

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

TITLE: Statement of Community Involvement

VERSION CONTROL

Date	Version	Author	Description of Changes
07/09/2020	0.1	Tom Evans	
21/09/2020	0.2	Kathryn Bradley	Review of amends

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Stage 1 Description: Fact finding (about your policy / service / service)

Department	Place		Lead officer responsible for assessment		Tom Evans (Neighbourhood Planning Manager)	
Service	Strategic Planning		Other members of team undertaking assessment		n/a	
Date	September 2020		Version			
Type of document (mark as appropriate)	Strategy	Plan	Function	Policy	Procedure	Service
Is this a new/ existing/ revision of an existing document (please mark as appropriate)	New		Existing		Revision	
<p>Title and subject of the impact assessment (include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate and how it fits in with the wider aims of the organisation)</p> <p>Please attach a copy of the strategy/ plan/ function/ policy/ procedure/ service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement of Community Involvement Existing policy which is being revised <p>The Statement of Community Involvement is a statutory document that sets out how the council will engage with stakeholders in regard to the development of planning policy documents and development management decisions.</p> <p>In response to COVID-19, government has issued temporary regulations that reduce the need to provide hard copies of planning documents in libraries and offices, whilst emphasizing digital engagement.</p> <p>This EIA is focused on the delivery of a Covid-Secure approach to the Councils planning function and the implications for all staff and stakeholders.</p> <p>The already identified risk disparities by PHE against Covid-19 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age: adverse impacts on older people. Sex: adverse impacts on males. Race: adverse impacts on people from a Black and Minority Ethnic background (BAME) Co-morbidity: adversely impacting those with existing health conditions. 					
Who are the main stakeholders and have they been engaged with?	<p>The main stakeholders are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The general public 					

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

<p>(e.g. general public, employees, Councillors, partners, specific audiences, residents)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The development industry</i> • <i>CEC staff</i> <p>Specific characteristics that may be affected most by these proposals are age and disability. Charities that support older people, the 'Belong' (owners of residential care homes in Cheshire East) and Cheshire East 'Connected Communities' service have been consulted</p> <p>In the Census of 2011 Cheshire East reported that of a population of 378,800, 17.5% were registered disabled.</p> <p>The number of people reporting as between the age of 0 and 15 was 17.8% The number of people reporting as between the age of 16 – 64 was 59.7% The number of people reporting being over the age of 65 was 22.5%</p> <p>These figures will be adjusted when the census is collected in 2021.</p>
<p>What consultation method(s) did you use?</p>	<p>Email consultation was undertaken with the Councils Connected Communities service that resulted in recommendations of key contacts and organisations that should be consulted where hard copies of documents are not available publicly.</p>

Stage 2 Initial Screening

<p>Who is affected and what evidence have you considered to arrive at this analysis? (This may or may not include the stakeholders listed above)</p>	<p>The proposals could affect a range of protected characteristics based on their ability access digital services. The most likely characteristics affected are age and disability. Exploring the UK's Digital Divide, (Office for National Statistics, 2019) identified that over half on non-internet users were over 75 and over half were disabled. The percentage of non-internet users in both groups has been declining in recent years.</p> <p>The Cheshire East 2017 Communications Survey (full report is available online at our results webpages) shows a decrease in internet usage by age, with 33% of the over 75s asked never having used the internet at all. Further questions were asked about socio-demographics; however the report and analysis did not include this specifically on internet use.</p> <p>The ONS Internet use survey (2019) estimated 11% of residents in Cheshire East either used the internet more than 3 months ago or had never used it, this would equate to around 34,000 residents. There are no further Cheshire East specific breakdowns – the number of responses by local authority is too low – however, more generally the</p>
---	---

