

Colchester Borough Council

Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit

What is an Equality Impact Assessment? An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a tool for identifying the potential impact of our policies, services, strategies and functions on our residents, visitors and staff. The assessment must include the potential impact on the following equality groups: age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. We also need to consider those who live in rural isolation, are on a low income or who do not have English as their first language. By assessing the potential impact we can ensure that the services we provide reflect the needs of our communities.

By carrying out EqIAs, we may also ensure that the services we provide fulfil the requirements of anti-discrimination and equalities legislation.

Relevance Test

Please use the relevance test below to decide whether your policy, service or strategy requires an EqIA:

Relevant

- The policy, strategy or service will impact on people (residents, visitors and staff).
- The policy, strategy or service is intended to benefit people.

Not relevant

- The policy, strategy or service has no clear impact on people.
- The policy, strategy or service is a support function or administrative.

How do I use the toolkit?

The toolkit is easy to use and does not require any specialist knowledge to be able to use it. The assessment is in two sections; initial screening and full impact assessment. Once you have completed the initial screening you will know whether or not you need to complete a full impact assessment. If you require further information on how to complete an EqIA please see the FAQs or contact Claire Gayfer, Equality and Diversity Officer on 01206 506452 or by email Claire.gayfer@colchester.gov.uk

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Screening

Name of strategy, project or policy to be assessed		Is the strategy/project/policy:	
Decision Making and Attendance at Meetings		New: No	Existing: Yes
Lead officer completing assessment	Job title	Date of assessment	
Amanda Chidgey	Democratic Services Manager	27 November 2010	
Responsible department		Director	
Corporate Management		Ann Wain / Pam Donnelly / Ian Vipond	

1. What is the main purpose of the policy, service or strategy?

The compilation, production and publication of Agendas and Decisions (and / or minutes) and access to Council Meetings.

2. List the main activities of the policy, service or strategy? (for strategies list the main policy areas):

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To facilitate the Council's decision making and scrutiny process• To comply with statutory publication requirements known as Access to Information• To ensure that the public are aware of the decisions being taken by Councillors and the decision making process• To encourage public participation

3. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy, service or strategy?

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local residents who may wish to be aware of and have the opportunity to influence decisions to be taken which directly affect the community in which they live;• Journalists who will seek opportunities to publicise decisions and attend meetings at which decisions are taken;• Businesses who may wish to be aware of and have the opportunity to influence decisions to be taken which directly affect their operations;• Other councils seeking information to gauge current trends, good practices and future trends;• Council officers and members who all need to be aware of the decisions being taken across the organisation and to have opportunities to contribute to or influence that process.
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4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy, service or strategy?

- Decisions are made in accordance with relevant statutory requirements
- Open and accountable decision making
- Greater public awareness of the work of the Council
- Increased involvement of the community in the democratic process

5. Are other departments or partners involved in delivery of the policy, service or strategy? If so, please give details below.

- Council Officers in all other service areas who write reports
- Council Officers who assist customers in the Customer Service Centre
- Local printing company which prints agendas

6. What data, information or knowledge do you have to enable you to assess the impact on equality target groups? Please list below. (For example, think about performance indicators and targets, user satisfaction, uptake of services, consultation or involvement, workforce monitoring data, complaints, external verification and eligibility criteria).

- Questionnaire compiled for distribution to 'Have Your Say!' participants the results of which are used to improve the service delivered where possible, such as an information page in agendas to provide an outline of the way a meeting operates and information sheets in the meeting room to explain in plain terms items of business or particular circumstances.

The following practices seek to minimise difficulties or problems:

- Agendas and decisions published and regularly updated on the Council's website and intranet;
- Electronic 'newsletters' containing links to the agendas and decisions are sent to subscribers of the service;
- Local Parish Councils are sent copies of agendas and decisions;
- Local libraries are supplied with copies of agendas and decisions;
- Information sheets, explaining what will happen at meetings are distributed around the meeting rooms;
- At least one dedicated member of the Democratic Services Team is available before the start of a meeting to assist visitors in person;
- Each agenda contains an information page to explain the purpose of the meeting, facilities available for people with accessibility problems and the procedures;
- Meeting rooms are fitted with audio loop systems for people with hearing difficulties;
- Speakers are advised to use the microphones provided at all times;
- The Council has a translation service available on request;
- The Council Offices which is accessible for those with mobility difficulties;

- Meetings take place in the evenings to allow people who work during the day to attend;
- The Council operates a system called 'Have Your Say!' which provides for 30 minutes at the start of most meetings for the public to address the Councillors.

