

Charnwood Borough Council

Equality Impact Assessment 'Knowing the needs of your customers and employees'

Background

An Equality Impact Assessment is an improvement tool. It will assist you in ensuring that you have thought about the needs and impacts of your service/policy/function in relation to the protected characteristics. It enables a systematic approach to identifying and recording gaps and actions.

Legislation- Equality Duty

As a local authority that provides services to the public, Charnwood Borough Council has a legal responsibility to ensure that we can demonstrate having paid due regard to the need to:

- ✓ Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- ✓ Advance Equality of Opportunity
- ✓ Foster good relations

For the following protected characteristics:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and civil partnership
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Race
7. Religion and belief
8. Sex (Gender)
9. Sexual orientation

What is prohibited?

1. Direct Discrimination
2. Indirect Discrimination
3. Harassment
4. Victimisation
5. Discrimination by association
6. Discrimination by perception
7. Pregnancy and maternity discrimination
8. Discrimination arising from disability
9. Failing to make reasonable adjustments

Note: Complete the action plan as you go through the questions

Step 1 – Introductory information

Title of the policy	Charnwood Growth Support Fund
Name of lead officer and others undertaking this assessment	David Hankin
Date EIA started	September 2017
Date EIA completed	September 2017

Step 2 – Overview of policy/function being assessed:

<p>Outline: What is the purpose of this policy? (Specify aims and objectives)</p> <p>The Growth Support Fund was established as a vehicle for the delivery of the Council's commitment in the Corporate Plan 2012 – 2016 to encouraging growth and prosperity across the Borough; that commitment was to be delivered in part through the creation of a minimum fund of £250,000, which has been supplemented through successive budget rounds over the past five years.</p> <p>Cabinet defined the scope of the scheme in 5 July 2012 as being intended to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce development such as supporting apprenticeships, providing staff training and the development of skills. • Infrastructure improvements that facilitate job creation and / or economic growth through improved accessibility; e.g. Broadband. • Affordable housing contributions that aid economic growth and sustainability, especially in rural areas, and • Other economic development and growth opportunities. <p>To provide additional guidance for potential applicants and lend greater clarity to the scope of the fund the detailed criteria approved under delegation provided a definition of what might be admissible for the purposes of supporting "other economic development and growth opportunities." They included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of the Council's regeneration priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan and Regeneration Strategy • Improvements to the public realm which encourage greater footfall in town and village centres • Support for Community Right to Build initiatives related to the delivery of new shops and business premises • Business networking, training, and development seminars, workshops and events, and • Advertising and marketing campaigns and promotions.
<p>What specific group/s is the policy designed to affect/impact and what is the intended change or outcome for them?</p> <p>The policy is designed to support and encourage the growth and prosperity of local businesses so as to sustain a healthy economy which can support the retention and creation of jobs.</p>
<p>Which groups have been consulted as part of the creation or review of the policy?</p> <p>The policy is the product of a direct instruction from Cabinet with related budget provision to facilitate delivery. It has not been the subject of any separate consultation with stakeholders as part of its foundation or review.</p>

Step 3 – What we already know and where there are gaps

List any existing information/data do you have/monitor about different diverse groups in relation to this policy? Such as in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation etc.

Data/information such as:

- Consultation
- Previous Equality Impact Assessments
- Demographic information
- Anecdotal and other evidence

As an integral step in the grant application process applicants are required to supply a copy of their own equal opportunities policy or sign up to the adoption of the Council's own policy.

Because the scheme is targeted primarily at businesses and their representatives or educational organisations rather than individuals there is currently no system in place to monitor diversity. Intuitively funding directed in support of apprenticeship support schemes will have supported young people and elements of the Business training programme delivered in partnership with CASE were specifically targeted at supporting women in business.

Support for projects like the Leicestershire Superfast Broadband project and programmes in support of the Love Loughborough Business Improvement District will impact upon a hugely diverse customer group because of the universal access to the benefits delivered.

What does this information / data tell you about diverse group? If you do not hold or have access to any data/information on diverse groups, what do you need to begin collating / monitoring? (Please list)

The information gives very little insight into the impact of the policy on diverse groups – very few of the grants awarded directly support individuals but aim to deliver wider economic benefit across all groups within society.

Where awards do support identifiable individuals it is acknowledged that equalities monitoring needs to be undertaken as part of the scheme evaluation process to gain a better insight into if and how the grant might be supporting diversity and to identify any barriers to accessing the scheme.

