

# 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 (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](mailto: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: Implementation of Public Rights of Way Hierarchy and Public Rights of Way (PRoW) Maintenance Inspections Strategy

Officer completing the EqlA: Jo Heynes, Asset and Records Manager.  
[Jo.heynes@essexhighways.org](mailto:Jo.heynes@essexhighways.org)

Date of completing the assessment: 15 March 2022

## 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>The new strategy and hierarchy will establish ECC's approach to looking after these Public Rights of Way that maximises our resources in line with national best practice. It will allow the Council to embrace technological advances and alternative ways of working to make the maintenance and upkeep service as efficient as possible.</p>   |
| 2.2 | <p>Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision):</p> <p>Essex County Council has the responsibility to ensure that the footpaths, bridleways, and byways that make up the network of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) across the county are able to be enjoyed by every resident of Essex.</p> <p>The new Public Rights of Way Maintenance and Inspections Strategy sets out the service levels relating to ECC's risk-based approach to managing how it organises, inspects and maintains the PRoW network it is responsible for. This strategy is in line with the recommendations and best practice set out in the October 2016 "Well-managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice", which is designed to promote the adoption of an integrated asset management approach to highway infrastructure based on the establishment of local levels of service through risk-based assessment.</p> |



## Public Rights of Way Maintenance and Inspections Strategy and Maintenance Hierarchy

	<p>In addition to the strategy, a maintenance hierarchy has for the first time, been developed across the Essex Public Rights of Way network. This organises the Public Rights of Way that ECC Highways are responsible for into three hierarchies: the Primary network (PW1), Secondary network (PW2) and the Tertiary network (PW3). This reflects the usage of the Public Rights of Way in Essex, allowing maintenance and network decisions to be prioritised with greater accuracy and ensure a better flow and experience for the user.</p> <p>What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (i.e. decommissioning or commissioning a service)?</p> <p>Implementing the proposed Public Rights of Way maintenance and Inspections Strategy and associated maintenance hierarchy will enable the County Council to implement a consistent approach across the county for PRow inspections and maintenance.</p>
2.3	<p>Does or will the policy or decision affect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• service users</li> <li>• employees</li> <li>• the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities?</li> </ul> <p>This decision is requesting a new maintenance strategy and hierarchy be implemented for Public Rights of Way. The hierarchy organises the Public Rights of Way that ECC Highways are responsible for into three networks – Primary, Secondary and Tertiary which reflect the usage of the Public Rights of Way in Essex.</p> <p>By allowing maintenance and network decisions to be prioritised with greater accuracy, this will provide a better flow and experience for the user.</p> <p>Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate? No</p>
2.4	<p>Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources? No</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>Delivery of these works and services will contribute towards the following aims in the Essex Vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop our County sustainably</li> <li>• Connect us to each other and the world</li> </ul> <p>In line with our organisational strategy, 'Everyone's Essex', this decision also contributes towards the following strategic priorities:</p> <p><b>A strong, inclusive and sustainable economy</b> - by delivering and maintaining high quality infrastructure to improve opportunities for people living in Essex.</p> <p><b>A high quality environment</b> – by embedding measures to ensure that the council significantly reduces its carbon footprint, whilst also supporting an acceleration in the progress towards alternative forms of travel across the county.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>GREEN COMMUNITIES</b> We will work with communities and businesses, providing advice and support to enable and empower local action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build climate resilience.</li> <li>• <b>NET ZERO</b> We will work across the council and the county to hit our net zero targets, by ensuring that the council significantly reduces its carbon footprint, whilst also supporting an acceleration in the progress towards sustainable housing and energy, and active and alternative forms of travel across the county.</li> </ul>
--	---

### Section 3: Evidence/data about the user population and consultation<sup>1</sup>

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>Implementing the proposed Public Rights of Way maintenance and Inspections Strategy and associated maintenance hierarchy will enable the County Council to</p>
-----	--

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



## Public Rights of Way Maintenance and Inspections Strategy and Maintenance Hierarchy

	implement a consistent approach across the county and ensure a better flow and experience for the user.
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>We have not conducted a formal consultation process, but we do have ongoing dialogue at the user group in relation to all aspects of PRoW via LAF and User Group meetings and Officers that we talk with suggest that this strategy provides flexibility to incorporate working with user groups to the benefit of the PRoW network in Essex.</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>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.

<b>Description of impact</b>	<b>Nature of impact</b> Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	<b>Extent of impact</b> 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
<b>Cross-cutting themes</b>		
<b>Description of impact</b>	<b>Nature of impact</b> Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	<b>Extent of impact</b>



## Public Rights of Way Maintenance and Inspections Strategy and Maintenance Hierarchy

		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 <b>Section 6</b> 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		



--	--	--

## 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: 18 March 2022

Signature of person completing the EqlA: Jo Heynes

Date: 15 March 2022

## 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.

