

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: Initial impact assessment

If an officer is undertaking a project, policy change or service change, then an initial impact assessment must be completed and attached alongside the Project initiation document.

EqIA Titular information:

Date:	13/01/2020
Service:	Place Commissioning
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Climate Emergency Action Plan initial Report
Completed by:	Rhian Hayes
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	No
Signed off by:	Nigel Bailey
Sign off date:	13/01/2020

1. Policy, Project or service information:

This section should be used to identify the main purpose of the project, policy or service change, the method of delivery, including who key stakeholders are, main beneficiaries and any associated aims.

What is the purpose of the project, policy change or service change , its expected outcomes and how does it relate to your services corporate plan:

The purpose of the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) is to set out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change. This is a new priority for the council from which everyone should benefit

The Climate Action Plan comprises:

- An assessment of the carbon footprint for Wokingham Borough. This is based on government data and reported two years in arrears, Wokingham Borough's carbon footprint is **580.9 ktCO₂e** (based on 2017 data). The assessment for the borough identifies the key priorities to

be address to become net zero carbon. These include carbon dioxide emissions from transport (31.4%); industrial and commercial (26.6%), and the domestic (43%).

- Challenges the Borough faces to become net-zero carbon include
- Key priority areas to focus on for reducing carbon dioxide emissions to net zero by 2030
 1. Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Transport
 2. Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Domestic and Business Property - Green Bank Project
 3. Generate more Renewable Energy in the Borough
 4. Create a Local Plan that Specifies Net Zero Construction and Infrastructure
 5. Increase the Levels of Carbon Sequestration the Borough Through Greening the Environment
 6. Engage with Young People and Support Sustainable Schools
 7. Reduce Waste Sent to Landfill
 8. Encouraging Behaviour Change
- An annual Climate Emergency Progress report will be developed and brought to council for approval in July 2020 and annually thereafter. This report will have a fully costed up action plan with carbon saving quotas against individual projects. The report will summarise the boroughs achievements and demonstrate the benefits of becoming net zero carbon.
- The Paris Agreement (2015) set out a framework to limit greenhouse gas emissions to levels that would prevent global temperatures from increasing to more than 2°C above the temperature benchmark set before the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. In autumn 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a report, which advised that global warming must be limited to 1.5°C as opposed to the previous target of 2°C to avoid the devastating impacts of climate change. As the climate has already warmed by 1°C since the industrial revolution benchmark. The report warned that there are now only 12 years (to 2013) left within which to take the actions required to avert a crisis, rather than the 32 previously thought (to 2050).
In response to the claims made by the IPCC, in the autumn of 2018 councils across the world started declaring a climate emergency. Wokingham Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency on 18th July 2019.

Outline how you are delivering your project, policy change or service change. What governance arrangements are in place, which internal stakeholders (Service managers, Assistant Directors, Members ect) have/will be consulted and informed about the project or changes:

The Wokingham Borough Council Economic Prosperity and Place Team will lead on the implementation and monitoring of the CEAP.

A Climate Emergency Action Plan to help achieve this new council priority of becoming net zero carbon by 2030. The plan will help us understand the scope of the carbon reduction required to reach our target, set initial budgets, set a carbon footprint and explore some of the actions requires to become a Net-Zero carbon borough by 2030

The **Climate Emergency Working Group**, made up of a cross party group of members, has been established to investigate and propose further recommendations to help achieve a net zero carbon Borough. The Working Group will undertake its role by:

- i. Reviewing, monitoring and contributing to the delivery of the actions set out in the Wokingham Borough Council Climate Emergency Action Plan
- ii. Providing a high level steer on policy direction in relation to carbon reduction
- iii. Reviewing the delivery and performance of key carbon reduction projects by the council
- iv. Reviewing and monitoring progress toward the council's ambition to achieve net zero carbon for Wokingham Borough by 2030 against the council's baseline carbon footprint.
- v. Liaise with and assist the Town and Parish Councils in implementing measures locally.

A **Climate Emergency Advisory Group** made up of representatives from industry, academia and charities. This group will meet quarterly to explore what new ideas and cutting edge technology can bring to reducing carbon dioxide emissions in the borough.

A **Climate Emergency Investment Board** will be established to assess each action in the CEAP in terms of carbon saved, income generated and costs to decide which actions will be invested in by the council.

The **Climate Emergency Officers Group** meets monthly and is attended by officers from across all of the departments in the council. The officers group delivers the activities set out in the CEAP.

We will set up working subgroups to work on specific areas to support the delivery of the action plan.