Step 4 – Do we need to seek the views of others? If so, who?

In light of the answers you have given in Step 2, do you need to consult with specific groups to identify needs / issues? If not please explain why.

Need to consult delivery partners to ensure the collection of equalities monitoring data.

Step 5 – Assessing the impact

In light of any data/consultation/information and your own knowledge and awareness, please identify whether the policy has a positive or negative impact on the individuals or community groups (including what barriers these individuals or groups may face) who identify with any 'protected characteristics' and provide an explanation for your decision (please refer to the general duties on the front page).

	Comments
Age	Positive: Apprenticeship support schemes (Charnwood

	<p>Apprenticeship Support Programme supported 35 placements and partnerships with Syston Town Council and John Storer House supported 4 appointments) have helped younger people into employment at a combined cost of £83,600.</p> <p>The remainder of the programme has to date distributed a further £253,500 across a wide range of schemes which will have delivered benefits to all age groups.</p>
Disability (Physical, visual, hearing, learning disabilities, mental health)	Neutral
Gender Reassignment (Transgender)	Neutral
Race	Neutral
Religion or Belief (Includes no belief)	The grant is not available to religious organisations
Sex (Gender)	Positive: Elements of the business advice and development workshops delivered in partnership with CASE (project cost £17,865) were specifically directed towards supporting women in business (25 women engaged in programme).
Sexual Orientation	Neutral
Other protected groups (Pregnancy & maternity, marriage & civil partnership)	Neutral
Other socially excluded groups (carers, low literacy, priority neighbourhoods, health inequalities, rural isolation, asylum seeker and refugee communities etc.)	Neutral

Where there are potential barriers, negative impacts identified and/ or barriers or impacts are unknown, please outline how you propose to minimise all negative impact or discrimination.

Please note:

- a) If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately.
- b) Additionally, if you have identified adverse impact that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people.

No negative impacts or potential barriers have been identified. However it is recognised that the marketing and promotion off the Growth Support Grant might be more specifically targeted at diverse groups through social media channels.

Summarise your findings and give an overview as to whether the policy will meet Charnwood Borough Council's responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity (please refer to the general duties on the front page).

There is nothing inherently discriminatory in the operation of the Growth Support grants scheme which would appear to act upon the protected characteristics of the identified groups – rather the issue is one of effectively monitoring where possible that the funding is fairly and equitably distributed across all groups where the opportunity to gather data from individual beneficiaries is possible.

Any adverse impacts or barriers to access for individuals will be addressed as they arise following monitoring.

Step 6- Monitoring, evaluation and review

Are there processes in place to review the findings of this Assessment and make appropriate changes? In particular, how will you monitor potential barriers and any positive/ negative impact?

Introduce post project evaluation where it is possible to access individual beneficiaries.

How will the recommendations of this assessment be built into wider planning and review processes? e.g. policy reviews, annual plans and use of performance management systems.

Requirement for monitoring will be incorporated in the published √scheme guidance criteria

Step 7- Action Plan

Please include any identified concerns/actions/issues in this action plan: The issues identified should inform your Service Plan and, if appropriate, your Consultation Plan			
Reference Number	Action	Responsible Officer	Target Date
1	Undertake diversity assessment of projects directed towards the training or support of identifiable individuals as part of the post project evaluation process and use the results to determine and inform solutions to address any identified adverse impacts or barriers to access..	Team Leader	With immediate effect
2	Review with the Coms team the options for promoting and marketing the Growth Support Grant to protected groups through social media channels	Team Leader	With immediate effect

Step 8- Who needs to know about the outcomes of this assessment and how will they be informed?

	Who needs to know (Please tick)	How they will be informed (we have a legal duty to publish EIA's)
Employees	√	Team briefing
Service users	√	Inclusion of monitoring requirements within scheme guidance notes
Partners and stakeholders	√	Inclusion of monitoring requirements within scheme guidance notes
Others		
To ensure ease of access, what other communication needs/concerns are there?		

Please delete as appropriate
I agree with this assessment / action plan
If disagree, state action/s required, reasons and details of who is to carry them out with timescales:
Signed (Service Head):



Date: 5/10/17

Please send completed & signed assessment to Suzanne Kinder for publishing.

Step 9- Conclusion (to be completed and signed by the Service Head)