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

	<p>survey finds – NOTE these are national findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-users were typically more likely to be female • Older residents were more likely not to be users – 13% of males and 14% of females aged 65-74 had never used the internet or used it more than 3 months ago, 40% of men and 52% of females aged 75+ • Conversely younger respondents were much less likely to have never used, less than 1% for both males and females for those aged 16 to 44 • Respondents who were defined as per the Equality Act as disabled were more likely to have never used the internet or used it more than 3 months ago (18%) vs those who were not defined as disabled (4%) • Unemployed residents were more likely not have not used the internet in the last 3 months or never (2.3%) compared to those who were either employed (1.2%) or self employed (2.1%). Those who were economically active – people looking after family or not actively seeking work perhaps due to a disability or some other reason – were more likely not have not used the internet in the last 3 months or never (11.0%)
<p>Who is intended to benefit and how?</p>	<p>The revised policy could have a positive impact on any of the protected characteristics by reducing the need for public interaction when accessing planning documents, and therefore reducing transmission opportunities for Covid 19.</p>
<p>Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups?</p>	<p>Greater emphasis on digital services and the promotion of access to planning documents and consultation material through social media and other digital platforms may improve engagement with sections of the community that currently do not participate in planning decisions.</p> <p>There could be a different outcome for some of the older population and some disabled members of the population who for whatever reason do not have access to digital services. It is important that these residents know that they are able to access a hard copy of any documents should they need to.</p>
<p>Does it include making decisions based on individual characteristics, needs or circumstances?</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>Are relations between different groups or communities likely to be affected? (eg will it favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others?)</p>	<p>No. Although focusing consultation and access to planning documents toward digital services is more likely to affect older people and disabled people, mitigation measures are also proposed to ensure these groups can still access documents should they need to.</p>
<p>Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality? Is</p>	<p>The approach will include mitigation measures that ensure those that wish to access the council’s planning documents in hard copy can do so by pre-appointment at our library services and organisations that represent the potentially</p>

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

there a history of unequal outcomes (do you have enough evidence to prove otherwise)?		affected groups will also be consulted directly to obtain a representative response. ORgansiations that represent the identified groups will also be contacted directly to obtain responses (where relevant) that are representative of such groups.						
Is there an actual or potential negative impact on these specific characteristics? (Please tick)								
Age	Y		Marriage & civil partnership		N	Religion & belief	N	
Disability	Y		Pregnancy & maternity		N	Sex	Y	
Gender reassignment		N	Race		N	Sexual orientation	N	
What evidence do you have to support your findings? (quantitative and qualitative) Please provide additional information that you wish to include as appendices to this document, i.e., graphs, tables, charts							Consultation/ involvement carried out	
							Yes	No
Age	<i>Does this service provide any impact for different age groups? If so what is this?</i> Yes – it may reduce access to planning documents and consultation opportunities however mitigation measures are proposed to offset this impact					Yes		
Disability	<i>Does this service provide any impact for disabilities? If so what is this?</i> Yes – it may reduce access to planning documents and consultation opportunities however mitigation measures are proposed to offset this impact					Yes		
Gender reassignment	<i>Does this service provide any impact for those who have undergone gender reassignment? If so what is this?</i> No – existing information does not indicate that this group are significantly disadvantaged in terms of access to digital services/the internet						No	
Marriage & civil partnership	<i>Does this service provide any impact for people who are married or have a civil partner?</i> No – existing information does not indicate that this group are significantly disadvantaged in terms of access to digital services/the internet						No	
Pregnancy & maternity	<i>Does this service provide any impact for women who are pregnant or on maternity leave?</i> No – existing information does not indicate that this group are significantly disadvantaged in terms of access to digital services/the internet						No	
Race	<i>Does this service provide any impact for people from a particular race? If so what is this?</i> No – existing information does not indicate that this group are significantly disadvantaged in terms of access to digital services/the internet						No	

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Religion & belief	<i>Does this service provide any impact for people from different faith groups? If so what is this?</i> No – existing information does not indicate that this group are significantly disadvantaged in terms of access to digital services/the internet		No
Sex	<i>Does this service provide any impact for men or women? If so what is this?</i> Yes – it may reduce access to planning documents and consultation opportunities however mitigation measures are proposed to offset this impact	Yes	
Sexual orientation	<i>Does this service provide any impact for people who are gay, lesbian etc.? If so what is this?</i> No – existing information does not indicate that this group are significantly disadvantaged in terms of access to digital services/the internet		No
Proceed to full impact assessment? (Please tick)		Yes	Date September 2020
Lead officer sign off		Date	
Head of service sign off		Date	

If yes, please proceed to Stage 3. If no, please publish the initial screening as part of the suite of documents relating to this issue

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Stage 3 Identifying impacts and evidence

This section identifies if there are impacts on equality, diversity and cohesion, what evidence there is to support the conclusion and what further action is needed

