

Colchester Borough Council

Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy to be assessed:

Environmental Sustainability Strategy (ESS)

NB: 'Policy' is meant broadly to mean policy, strategy, service, function, activity or decision.

The current version of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy can be viewed [here](#) (please note the document may be in mark-up while consultation with Portfolio Holders take place across the various Service areas).

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

- To look at how we can build resilient communities to deal with the effects of climate change
- To ensure we are meeting statutory obligations to monitor and report on green house gas emissions
- To look at how we can meet the objectives and priorities laid out in the HECA report
- To review the Councils commitment to the Nottingham declaration, and consider progressing to Climate Local
- To see how we can help communities to deliver projects and services that work towards reducing CO2, renewable energy, energy saving initiatives, reducing fuel poverty and other effects of climate change on the East of England

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

In order to achieve our environmental sustainability vision, we have identified 2 strategic priorities:

Strategic Priority 1

'Community Leadership' by reducing the environmental impact of Colchester Borough Council's Building Services and Operations

Strategic Priority 2

'Building resilient communities' by working with Colchester's Residents, Businesses and Third Sector Organisations.

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so what are they?

- The strategy links with other action plans, policies and strategies (both internal and external) but it does not replace any other strategy

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

- Officers & Managers within the Council and how they deliver services
- Communities
- Councillors
- Community groups and local charities with a 'green' focus

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

This is how we plan to deliver on each priority:

Strategic Priority 1:

Key Objectives:

- Meet targets in CO2e reduction.

- Show community leadership by making further commitments to reduce carbon emissions.
- Embed green procurement.
- Reduce energy use.
- Assess opportunities for saving water.
- Support our staff to be greener.
- Improve our housing stock.
- Improve recycling performance.

Strategic Priority 2:

Key Objectives:

- Support local communities to help them to become more resilient to climate change.
- Align our own strategies to enable a collaborative approach with external partners.
- Develop, create and promote opportunities for environmental understanding, to help retain rural skills and grow the local green economy.
- Identify sources of grant and match funding.
- Create opportunities to reduce energy costs and use in our communities.
- Identify opportunities to deliver sustainable transport.
- Increase the number of warmer, greener homes.
- Encourage residents and businesses to access information about environmental sustainability online.
- Work to reduce fuel poverty.
- Engage with partner agencies that could support us in the delivery of sustainability projects.
- Support activities and projects that meet the 'buy local' agenda to keep trade local.

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below:

- ECC

- All Service areas across the Council.
- Community Partners and Third Sector.

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations¹ which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff?

This is included within the completed [evidence base](#) for the strategy.

If so provide details and include a link to the document or source where available.

8. The ‘general duty’ states that we must have “due regard” to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation?
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a ‘protected characteristic²’ and those who do not?³
- (c) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not?⁴

Not all policies help us to meet the ‘general duty’, but most do.

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to meet the ‘general duty’:

The policy helps us to ‘eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation’ in the following way(s):

- Supporting people to access mainstream services by putting measures in place to improve access for all
- Working with CSC manager to ensure good quality information is available (such as a 24hr information phone line set up to advise residents on energy switching).

¹Click on [surveys or consultations](#) for more information. The Council’s surveys and consultations include ‘equality monitoring information’ to help us identify any particular concerns or views expressed by any particular group or ‘protected characteristic’. It can also help us to assess how representative of our customers the respondent group is. Local Data on the Protected Characteristics is available [on this page](#) of the Hub.

²The Equality Act’s ‘protected characteristics’ include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

³This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

⁴This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

The policy helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s):

- Helping people in communities to help themselves.
- Supporting community groups to access external funds to run new projects and help people considered vulnerable.
- Improves access to projects that are normally accessed online, supporting people unable to get online by assisting local charity to get external grant funding to provide one to one support for vulnerable households/ families.

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s):

- Building new partnerships and collaborative projects.

9. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Age	Older people (60+)		<p>Better access to services such as energy switching</p> <p>Addressing fuel poverty, providing cheaper energy and energy saving advice for residents</p> <p>Improving services locally by supporting transition towns and community groups to deliver support to local residents</p> <p>Building better relationships with Zones</p>		<p>If funding or community partnerships withdraw some projects/ additional support to access offline support could come to an end</p>
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)		<p>Volunteering opportunities generated as a result of the new partnerships, focussing on training unemployed</p> <p>Addressing fuel poverty, providing cheaper energy and energy saving advice for residents</p> <p>Improving services locally by supporting transition towns and community groups to deliver support to local residents</p> <p>Building better relationships with Zones</p>		
Disability	Physical		<p>Volunteering opportunities generated as a result of the new partnerships, focussing on training unemployed</p>		
	Sensory				
	Learning				

