

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 June 2023
Service:	Place and Growth (Delivery & Infrastructure)
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Twyford Neighbourhood Plan
Completed by:	Ben Davis (Growth and Delivery Team, Senior Planning Policy Officer)
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	Yes
Signed off by:	Trevor Saunders Assistant Director Planning
Sign off date:	03/07/23

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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:
<p>Twyford Parish Council has produced a Neighbourhood Plan to help shape how development is managed in their area. The Plan contains policies on housing, the natural, built and historic environment, community facilities and transport. The Plan does not include any site allocations.</p> <p>This report seeks approval to 'make' (bring into legal force) the Plan. This is required by the Regulations governing the production of neighbourhood plans.</p> <p>A referendum was undertaken on 6 July 2023, through which 88.5% of voters were in favour of Wokingham Borough Council using the plan as a starting point for determining planning applications. The Council has a legal duty to make a plan following a successful referendum, being where</p>

more than 50% have voted in favour of it. Therefore, the recommendation of the report to make the plan is a decision required by the Regulations governing the neighbourhood plan process. There are no alternative options.

Once made (adopted), the Plan will form part of the statutory development plan alongside the Council's local plans and other made neighbourhood plans. The Plan will thereby carry significant weight in the determination of planning applications and appeals in or affecting Twyford Parish.

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:

The consultation framework for the preparation of the Plan has been undertaken in accordance with the Regulations governing the neighbourhood plan process and the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. This involved sending emails/letters to a number of individuals, organisations, councillors and internal officers. Advertising and further information took place on the Council's website and publicised through social media. Publicity was also undertaken by the Parish Council.

Stakeholders including the Assistant Director of Planning and Director of Place & Growth have been engaged through the Corporate Leadership Team. Specialists from Growth & Delivery have also engaged with members of the Twyford Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group and Twyford Parish Council and provided policy advice and technical support throughout the Plan's preparation.

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

The Plan has been produced by Twyford Parish Council (the qualifying body) with the input of their community and other stakeholders. Advice and support has been provided by Council officers during the Plan's preparation. The purpose of neighbourhood planning is to enable local communities to help shape how development is managed in their area. The main beneficiaries are residents and local businesses within Twyford Parish.

The Independent Examiner was also satisfied that consultation and publicity undertaken on the Plan had met the regulatory requirements.

The Plan, once made, will be used by Wokingham Borough Council alongside local plans to help determine the suitability of planning applications within the area, and to help defend any appeals against the refusal to grant planning permission.

<p>Outline any associated aims attached to the project, policy change or service change:</p>

<p>The purpose of a neighbourhood plan is to enable communities to help shape how development is managed in their area.</p>

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:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Gender:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Disabilities:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Age:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Sexual orientation:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Religion/belief:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Gender re-assignment:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Pregnancy and Maternity:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Marriage and civil partnership:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.

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....

Trevor Saunders

Assistant Director, Planning

Date:....03/07/2023

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