

## **Colchester Borough Council**

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

#### Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy/ decision to be assessed:

#### **Essex Faith Covenant**

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

The Essex Faith Covenant lists key principles and commitments in order to develop partnership activity.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

Partnership activity between the Council and faith groups

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

There is no change to existing policy. The Essex Faith Covenant seeks to embed, and derive further benefit from, existing links between public services (including the Council) and faith communities.

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

Colchester residents

Individuals within faith communities

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

Signatories to the Covenant commit to working together to:

Pro-actively build relationships and trust between faith groups and public services.

Create opportunities to raise awareness and share learning and knowledge between different faith communities, and within the public services.

Seek opportunities to bring people together to serve the community, particularly the most disadvantaged

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

Essex County Council  
Essex Police  
Essex Fire and Rescue  
Other district councils

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations<sup>1</sup> which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff?

Consultation took place as part of ECC's work with faiths communities, including those in Colchester, during 2016 and 2017. This has helped in the process of drafting the Essex Faiths Covenant. However, no specific data or analysis has been made 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 characteristic'<sup>2</sup> and those who do not<sup>3</sup>
- (c) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not<sup>4</sup>

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

---

<sup>1</sup>Click 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.

<sup>2</sup> The 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.

<sup>3</sup> This 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.

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

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):

Partnership working between CBC and faiths communities is likely to be enhanced by the Covenant. This may help the Council to understand more about local faith communities and meet individual needs. This may assist the Council in eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment on the basis of religion and belief and/or race.

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

Partnership working between CBC and faiths communities is likely to be enhanced by the Covenant. This may help the Council to understand more about local faith communities and meet individual needs. This may assist the Council in advancing equality of opportunity (in respect of religion and belief and/ or race).

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

Partnership working between CBC and faiths communities is likely to be enhanced by the Covenant. This may help the Council to understand more about local faith communities. This may assist the Council in promoting understanding and tackling prejudice.

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+)		No specific impact has been identified.		No specific impact has been identified.
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)		No specific impact has been identified.		No specific impact has been identified.
Disability	Physical		No specific impact has been identified.		No specific impact has been identified.
	Sensory		As above		No specific impact has been identified.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
	Learning		As above		No specific impact has been identified.
	Mental health issues		As above		No specific impact has been identified.
	Other – <i>specify</i>				.
Race/ Ethnicity <sup>5</sup>	White		No specific impact has been identified.		No specific impact has been identified.
	Black	X	Enhanced partnership working between CBC and faith communities may help to increase access to Council services from this group.		No specific impact has been identified.
	Chinese		As above		No specific impact has been identified.
	Mixed Ethnic Origin		As above		No specific impact has been identified.
	Gypsies/ Travellers				No specific impact has been identified.
	Other – <i>please state</i>				
Language	English not first language	X	Enhanced partnership working between CBC and faith communities may help to increase access to Council services from this group.		No specific impact has been identified.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks		No specific impact has been identified.		No specific impact has been identified.
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	X	Enhanced partnership working between CBC and faith communities may help to increase access to Council services from this group.		No specific impact has been identified.
Sex	Men		No specific impact has been identified.		No specific impact has been identified.
	Women		No specific impact has been identified.		No specific impact has been identified.

<sup>5</sup> 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
Gender Reassignment <sup>6</sup>	Transgender/ Transsexual		No specific impact has been identified.		No specific impact has been identified.
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian		No specific impact has been identified.		No specific impact has been identified.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership		No specific impact has been identified.		No specific impact has been identified.

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

Not Applicable – No negative impacts identified.

11. Could the policy discriminate<sup>7</sup> against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly<sup>8</sup>?

No

---

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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'.

<sup>8</sup> 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
<b>No negative impacts have been identified X</b>	<b>Sign off screening and finish.</b>
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:

Andrew Harley – Equality and Safeguarding Co-ordinator  
Joanne Besant – Equality & Diversity Officer

14. Date of completion:

July 2017

Reviewed by JB November 2019

15. Date for update or review of this screening:

November 2022