

Lancaster City Council's Equality Impact Assessment Guidance and Form

What is an equality impact assessment?

An equality impact assessment is a way of understanding the impact that a new way of doing things might have on members of our community, in particular people from protected groups. This could be a new service, practice, policy, strategy, project or decision.

Protected groups include age, disability, faith, religion or belief, gender (including marriage, pregnancy and maternity), gender reassignment, race and sexual orientation (including Civil Partnership).

Please note: the impact on rural communities and people on low incomes must also to be considered.

Why do I need to carry out an equality impact assessment?

Part of the council's core purpose is to *'provide a range of customer focused services and offer value for money and meet the needs of people who live, work and visit the district' and to 'maintain a cohesive community by ensuring we understanding the needs of our communities and provide equality of access to our services and employment opportunities'*.

It is therefore important that we collect and use information about our community to help us to understand how service changes and decisions might impact on the local community.

Our corporate *Ethos* makes it clear that in our stewardship role the council has a responsibility for *'ensuring the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the local area'* and that in terms of social justice that *'the values of local government are founded on equality and meeting community needs'*.

Therefore we should consider how everything we do will impact on the communities that we serve. This should lead to more informed decision making, more customer focussed, cost effective, efficient services for local people.

When delivering services and employment, the council has a general equality duty to consider the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other unlawful conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

How do I carry out an equality impact assessment?

A simple form has been developed to assist services with carrying out equality impact assessments.

The form provides a consistent approach to equality impact assessment, however, it is more important that we consider how everything we do will impact on the local community and that action is taken to mitigate impact. The form provides a way of recording this.

The council's 'getting to know our communities' data will help services to assess potential impact on protected groups. This provides both local and national statistics and is available on the Elsie equality and diversity page (via HR).

All councils have to produce similar information, therefore it may be useful to do a web search rather than starting from scratch.

An example of a completed form is also available on the Elsie equality and diversity page (via HR).

When do I need to carry out equality impact assessment?

Equality impact assessment should take place when considering doing something in a new way.

For example:

- A change in a current service or introduction of a new service
- The review of a current policy/strategy or the development of a new policy/strategy
- The start of a new project or when making a decision.

A decision making flow chart is available on the Elsie equality and diversity page (via HR).

An equality impact assessment form will need to be completed as an appendix to decision making committee reports eg Cabinet, Council.

Please note: the outcomes of your equality impact assessment should be used to inform your reports.

Please refer to the report writing guidelines on Elsie or contact democratic services for advice on this.

Who should carry out equality impact assessment?

An equality impact assessment should be carried out by the officer leading on above examples.

Who can I contact for support and guidance?

Equality impact assessment support is available from the HR and Organisational Development Team.

Equality impact assessment form

An equality impact assessment should take place when considering doing something in a new way.

Please submit your completed form as an appendix to your committee reports for monitoring and publishing purposes to [‘report clearance’](#) (please refer to report writing guidance).

Please keep your answers brief and to the point. Consideration needs to be reasonable and proportionate.

Please also remember that this will be a public document – do not use jargon or abbreviations.

Section 1: Details

Service	Governance (HR&OD)
Title and brief description (if required)	Corporate Plan 2016 - 2020
New or existing	New
Author/officer lead	Bob Bailey, Organisational Development Manager
Date	15 March 2016

Does this affect staff, customers or other members of the public?

Yes Please complete the rest of the equality form.

~~**No** Please return the equality form as above.~~

Section 2: Summary

What is the purpose, aims and objectives? The Corporate Plan for 2016 -2020 sets out what the Council plans to deliver over the coming years to deliver the Council’s ethos and vision. The plan comprises four priorities being: Clean and Green Places; Health and Wellbeing; Community Leadership and Sustainable Economic Growth and associated corporate outcomes and success measures. The Corporate Plan also reflects the changing needs and aspirations of local communities and the shifting priorities, opportunities and challenges that the council faces.

Who is intended to benefit and how? The Corporate Plan benefits the whole of the local community - residents, council staff, elected members and visitors to the district, those who work in the district and service users, by setting out the Council’s plans and expected outcomes over the next four years. The purpose of this EIA is to ensure that our Corporate Plan does not prompt any disproportionate negative impact on people with any of the protected characteristics. The expected outcomes of this EIA is the identification of any potential issues and a commitment to take the recommended mitigating actions to ensure our services are available to the whole community.

