understand the borough and its residents through a number of different lenses. Ultimately this data will help the council to prioritise its services to meet the needs of the borough. We do know from the data that the demographics of Wokingham Borough have changed significantly between 2011 and 2021, with 15% growth in overall population and an increase in non-white British residents. This changing picture will be monitored over the lifetime of the council plan. The delivery of the plan will be monitored through the corporate performance reporting cycle and the annual report.

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4. Assessing & Scoring Impact

This section should be used to assess the likely impact on each equality group, consider how significant any impacts could be and explain how the data gathered supports the conclusions made.

Scoring impact for equality groups	
Positive impact	The proposal promotes equality of opportunity by meeting needs or addressing existing barriers to participation and/or promotes good community relations
Neutral or no impact	The proposal has no impact or no disproportionate impact.
Low negative	The proposal is likely to negatively impact a small number of people, be of short duration and can easily be resolved.
High negative	The proposal is likely to have a significant negative impact on many people or a severe impact on a smaller number of people.

Referring to the Scoring table above, please give an impact score for each group, explain what the likely impact will be, and briefly set out how the data supports this conclusion.

Equality group	Impact score	Impact and supporting data
Age	Positive impact	The aim of the council plan is to support the vision of Wokingham being “a great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business” and the overall outcome should have a positive impact on all protected characteristics. Individual programmes of work within the delivery of the council plan will need their own EqIA to determine impacts on protected characteristics.
Disability	Positive impact	As above
Gender reassignment	Positive impact	As above
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Positive impact	As above
Pregnancy/Maternity	Positive impact	As above
Religious belief	Positive impact	As above
Race	Positive impact	As above
Sex	Positive impact	As above
Sexual Orientation	Positive impact	As above
Socio-economic disadvantage	Positive impact	As above
Armed Forces Communities	Positive impact	As above

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5. Conclusion and next steps.

Based on your findings from your initial impact assessment, you must complete a full impact assessment if you have identified any groups as having a low or high negative impact.

If no impact, or a positive impact has been identified, you do not need to complete a full assessment. However, you must include reference to the initial assessment in any associated reports, and it must receive formal approval from the Assistant Director responsible for the project, policy, or service change.