

Equality Impact Assessment

Reference: EQIA391602454

Submitted: 10 January 2022 13:20 PM

Executive summary

Title of policy or decision: Colchester Towns Fund ECC Business Cases

Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision): As part of the Government's Towns Fund initiative, which aims to support locality-based partnerships in the regeneration of town centres and their surrounding neighbourhoods, Colchester Borough Council as the accountable body for the programme has been awarded £18.2m of funding to invest in a range of economic development projects across the town centre. Of this total funding figure, ECC will receive £6.297m to facilitate the delivery of the following specific projects:

- Public Realm aspects of the Essex County Hospital housing redevelopment, led by Essex Housing (improving a key heritage asset and gateway into the town centre);
- Transformed Youth Facilities - the redevelopment of the Townhouse in Colchester town centre and Stanway and Highwoods youth centres that will enhance longer-term opportunities and outcomes for young people;
- ACL Wilson Marriage Centre - redevelopment of the existing gymnasium into a digital skills hub for learners to improve people's life chances through further education and learning as well as a flexible facility for hire that will be available to the local community;
- Physical Connectivity - improved walking/cycling infrastructure between the town centre, Greenstead and University of Essex; and
- The wider "Heart of Greenstead" estate regeneration project (covering housing/commercial space/public sector services) includes rolling out the successful Essex Pedal Power scheme and introducing the concept of a "Liveable Neighbourhood" to encourage behaviour change, increase walking/cycling and influence healthier lifestyle choices.

What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve?: Strong, Inclusive and Sustainable Economy, High Quality Environment, Health, Independence and Wellbeing for All Ages, A good place for Children and Families to Grow

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Enable inclusive economic growth: Good jobs, Infrastructure, Future growth and investment, Levelling up the economy

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Help people get the best start and age well: Net zero, Transport and built environment

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Help create great places to grow up, live and work: Healthy lifestyles, Promoting independence, Place based working, Carers, Levelling up health

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Transform the council to achieve more with less: Educating outcomes, Family resilience and stability, Safety, Outcomes for vulnerable children, Levelling up outcomes for families

Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?: a new policy (or decision)

Please provide a link to the document / website / resource to which this EqIA relates:

<https://www.colchester.gov.uk/we-are-colchester/>

Please upload any documents which relate to this EqIA, for example decision documents:

Assessing the equality impact

Use this section to record how you have assessed any potential impact on the communities likely to be affected by the policy (or decision): A range of data has been collated and used to inform the emerging business cases of the ECC-led projects. From a baseline perspective, demographic data relating to the age, ethnicity, disability, religion and gender profile of Colchester borough residents has been considered. Additionally, the individual requirements of the varied users and stakeholders affected by each of the projects have been taken into account when shaping the scope and potential benefits of the projects. Furthermore, plans for ongoing consultation and engagement have been included in the business cases and will feature throughout the lifecycle of each project, as appropriate.

Does or will the policy or decision affect:

Service users: Yes

Employees: No

The wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities: Yes

Which geographical areas of Essex does or will the policy or decision affect?: Colchester

Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?: Yes

Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?: No

Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies?: Yes

Is the new or revised policy linked to a digital service (website, system or application)?: No

Description of impact

Description of Impact. If there is an impact on a specific protected group tick box, otherwise leave blank. You will be given the opportunity to rate identified impacts as positive, negative or neutral on the next page: Age, Disability - learning disability, Disability - mental health issues, Disability - physical impairment, Disability - sensory impairment, Gender / sex, Pregnancy / maternity, Race

I confirm that I have considered the potential impact on all of the protected characteristics: I confirm that I have considered the potential impact on all of the protected characteristics

Describe any actions that have already been taken to mitigate negative impacts on any of the protected characteristics: A fundamental driver of the ECC-led projects within the Town Deal programme is the aspiration to create greater opportunities for all and particularly support those who experience more disadvantaged circumstances through targeted interventions. Consequently, it has been assessed that the delivery of these projects will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

Age

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: Transformed Youth Facilities will significantly enhance the community-based assets available to children and young people, which in turn will increase their access to personal skills development (including formal qualifications as well as "softer" skills) that will maximise their life chances.

Similarly, the redevelopment of the gym at the ACL Wilson Marriage Centre will provide a state of the art facility where learners of all ages will be able to acquire key digital and other skills that will be essential to the ability to

secure meaningful local employment and lifelong learning.

Extent of impact: Medium

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Disability - learning disability

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: Enhanced facilities at the youth centre in Stanway will particularly benefit SEND users who currently access this community asset.

