

## Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: the initial impact assessment

### 1. Process and guidance

The purpose of an EqIA is to make sure that the council is meeting the needs of all our residents by ensuring we consider how different groups of people may be affected by or experience a proposal in different ways.

The council has a two stage EqIA process:

- Stage 1 - the initial impact assessment
- Stage 2 - the full impact assessment.

This form is for use at Stage 1 of the process. This must be completed when undertaking a project, policy change, or service change. It can form part of a business case for change and must be completed and attached to a Project Initiation Document. The findings of the initial impact assessment will determine whether a full impact assessment is needed.

Guidance and tools for council officers can be accessed on the council's Tackling Inequality Together intranet pages.

Date started:	02/08/2022
Completed by:	Francesca Rowson
Service:	Housing and Place Commissioning
Project or policy EqIA relates to:	Homelessness Prevention Grant consultation response for 2023/24 onwards
Date EqIA discussed at service team meeting:	02/08/2022
Conclusion (is a full assessment needed?):	No
Signed off by (AD):	Rhian Hayes
Sign off date:	11/08/2022

## 2. Summary of the policy, project, or service

This section should be used to summarise the project, policy, or service change (the proposal).

### **What is the purpose of the proposal, what are the aims and expected outcomes, and how does it relate to service plans and the corporate plan?**

To agree on Wokingham Borough Council's response to the Government's Homelessness Prevention Grant consultation for 2023/24 onwards, for submission by 26<sup>th</sup> August 2022. This consultation seeks feedback from local authorities and other relevant stakeholders regarding the Government's approach to the Homelessness Prevention Grant for the year 2023/24 onwards. The aim of the proposal is to ensure that the views of Wokingham Borough Council are conveyed to the Government regarding the future of this grant, in the light of ongoing work at the council to tackle homelessness, including early intervention where possible. By putting across these views, the proposal aims to suggest a way of allocating funding which accurately reflects the significant homelessness pressures in Wokingham Borough and recognises the numbers associated with early prevention success as well as private rented sector data. Tackling homelessness is a key priority of the Council's and this proposal aims to support the Council's work on this through submitting views to central government on this topic.

### **How will the proposal be delivered, what governance arrangements are in place and who are the key internal stakeholders?**

The proposal consists of a consultation response, so delivery of this will consist of submitting the response through the online consultation form, once the submission has been agreed through the Individual Executive Member Decision.

**Who will be affected by the proposal? Think about who it is aimed at and who will deliver it.**

If the suggestions made by WBC are taken forwards by the Government, then there will be a positive impact on both those presenting as homeless and on the Council's services which relate to homelessness, as there will be a resultant increase in grant allocations for WBC for homelessness prevention.

### 3. Data & Protected Characteristics

This section should be used to set out what data you have gathered to support the initial impact assessment.

The table below sets out the equality groups that need to be considered in the impact assessment. These comprise the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 and other priority areas defined by the council.

Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy/Maternity
Religious belief	Race	Sex	Sexual Orientation	Socio-economic disadvantage

**What data and information will be used to help assess the impact of the proposal on different groups of people? A list of useful resources is available for officers on the Council’s Tackling Inequality Together intranet pages.**

The information used to understand the impact of the proposal on different groups is the data and experiences of WBC in relation to homelessness prevention in the borough. This is the same intelligence which informed the proposal itself, because the significant pressures relating to temporary accommodation and tackling homelessness in Wokingham Borough constitute the reason for the proposal and for the recommendations which it makes to central Government in terms of a future Homelessness Prevention Grant allocations formula. Additionally, more general, widely publicised information relating to homelessness, in terms of its most frequent causes and the groups which statistically it affects the most, has also been used to help assess the proposal’s impact. If the Government altered the details of the grant allocation to reflect the views and experiences of WBC, then the proposal would have a positive impact on these groups through a greater allocation of funding for the Council’s homelessness services; if not, then the effect of the proposal would be neutral.

**4. Assessing & Scoring Impact**

This section should be used to assess the likely impact on each equality group, consider how significant any impacts could be and explain how the data gathered supports the conclusions made.

Scoring impact for equality groups	
Positive impact	The proposal promotes equality of opportunity by meeting needs or addressing existing barriers to participation and/or promotes good community relations
Neutral or no impact	The proposal has no impact or no disproportionate impact.
Low negative	The proposal is likely to negatively impact a small number of people, be of short duration and can easily be resolved.
High negative	The proposal is likely to have a significant negative impact on many people or a severe impact on a smaller number of people.

Referring to the Scoring table above, please give an impact score for each group, explain what the likely impact will be, and briefly set out how the data supports this conclusion.

Equality group	Impact score	Impact and supporting data
Age	Positive impact	People in certain age groups e.g. younger people are statistically more likely to be affected by homelessness than on average, and the proposal seeks to increase homelessness funding for WBC services.
Disability	Positive impact	People with disabilities are statistically more likely to be affected by homelessness than on average, and the proposal seeks to increase homelessness funding for WBC services.
Gender reassignment	Positive impact	LGBT+ people are statistically more likely to be affected by homelessness than on average, and the proposal seeks to increase homelessness funding for WBC services.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral or no impact	
Pregnancy/Maternity	Positive impact	Being pregnant can increase someone's risk of becoming homeless, and the proposal seeks to increase homelessness funding for WBC services.
Religious belief	Neutral or no impact	
Race	Positive impact	Issues relating to language barriers are increasingly frequent in relation to homelessness presentations, since many presentations are by those from countries where the language(s) spoken is/are not English e.g. Ukraine. Any increase in grant funding through the proposal would result in more resource to aid those presenting as homeless whose first language is not English, and who may face language barriers in the process as a result. People from ethnically diverse backgrounds are also statistically more likely to be affected by homelessness than on average.
Sex	Neutral or no impact	Women are statistically more likely to be affected by Domestic Abuse than men, which constitutes the reason behind the homelessness presentation in some cases, however in general men are statistically more likely to be homeless than women.

Sexual Orientation	Positive impact	LGBT+ people are statistically more likely to be affected by homelessness than on average, and the proposal seeks to increase homelessness funding for WBC services.
Socio-economic disadvantage	Positive impact	People who are socio-economically disadvantaged are more likely to be affected by homelessness than on average, and the proposal seeks to increase homelessness funding for WBC services.

**5. Conclusion and next steps.**

Based on your findings from your initial impact assessment, you must complete a full impact assessment if you have identified any groups 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 include reference to the initial assessment in any associated reports, and it must receive formal approval from the Assistant Director responsible for the project, policy, or service change.