

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:	02 February 2020
Service:	Strategy and Commissioning (Place)
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan
Completed by:	James McCabe
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	No
Signed off by:	Nigel Bailey
Sign off date:	05/02/20

17

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:

Arborfield & Newland and Barkham Parish Councils have produced a Neighbourhood Plan to help shape how development is managed in their area. The Plan contains a number of policies on housing; the natural and historic environment; community facilities; business and commercial development; open space; transport; and flooding. The Plan does not include any site allocations.

This report seeks approval to 'make' (bring into legal force) the Plan. This is required by the Regulations governing the production of Neighbourhood Plans.

A referendum was undertaken on 6 February 2020, through which 94% of voters were in favour of Wokingham Borough Council using the plan for determining planning applications. The council has a legal duty to make a plan following a referendum where greater than 50% have voted in favour

of it. Therefore, the recommendation of the report to make the plan is a decision is required by the Regulations governing the neighbourhood plan process. There are no alternative options.

Once made, the Plan will form part of the statutory development plan alongside the council Local Plans and other made Neighbourhood Plans. The Plan will thereby carry significant weight in the determination of planning applications and appeals in or affecting Arborfield & Newland and Barkham Parishes.

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 etc.) have/will be consulted and informed about the project or changes:

The consultation framework for the preparation of the Plan has been undertaken in accordance with the Regulations governing Neighbourhood Plans and the council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement for planning consultations. This involved sending emails/letters to a number of individuals, organisations, councillors, and internal officers. Advertising and further information took place on the council's website and publicised through social media. Publicity was also undertaken by the Parish Councils.

Stakeholders include all Directors have been engaged through the Corporate Leadership Team, and Lead Specialists from Strategy and Commissioning and Locality and Customer Services involved in advising Arborfield and Barkham Parish Councils throughout the Plans preparation.

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

The Plan has been produced by Arborfield & Newland and Barkham Parish Councils, with the input of their communities. With the purpose of neighbourhood planning being allowing communities to help shape how development is managed in their area, the main beneficiaries are residents and local businesses within Arborfield and Barkham Parishes.

The Plan, once made, will be used by Wokingham Borough Council alongside Local Plans to help determine the suitability of planning applications within the area, and to help defend any appeals against the refusal to grant permission.

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

The purpose of neighbourhood plan are to allow communities to help shape how development is managed in their area.

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:	None	Neutral impact - Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Gender:	None	Neutral impact - Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Disabilities:	None	Neutral impact - Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged. <i>The EqIA supporting earlier stages of the consultation identified that as the preparation of the Plan was partly reliant on map-based information, this may disadvantage people with visual impairments. Arrangements for the referendum enabled fair access for people with visual and other disabilities.</i>
Age:	None	Neutral impact - Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Sexual orientation:	None	Neutral impact - Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Religion/belief:	None	Neutral impact - Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Gender re-assignment:	None	Neutral impact - Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.

Pregnancy and Maternity:	None	Neutral impact - Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Marriage and civil partnership:	None	Neutral impact - Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.

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 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 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

Date: 05/02/2020

This page is intentionally left blank