

**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:	19 January 2022
Service:	Democratic and Electoral Services
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	<b>Interim Review of Polling District and Places</b>
Completed by:	Samuel Whitcher
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	No
Signed off by:	Andrew Moulton
Sign off date:	19/01/2022

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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.

<b>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:</b>
Following the May 2021 elections the Council has carried out an interim review of polling districts and places for Hillside and Maiden Erlegh wards. The Returning Officer recommends that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hillside Ward: Lower Earley Library to be designated as the polling place for all elections for polling district EDW.</li><li>• Maiden Erlegh Ward: Earley St Peters Church Hall to be designated as the polling place for all elections for polling districts EFW &amp; EGW.</li></ul>

**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 Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a statutory requirement for councils to conduct a review of polling places every four years but also at any other time if a building becomes unavailable or if any changes are identified following an election.

The Council began this interim review on 29 November 2021 and gave all interested parties the opportunity to make a representation until 10 January 2022.

A notice of the review was published on the Council's website. A copy was also sent to all relevant ward members, relevant polling places and other interested individuals and organisations.

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

Electors in the EDW polling district of Hillside ward, the EFW and EGW polling districts of Maiden Erlegh Ward and the school children, their parents and teachers at Hillside and Aldryngton Schools.

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

The aim of the project is to ensure that electors in the relevant wards are provided with suitable polling places where they will be able to cast their votes at all future elections.

**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	None of the proposed alternative venues would affect persons with this protected characteristic specifically.
Gender:	No	None of the proposed alternative venues would affect persons with this protected characteristic specifically.
Disabilities:	Positive	The venues have been viewed to ensure that they are accessible for people with a disability.
Age:	No	None of the proposed alternative venues would affect persons with this protected characteristic specifically.

Sexual orientation:	No	None of the proposed alternative venues would affect persons with this protected characteristic specifically.
Religion/belief:	No	None of the proposed alternative venues would affect persons with this protected characteristic specifically.
Gender re-assignment:	No	None of the proposed alternative venues would affect persons with this protected characteristic specifically.
Pregnancy and Maternity:	Positive	The proposed alternative venues are accessible for people using prams or buggies.
Marriage and civil partnership:	No	None of the proposed alternative venues would affect persons with this protected characteristic specifically.

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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 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 Andrew Moulton.

Date: 19 January 2021