The redeveloped facilities at the ACL Wilson Marriage Centre will provide an inclusive and modern space that can be used by all members of the community, irrespective of ability.

Extent of impact: Medium

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The redeveloped facilities at the ACL Wilson Marriage Centre will provide an inclusive and modern space that can be used by all members of the community, irrespective of ability.

Disability - mental health issues

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: The term "Mental Health" covers a very broad range of conditions and level of severity that affect a person's day-to-day lifestyle and equally there are a veritable number of factors that influence a person's mental health, both positively and negatively. As previously indicated, the nature of this programme is very much centred on improving people's experiences of the places where they live, work, study and socialise in and around Colchester town centre, and there are a number of direct and indirect wellbeing benefits that will be generated by the delivery of the ECC-led Town Deal projects.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact:

- Essex County Hospital Redevelopment - the physical environment and access to nature play a significant role in the quality of a person's mental health
- ACL Wilson Marriage Centre gym refurbishment to create digital skills hub - self-improvement and skills development that lead to improved employment outcomes and general increases in self-confidence and resilience as well as an asset that encourages people to come together, both in an education and social context
- Physical Connectivity - significant research that demonstrates the mental health benefits of physical activity
- Heart of Greenstead - similar to physical connectivity, access to an enhanced environment as well as a free mode of transport to benefit more easily from local employment, education and training opportunities plus the wider benefits of tackling deprivation and health inequalities
- Transformed Youth Facilities - increasing social interaction, developing key life skills, enhancing enjoyment through affordable leisure opportunities, access to supportive social workers and more formalised training and learning opportunities

Disability - physical impairment

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: ACL Wilson Marriage Centre - improved toilet facilities for those with disabilities; fully wheelchair accessible; disabled parking; inclusive facility that can be used by all members of the community irrespective of ability.

Essex County Hospital redevelopment - The homes on site have been designed to Lifetime Home standards, which is a series of sixteen design criteria to make homes more accessible and adaptable to stay in for a lifetime and for people with disabilities. In addition to this, Essex Housing build all its units larger than a typical builder, have wider corridors for wheelchairs, have lifts wherever possible in apartment blocks. The site itself is also wheelchair friendly throughout, with ramps across the site.

Heart of Greenstead (Essex Pedal Power) - This project will have a tangible positive impact for people who are wheelchair users or who have an accessibility need, i.e., within the 'Disability' heading under the protected characteristics definition in the Equality Act of 2010, as a proportion of the homes will be delivered with enhanced accessibility standards.

Extent of impact: Medium

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Disability - sensory impairment

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: Essex County Hospital redevelopment - as a nod to the site's history as a former hospital, the public realm will include medicinal and scented planting as well as a range of textures (planting and street furniture) to enhance the experience for people with sensory impairments.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: Essex County Hospital redevelopment - as a nod to the site's history as a former hospital, the public realm will include medicinal and scented planting as well as a range of textures (planting and street furniture) to enhance the experience for people with sensory impairments.

Gender / sex

Nature of impact: Neutral

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: The Town Deal projects will benefit both men and women as each gender will have equal opportunities to enjoy the public realm improvements and access the enhanced facilities brought about by the improved infrastructure of the streetscape (walking and cycle paths) and community assets such as the ACL Wilson Marriage Centre and youth centres.

Extent of impact: Low

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: The Town Deal projects will benefit both men and women as each gender will have equal opportunities to enjoy the public realm improvements and access the enhanced facilities brought about by the improved infrastructure of the streetscape (walking and cycle paths) and community assets such as the ACL Wilson Marriage Centre and youth centres.

Pregnancy / maternity

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: ACL Wilson Marriage Centre - the refurbishment will include baby changing facilities.

Extent of impact: Low

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: ACL Wilson Marriage Centre - the refurbishment will include baby changing facilities.

Race

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: The redevelopment of the ACL Wilson Marriage Centre and Colchester Townhouse as well as refurbishment of Stanway and Highwoods Youth Centres will revitalise the space in which services can be provided.

Extent of impact: Low

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: Both ACL and Youth Services work with community groups where English is not their first language and enhancements to these facilities will improve the Council's ability to offer services to more people who could benefit from such courses and social interactions / community support.

Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

Does your EqlA indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?: No

Details of person completing the form

I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance: I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance

Date EqlA completed: 10/01/2022

Name of person completing the EqlA: Louise Denyer

Email address of person completing the EqlA: Louise.Denyer@essex.gov.uk

Your function: Place and Public Health

Your service area: Sustainable Growth

Your team: Localities

Are you submitting this EqlA on behalf of another function, service area or team?: No

Email address of Head of Service: Andrew.Burgess2@essex.gov.uk