

## Equality and Rurality Impact Assessment Form

When completing this form you will need to provide evidence that you have considered how the ‘protected characteristics’ may be impacted upon by this decision. In line with the General Equality Duty the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard for the need to:

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This form should be completed in conjunction with the guidance document available on the Intranet

Once completed a copy should be emailed to [cheryl.sloan@publicagroup.uk](mailto:cheryl.sloan@publicagroup.uk) to be signed off by an equalities officer before being published.

1. Person responsible for this assessment:

Name: **Andy Barge, Assistant Director – Communities**

Date of assessment: **20 February 2023**

Telephone: **01594 812290**

Email: [andy.barge@publicagroup.uk](mailto:andy.barge@publicagroup.uk)

2. Name of the policy, service, strategy, procedure or function:

**West Oxfordshire District Council – Grants Review**

Is this a new or existing one? Existing

3. Briefly describe it aims and objectives

West Oxfordshire District Council recognises that the voluntary and community sector provides a range of valued services and facilities to local communities in West Oxfordshire and wish to continue this support through grant funding schemes.

This grants review has considered the most effective way to use the grants budgets available and to look for opportunities to widen its reach and impact. It proposes an approach better aligned to the outcomes intended from the new [Council Plan 2023 -2027](#) and fostering greater community engagement and involvement.

The Council Plan itself was shaped by an extensive ‘Your Voice Counts’ consultation and therefore reflects what’s most important to our residents, so there was a desire for this to be reflected in the new approach.

4. Are there any external considerations? (e.g. Legislation/government directives)

No, the proposals all relate to the Council's discretionary grants budgets and not to any statutory schemes. The way in which this resource is invested is at the Council's discretion, subject to appropriate governance, transparency and financial safeguards.

5. What evidence has helped to inform this assessment?

Source	✓	If ticked please explain what
Demographic data and other statistics, including census findings		
Recent research findings including studies of deprivation	✓	The learning from firstly the Covid-19 pandemic and latterly the cost of living crisis shows the ability of the voluntary and community sector to understand and meet community need. The Council should therefore support and where possible improve its resilience and ability to deliver.
Results of recent consultations and surveys	✓	An extensive 'Your Voice' consultation informed the new Council Plan 2023-2027, which has in turn defined the four 'lots' or outcomes intended from its revenue grants programme, supported by 3-year service level agreements. Youth Needs Assessment 2021
Results of ethnic monitoring data and any equalities data		
Anecdotal information from groups and agencies within Oxfordshire		
Comparisons between similar functions or policies elsewhere	✓	The award winning success of Crowdfund Cotswold
Analysis of audit reports and reviews	✓	Community grants audit October 2020
Other:	✓	The total budget available to support the Council's approach to grant funding is not proposed to reduce as part of this review

6. Please specify how intend to gather evidence to fill any gaps identified above:

No gaps have been identified for the purposes of conducting this review. Its implementation can be informed by demographic and deprivation data when reviewing and assessing applications received for grant funding, or for projects pitched for crowdfunding and asking for a Council pledge of support.

7. Has any consultation been carried out?

Yes - please see section 5 above

If No, please outline any planned activities

N/A

8. What level of impact either directly or indirectly will the proposal have upon the general public / staff? (Please quantify where possible)

Level of impact	Response
NO IMPACT – The proposal has no impact upon the general public/staff	
LOW – Few members of the general public/staff will be affected by this proposal	
<b>MEDIUM</b> – A large group of the general public/staff will be affected by this proposal	✓
HIGH – The proposal will have an impact upon the whole community/all staff	

Comments: The revenue grants programme is focussed on the broad themes of environment; climate and ecology; and community resilience and wellbeing. Equally, the civic crowdfunding will invite projects from across the District and be focussed on:

- Improving the physical and mental wellbeing of our local communities
- Directly addressing climate change
- Enhancing lives through events and activities
- Supporting young peoples' ideas and ambitions
- Helping to tackle the barriers and challenges many of us experience in life, such as poverty, ill health, distance from services, social isolation/loneliness
- Cultivating food equity, building a fair food system for everyone
- Protecting and enhancing our natural and built environment
- Investing in and maintaining the facilities we rely on for these activities to take place

9. Considering the available evidence, what type of impact could this function have on any of the protected characteristics?

*Negative – it could disadvantage and therefore potentially not meet the General Equality duty;*

*Positive – it could benefit and help meet the General Equality duty;*

*Neutral – neither positive nor negative impact / Not sure*

	Potential Negative	Potential Positive	Neutral	Reasons	Options for mitigating adverse impacts
Age – Young People		✓		<p>Lot 3 of the revenue grants programme has an intended outcome of “Increasing community resilience and amplifying the voice of the seldom heard, so that we take action on issues most important to our residents and their needs, such as access to food, supporting young people and cultural provision”</p> <p>Intended outcomes from civic crowdfunding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community led change</li> <li>• Improved health and food equity</li> <li>• Well connected and resilient communities</li> <li>• Improved mental and physical wellbeing across all age groups and backgrounds</li> <li>• Improved essential local infrastructure that facilitates rural living</li> <li>• Improved environmental outcomes, such as carbon reduction, improved biodiversity or green infrastructure</li> </ul>	No adverse impacts identified
Age – Old People		✓			
Disability		✓			
Sex – Male			✓		
Sex – Female			✓		
Race including Gypsy and Travellers			✓		
Religion or Belief			✓		
Sexual Orientation			✓		
Gender Reassignment			✓		
Pregnancy and maternity			✓		
Geographical impacts on one area		✓			
Other Groups			✓		
<b>Rural considerations:</b> i.e. Access to services; leisure facilities, transport; education; employment; broadband.		✓			

10. Action plan (add additional lines if necessary)

Action(s)	Lead Officer	Resource	Timescale
Use demographic and deprivation data when reviewing and assessing applications received for grant funding, or for projects pitched for crowdfunding and asking for a Council pledge of support.	Grants Officer	Time Oxfordshire Insight	September 2023 – January 2024 for grant funding September 2023 – March 2026 for civic crowdfunding

11. Is there is anything else that you wish to add?

N/A

### Declaration

I/We are satisfied that an equality impact assessment has been carried out on this policy, service, strategy, procedure or function and where an negative impact has been identified actions have been developed to lessen or negate this impact. We understand that the Equality Impact Assessment is required by the District Council and that we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment.

Completed By:	Andy Barge, Assistant Director – Communities	Date:	20 February 2023
Line Manager:	Jan Britton, Managing Director	Date:	20 February 2023
Reviewed by Corporate Equality Officer:	Cheryl Sloan, Business Manager - Business Continuity, Governance and Risk	Date:	20 February 2023