

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:	23/11/2020
Service:	Corporate Services
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Wokingham Energy Community
Completed by:	Diana Tovar
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	No
Signed off by:	
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:

The aim of the Wokingham Community Energy (WCE) scheme is to create investment opportunities through a community share offering to encourage and facilitate a widespread uptake of the renewable energy installations within the Borough.

The WCE scheme is expected to primarily support achievement of 2 key objectives within the borough:

- to generate funding that can be invested in renewable energy installations through a community share offering
- to increase renewable energy generation on local buildings which will lead to a reduction in carbon emissions, contributing toward the Councils stated Climate Emergency aims.

The benefits of the scheme include

- Installation of renewable energy systems can take place where there is no investment required to the council and a reduction in carbon emissions by the generation of green energy.
- Participating in an existing project that is already running with systems and processes in place so we can be operational very quickly

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 Community Energy (WCE) will be formed by a combination of members from the local community, Wokingham Borough Council and Reading Community Energy Society (RCES) with services provided by Energy4All (E4A). The scheme operates similar to a cooperative, with an obligation to members but specifically delivery benefit back to society.

WCE will remain independent of RCES and may seek grants for its work (which RCES will support applications for if that helps) and will seek to continue to develop renewable energy in Wokingham Borough and its surroundings.

WCE will appoint one of its members to be part of the RCES community fund committee, to evaluate and approve community fund applications in general and to encourage community groups from its local area to apply for grants. Once WCE's ring-fenced community fund has sufficient funds to support its funding applications, a separate WCE community fund committee may be established, which should include at least one RCES Director to ensure funds are appropriately managed.

A member of the Energy Team within Commercial Property will be assigned as the 'Representative Council Officer' and will undertake additional tasks related to the project as an extension of their substantive role. This role will support the process for identification of potential sites for the installation, and oversight of the process for funding of the renewable energy installations to be fitted and the construction and operation arrangements.

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

The main beneficiaries of the proposed scheme are

- Residents in Borough with an interest of investing in renewable energy projects locally.
- Building owners and users will benefit through WCE purchasing and installing renewable energy solutions at no cost to the building owner.

- The local community. As a not for profit organisation, any surplus funds each year will contribute to a Community Fund to support local projects focussed on carbon reduction, energy efficiency and wider sustainability.

This scheme will facilitate access to external funding to cover the cost of renewable energy installations across the Borough.

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

This scheme broadly assists WBC in moving towards its stated aim of being carbon neutral by 2030 by way of increasing the installation of small renewable energy generation systems where there is no investment required to the council and a reduction in carbon emissions by the generation of green energy.

By working with Reading Community Energy Society (RCES), Wokingham Community Energy will be able to participate in an existing scheme that is already running with systems and processes in place so we can be operational very quickly.

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	<p>Wokingham Community Energy (WCE) aims to form an association with Reading Community Energy Society (RCES), as the incorporated body for investment and management. WCE is proposing to become a Community Action Group. This is a voluntary scheme and there are no eligibility criteria. WCE investors could be people exclusively locally to Wokingham, or a wider public in the Berkshire area. To be part of the scheme, investors need to contribute to a minimum cost of shares. WCE as an associated body of RCES, will be managed for the benefit of the community and owned by investors, who will be mainly local people.</p> <p>WCE scheme will enable investment opportunities through a community share offering to encourage and facilitate a widespread uptake of the renewable energy installations within the Borough. The scheme will enable individuals and local organisations to access the economic and social benefit associated with renewable energy schemes fitted on local buildings and other installations. The eligibility of buildings for renewable energy installations will depend on their size, location, suitable roof space, etc.</p> <p>Supporting WCE will generate positive environmental changes that will support Wokingham Borough towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030.</p>
Gender:	No/Neutral	<p>Wokingham Community Energy (WCE) aims to form an association with Reading Community Energy Society (RCES), as the incorporated body for investment and management. WCE is proposing to become a Community Action Group. This is a voluntary scheme and there are no eligibility criteria. WCE investors could be people exclusively locally to Wokingham, or a wider public in the Berkshire area. To be part of the scheme, investors need to contribute to a minimum cost of shares. WCE as an associated body of RCES, will be managed for the benefit of the community and owned by investors, who will be mainly local people.</p>

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Disabilities:	No/Neutral	<p>Wokingham Community Energy (WCE) aims to form an association with Reading Community Energy Society (RCES), as the incorporated body for investment and management. WCE is proposing to become a Community Action Group. This is a voluntary scheme and there are no eligibility criteria. WCE investors could be people exclusively locally to Wokingham, or a wider public in the Berkshire area. To be part of the scheme, investors need to contribute to a minimum cost of shares. WCE as an associated body of RCES, will be managed for the benefit of the community and owned by investors, who will be mainly local people.</p> <p>WCE scheme will enable investment opportunities through a community share offering to encourage and facilitate a widespread uptake of the renewable energy installations within the Borough. The scheme will enable individuals and local organisations to access the economic and social benefit associated with renewable energy schemes fitted on local buildings and other installations. The eligibility of buildings for renewable energy installations will depend on their size, location, suitable roof space, etc.</p> <p>Supporting WCE will generate positive environmental changes that will support Wokingham Borough towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030.</p>
Age:	No/Neutral	<p>Wokingham Community Energy (WCE) aims to form an association with Reading Community Energy Society (RCES), as the incorporated body for investment and management. WCE is proposing to become a Community Action Group. This is a voluntary scheme and there are no eligibility criteria. WCE investors could be people exclusively locally to Wokingham, or a wider public in the Berkshire area. To be part of the scheme, investors need to contribute to a minimum cost of shares. WCE as an associated body of RCES, will be managed for the benefit of the community and owned by investors, who will be mainly local people.</p> <p>WCE scheme will enable investment opportunities through a community share offering to encourage and facilitate a widespread uptake of the renewable energy installations within the Borough. The scheme will enable individuals and local organisations to access the economic and social benefit associated with renewable energy schemes</p>