An annual Climate Emergency Progress report will be developed and brought to council for approval in July 2020 and annually in July thereafter. This report will have a fully costed up action plan with carbon saving quotas against individual projects. The report will summarise the boroughs achievements and demonstrate the benefits of becoming net zero carbon.

The Climate Emergency Action Plan can be called in for overview of scrutiny committees.

Outline who are the main beneficiaries of the Project, policy change or service change?

The main beneficiaries of the project are all of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough.

Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.

Outline any associated aims attached to the project, policy change or service change:

The Council's Key Priorities for Reducing Carbon Dioxide Emissions to Net Zero by 2030

The analysis above has helped the council to identify eight key priority areas (below) to focus on for reducing carbon dioxide emissions. The action plan, which has been populated with ideas from local residents, Town and Parish councils, council officers, and local businesses, is not exclusively limited to these areas.

1. Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Transport

The council will seek to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from transport by using technology to help improve traffic flows, reducing congestion by optimising the use of the existing road network and increasing the number of EV charging points across the borough. The council aims to encourage residents to take up more sustainable transport options such as walking, cycling, and bus and train travel.

2. Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Domestic and Business Property - Green Bank Project

There are around 72,000 dwellings in the Borough, of which an estimated 85% use fossil-fuel based natural gas. The council will set up the Green Bank Project to help residents and businesses pay for the cost of converting from natural gas to other low carbon forms of energy. The Green Bank will help install energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy technology into to homes and businesses across the borough.

The council will implement the necessary measures to improve the current energy usage of its own corporate properties and aims to become net zero carbon by 2030.

3. Generate more Renewable Energy in the Borough

The council plans to develop five largescale solar PV farms throughout the Borough over the next five years. This will not only increase the production of renewable energy, but has the potential to generate an income, which will then be reinvested into delivering other carbon reduction projects.

4. Create a Local Plan that Specifies Net Zero Construction and Infrastructure

All major residential and commercial developments will be expected to deliver high sustainable construction standards. Policies to enable this will be embedded in the upcoming Local Plan Update (LPU). Major developments will embrace innovative sustainable design solutions for energy efficiency and low carbon energy generation and use.

5. Increase the Levels of Carbon Sequestration the Borough Through Greening the Environment

The council will plant 250,000 new trees over the next five years. As well as increasing the capacity for carbon offsetting, afforestation will allow for a biodiversity net gain, an approach to development that increases levels of biodiversity at a greater rate.

6. Engage with Young People and Support Sustainable Schools

The council will launch a sustainable schools programme. The programme aims to promote behavioural change amongst young people by engaging with schools to work with children to encourage the adoption of new 'climate-friendly' behaviours that will influence their families and communities.

7. Reduce Waste Sent to Landfill

The council aims to achieve zero waste to landfill and 90% recycling by 2030. The council will reach the 2020 target to reach 60% recycling of waste produced in the borough. This step-change has been achieved through encouraging people in the borough to change their behaviour. An example is the introduction of food waste collection which has been a great success borough-wide. There remains great scope for future improvement with opportunities available regarding glass recycling and increasing the range of plastics that can be recycled.

8. Encouraging Behaviour Change

As a community leader, the council will set an example and set high standards in becoming net zero carbon. This includes its own estate but also its policies, service delivery and investment decisions. The Council will communicate and engage with all of its residents, businesses, schools, Town and Parish Councils, charities, the University of Reading, Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership, the Greater South East Energy Hub and other local authorities to work together to initiate education programmes and encourage behaviour change

2. Protected characteristics:

There are 9 protected characteristics as defined by the legislation:

- Race
- Gender
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Age
- Religious belief
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership:

To find out more about the protected groups, please consult the EQIA guidance.

3. Initial Impact review:

In the table below, please indicate whether your project, Policy change or service change will have a positive or negative impact on one of the protected characteristics. To assess the level of impact, please assign each group a Positive, No, Low or High impact score:

For information on how to define No, low or high impact, please consult the EQIA guidance document.

If your project is to have a positive impact on one of the protected groups, please outline this in the table below.

For details on what constitutes a positive impact, please consult the EQIA guidance.

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Race:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.

Gender:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.
Disabilities:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.
Age:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.
Sexual orientation:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.
Religion/belief:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.
Gender re-assignment:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate

		Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.
Pregnancy and Maternity:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.
Marriage and civil partnership:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.

Based on your findings from your initial impact assessment, you must complete a full impact assessment for any groups you have identified as having a low of 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 report on this initial assessment and it must receive formal approval from the Assistant Director responsible for the project, policy or service change.

Initial impact assessment approved by....

Nigel Bailey: Interim Assistant Director Housing & Place Commissioning

Date: 13th January 2020