

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqIA : LGA Corporate Peer Challenge - Action Plan Progress

Essential information

Items to be assessed: (please mark 'x')

Strategy		Policy		Plan		Project		Service/Procedure	
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Responsible officer	Emma Duncan,	Service area	Strategy	Directorate	Law, Strategy & Public Heath
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Stage 1: EqIA Screening (mandatory)	Date created: 20/12/2022	Stage 2 : Full assessment (if applicable)	Date created : n/a
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Approved by Head of Service / Overseeing group/body / Project Sponsor:

"I am satisfied that an equality impact has been undertaken adequately."

Signed by (print): E Duncan

Dated: 20/12/22

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Guidance notes

What is an EqlA and why do we need to do it?

The Equality Act 2010 places a 'General Duty' on all public bodies to have 'due regard' to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them.
- Fostering good relations between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them.

EqlAs are a systematic way of taking equal opportunities into consideration when making a decision, and should be conducted when there is a new or reviewed strategy, policy, plan, project, service or procedure in order to determine whether there will likely be a detrimental and/or disproportionate impact on particular groups, including those within the workforce and customer/public groups. All completed EqlA Screenings are required to be publicly available on the council's website once they have been signed off by the relevant Head of Service or Strategic/Policy/Operational Group or Project Sponsor.

What are the "protected characteristics" under the law?

The following are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010: age; disability (including physical, learning and mental health conditions); gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

What's the process for conducting an EqlA?

The process for conducting an EqlA is set out at the end of this document. In brief, a Screening Assessment should be conducted for every new or reviewed strategy, policy, plan, project, service or procedure and the outcome of the Screening Assessment will indicate whether a Full Assessment should be undertaken.

Openness and transparency

RBWM has a 'Specific Duty' to publish information about people affected by our policies and practices. Your completed assessment should be sent to the Strategy & Performance Team for publication to the RBWM website once it has been signed off by the relevant manager, and/or Strategic, Policy, or Operational Group. If your proposals are being made to Cabinet or any other Committee, please append a copy of your completed Screening or Full Assessment to your report.

Enforcement

Judicial review of an authority can be taken by any person, including the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) or a group of people, with an interest, in respect of alleged failure to comply with the general equality duty. Only the EHRC can enforce the specific duties. A failure to comply with the specific duties may however be used as evidence of a failure to comply with the general duty.

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1.1 What is the overall aim of your proposed strategy/policy/project etc and what are its key objectives?

LGA Corporate Peer Challenge: Action Plan Progress

The Royal Borough invited the LGA into the council to conduct a Corporate Peer Challenge review in January 2022, in order to provide an external assessment of its progress, and recommendations for further improvement. Their assessment and recommendations were set out in the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Feedback Report. Cabinet considered the recommendations in March 2022 and agreed to accept the 11 recommendations subject to minor amendments and agreed to the preparation of an Action Plan. This report updates Members on the progress to date following a return visit by the Recommendations with particular relevance to the Equalities have been summarised below although these do not form part of the recommendation for this report and have been included for completeness:

Recommendation1

Prioritise embedding the Corporate Plan across the Council and the establishment of a new performance framework which links service plans and priorities to budget and risks over the medium term.

- The Corporate Plan contains a cross-cutting commitment to reducing inequalities and a range of specific goals focused on improving outcomes for people with protected characteristics. The council is currently revising its Equality objectives and undertaking an ambitious research project to strengthen our understanding of inequalities and disadvantage in the Borough. Revised equality objectives will be included in a refresh of the Corporate Plan by the end of 2022. This reflects feedback from the CPC Review team to strengthen our approach to Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion.

Recommendation 3

Establish a Member development programme, including a new induction package for May 2023 which aligns to the strategic priorities of the Royal Borough. Group Leaders need to be fully involved in developing the programme to ensure ongoing member participation, throughout the term of office.

- The Member development programme will include specific training on Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion.

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Recommendation 5

Review the current model of scrutiny committees. There are currently 4 scrutiny panels and one county-wide health scrutiny. It may be better for the committees to be more closely aligned to the priorities in the Corporate Plan and service delivery arrangements covering people, place and corporate functions.

- Corporate Overview & Scrutiny will review progress on strengthening the council's approach to Equalities.

Recommendation 9

Develop a localism strategy with town and parish councils and community groups which promotes greater subsidiarity of decision making and thus enabling RBWM to be more strategic.

- Development of the strategy includes strengthening engagement with a range of groups representing the views and interests of groups with protected characteristics.

Recommendation 10

Take advantage of the 25th anniversary of being a unitary council to work with the Youth Council and partners to set out a new 25-year vision for the Royal Borough.

- The development of the vision, strengthens engagement with our Youth Council and ensures that young people's views and priorities are reflected within the council's long term vision.

Stage 1 : Screening (Mandatory)

1.2 What evidence is available to suggest that your proposal could have an impact on people (including staff and customers) with protected characteristics? Consider each of the protected characteristics in turn and identify whether your proposal is Relevant or Not Relevant to that characteristic. If Relevant, please assess the level of impact as either High / Medium / Low and whether the impact is Positive (i.e. contributes to promoting equality or improving relations within an equality group) or Negative (i.e. could disadvantage them). Please document your evidence for each assessment you make, including a justification of why you may have identified the proposal as "Not Relevant".

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Protected characteristics	Relevance	Level	Positive/negative	Evidence
All protected characteristics	Relevant		Positive	<i>Increased focus on equality, diversity and inclusion across the council, through embedding of the Corporate Plan, Member induction, and strengthened engagement with stakeholder groups.</i>
Age	Not relevant		Positive	<i>Youth Council leading on the development of the 25 Year Vision, enhancing youth engagement and voice in the borough's vision and priority setting.</i>
Disability	Not relevant			
Gender re-assignment	Not relevant			
Marriage/civil partnership	Not relevant			
Pregnancy and maternity	Not relevant			
Race	Not relevant			
Religion and belief	Not relevant			
Sex	Not relevant			
Sexual orientation	Not relevant			

Outcome, action and public reporting

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Screening Assessment Outcome	Yes / No / Not at this stage	Further Action Required / Action to be taken	Responsible Officer and / or Lead Strategic Group	Timescale for Resolution of negative impact / Delivery of positive impact
Was a significant level of negative impact identified?	No			
Does the strategy, policy, plan etc require amendment to have a positive impact?	No			

If you answered **yes** to either / both of the questions above a Full Assessment is advisable and so please proceed to Stage 2. If you answered “No” or “Not at this Stage” to either / both of the questions above please consider any next steps that may be taken (e.g. monitor future impacts as part of implementation, re-screen the project at its next delivery milestone etc).