

**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:	Carers
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Wokingham Borough Council's Carers Strategy 2020-2025
Completed by:	Lesley Buckland
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	The Carers strategy has been considered at Wokingham's ASCLT and by Children's Services and shared for final comment with organisations that support carers.
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 supports almost 600 adult carers and over 200 young carers and the council predicts the number of people it supports will increase over the next 5 years. We have developed our carers strategy to explain how we will meet the needs of carers and young carers in Wokingham to 2025.

The strategy will support the council in meeting its statutory obligations under the Care Act 2014 and Children and Families Act 2014. These are to ensure carers and young carers have the support they need.

Adult carers will have:

- Support to look after their own health and well being.
- Receive services which will support them in their caring role to prevent , reduce or delay the need for other care and support for the person they care for
- Have a range of support and resources to enable them to have a life outside of caring
- Get the information and advice that they need relating to care. This includes breaks from caring and should be tailored to an individual following assessment
- Carers have a right to an assessment and where eligible support to meet their needs

Under the Children and Families Act 2014, local authorities must provide young carers with:

- An assessment whether they are currently caring or intend to care. Assessments must consider the impact of caring in relation to their education, employment, well being, personal development, physical, mental and emotional health. Their views must be taken into account about what they want to happen
- A transition assessment before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday

This strategy will drive our plans that will support making Wokingham to be one of the best boroughs for carers and young carers in need of support to live, where they feel safe, included and a key part of our community

The strategy is aligned to our Adult Social Care Strategy and Voluntary Sector Strategy which will form part of the borough plan:

- To deliver more efficient and effective services for vulnerable groups
- To prevent, reduce and delay the need for formal support
- To keep people safe

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:

In producing this strategy we consulted with carers and young carers via an on line survey, postal survey and drop in sessions both in the day and the evening. Our on line survey was sent to all carers registered with Wokingham Borough Council and also disseminated via carers newsletters from various carer organisations. We had a 35% response rate to our survey.

We have held workshops with various carers groups, the carers forum and the carers strategic group which includes providers from many organisations as well as internal staff within Wokingham Borough Council.

Internally we have consulted with:

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

The Council will further develop an action plan to take the strategy forward through the Carers Strategic Group. This action plan will be monitored and governed by the Adult Social Care leadership Team, and will also report into the Children Leadership Team.

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

This strategy will benefit carers and young carers. It also describes WBC's ambition for carers and young carers and what we will prioritise over the next 5 years:

- Identifying, recognising and engaging carers including seldom heard carers e.g. military, travellers, LGBT, young carers, working carers, BAMER, mental health, substance abuse
- Supporting Young Carers (Young adult carers)
- Enabling carers to have a life outside of caring (recreation, health & well-being, learning & education)

- Working carers – empowering working age carers to remain or gain employment by ensuring they have access to resources that support them to care

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

- To develop a local offer for carers so that they are better informed on what support they have access to.
- To improve the uptake of carers engaging in activities outside of their caring role enabling carers opportunities for leisure activities and time away from their caring responsibilities to enhance their sense of well-being and reducing social isolation.
- To work collaboratively with partners to actively promote carers advice, support and information services so that carers can make informed choices.
- To support carers in developing strategies to enable them to feel able to take a break, or to have time for themselves, helping them to continue to care.
- To create opportunities for working carers to access support, advice, and information and training in a variety of ways that fit in with their lifestyle, supporting them to care whilst remaining in employment.
- To develop systems and processes for engaging with a broader spectrum of carers within our communities in order to enable equitable access to support
- To develop clear pathways and assessments between Adult and Children's Social Care Teams. A whole family approach will ensure that young carers will have their needs met to enable them to remain with and continue caring in their family.
- To improve our monitoring information by developing robust processes for capturing protected characteristics
- To develop our on line Care Act training for all staff to improve identification and recognition of carers
- To affiliate to the Employers for Carers scheme to enable WBC to become a carer friendly work place and support our providers in becoming one too
- To increase preventative measures to ensure carers can take a break including assistive technology (AT) and respite for the cared for
- To provide regular group activities and events throughout the year for young carers, in both school term time and in school holidays fostering a community of support and providing opportunities for them to have access to activities that other children and young people who are not carers may have.
- To establish a young carers' forum ensuring the voice of young carers' is heard and they are able to influence decisions that may affect their lives and are able to actively contribute to the carers' strategic group.
- To improve emotional well-being for young carers, improving mental health and reducing the need for statutory services.
- To work with schools and colleges ensuring young carers have the support and understanding they need to be able to learn and achieve.
- To establish a seamless pathway for transition from Childrens' to Adult services ensuring assessments reflect future aspirations for adult life

- To co-produce services that we commission with carers from a broad spectrum of the community, including those from underrepresented groups ensuring wider representation enabling us to develop services that will be more inclusive of carers who live in our community.

## 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:	Positive	The strategy will be promoting identification and inclusion of carers from a broader range of ethnic backgrounds
Gender:	No	
Disabilities:	No	
Age:	Positive	The strategy promotes identification and support for young carers
Sexual orientation:	Positive	The strategy promotes identification and inclusion from a broad range of people within our community
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 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 Wesley Hedger

Date: