

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:	12 th April 2021
Service:	CIC, R&A, P&G, ASC, CS
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Wokingham Borough Council Recovery Strategy. This strategy sets out the council's ambitions for recovery against nine key pillars of activity.
Completed by:	Javeria Ali
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	Not yet.
Signed off by:	Rhian Hayes
Sign off date:	12 th April

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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 service's corporate plan:

Purpose:

- To capture a snapshot of one version of the recovery activity taking place across the organisation
- To review activity through the lens of Covid-19
- To ensure each pillar of recovery is addressed within the organisation

- To provide the public with a document outlining our roadmap and vision for a recovered Wokingham

Expected outcomes:

Climate Change

- Deliver the actions in our climate emergency action plan
- Encourage the growth of green industries
- Maximise the short term environmental benefits of lockdown restrictions based on data and insights
- Reflect the green agenda in all council policies
- Deliver environmental benefits to the organisation through the Workplace Re-Imagined programme and WBC environmental audit
- Build on the increased public awareness of climate change to change people`s behaviours and reduce emissions
- Support development of green infrastructure and protect our outdoor spaces
- Invest in long term ambitious green projects such as solar farms, tree planting and a network of electric charging points
- Ensuring everyone in the borough has access to affordable sustainable energy
- Meet our goal for both the council and the borough to be net zero carbon by 2030

Physical and Emotional Health & Wellbeing

- Address the low to moderate Mental Health service provision needs within the borough
- Mobilising our relationship with partners such as the VCS to address virus outbreaks
- Continue to support, through the taskforce, adult social care markets in managing Covid19
- Monitoring and evaluation of vaccine rollout
- Working with our partners to strengthen and adapt the mental health offer in light of emerging evidence
- Service transformation projects to improve efficiency and quality of services for residents and managing demand for ASC
- Embedding a strength based practice approach
- Longer term actions to address the health impacts of Covid19, particularly on vulnerable communities, based on data, evidence and evaluation

Education and Development for Children and Young People

- Ongoing engagement and support for schools to tackle the challenges of Covid19
- Continued support for remote education and use of technology to support remote education outside school environment

- Reviewing the educational impact of lockdown and impacts on children's development in light of emerging evidence
- Action planning to address the impacts on childhood development and education
- Using data & insights to assess the longer term impacts of lockdown restriction on childhood development and education

Creating Resilient Communities and Sustainable Services

- Providing simple & direct ways for residents to access services & support
- Continue to build on alternative service delivery models and embed these as 'the norm'
- Further strengthening of partnerships, networks and support for providers
- Working with our local providers to ensure that commissioned services manage demand and meet the needs of our community.
- Learning from Covid19 to strengthen and shape our services and adopt a commercial approach
- Building on learning, design and development of digital offers that meet future needs, and enhance customer experiences, ensuring services are fully accessible
- Work closely with other partners and use WBC assets to find more collaborative and local ways of delivering frontline services i.e. Town and Parish Councils, VCS, libraries
- Developing market capacity to meet the needs of our residents
- Making all decisions with customers at the heart of what we do
- Infrastructure investment to grow digital capabilities across the borough
- Maximise digital opportunities for services
- Working in partnership to support an integrated system that provides high quality, cost effective care to meet the demands of the community
- Design and develop high quality and ambitious service provisions for our residents
- Working with health partners to ensure joined up delivery of services to vulnerable groups

Investing in a Sustainable Future, Regeneration and Arts & Culture

- Develop a shared vision of place and celebrate the uniqueness of the borough.
- Re-imagining sustainable transport across the borough
- Communicate the strengths of the borough to attract investment
- Implementation of the arts & culture offering to attract visitors to town centres and key sites throughout the borough
- Implement the arts & culture strategy to attract visitors, support economic growth, and promote well-being of residents