Section 3: Assessing impact

Is there any potential or evidence that this will or could:		
• Affect people from any protected group differently to others?	Yes	No
• Discriminate unlawfully against any protected group?	Yes	No
• Affect the relations between protected groups and others?	Yes	No
• Encourage protected groups to participate in activities if participation is disproportionately low (won't always be applicable)?	Yes	No
• Prevent the council from achieving the aims of its' Equality and Diversity Policy?	Yes	No

If yes, please provide more detail of potential impact and evidence including:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A brief description of what information you have and from where e.g. getting to know our communities data, service use monitoring, views of those affected i.e. discussions or consultation results? - What does this tell you i.e. negative or positive affect? 	
<p>Age</p> <p>including older and younger people and children</p>	<p>Getting to know our communities data indicates that the Lancaster district:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has an above average proportion of age groups 15-24 and 65+ due to the universities and the district being a popular retirement destination. • 65.1% aged 16-64 and 18.3% aged 65 and over with 18-24 (14.2%), and 65-79 (13.1%) the largest age groups. • The district was ranked 147 out of 326 Local Authority areas in England for deprivation affecting children in 2015 • 16% of children live in poverty. This is lower than the percentage for England (18.6%) and the NW (22.4%) • Based on current trend, it is likely that 24% of the district's population will be over 65 by 2030 • The district was ranked 127 out of 326 Local Authority areas in England for deprivation affecting older people in 2015 <p>In the 2015 Residents Survey over half of residents aged 65 or over indicated that health reasons prevent them from taking a more active role. Our Health and Wellbeing corporate priority includes a range of actions and activities aimed at supporting residents in the district including measures to keep vulnerable people warm in their homes and <i>'...continuing work to improve the quality and availability of Housing and to assess the viability of building new one-bedroomed properties; housing renewal, particularly in the West End of Morecambe and improvements in the private rented sector. As part of the statutory planning process, the council will allocate land for housing purposes, to meet the challenges of finding space for sustainable growth to address demographic changes in the district. It will seek opportunities to include new affordable housing as part of the development plans and champion the need for younger generations in our community to have access to their own homes.'</i></p> <p>The 2015 Residents Survey identified that <i>'Job prospects are most important to residents aged 16 to 44'</i> this is reflected in the Sustainable Economic Growth corporate priority which highlights that <i>'The main prospects for economic growth relate to skills retention...'</i> and that the council will work in collaboration to develop opportunities that <i>'...help to secure economic benefits through new jobs and business growth, including support for new energy and transport infrastructure and the nuclear nomination for Heysham'</i></p>

Disability	<p>The Corporate Plan sets out the council's role and responsibilities to all its citizens in its Core Purpose, being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>provide the democratic leadership, with high ethical standards, needed to help the district address the major issues facing it</i> <i>bring communities and agencies together to work in partnership to address the major issues affecting the district</i> <i>provide a range of customer-focussed services that deliver our statutory responsibilities, offer value for money and meet the needs of people who live in, work in and visit the district</i> <i>maintain a sustainable and cohesive community by ensuring we understand the needs of our communities and provide equality of access to our services and employment opportunities</i> <p>The Residents Survey set out residents' preferred methods of contacting the council, the results of which will be considered as part of the 'digital workplace' approach identified within the Community Leadership corporate priority.</p> <p>The intention to protect the most vulnerable in our society is a thread that runs through all of the council's priorities.</p>
Faith, religion or belief	
Gender including marriage, pregnancy and maternity	
Gender reassignment	
Race	
Sexual orientation (including Civic Partnership)	
Rural communities	<p>The council's Vision refers specifically to <i>Coast and Countryside</i> as 'a conserved, enhanced and diversified environment with a network of vibrant rural communities which will lead the North West in its quality of life and environmental and design standard and within which sustainable housing, economic and retail development to meet local needs will be supported'</p>
People on low incomes	<p>In considering local priorities and council spending residents said that 'Welfare benefits and community support, job prospects and affordable decent housing are most important to residents and the areas where they don't want to see spending reduced reflects this'. A range of actions and activities relating to each of these are incorporated within the council's corporate priorities, specifically Health and Wellbeing and Community Leadership which includes measures to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in the district and to 'Act on the Government's future roll-out of Universal credit in the district, and other welfare reforms'. The Localised Council Tax Benefits Support Scheme (LCTS) will also be reviewed to determine a sustainable scheme for the future.</p>

Section 4: Next steps

Do you need any more information/evidence e.g. statistics, consultation? If so, how do you plan to address this?

It would be beneficial across the council to:

- review and further develop data monitoring systems and performance management to help fill any gaps in the council's knowledge of the new protected groups and their service needs
- consult with all Services to gain a greater understanding of activities that may have a positive or negative impact on protected groups

How have you taken/will you take the potential impact and evidence into account?

The potential impact and evidence has been taken into account in developing the Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020 its corporate priorities and related corporate outcomes and success measures

How do you plan to monitor the impact and effectiveness of this change or decision?

The Corporate Plan is monitored as part of the council's performance management arrangements and framework

Thank you for completing this equality impact assessment form, please submit your completed form as an appendix to your committee reports for monitoring and publishing purposes to ['report clearance'](#) (please refer to report writing guidance).