

Equality Impact Assessment

Introduction

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a tool to help local authorities ensure their policies, and the ways they carry out their functions, do what they are intended to do and for everybody.

The Equality Act 2010 includes a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which requires public authorities to try and eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it and promote equality and good relations across a range of protected characteristics.

The protected characteristics are:

Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment
Marriage and civil partnership	Pregnancy and maternity	Race
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)	Sex	Sexual orientation

The council also considers specific protected groups to ensure they are reflected in strategic decision-making. These include:

Armed forces personnel and Veterans	Carers	Care leavers
Socio-economically disadvantaged	Rural communities	

An EqIA should be completed with the full range of protected characteristics considered during the initial stages of developing new strategies, policies, functions or services, prior to starting a procurement exercise and before decisions are made, e.g. at committee or council meetings.

Examples of when an EqIA should be completed are:

Any proposals to introduce or add to a service	Any proposals to adopt policy priorities, legislation, strategies and plans
Any proposals to remove, reduce or alter a service	Changes to staffing structure where groups of employees are likely to be negatively affected
Any new policies or changes to policies	Any proposals in relation to procured or commissioned services

Person(s) responsible for this EqIA	
Officer responsible: Emma Cathcart	Service area: Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit
Job title: Assistant Director	Date of assessment: September 2026

This assessment considers and sets out the general activities of the Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit. Any activities adhere to legislation and Policies which set out the Council's enforcement tools and the considerations adopted when determining whether enforcement action should be taken and if so, what that action should be.

This activity is applicable to investigation and enforcement and can impact staff across the Council and residents / members of the public. Prosecutions will only be considered where the evidential and public interest tests are met with due consideration to the welfare of individuals. Appropriate enforcement activity acts as a deterrent and benefits the public.

Policies set out the councils' legislative obligations when carrying out enforcement and the associated impact. Some Policies have no direct impact, they ensure due diligence that the council fulfils them and is not complicit in criminal activity.

Legislation which is considered is various and wide ranging as the council has various enforcement responsibilities.

Assessment of impacts

For each protected characteristic or protected group, please indicate the type of impact:

- Positive – contributes to promoting equality or improving relations between people with protected characteristics and protected groups
- Neutral – no impact
- Negative – could disadvantage them.

Protected characteristic or group	Impact	Description of impact	Mitigating action (if negatively impacted)
AGE	Positive	Enforcement action may not be appropriate in relation to older offenders	
DISABILITY A definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 is available here .	Positive and negative	Enforcement action may not be appropriate in cases where the offender has a disability particularly where an offender lacks mental capacity. Activity relating to the reduction of blue badge misuse and subsequent campaigns regarding correct use will impact positively. Those that have used their badge incorrectly or are party to misuse could be impacted in terms of enforcement which could be seen negatively.	Where an offender lacks mental capacity or has a relevant disability, adjustments will be made to support the individual through the process and enforcement action will not be taken where it is not appropriate to do so. Where necessary, individuals may request documentation or explanation that would assist them to understand/read information related to the enforcement activity being undertaken. To reduce blue badge misuse, media campaigns will seek to raise awareness to maximise correct use of a blue badge and limit 'accidental' misuse.

GENDER REASSIGNMENT	Neutral		
MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	Neutral		
PREGNANCY & MATERNITY	Neutral		
RACE* Further information on the breakdown below each of these headings, is available here. For example, Asian, includes Chinese, Pakistani and Indian etc.	Neutral	N.B - Interpreters and translation of documents are provided where necessary	
RELIGION & BELIEF** A list of religions used in the Census is available here	Neutral		
SEX	Neutral		
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Neutral		
Socio-economically disadvantaged The term socio-economic refers to the differences between groups of people caused mainly by their financial situation. These include factors like employment, education, health, income, living environment, crime, and access to housing.	Positive and negative	Individuals experiencing disadvantage in this area are impacted more by Policies associated with Council Tax Reduction Scheme awards. The work being undertaken to ensure the housing waiting lists are correct impacts positively by ensuring those who are eligible have an increased chance of being housed.	Considerations regarding financial impact form part of any decision making where individuals are from low-income households.
Rural communities Considerations include how people who live in rural parts of the district can access council services, transport, education, employment, and internet and broadband.	Neutral		
Carers A carer is anyone, including children and adults, who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care	Neutral		

they give is unpaid. ¹ Please see guidance for considering care experience in EqIAs here .			
Care Leavers A care leaver is defined in law as someone over the age of 16 who has been in the care of the local authority and/or Health and Social Care Trust for a period of at least 13 weeks or more. Please see guidance for considering care experience in EqIAs here .	Neutral		
Other protected groups if applicable (e.g. refugees or asylum seekers, homeless people)	Neutral		

¹ NHS commissioning » Who is considered a carer?