

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
 - 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 (EqlA) 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 EqlA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. The EqlA will be published [online](#):
8. All **Cabinet Member Actions, Chief Officer Actions, Key Decisions** and **Cabinet Reports must be** accompanied by an EqlA.
9. For further information, refer to the EqlA 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: Essex Highways
If you are submitting this EqlA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team:
Title of policy or decision: Coronavirus Outbreak – Continuation of Temporary Change to Highway Safety Inspections Regime – specifically double-crewed driven inspections and use of Road AI video software
Officer completing the EqlA: Deana James, Business Planning Manager, Essex Highways Commissioning deana.james2@essex.gov.uk
Date of completing the assessment: 31 March 2021

Section 2: Policy to be analysed	
2.1	<p>Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?</p> <p>This is an extension of the existing temporary change to the standard regime of driven highway safety inspections in order to protect the health and safety of staff of ECC and Ringway Jacobs and to a more limited extent the wider population.</p> <p>In order to continue to deliver this service whilst following social distancing guidelines, it is proposed that we continue to operate single-crewed inspections for an extended period of time.</p> <p>Further consideration has also been given to using video technology to supplement the revised single manned inspections process, enabling the identification of all defect priorities. These changes are to come into effect on 1 April 2021, as per Appendix 2.</p>
2.2	<p>Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision):</p> <p>The United Kingdom is having to respond to the coronavirus outbreak.</p> <p>The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Order 2020 came into force on 26 March 2020 and most organisations have closed workplaces and places where people gather.</p>



	<p>Under section 2B of the National Health Service Act 2006 the Council is under a legal duty to take such steps as it considers appropriate for improving the health of the people in its area.</p> <p>Against this context the Council previously had to consider the regime of highway safety inspections in Essex. The inspection regime is one of the most fundamental duties of the highway authority as it is part of our system to ensure that we have taken reasonable care to ensure that highways are not dangerous.</p> <p>As a result of the pandemic we put in place a system of single crewed vehicles with one person carrying out both roles, and the inspection scope of driven inspections was reduced to focus on the identification of Priority 1 and 2 defects only.</p> <p>What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (i.e. decommissioning or commissioning a service)?</p> <p>Although the highway safety inspections regime is not covered by statutory regulations, the service is one where social distancing, in line with Government advice, should be observed in order to reduce the potential impact of Covid19 on the staff delivering the service.</p> <p>If the recommendations are adopted, inspections will continue to be undertaken where these protocols can be observed.</p> <p>Implementing these changes, in line with Government advice will be vital to maintaining public health and help reduce the risk of the spread of coronavirus.</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>This decision is requesting an extension to the existing temporary change to the standard regime of driven highway safety inspections in order to protect the health and safety of staff of ECC and Ringway Jacobs and to a more limited extent the wider population.</p> <p>Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?</p> <p>No</p>



Appendix 3 EqlA

2.4	Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources? No
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>If we implement the temporary changes to the current inspection regime proposed in Appendix 1, we will be able to adhere to Government guidelines, and reprioritise resources to continue the delivery of essential Highways and Transportation services.</p> <p>Delivery of these works and services will continue to contribute towards the following objectives;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meet customer needs.• Obtain value for money.• Promote improvement and innovation.• Help ECC realise its strategic aims 2017-2021.• Reduce the cost of the Service.

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, e.g. 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>Whilst the request to sustain single-crewed inspections for a further period of up to three months is considered a temporary measure, it is also noted that the requirement for social distancing could be in place for some time, hence the proposal to continue to explore alternatives such as the use of Road AI support this method with video data.</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>

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.



Appendix 3 EqlA

	See above.
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>See above</p>



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 – county wide, temporary changes not targeted at specific groups	L
Disability – learning disability	Neutral – county wide, temporary changes not targeted at specific groups	L
Disability – mental health	Neutral – county wide, temporary changes not targeted at specific groups	L
Disability – physical disability	Neutral – county wide, temporary changes not targeted at specific groups	L
Disability – sensory impairment (visual, hearing and deafblind)	Neutral – county wide, temporary changes not targeted at specific groups	L
Gender	Neutral – county wide, temporary changes not targeted at specific groups	L
Gender reassignment	Neutral – county wide, temporary changes not targeted at specific groups	L
Marriage/civil partnership	Neutral – county wide, temporary changes not targeted at specific groups	L
Pregnancy/maternity	Neutral – county wide, temporary changes not targeted at specific groups	L
Race	Neutral – county wide, temporary changes not targeted at specific groups	L
Religion/belief	Neutral – county wide, temporary changes not targeted at specific groups	L
Sexual orientation	Neutral – county wide, temporary changes not targeted at specific groups	L
Cross-cutting themes		
Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact



Appendix 3 EqlA

		Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
Socio-economic	Neutral – county wide, temporary changes not targeted at specific groups	L
Environmental, e.g. housing, transport links/rural isolation	Neutral – county wide, temporary changes not targeted at specific groups	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.
N/A		



Appendix 3 EqlA

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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: 6 April 2021

Signature of person completing the EqlA: Deana James

Date: 31 March 2021

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.

