

Equality Impact Assessment

Reference: EQIA333500380

Submitted: 10 May 2021 16:36 PM

Executive summary

Title of policy or decision: Essex Walking Strategy

Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision): To encourage walking for Transport, to encourage walking for Health/increased Physical Activity, and to provide a strategic context for Walkable and Liveable neighbourhoods.

What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve?: Enable inclusive economic growth, Help people get the best start and age well, Help create great places to grow up, live and work

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Enable inclusive economic growth: Help people in Essex prosper by increasing their skills, Enable Essex to attract and grow large firms in high growth industries

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Help people get the best start and age well: Improve the health of people in Essex

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Help create great places to grow up, live and work: Help to secure stronger, safer and more neighbourly communities, Help secure sustainable development and protect the environment, Facilitate growing communities and new homes

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

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

https://www.essexhighways.org/uploads/files/essex_walking_strategy.pdf (to be updated)

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

https://www.essexhighways.org/uploads/files/essex_walking_strategy.pdf (to be updated)

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): The number of Walking trips in Essex have broadly remained flat over the past 20 years however, the number of car trips have increased substantially including short trips under 2km, which are trips that can reasonably considered to be walkable. Health inequalities are a real challenge, walking is affordable and most people are capable of walking to support their physical and mental health. However, some people are inactive and have a higher risk of non-communicable diseases due to sedentary lifestyles. Two brisk 10 minute walks per day is known to improve both physical and mental health, which will increase the wellbeing of residents. The Walking Strategy treats walking as a mode of transport and therefore recognises the potential not just for transport impacts such as congestion and emissions, but also considers the health benefits as well as the role of walking in supporting local economies, town centres and walkable environments in new development. Encouraging walking is a key component of reducing inequalities and encouraging inclusive, sustainable development.

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?: All Essex

Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?: No

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, Gender reassignment, 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: The Walking Strategy aims to make walking accessible by improving the physical environment and the social context. Increasing footfall and making walking more visible all contribute to making it safer and more inclusive.

Age

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: Strategy encourages walking across all age groups, in particular for older people and children walking to school.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: The impact on age is considered to be positive, as the strategy recognises that an ageing population needs to keep active and may require enhanced walking infrastructure.

Disability - learning disability

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: Improving walking infrastructure will have a positive impact on people with learning disabilities in terms of their physical and mental health.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: More coherent walking networks enables better mobility and accessibility.

Disability - mental health issues

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: Walking is known to improve mood and mental health.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: Encouraging walking is an important component of maintaining wellbeing and mental health for most people, while it will be particularly beneficial for those who have been sedentary or isolated, it has a role to play in improving mental health across the whole population.

Disability - physical impairment

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: Improving streets to make them more accessible and less dominant by vehicles will make it easier to people with a physical impairment to use streets.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: Improving the physical environment is an important part of creating an accessible transport system.

Disability - sensory impairment

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: Improving walking infrastructure will improve opportunities for people with sensory impairments.

Extent of impact: Low

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: Coherent walking networks with high quality infrastructure creates a more accessible environment.

Gender / sex

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: The strategy aims to improve the walking environment to make the walking environment safer, this is likely to encourage more women to walk.

Extent of impact: High

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: More people walking creates a sense of better natural surveillance and perceptions of improved safety.

Gender reassignment

Nature of impact: Neutral

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: Impacts are considered to be neutral

Extent of impact: Impacts are considered to be neutral

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: More accessible walking environments are likely to be more socially inclusive spaces.

Pregnancy / maternity

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: More accessible walking environments are likely to benefit pregnancy and maternity.

Extent of impact: Low

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: The impact is low to medium

Race

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: More walkable environments and changing attitudes to walking is pro-social, walking in communities and around town centres encourages more inclusive environments where people can experience greater diversity. This is particularly the case when walking is combined with public transport.

Extent of impact: Low

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: Low to medium impact

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: 10/05/2021

Name of person completing the EqlA: Julian Sanchez

Email address of person completing the EqlA: Julian.Sanchez@essex.gov.uk

Your function: Place and Public Health

Your service area: Transportation and Infrastructure

Your team: Sustainable Transport

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

Email address of Head of Service: tracey.vickers@essex.gov.uk