- Build the right homes in the right places
- Ensure that we have a comprehensive digital infrastructure for superfast broadband and 5G across the borough
- Improve the joint working between the council and towns & parishes
- Delivery of reimaged sustainable transport solutions
- Continue to invest in the regeneration of our town centres, commercial and residential areas
- Create well planned places that make Wokingham a great place to live and work
- Prepared for the impact of emerging technologies in particular relating to transport

Supporting & Strengthening Businesses and the Local Economy

- Analyse the impact of the pandemic on our local businesses and identify trends in the economy through gathering data and insights
- Increase our level of engagement with the businesses community to understand their needs and provide support where we can. Particularly in managing Covid19 related issues
- Continue to distribute grants and signpost businesses to specialist business advice
- Create initiatives that support businesses that are re-evaluating and adapting to the new trading environment post Covid19
- Work in partnership with anchor institutions, such as the University of Reading, and business parks to stimulate business growth.
- Support new business start-ups and flexible working trends e.g. through the development of innovation and co-working spaces in the borough
- Develop longer term strategies based the growth opportunities presented by green industrial and media sectors
- Encourage businesses to invest in the borough, through relocation (FDI) and joint development projects with the private sector

Stimulating Skills Development and Job Creation

- Create an employment hub to help residents seeking work into employment
- High quality careers information, advice and guidance is available to residents
- Provide advice to businesses seeking to support their employees with their emotional health & wellbeing
- Work with schools ,local colleges and businesses to identify the skills and knowledge that local businesses need to grow
- Strengthening the social value conditions on suppliers to help create local jobs and keep council spend within the borough
- Ensure that businesses and residents get the most out of schemes such as the Governments apprenticeship programme and Kick Start
- All sectors of society benefit from economic growth and the opportunities to employment and training that support lifelong prosperity and independence

Developing Our People and New Ways of Working

- Ensure our workforce have a safe work environment during Recovery
- Monitor staff wellbeing through recovery and offer support
- To maximise the opportunities that Covid-19 has shown us in relation to our workforce & accommodation
- To ensure our staff are enabled to fully utilise the technology provided whilst developing their digital skills
- Use data & insight to inform our approach to staff health & wellbeing and ways of working
- To develop a fit for future accommodation & workforce

Contain Outbreak Management Fund

- Maximising the use of government funding to contain the virus

Council's **Corporate** Plan:

- Enriching Lives: Addressed through our 'physical and emotional health & wellbeing' pillar of recovery as well as our ambitions to invest in a sustainable future, regeneration and arts and culture. Additionally we seek to focus on education and development for children and young people to enrich their lives.
- Safe, strong communities: From our residents we know that one of the positive impacts to come from Covid-19 was the sense of community. We will build on this to create resilient neighbourhoods.
- A clean and green borough: Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019 we have outlined our aspirational aims in our Climate Emergency Action Plan to ensure zero waste goes to landfill by 2050 and our carbon footprint is net carbon zero by 2030. We will address this through our climate change pillar of recovery.
- Right homes, Right Places: Regeneration and investment in housing are a pillar of this strategy
- Keeping the borough moving: We have commitment to investment in sustainable services and infrastructure which includes travel.
- Changing the way we work for you: Our people and ways of working is a key recovery pillar. This will help us address new ways of working in light of the pandemic and how we can best serve our residents.

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:

How the project will be delivered:

- Creation of a Recovery Strategy
- Collaboration with all directorates to develop a recovery action plan

Governance:

- Existing governance in the form of the Corporate Recovery Programme.
- Adoption of a Hub and Spoke model. This strategy has captured existing governance across the organisation which will be mobilised to support with delivery of this strategy.

Stakeholders:

- CLT, ECLT, WBC Businesses, residents, staff and partners

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

- WBC Residents
- WBC Staff

Outline any associated aims attached to the project, policy change or service 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:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.
Gender:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.
Disabilities:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.
Age:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.

Sexual orientation:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.
Religion/belief:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.
Gender re-assignment:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.
Pregnancy and Maternity:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.
Marriage and civil partnership:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.

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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: Rhian Hayes

Date: 12th April