Protected characteristics	<p>Is the policy (function etc....) likely to have an adverse impact on any of the groups?</p> <p>Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations</p> <p>List what negative impacts were recorded in Stage 1 (Initial Assessment).</p>	<p>Are there any positive impacts of the policy (function etc....) on any of the groups?</p> <p>Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations</p> <p>List what positive impacts were recorded in Stage 1 (Initial Assessment).</p>	<p>Please rate the impact taking into account any measures already in place to reduce the impacts identified</p> <p>High: Significant potential impact; history of complaints; no mitigating measures in place; need for consultation</p> <p>Medium: Some potential impact; some mitigating measures in place, lack of evidence to show effectiveness of measures</p> <p>Low: Little/no identified impacts; heavily legislation-led; limited public facing aspect</p>	<p>Further action (only an outline needs to be included here. A full action plan can be included at Section 4)</p> <p>Once you have assessed the impact of a policy/service, it is important to identify options and alternatives to reduce or eliminate any negative impact. Options considered could be adapting the policy or service, changing the way in which it is implemented or introducing balancing measures to reduce any negative impact. When considering each option you should think about how it will reduce any negative impact, how it might impact on other groups and how it might impact on relationships between groups and overall issues around community cohesion. You should clearly demonstrate how you have considered various options and the impact of these. You must have a detailed rationale behind decisions and a justification for those alternatives that have not been accepted.</p>
Age	<p>Yes – non-internet users are more likely to be over 75 (<i>The ONS Internet use survey and Exploring the UK's digital divide, both 2019</i>).</p>	<p>Yes, reducing access to physical copies of planning documents in buildings will reduce the chances of transmitting covid19 in this age group, who are especially at risk.</p>	<p>Low/Medium</p>	<p>Mitigation measures that allow individuals to pre-book an appointment at a library, to view a screen or document, in a covid-secure environment that enables track and trace to be carried out if necessary.</p> <p>Organisations that represent the potentially affected</p>

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

				groups will also be consulted directly to obtain a representative response.
Disability	Yes – non-internet users are more likely to be disabled (<i>The ONS Internet use survey and Exploring the UK's digital divide, both 2019</i>).	Yes, reducing access to physical copies of planning documents in buildings will reduce the chances of transmitting covid19 in this group.	Low/Medium	Mitigation measures are proposed that allow individuals to pre-book an appointment at a library, to view a screen or document, in a covid-secure environment that enables track and trace to be carried out if necessary. Organisations that represent the potentially affected groups will also be consulted directly to obtain a representative response.
Gender reassignment	No			
Marriage & civil partnership	No			
Pregnancy and maternity	No			
Race	No			
Religion & belief	No			
Sex	Yes – non-internet users are more likely to be female (<i>The ONS Internet use survey and Exploring</i>	Yes, reducing access to physical copies of planning documents in buildings will		Mitigation measures are proposed that allow individuals to pre-book an

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

	<i>the UK's digital divide, both 2019).</i>	reduce the chances of transmitting covid19 in this group.		appointment at a library, to view a screen or document, in a covid-secure environment that enables track and trace to be carried out if necessary. Organisations that represent the potentially affected groups will also be consulted directly to obtain a representative response.
Sexual orientation	No			
<p>Is this change due to be carried out wholly or partly by other providers? If yes, please indicate how you have ensured that the partner organisation complies with equality legislation (e.g. tendering, awards process, contract, monitoring and performance measures)</p> <p>The change is not to be carried out by other providers.</p>				

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Stage 4 Review and Conclusion

Summary: provide a brief overview including impact, changes, improvement, any gaps in evidence and additional data that is needed			
Specific actions to be taken to reduce, justify or remove any adverse impacts	How will this be monitored?	Officer responsible	Target date
Mitigation measures are proposed that allow individuals to pre-book an appointment at a library, to view a screen or document, in a covid-secure environment that enables track and trace to be carried out if necessary.	Through liaison with the library service prior to consultation stages and the collection of information that sets out how many individuals have accessed the relevant document.	Tom Evans	Variable and to be collected at the close of all consultations.
Please provide details and link to full action plan for actions	The changes proposed will potentially reduce the availability of hard copies of planning documents or access to digital copies of planning documents in a Cheshire East Council library or customer service centre. This is most likely to effect women, older residents or disabled people more than other groups. The effect is proposed to be mitigated by enabling access to such documents or screens through a pre-booked system. The ability to speak to officers about such documents over the phone will also be available and organisations that represent the potentially affected groups will also be consulted directly to obtain a representative response.		
When will this assessment be reviewed?	When the SCI is altered or updated.		
Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?	No		
Lead officer sign off	Tom Evans	Date	29/09/2020
Head of service sign off	David Malcom	Date	29/09/2020

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Please publish this completed EIA form on the relevant section of the Cheshire East website