

**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:	31.1.2020
Service:	Adult Social Care
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Voluntary Sector Strategy 2020-2025
Completed by:	Lesley Buckland
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	The Voluntary Sector strategy has been considered at Wokingham's ASCLT.
Signed off by:	Wesley Hedger
Sign off date:	

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**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:

Wokingham is a thriving and diverse borough. The population and economy continues to grow and the needs of residents are changing which impacts on the services we provide. Our ambition is for Wokingham Borough to be one of the best boroughs for adults and carers in need of support to live, where they feel safe, included and a key part of our community.

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) has a strong commitment to promoting equality, tackling disadvantage and improving the life chances of our residents, especially those who are the most vulnerable. Our Corporate Plan commits to safeguard the most vulnerable residents and ensure that everyone has an equal chance of benefitting from the opportunities that living and working in Wokingham Borough have to offer.

The Corporate Plan (draft) sets out the Council's promises to residents, business and partners across a number of priority themes. Those that impact on the VCS are:

- Promote a strong and vibrant voluntary sector that enable children, young people and vulnerable adults to be supported as early as possible
- To prevent, reduce and delay the need for formal care and support
- Create resilient communities by empowering all of our people through education, art, culture, leisure and wellbeing opportunities.

The VCS strategy sets out the Council's strategic vision for the VCS that will help promote health and well-being and enable people with care needs to live independently and reduce the need for long term care. It sets out how we want to deliver services, and the role of the VCS to improve the quality of life of the borough's communities. It is the start of defining how we will work alongside the VCS to deliver effective early intervention services that reduce the need for long term care and enable people to live more independent fulfilling lives.

This strategy articulates the Council's priorities and sets clear expectations as to the outcomes the Council wishes to achieve through its relationship and funding to VCS organisations.

Our vision is to have an independent, sustainable and diverse voluntary and community sector, working with the community, Council, and partners to meet the needs of local people

We hope to achieve this vision through the following priorities that are detailed within the VCS strategy:

- Prevent, reduce and delay the need for formal care and support
- Work in partnership and build the capacity of the VCS
- Commission services in line with our strategic priorities that deliver quality and value for money

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:

This strategy has been coproduced with Involve, this ensured that the sector had a clear voice and also provided local context to the Council. The consultation took place over five weeks and 250 local charities and organisations (who have adults as their service users) were contacted and informed. All were offered various methods to contribute and a survey was posted on the WBC website for both providers and users of their services. In addition workshops were held with various key stakeholders and funded organisations. We met with all internal stakeholders and representatives of partner statutory organisations including the CCG and NHS providers. In total over 60 hours of consultation meetings were held

with 18 organisations seen in person. We received input from a further 14 organisations and 50 surveys were completed on our website. This has therefore been a genuinely co-produced strategy and this spirit of collaborative working is one that we will continue.

Internally we have consulted with:

- ASC Leadership Teams which includes the Director of Adult Services and AD's
- Transitions Team
- Optalis
- Strategy & Commissioning
- Community Engagement

The Council will further develop an action plan to take the strategy forward. This action plan will be monitored and governed by the Adult Social Care leadership Team.

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

The Council has taken a traditional approach to supporting the VCS in the way it has grant funded services to date. This strategy looks at ways to strengthen our relationship with the VCS and support communities in a way that is flexible, responsive and meets local needs whilst delivering high quality and demonstrating value for money. As budgetary pressures increase, the need to target investment in key priority areas is essential. We need to find new, innovative and efficient ways to make best use of the resources we and our partners have available. This includes providing support to the VCS in a range of practical ways, as well as through a commissioning approach that has a clear funding framework and specified outcomes. There will be considerable change in the way we work in the future and we will support the VCS throughout this process.

The key beneficiaries will be the VCS sector, adults and carers in need of support, whether they are older people, carers, disabled people, the homeless, refugees and asylum seekers, people with learning disabilities, people who need housing related support, victims of crime or those living on low incomes.

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

- To maximise referrals to the WCD and ensure organisations list and update information
- To improve information and awareness of all VCS and statutory organisations including working together better
- To asset map the local community groups and make sure that people are aware

- To adopt a corporate approach to social isolation including technology, contracts infrastructure and new housing developments take into account
- To support the implementation of the Wokingham Carers Action plan
- To align commissioning of carers service to the wider VCS plan
- To ensure that a commitment to carers is in all relevant VCS contracts
- To secure a commitment to emotional and mental wellbeing as part of future commissioning and procurement processes
- To develop mental health awareness and prevention training in the VCS
- To involve the VCS in the development of the Recovery College
- To map all current transport services and review any opportunity to be used better
- To initiate a pilot project looking at borough wide transport network
- To explore a single streamlined process for all WBC funding to the VCS based on corporate priorities
- To identify outcomes to be used in a future 'bidding programme' for the procurement and contracting of future services
- To provide multiyear funding to assist business planning for VCS

## 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.*

<b>Protected characteristics</b>	<b>Impact score</b>	<b>Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:</b>
Race:	No	
Gender:	No	
Disabilities:	No	
Age:	No	
Sexual orientation:	No	
Religion/belief:	No	
Gender re-assignment:	No	
Pregnancy and Maternity:	No	
Marriage and civil partnership:	No	

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 Wesley Hedger

Date: