

Equality Impact Assessment

Context

1. under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, when making decisions, Essex County Council must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, i.e. have due regard to:
 - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
 - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
 - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage/civil partnership
 - pregnancy/maternity
 - race
 - religion/belief
 - sex/gender
 - sexual orientation.
3. In addition to the above protected characteristics you should consider the cross-cutting elements of the proposed policy, namely the social, economic and environmental impact (including rurality) as part of this assessment. These cross-cutting elements are not a characteristic protected by law but are regarded as good practice to include.
4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document should be used as a tool to test and analyse the nature and impact of either what we do or are planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
5. Use the questions in this document to record your findings. This should include the nature and extent of the impact on those likely to be affected by the proposed policy.
6. Where this EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. The EqIA will be published [online](#):
8. All **Cabinet Member Actions, Chief Officer Actions, Key Decisions** and **Cabinet Reports must be** accompanied by an EqIA.
9. For further information, refer to the EqIA guidance for staff.
10. For advice, contact:
Shammi Jalota shammi.jalota@essex.gov.uk
Head of Equality and Diversity
Corporate Law & Assurance
Tel 0330 134592 or 07740 901114



Section 1: Identifying details

Your function, service area and team: Highways and Transportation

If you are submitting this EqlA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team: N/A

Title of policy or decision: Extension of Devolution Pilot with Parish and Town Councils to 2021/22

Officer completing the EqlA: Deana James, Business Planning Manager, Highways
Commissioning Tel: 03330 136563 Email: deana.james2@essex.gov.uk

Date of completing the assessment: 16/11/2020

Section 2: Policy to be analysed

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| 2.1 | <p>Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?</p> <p>This is a request to extend the pilot launched in March 2019 whereby Essex County Council (ECC) allocated funding to a small number of Parish and Town Councils and allowed them to spend this on minor and routine maintenance works related to the highway network in their area.</p> |
| 2.2 | <p>Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision):
To pilot an initiative to devolve low-level, routine highways services</p> <p>What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (i.e. decommissioning or commissioning a service)?</p> <p>This devolution pilot was initially expected to run for 12 months but was extended earlier this year until 31 March 2021 to give the signed-up Parish and Town Councils more time to deliver work and assess its effectiveness.</p> <p>Due to the impact of COVID19, we have not seen the expected take up by Parish and Town Councils in the second year of the pilot and in addition, parishes have found it harder to undertake work, due to social distancing restrictions. This has prevented a formal review being carried out to decide whether or not to make this pilot available to all Parishes.</p> <p>We are therefore recommending that the devolution pilot is extended for a further year until 31 March 2022, in order to gather enough evidence for a formal review and further increase the uptake amongst Parishes and Town Councils not yet signed up.</p> |



2.3	<p>Does or will the policy or decision affect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • service users • employees • the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities? <p>Not as far as the pilot is concerned as this will be work done over and above normal, current service levels</p> <p>Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?</p> <p>Not adversely, but Town Councils and Parish Councils will have to be clear on their new, additional liabilities and responsibilities</p>
2.4	<p>Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?</p> <p>No, but extra support will continue to be needed to run and review the pilot</p>
2.5	<p>Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes?</p> <p>ECC is now implementing a risk based approach for all its Highway activities, in line with the 'Well Managed Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice' published in October 2016, thus the proposal to change how highway services are delivered is in line with looking at the whole service under the above Code of Practice.</p>



Section 3: Evidence/data about the user population and consultation¹

As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

3.1	<p>What does the information tell you about those groups identified?</p> <p>No groups identified as adversely affected</p>
3.2	<p>Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?</p> <p>No. No groups identified as adversely affected</p>
3.3	<p>If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary. Please include any reasonable adjustments, e.g. accessible formats, you will provide as part of the consultation process for disabled people:</p> <p>Communities should not be affected by continuing with this change as in effect we are making it easier for communities to have contact with service deliverers long-term. This assumes the pilot will be successful. If it is not then we just continue to deliver as we are now.</p>

¹ Data sources within EEC. Refer to Essex Insight:
<http://www.essexinsight.org.uk/mainmenu.aspx?cookieCheck=true>
with links to JSNA and 2011 Census.



Section 4: Impact of policy or decision

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
Age	Neutral	L
Disability – learning disability	Neutral	L
Disability – mental health issues	Neutral	L
Disability – physical impairment	Neutral	L
Disability – sensory impairment (visual, hearing and deafblind)	Neutral	L
Gender/Sex	Neutral	L
Gender reassignment	Neutral	L
Marriage/civil partnership	Neutral	L
Pregnancy/maternity	Neutral	L
Race	Neutral	L
Religion/belief	Neutral	L
Sexual orientation	Neutral	L

Cross-cutting themes

Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
Socio-economic	Neutral	L
Environmental, eg housing, transport links/rural isolation	Neutral	L



Section 5: Conclusion

		Tick Yes/No as appropriate	
5.1	Does the EqlA in Section 4 indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	If ' YES ', use the action plan at Section 6 to describe the adverse impacts and what mitigating actions you could put in place.



Section 6: Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

What are the potential adverse impacts?	What are the mitigating actions?	Date they will be achieved.
No adverse impacts identified		



Section 7: Sign off

**I confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately.
(A typed signature is sufficient.)**

Signature of Head of Service: Peter Massie

Date: 16 November 2020

Signature of person completing the EqlA: Deana James

Date: 16 November 2020

Advice

Keep your Director informed of all equality & diversity issues. We recommend that you forward a copy of every EqlA you undertake to the director responsible for the service area. Retain a copy of this EqlA for your records. If this EqlA relates to a continuing project, ensure this document is kept under review and updated, eg after a consultation has been undertaken.