		<p>fitted on local buildings and other installations. The eligibility of buildings for renewable energy installations will depend on their size, location, suitable roof space, etc.</p> <p>Supporting WCE will generate positive environmental changes that will support Wokingham Borough towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030.</p>
Sexual orientation:	No/Neutral	<p>Wokingham Community Energy (WCE) aims to form an association with Reading Community Energy Society (RCES), as the incorporated body for investment and management. WCE is proposing to become a Community Action Group. This is a voluntary scheme and there are no eligibility criteria. WCE investors could be people exclusively locally to Wokingham, or a wider public in the Berkshire area. To be part of the scheme, investors need to contribute to a minimum cost of shares. WCE as an associated body of RCES, will be managed for the benefit of the community and owned by investors, who will be mainly local people.</p> <p>WCE scheme will enable investment opportunities through a community share offering to encourage and facilitate a widespread uptake of the renewable energy installations within the Borough. The scheme will enable individuals and local organisations to access the economic and social benefit associated with renewable energy schemes fitted on local buildings and other installations. The eligibility of buildings for renewable energy installations will depend on their size, location, suitable roof space, etc.</p> <p>Supporting WCE will generate positive environmental changes that will support Wokingham Borough towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030.</p>
Religion/belief:	No/Neutral	<p>Wokingham Community Energy (WCE) aims to form an association with Reading Community Energy Society (RCES), as the incorporated body for investment and management. WCE is proposing to become a Community Action Group. This is a voluntary scheme and there are no eligibility criteria. WCE investors could be people exclusively locally to Wokingham, or a wider public in the Berkshire area. To be part of the scheme, investors need to contribute to a minimum cost of shares. WCE as an associated body of RCES, will be managed for the benefit of the community and owned by investors, who will be mainly local people.</p> <p>WCE scheme will enable investment opportunities through a community share offering to encourage and facilitate a widespread uptake of the renewable energy installations within the Borough. The scheme will enable individuals and local organisations to access the economic and social benefit associated with renewable energy schemes fitted on local buildings and other installations. The eligibility of buildings for renewable energy installations will depend on their size, location, suitable roof space, etc.</p>

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Gender re-assignment:	No/Neutral	<p>Wokingham Community Energy (WCE) aims to form an association with Reading Community Energy Society (RCES), as the incorporated body for investment and management. WCE is proposing to become a Community Action Group. This is a voluntary scheme and there are no eligibility criteria. WCE investors could be people exclusively locally to Wokingham, or a wider public in the Berkshire area. To be part of the scheme, investors need to contribute to a minimum cost of shares. WCE as an associated body of RCES, will be managed for the benefit of the community and owned by investors, who will be mainly local people.</p> <p>WCE scheme will enable investment opportunities through a community share offering to encourage and facilitate a widespread uptake of the renewable energy installations within the Borough. The scheme will enable individuals and local organisations to access the economic and social benefit associated with renewable energy schemes fitted on local buildings and other installations. The eligibility of buildings for renewable energy installations will depend on their size, location, suitable roof space, etc.</p> <p>Supporting WCE will generate positive environmental changes that will support Wokingham Borough towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030.</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity:	No/Neutral	<p>Wokingham Community Energy (WCE) aims to form an association with Reading Community Energy Society (RCES), as the incorporated body for investment and management. WCE is proposing to become a Community Action Group. This is a voluntary scheme and there are no eligibility criteria. WCE investors could be people exclusively locally to Wokingham, or a wider public in the Berkshire area. To be part of the scheme, investors need to contribute to a minimum cost of shares. WCE as an associated body of RCES, will be managed for the benefit of the community and owned by investors, who will be mainly local people.</p> <p>WCE scheme will enable investment opportunities through a community share offering to encourage and facilitate a widespread uptake of the renewable energy installations within the Borough. The scheme will enable individuals and local organisations to access the economic and social benefit associated with renewable energy schemes fitted on local buildings and other installations. The eligibility of buildings for renewable energy installations will depend on their size, location, suitable roof space, etc.</p> <p>Supporting WCE will generate positive environmental changes that will support Wokingham Borough towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030.</p>

Marriage and civil partnership:	No/Neutral	<p>Wokingham Community Energy (WCE) aims to form an association with Reading Community Energy Society (RCES), as the incorporated body for investment and management. WCE is proposing to become a Community Action Group. This is a voluntary scheme and there are no eligibility criteria. WCE investors could be people exclusively locally to Wokingham, or a wider public in the Berkshire area. To be part of the scheme, investors need to contribute to a minimum cost of shares. WCE as an associated body of RCES, will be managed for the benefit of the community and owned by investors, who will be mainly local people.</p> <p>WCE scheme will enable investment opportunities through a community share offering to encourage and facilitate a widespread uptake of the renewable energy installations within the Borough. The scheme will enable individuals and local organisations to access the economic and social benefit associated with renewable energy schemes fitted on local buildings and other installations. The eligibility of buildings for renewable energy installations will depend on their size, location, suitable roof space, etc.</p> <p>Supporting WCE will generate positive environmental changes that will support Wokingham Borough towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030.</p>
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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....

Date: 23/11/2020