

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Engagement and our equality duty

Whilst [the Gunning Principles](#) set out the rules for consulting ‘everyone’, additional requirements are in place to avoid discrimination and inequality.

Cheshire East Council is required to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Equality Act 2010 simplified previous anti-discrimination laws with a single piece of legislation. Within the Act, the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149) has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, by consciously thinking about equality when making decisions (such as in developing policy, delivering services and commissioning from others)
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, by removing disadvantages, meeting their specific needs, and encouraging their participation in public life
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not

The Equality Duty helps public bodies to deliver their overall objectives for public services, and as such should be approached as a positive opportunity to support good decision-making.

It encourages public bodies to understand how different people will be affected by their activities so that policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. By understanding the effect of their activities on different people, and how inclusive public services can support and open up people’s opportunities, public bodies are better placed to deliver policies and services that are efficient and effective.

Complying with the Equality Duty may involve treating some people better than others, as far as this is allowed by discrimination law. For example, it may involve providing a service in a way which is appropriate for people who share a protected characteristic, such as providing computer training to all people to help them access information and services.

The Equality Act identifies nine 'protected characteristics' and makes it a legal requirement to make sure that people with these characteristics are protected from discrimination:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Applying the equality duty to engagement

If you are developing a new policy, strategy or programme you may need to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment. You may be able to ascertain the impact of your proposal on different characteristics through desk-based research and learning from similar programmes, but you also need to carry out some primary research and engagement. People with protected characteristics are often described as 'hard to reach' but you will find everyone can be reached – you just need to tailor your approach, so it is accessible for them.

Contacting the [Equality and Diversity mailbox](#) will help you to understand how you can gain insight as to the impacts of your proposals and will ensure that you help the Council to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Section 1 – Details of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function or procedure

Proposal Title	Wider Borough Carbon Neutral Action Plan
Date of Assessment	21/11/2023
Assessment Lead Officer Name	Emma Williams
Directorate/Service	Environmental Services
Details of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function or procedure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheshire East Council has signed up to the UK 100 pledge and in so doing has committed itself to borough wide carbon neutrality by 2045. • To achieve this objective the council needs to create an action plan, for the five years between 2024 and 2029. • The aim of the plan will be to set in place the structures and policies to reduce carbon within the borough and to begin that process of reduction. • There is scientific consensus over the threat posed by climate change and national and international targets are in place to limit the impact of carbon. • The action plan will, together with the council’s 2025 carbon neutral action plan, form a central pillar of the new Cheshire East plan.
Who is Affected?	<p>All residents and staff of Cheshire East will be affected by the actions to be taken to reduce carbon emissions in the borough.</p> <p>It is likely that some groups will be affected more than others by this process, it is also the case that the same groups are likely to be affected more than others by the impacts of climate change as these impacts become more problematic.</p> <p>It is anticipated that disabled residents, residents in rural areas and residents who are fiscally disadvantaged will be affected more than others.</p> <p><u>Rural residents</u> Incentives/plans for active travel less likely to be relevant Population densities for energy efficiency group measures will be less Any changes to public transport will be more impactful</p> <p><u>Disabled residents</u></p>

	<p>Increased pedestrianisation, drives to encourage public transport use and active travel could have a more significant impact on people with disabilities, particularly those with mobility issues.</p> <p>Changes to home heating could impact those with lung conditions or joint issues</p> <p>Efforts to eliminate single use plastics can have a detrimental effect on those with disabilities due to the need for disposable assistance equipment such as plastic straws and disposable wipes.</p> <p><u>Disadvantaged</u></p> <p>Those who are fiscally disadvantaged may struggle to afford retrofit measures or new technologies</p>
<p>Links and impact on other services, strategies, functions or procedures.</p>	<p>Carbon reduction cuts across many areas of council work and will impact Highways and Transport, Public Health, Green Spaces, Housing, Education, Tourism, Regeneration, farming and agriculture, economy and industry, waste services, parks and green spaces, countryside, and possibly others.</p> <p>Carbon Neutrality by 2025 (council) and 2045 (borough) are central to the revised corporate plan.</p>

<p>How does the service, service change, strategy, function or procedure help the Council meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty?</p>	<p>Carbon neutrality actions produce co-benefits which will promote equality of opportunity by providing better green spaces, improved access to public transport and active modes of transport and improves air quality.</p> <p>It is also noted that a lack of action with regards to carbon reduction is likely to lead to climate change creating more unstable weather and more extreme impacts which will generally have a more direct impact on those most vulnerable in society.</p>
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Section 2- Information – What do you know?

<p>What do you know?</p>	<p>What information (qualitative and quantitative) and/or research have you used to commission/change/decommission the service, strategy, function, or procedure?</p>
<p>Information you used</p>	<p>We have worked with a firm of consultants to review action being taken by other councils within the carbon sphere – results shown in the Baseline Report PowerPoint Presentation (cheshireeast.gov.uk).</p> <p>In preparing the initial draft of the 2024-29 action plan we have consulted with council members, officers, town and parish councils, business groups, the NHS, climate groups and the council's differently abled network</p>
<p>Gaps in your Information</p>	<p>We will need to engage with members of the public and organisations representing groups that may be disadvantaged by the work we are doing to ensure our proposals do not cause harm to particular groups.</p>