7. Are there any concerns that the policy, service or strategy could have a differential impact in terms of equality?

Use the table below to indicate:

- Where you think that the policy, service or strategy could have a negative impact on any of the equality target groups, for example, it could disadvantage them;
- Where you think that the policy, service or strategy could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relations within equality target groups;
- Provide an explanation as to why you think there is a positive or negative impact;
- The key elements of people's lives affected by this policy, service or strategy. For example, finance, accommodation or welfare; and
- If you identified any data in question 6, use it to help your explanation below.

		Positive impact – it could benefit	Negative impact or risk – it could disadvantage	Explanation
Gender	Women			No impact – meetings are held in the evening to accommodate those with family commitments or in full time employment.
	Men			No impact – ditto
	Transgender			No impact – ditto
Race (census categories)	White – British			No impact
	White – Irish			No impact
	White – other background			No impact
	Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			No impact
	Mixed – White and Black African			No impact
	Mixed – White and Asian			No impact
	Any other mixed background			No impact
	Asian/Asian-British - Indian			No impact
	Asian/Asian-British - Pakistani			No impact

		Positive impact – it could benefit	Negative impact or risk – it could disadvantage	Explanation
	Asian/Asian-British – any other Asian background			No impact
	Black/Black British – Caribbean			No impact
	Black/Black British – African			No impact
	Black/Black British – any other Black background			No impact
	Chinese			No impact
	Gypsies/Travellers			No impact
	Any other group (write in)			No impact
Disability	Physical			No impact - rooms used for meetings must be accessible, have an audio loop system and microphones provided. Participants are advised to use microphones at all times.
	Sensory			No impact
	Learning			No impact
	Mental health issues			No impact – there may be an issue in communicating procedures to persons who have difficulty understanding their content. If the service is made aware of such difficulties we will take steps accordingly.
	Other – please specify			No impact
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian, gay and bisexual			No impact
Age	Older people (60 +)			No impact - all public meetings are open to all age groups.
	Younger people (17-25), and children (0-16)			No impact - all public meetings are open to all age groups.
Belief or Religion	Buddhist			No impact – it may be that the timing of meetings would require adjustment due to religious practices but this has not been requested. Councillors are actively encouraged to attend Equality and Diversity training.

		Positive impact – it could benefit	Negative impact or risk – it could disadvantage	Explanation
	Christian			No impact - ditto
	Hindu			No impact – ditto
	Jewish			No impact – ditto
	Muslim			No impact - ditto
	Sikh			No impact - ditto
	Other – please specify			No impact - ditto
Language	English not first language			No impact – meeting papers and information on the website are in English only. This could impact on persons with limited English language skills but translation services are available. No translation service is available during meetings but this has not been requested.
Social inclusion	Low income			No impact – meetings are generally held in the town centre which is most accessible for all. Occasionally, if the subject matter impacts on particular communities, meetings have been held in that community.
	Rural isolation			No impact - ditto
Equal opportunities and /or improved relations				

8. Based on the explanations you have given in question 7, could the policy, service or strategy discriminate against any group(s) either directly or indirectly? If yes, please state how.

No, because adequate measures are in place to ensure equality of opportunity to decision making.

Note: Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their racial or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would disadvantage people on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, unless the practice can be objectively justified by a legitimate aim.

9 a) If you have identified any negative impacts in question 7, how could you minimise or remove this negative impact?

Not applicable

9 b) If you have identified any positive impacts in question 7, how could you improve or promote this positive impact?

Not applicable

10. What consultation has been carried out on the policy, service or strategy? Who with? Please give the findings of the consultation below.

None at this stage

11. Do the findings from the consultation remove any negative impacts identified in question 7? Please give an explanation below.

Not applicable

12. If consultation has not been carried out, and you have no data or information available which monitors the impact of the policy, service or strategy on equality target groups, how do you intend to make a decision on the impact?

Ward Councillors encourage local residents to attend meetings to present their views; the council website has a feedback form for those attending meetings.