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
	Mental health issues				
	Other – <i>specify</i>		<p>Addressing fuel poverty, providing cheaper energy and energy saving advice for residents</p> <p>Improving services locally by supporting Third Sector to deliver support to local residents</p> <p>Building better relationships with Zones</p>		
Ethnicity ⁵	White		Volunteering opportunities generated as a result of the new partnerships, focussing on training unemployed		
	Black				
	Chinese				
	Mixed Ethnic Origin		<p>Addressing fuel poverty, providing cheaper energy and energy saving advice for residents</p> <p>Improving services locally by Third Sector to deliver support to local residents</p> <p>Building better relationships with Zones</p>		
	Gypsies/ Travellers				
	Other – <i>please state</i>				

⁵ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian (Asian or Asian British), African, Caribbean, Other Black (Black or Black British), White and Black African, White and Asian, White and Black Caribbean (Mixed), British, Irish, Other White (White), Chinese, Other (Other Ethnic Group).

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Language	English not first language		<p>Volunteering opportunities generated as a result of the new partnerships, focussing on training unemployed</p> <p>Addressing fuel poverty, providing cheaper energy and energy saving advice for residents</p> <p>Improving services locally by supporting Third Sector to deliver support to local residents</p> <p>Building better relationships with Zones</p>		The strategy and project information, including the BCS automated line is in English only.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks		<p>Volunteering opportunities generated as a result of the new partnerships, focussing on training unemployed</p> <p>Addressing fuel poverty, providing cheaper energy and energy saving advice for residents</p> <p>Improving services locally by supporting Third Sector to deliver support to local residents</p> <p>Building better relationships with Zones</p>		

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)		<p>Volunteering opportunities generated as a result of the new partnerships, focussing on training unemployed</p> <p>Addressing fuel poverty, providing cheaper energy and energy saving advice for residents</p> <p>Improving services locally by supporting Third Sector to deliver support to local residents</p> <p>Building better relationships with Zones</p>		
Sex	Men		<p>Volunteering opportunities generated as a result of the new partnerships, focussing on training unemployed</p> <p>Addressing fuel poverty, providing cheaper energy and energy saving advice for residents</p> <p>Improving services locally by supporting Third Sector to deliver support to local residents</p> <p>Building better relationships with Zones</p>		
	Women				

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Gender Reassignment ⁶	Transgender/ Transsexual		Volunteering opportunities generated as a result of the new partnerships, focussing on training unemployed		
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian		Addressing fuel poverty, providing cheaper energy and energy saving advice for residents		
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership		Improving services locally by supporting Third Sector to deliver support to local residents Building better relationships with Zones		

10. If you have identified any negative impacts (above) how can they be minimised or removed?

- *Monitoring and evaluation of the action plan*
- *iChoosr could be asked to collect ethnicity information so we can see who is accessing the energy switching service, and if this proves to be an issue we would be able to consider replicating information in another/ other language(s)*

11. Could the policy discriminate⁷ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly⁸?

⁶ The protected characteristic of gender reassignment is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as “a person proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.” This is a personal process that may involve medical interventions such as counselling, psychotherapy, hormone therapy or surgery, but does not have to. NB: It is generally held that transgender people disguise their features or clothing to resemble their preferred sex, whereas transsexual people wish to change their body to completely resemble their preferred sex.

⁷ The Council has a general duty to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their 'protected characteristic' whether on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity; religion or belief; sex (gender), sexual orientation, or marriage and civil partnership. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would nevertheless disadvantage people on the grounds of their 'protected characteristic'.

(Please read the footnotes below before completing this section.)

- *Nothing has been identified*

⁸ If you answer 'yes' to question 11 (above) you will need to complete this section *and* go on to complete Section 2 in order to conduct a full Equality Impact Assessment.

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

12. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
No negative impacts have been identified X	Sign off screening and finish. Copy to Gareth Mitchell 18/12/14
Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

13. Name and job title of person completing this form:

- Wendy Bixby, Sustainability & Projects Officer

14. Date of completion:

- Version 2 completed 18/12/14

15. Date for update or review of this screening:

- January 2020 (based on a review taking place when the strategy is next under review)

Summary and findings of Full Equality Impact Assessment

17. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
Likely negative impacts have been identified but are considered to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
Further planned engagement with equality target groups will take place in order to gain sufficient evidence to make a judgement on impact. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and review within 6 months.
Planned engagement has taken place: No likely negative impacts have been identified. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
Planned engagement has taken place: Likely negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off and finish.
The policy could be unlawfully discriminatory and will not be implemented. <input type="checkbox"/>	Finish without signing off.

18. Name and job title of person completing this form:

19. Date of completion:

20. Date for update or review of this screening:

If you have now signed off this full assessment, please send a copy to the relevant Head of Service and the Equality and Safeguarding Officer. You also need to arrange for it to be published on the Council's website [here](#) – under the relevant service area heading.