3. What did people tell you?

What did people tell you	What consultation and engagement activities have you already undertaken and what did people tell you? Is there any feedback from other local and/or external regional/national consultations that could be included in your assessment?
<p>Details and dates of the consultation/s and/or engagement activities</p>	<p>We have reviewed the carbon plans of other councils and the equality impacts they have identified.</p> <p><u>Slough Borough Council</u></p> <p>Slough Council did not consider that a high level carbon management plan required an Equalities Impact Assessment but recognised that the impacts of climate change can have differing effects based on gender, disability, age and to a certain extent on race.</p> <p>https://democracy.slough.gov.uk/documents/s61462/Report.pdf</p> <p><u>Wyre Council</u></p> <p>Wyre council brought forward a climate change strategy and felt there were no significant equality implications from this.</p> <p>https://wyre.moderngov.co.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=20327&ISATT=1#search=%22wider%20borough%20carbon%22</p> <p><u>Cheltenham Borough Council</u></p>

	<p>Cheltenham Council noted only the risk to equality of taking no or insufficient action on climate change as the impacts of a changing climate are likely to be felt most keenly by the most vulnerable.</p> <p>Crematorium Development WorkBook (cheltenham.gov.uk)</p> <p>We held consultation sessions with the council’s Differently Abled Group, local town and parish councils, council members, climate action groups and local business groups. These engagements helped us to understand that there is a broad level of support for carbon reduction actions, however there are groups who are economically and socially disadvantaged who have concerns about the way the transition will be managed and the impact this could have on them. For example a concern that disabled parking spaces will be removed either to take all cars out of a space or to install electric chargers. Also the cost of installing carbon reduction technologies such as heat pumps is seen to be unaffordable by many individuals.</p> <p>We intend to consult with the public more widely to inform the final version of the action plan.</p>
<p>Gaps in consultation and engagement feedback</p>	<p>We need to consult with the general public to establish if there are gaps in our understanding and to provide us with input as to areas of concern for particular groups.</p>

4. Review of information, consultation feedback and equality analysis

Protected characteristics groups from the Equality Act 2010	What do you know? Summary of information used to inform the proposal	What did people tell you? Summary of customer and/or staff feedback	What does this mean? Impacts identified from the information and feedback (actual and potential). These can be either positive, negative or have no impact.
Age	Information provided from consulting with public health and other groups	Elderly people and the very young may have particular vulnerabilities and will need additional consideration.	Active travel measures will not always be available to the very young or very old, it cannot be assumed that everyone has the same ability to walk or cycle. Retaining a warm and dry space can be a particular challenge to the very young and the very old. Retrofit schemes must ensure they are suitable for those with particular vulnerabilities.
Disability	Engagement with the Differently Abled Group.	People with certain disabilities may have particular vulnerabilities and will need additional consideration.	Active travel measures will not always be available to those with certain disabilities, it cannot be assumed that

					<p>everyone has the same ability to walk or cycle.</p> <p>Retaining a warm and dry space can be a particular challenge to those with certain disabilities. Retrofit schemes must ensure they are suitable for those with particular vulnerabilities.</p>
Gender reassignment	Consultation stakeholders	with	various	No particular considerations noted	No issues expected
Pregnancy and maternity	Consultation stakeholders	with	various	No particular considerations noted	No issues expected
Race/ethnicity	Consultation stakeholders	with	various	No particular considerations noted	No issues expected
Religion or belief	Consultation stakeholders	with	various	No particular considerations noted	No issues expected
Sex	Consultation stakeholders	with	various	No particular considerations noted	No issues expected

Sexual orientation	Consultation with various stakeholders	No particular considerations noted	No issues expected
Marriage and civil partnership	Consultation with various stakeholders	No particular considerations noted	No issues expected

5. Justification, Mitigation and Actions

Mitigation	What can you do? Actions to mitigate any negative impacts or further enhance positive impacts
<p>Please provide justification for the proposal if negative impacts have been identified? Are there any actions that could be undertaken to mitigate, reduce or remove negative impacts?</p> <p>Have all available options been explored? Please include details of alternative options and why they couldn't be considered?</p> <p>Please include details of how positive impacts could be further enhanced, if possible?</p>	<p>The proposal is for an overarching programme of activity. The impacts will need to be considered on a project by project basis and these individual projects will have solutions for vulnerable groups planned into their delivery.</p>

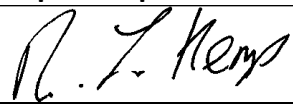
6. Monitoring and Review -

Monitoring and review	How will the impact of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function or procedure be monitored? How will actions to mitigate negative impacts be monitored? Date for review of the EIA
Details of monitoring activities	<p>The overarching programme of activity will be assessed to ensure that it takes into account a wide range of feedback.</p> <p>Each individual project will then need to be assessed against this EIA (which will be reviewed and retained as a live document).</p> <p>We will monitor the feedback we receive through comments, questions and FOIs to be sure that we are not causing difficulty to any particular groups.</p> <p>We will use the contact and partnership mechanisms established as parts of the action plan to check in with the impacts of our measures that we may be unsighted on.</p>
Date and responsible officer for the review of the EIA	Please include the date, responsible officer and department. It is recommended that the EIA be reviewed approximately 6 months after it has been signed off.

7. Sign Off

When you have completed your EIA, it should be sent to the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mailbox](#) for review. If your EIA is approved, it must then be signed off by a senior manager within your Department (Head of Service or above).

Once the EIA has been signed off, please forward a copy to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer to be published on the website. For Transparency, we are committed to publishing all Equality Impact Assessments relating to public engagement.

Name	Ralph Kemp
Signature	
Date	19/01/2024

OFFICIAL

8. Help and Support

For support and advice please contact EqualityandInclusion@cheshireeast.gov.uk