



Charnwood

Equality Impact
Assessment
Member Development
Strategy 2024-2028

09/10/2024

- **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, victimisation.
- ✓ Advance Equality of Opportunity
- ✓ Foster good relations

For the following protected characteristics:

- ✓ Age
- ✓ Disability
- ✓ Gender reassignment
- ✓ Marriage and civil partnership
- ✓ Pregnancy and maternity
- ✓ Race
- ✓ Religion and belief
- ✓ Sex (Gender)
- ✓ Sexual orientation

What is prohibited?

- ✓ Direct Discrimination
- ✓ Indirect Discrimination
- ✓ Harassment
- ✓ Victimisation
- ✓ Discrimination by association
- ✓ Discrimination by perception
- ✓ Pregnancy and maternity discrimination
- ✓ Discrimination arising from disability
- ✓ Failing to make reasonable adjustments

Complete this action plan as you go through the questions

- **Step 1 – Introductory information**

Title of the policy	Member Development Strategy 2024-2028
Lead officer and others undertaking this assessment	Nicky Conway Democratic Services Officer
Date EIA started	27 Sep 2024
Date EIA completed	

- **Step 2 – Overview of policy/function being assessed**

Outline: What is the purpose of this policy? (Specify aims and objectives)
<p>As part of its member development programme, Democratic Services adheres to a Member Development Strategy. This forms the basis from which member development events are arranged and is part of its reaccreditation to the EMC Member Charter.</p> <p>The strategy's aims are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to ensure that there is support for all members to enable them to acquire sufficient knowledge and a full range of skills to maximise their ability and capacity. • to support the Council in achieving its objectives by enabling members to increase and realise their potential as decision-makers, community representatives and community leaders. • covers 2024-2028.
What specific group/s is the policy designed to affect/impact and what is the intended change or outcome for them?
This strategy will impact all Charnwood Borough Councillors. This is a discrete group of individuals who are in continual contact with the Democratic Services Team. The intention is to provide a framework for the delivery of member development events enabling councillors to maximise their ability and capacity in performing the role.
Which groups have been consulted as part of the creation or review of the policy?
Charnwood Borough Councillors, specifically Group Leaders, Member Development Member Reference Group (MDMRG), all councillors, Equalities Working Group.

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

<p>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.</p> <p>Data/information such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation • Previous Equality Impact Assessments • Demographic information • Anecdotal and other evidence
<p>After 2023 election, all councillors were provided with an important information and forms pack which included an Equalities Form. Councillors were invited to complete the form on a voluntary basis.</p> <p>When a councillor is elected for the first time, they are provided with a Democratic Services Officer (DSO) as a buddy. For 2023 there were 29 new councillors. As part of the initial 1-2-1 meeting the DSO followed a checklist which included whether the councillor wished to disclose any equalities requirements or adjustments. 43 councillors completed the forms in 2023 and 6 disclosed disabilities with 3 asking for adjustments. These were taken into account when considering committee documentation, attendance at meetings and member development.</p>

<p>All councillors are offered an opportunity for a 1-2-1 personal review of their member development requirements which included identifying any barriers to their learning. This was last offered to councillors in April 2021 and will be offered again in Autumn 2024.</p> <p>Member Development Feedback Surveys are completed regularly, the last survey was completed after the Induction Programme 2023 had finished and was considered by the Member Development Member Reference Group in March 2024.</p>
<p>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)</p>
<p>Data collected indicates that the Member Development Strategy does not have an adverse impact on protected characteristics and the position is regularly monitored.</p>

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

<p>Considering the answers given in Step 2, do you need to consult with specific groups to identify needs / issues? If not explain why.</p>
<p>Democratic Services Officers maintain a close working relationship with all councillors and routinely check whether any support is required to access its services or barriers to learning have been identified. No further consultation is necessary.</p>

• **Step 5 – Assessing the impact**

<p>Considering any data/consultation/information and your own knowledge, identify whether the policy has a positive or negative impact on the individuals or community groups who identify with any 'protected characteristics' and provide an explanation for your decision. Please refer to the general duties on the front page.</p>	
Age	Neutral
<p>Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical • Visual • Hearing • learning disabilities • mental health 	<p>Member training events are exclusively arranged via MS Teams online which allows councillors to attend from within their own property, enabling any adjustments for disability to be managed within the home environment. Councillors with identified adjustment needs are provided with additional support if a training event is held at Council offices.</p> <p>Other opportunities for member development are also provided, including e-learning via 'My Learning' software, external courses and EMC, LGA, CfGS workbooks, advertised in the Member's Bulletin on a monthly basis.</p> <p>The strategy states the Council will respond positively to reasonable requests from members regarding how development opportunities can be made more accessible.</p>
Gender Reassignment (Transgender)	Neutral
Race	Neutral
Religion or Belief (Includes no belief)	Neutral
Sex (Gender)	Neutral

Sexual Orientation	Neutral
<p>Other protected groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnancy & maternity • Marriage & civil partnership 	<p>Positive impact. Member training events are recorded if the trainer allows it (some external trainers do not wish to record sessions). If a councillor is unable to attend a training event or briefing session for pregnancy or maternity reasons the presentation and recording is uploaded to an internet site and made available for councillors to watch after the event.</p> <p>Member Development events are scheduled on different days of the week to enable all councillors to attend a training event alongside other commitments. Where possible event dates are publicised three months in advance and where appropriate courses will be run on several dates.</p>
<p>Other socially excluded groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers • Low literacy • Priority neighbourhoods • Health inequalities • Rural isolation • Asylum seeker and refugee communities • Current and ex-armed HM forces personnel (Veterans) • Care experienced leavers 	<p>Positive impact. Member training events are recorded if the trainer allows it (some external trainers do not wish to record sessions). If a councillor is unable to attend a training event or briefing session the presentation and recording is uploaded to an internet site and made available for councillors to watch after the event.</p> <p>Member Development events are scheduled on different days of the week to enable all councillors to attend a training event alongside other commitments.</p> <p>The Strategy aims to proactively engage with under-represented groups when encouraging people to become councillors before the next local election. This is in the Strategy's Action Plan for elections 2027.</p> <p>Carer's Allowance is available for councillors to support attendance at Member Development events.</p>

<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately. • 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.
Not applicable
<p>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).</p>
<p>The Member Development Strategy is adapted to its cohort of councillors and meets the Council's responsibility in relation to equality and diversity.</p>

- **Step 6- Monitoring, evaluation, review**

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

The Member Development Strategy is refreshed every four years after consultation with all councillors and is approved by Cabinet and Full Council. A "light touch" review by the MDMRG of the implementation and effectiveness of the strategy is completed annually.

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.

The approved EIA will form part of the four yearly approval of the Strategy and annual 'light touch' review.

• **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
	Not applicable – see action plan in Strategy		

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

	Who needs to know?	How they will be informed (we have a legal duty to publish EIA's)
Employees	n/a	
Service users	Yes	Through approval at full Council
Partners and stakeholders	n/a	
Others	n/a	
To ensure ease of access, what other communication needs/concerns are there?	None identified	

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

Delete as appropriate