13. Please give details of how you (or how you intend to) collect monitoring data in relation to any of the following equality target groups:

Age: This data will not be collected because it is not expected that it will impact on the use of the service.	Disability: This data will not be collected because it is not expected that it will impact on the use of the service.
Gender/transgender: This data will not be collected because it is not expected that it will impact on the use of the service.	Race: This data will not be collected because it is not expected that it will impact on the use of the service.
Religion and belief: This data will not be collected because it is not expected that it will impact on the use of the service.	Sexual orientation: This data will not be collected because it is not expected that it will impact on the use of the service.
Low income: This data will not be collected because it is not expected that it will impact on the use of the service.	Rural isolation: This data will not be collected because it is not expected that it will impact on the use of the service.
English not first language: This data will not be collected because it is not expected that it will impact on the use of the service.	Other (please state): This data will not be collected because it is not expected that it will impact on the use of the service.

14. Which main audience, users or customers identified in question 3 have you involved in producing this EqlA?

None, other than Have Your Say! Questionnaire results.

15. Summary of initial screening

Findings	Action required
No negative impacts have been identified and this has been justified with data or information. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off initial screening and finish.
Negative impacts were identified but have been minimised or removed. <input type="checkbox"/> ✓	Implement actions identified in question x then sign off initial screening and finish.
Negative impacts were identified but have not been minimised or removed. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off initial screening and complete a full impact assessment.
Insufficient evidence to make a judgement. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off initial screening and complete a full impact assessment.

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send one copy to the relevant director and one to the Equality and Diversity Officer.

Name:	Amanda Chidgey	Copy sent to Head of Service? (Lucie Breadman)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Job title:	Democratic Services Manager	Copy sent to Equality and Diversity Officer?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of completion:	27 November 2010	Copy reviewed by Diversity Steering Group?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Date for review of this screening:	27 November 2013	Copy published on CBC website and The Hub?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

If you have identified any negative impact which is possibly discriminatory and not intended and/or of high impact, you must complete Section Two, Full Impact Assessment. Please contact the Equality and Diversity Officer for further information.

Full Equality Impact Assessment

In the EqIA screening you identified negative impacts that have not been minimised or removed, or there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement, therefore you now need to complete a full impact assessment:

- You need to show what information, data or evidence you have gathered, including consultation, and the findings; and
- You are required to complete the action plan to show how you will use the information gathered to minimise, reduce or remove the negative impacts you have identified.

Once you have completed these sections you can sign off the full EqIA.

If you require further information on how to complete an EqIA please see the FAQs or contact Claire Gayfer, Equality and Diversity Officer on 01206 506452 or by email Claire.gayfer@colchester.gov.uk

1. What information has been gathered, including consultation with target equality groups, on how the policy, service or strategy could impact on equality target groups. This could include consultation with the general (i.e. whole) population analysed by certain groups? If there has already been consultation what does it indicate about negative impact of this strategy, project or policy?

Equality target groups	Information gathered and findings
Women	
Black and minority ethnic people (including Gypsies and Travellers)	
Young people and children	
Older people	
People with disabilities	
Lesbian, gay or bisexual people	
Transgender people	
People with religious faith or beliefs	
People on low incomes	
People living in rural areas	

Equality target groups	Information gathered and findings
People without English as their first language.	
CBH Staff	

2. As a result of this assessment and available evidence collected, including consultation, state whether there will need to be any changes made/planned to the policy, service or strategy. If yes, please state changes to be made below.

3a) Have you set up a monitoring/evaluation/review process to check the successful implementation of the policy, service or strategy?

YES ☐ NO ☐

3b) How will this monitoring/evaluation further assess the impact on the equality target groups/ensure the policy, service or strategy is non-discriminatory?

Action Plan

Equality strands	Negative impact	Action to minimise or remove negative impact	By who?	By when?	Progress to date
Gender					
Race					
Disability					
Sexual orientation					
Age					
Religion or belief					
Low income					
Rural isolation					
English not first language					

Sign off full EqIA

Name:		Copy sent to Head of Service? (Please name)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Job title:		Copy sent to Equality and Diversity Officer?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of completion:		Copy reviewed by Diversity Steering Group?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Date action plan will be reviewed:		Copy published on CBC website and The Hub?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>