

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. EqIAs help us to meet our [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) and where applicable the [Armed Forces Duty](#)

The council has a two stage EqIA process:

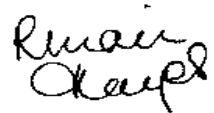
- Stage 1 - the initial impact assessment
- Stage 2 - the full impact assessment.

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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:	08.12.2023	
Completed by:	Ruby Shekhawat	
Service:	Strategic Housing / Economy and Housing	
Project or policy EqIA relates to:	Affordable Housing Strategy	
Date EqIA discussed at service team meeting:	19.09.2023	
Conclusion (is a full assessment needed?):	No.	

Signed off by (AD):	Rhian Hayes Assistant Director, Economy & Housing	
Sign off date:	13.12.2023	

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?

This strategy aims to meet housing needs, offer suitable homes for vulnerable residents, ensure healthy, safe, and sustainable living, and foster inclusive growth for thriving communities. The strategy will set out the strategic direction of the Council from 2024-2028, ensuring the Council meets its Corporate Parenting Duties and adheres to relevant legislation, community vision and best practise. The strategy will be accompanied by a 4-year action plan which sets out the actions the Council will undertake to achieve these objectives in more detail.

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

Strategy to be adopted in April 2024 following standard Council Executive governance procedures. Prior, the strategy is being aired at the Registered Partners partnership meeting, HAIG (Housing Advisory and Implementation group), Tenancy and Landlord Improvement Panel, Place and Growth Leadership Team, Corporate Leadership Team and Public Consultation.

Key internal stakeholders are Housing, Climate Emergency, Adult Social Care Services, Children Services.

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

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The strategy is aimed at the housing needs of the borough. It includes residents facing the brunt of expensive private rented sector, growing older population, key workers, survivors of domestic abuse, residents who are homeless, currently sleeping rough, at risk of homelessness, young people aged 16-25, are those in and transitioning out of care, 16/17-year-olds at risk of homelessness and Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) leaving care. Residents with learning disabilities, physical disabilities or are struggling with their mental health who require more support through specialist housing schemes.

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.

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

The Armed Forces Act 2021 also requires consideration of the [impact on Armed Forces Communities](#) when exercising certain housing, education or healthcare functions (excluding social care). Further guidance can be found [here](#).

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.

Wokingham Housing needs assessment data for vulnerable adults fed into the strategy. Data to assess the impact of strategy on residents will be star survey, new homes survey, housing facts and figures (quarterly reports).

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.

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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
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Age	Positive	This strategy is aimed towards supporting vulnerable residents, net need for housing older people is 56 units (2024-28). Furthermore, by prioritising clear housing pathways and options for young residents aged (16-25). The Council's strategic needs data currently shows that there are 119 young residents this strategy will benefit rising to 169 by 2026/27. Moreover, supporting independent living and specialist accommodation for older people who will be positively affected by this strategy.
Disability	Positive	<p>The net need for adults with physical disability is 15. The net need from residents with learning disability and mental health is 44 and 18 respectively for period (2024-28). There is limited quantitative data on the number of young people within the priority groups outlined in this strategy that have a disability. Negotiating and building specialist accommodation to support residents with disability and mental health who will be positively affected by this strategy.</p> <p>Quantitative data from our housing officers suggests that a higher proportion of Care Leavers have complex mental health needs related to their trauma. For example, a young person who has experienced more than 3 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) is much more likely to experience rough sleeping and have more complex mental health needs.</p>
Gender reassignment	Neutral	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	
Pregnancy/Maternity	Neutral	
Religious belief	Positive	<p>The Council is expecting to have 70 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children Care Leavers by 2026/27, up from 38 currently. These residents are predominantly from Afghanistan (37%) Sudan (21%) and Iran (16%) with Iraq, Syria and Eritrea (5% each) making up a significant portion.</p> <p>These countries have varied religious beliefs, different to the predominant religion in England, and so will benefit from a strategy that has identified this cohort as a priority group.</p>

Race	Positive	<p>The Council is expecting to have 70 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children Care Leavers by 2026/27, up from 38 currently. These residents are predominantly from Afghanistan (37%) Sudan (21%) and Iran (16%) with Iraq, Syria and Eritrea (5% each) making up a significant portion.</p> <p>People from these countries are from a variety of races, different to the predominant one in England, and so will benefit from a strategy that has identified this cohort as a priority group.</p>
Sex	Neutral	
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	
Socio-economic disadvantage	Positive	<p>Quantitative data from our Housing Officers suggests that this strategy will put a strategic direction in place for the priority groups who have previously experienced a level of trauma or financial hardship which has led to the Council adopting a Corporate Parenting responsibility for them. This includes family and friends no longer willing to accommodate, domestic abuse or other factors that place additional challenges on their ability to enter the housing market. Additional support is usually required for challenging behaviours also.</p> <p>The Council, together with its partners such as Registered Providers and third sector organisations, has a key role through engagement in helping to create thriving communities and address the root causes of housing crises such as improving employability, enhancing tenancy sustainability, reducing worklessness and a reliance on benefits. By investing in social capital programmes and delivering initiatives such as creative social prescribing and tenancy sustainment schemes, and arts based approaches to improving health and wellbeing will help to empower residents and transform lives, as well as more broadly helping to support the local economy and wider community.</p>
Armed Forces Communities	Neutral	

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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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