

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:	9 th June 2022
Completed by:	Sarah Salter
Service:	Commissioning
Project or policy EqIA relates to:	Berkshire Community Equipment Service
Date EqIA discussed at service team meeting:	
Conclusion (is a full assessment needed?):	No
Signed off by (AD):	
Sign off date:	5 th August 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?

Since 2012, Wokingham Borough Council has been part of a S75 agreement with Reading Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, West Berkshire Council, Slough Borough Council, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and the NHS CCGs in East and West Berkshire to jointly procure an integrated equipment service for the community known as the Berkshire Community Equipment Service (BCES). The service is used by both adults and children with disabilities and provides daily living and nursing equipment to people who live in the community. It includes simple equipment such as perching stools and walking sticks, as well as more complex items such as hoists and specialist seating. The purpose of this equipment is to support people in their own homes, promoting independence and safety.

The service fulfils the Council's statutory duties under the Care Act 2014 to help to improve people's independence and wellbeing and provide services that prevent, reduce and delay the need for formal care and support and under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need (which includes a child with a disability).

The service provision aligns to the strategic priorities set out within Wokingham's Adult Social Care Strategy, which include to:

1. Keep people safe
2. Prevent, reduce and delay the need for formal care and support
3. Work in partnership and commission services that deliver quality and value for money

It also supports the delivery of strategic objectives as set out in the Children’s Services Strategy 2021 – 2024:

1. Ensure we are designed to deliver excellent outcomes for all children, young people & families in Wokingham
2. Develop effective strategies which improve outcomes and deliver them in the most efficient way
3. Strengthen our partnerships, drive system leadership & put children at the heart of everything Wokingham does

The current contract is due to expire at the end of March 2024. The arrangement has been highly successful in meeting the needs of vulnerable adults and children cost effectively because the partnership can buy in bulk which drives down price. The proposal is for Wokingham to continue being part of the partnership and to joint reprocure the service for a further 5 years (plus 2 years extension).

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

Service Managers in Adult and Children’ services have been consulted as well as colleagues in Procurement, Finance and Legal who all support the proposal to jointly reprocure the service. A Procurement Business case has been written which will be presented to the leadership teams of Adults and Children’s Services before being presented to the Executive Committee for approval to proceed.

Once approved, the reprocurement exercise will be managed by West Berkshire Council as the lead authority with involvement from each partner in design and evaluation of the tender.

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

The service is aimed at vulnerable adults and children with disabilities across the whole of Berkshire. A suitable provider will be awarded the contract via an open and competitive tender process.

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.

From annual reporting we know that for the financial year 21-22 2,492 adults and 103 children with disabilities received pieces of equipment. Data is not specifically reported in relation to the nine protected characteristics, however, as this is a statutory service, it is available to anybody in the borough with an assessed need regardless of equality groups.

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	No impact	The proposal to continue with the existing arrangement means that anybody with an assessed need will have access to the service free of charge regardless of equality groups
Disability	No impact	As above
Gender reassignment	No impact	As above
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No impact	As above
Pregnancy/Maternity	No impact	As above
Religious belief	No impact	As above
Race	No impact	As above
Sex	No impact	As above
Sexual Orientation	No impact	As above
Socio-economic disadvantage	No impact	As above

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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.

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