

## Equality Impact Assessment

Reference: EQIA307851207

Submitted: 25 February 2021 17:16 PM

### Executive summary

**Title of policy or decision:** Kickstart Essex – 2021

**Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision):** To support Essex residents aged 16-24 who are being disproportionately impacted by the economic outcomes of Covid-19, through the implementation of the Government Kickstart Scheme. This will stimulate entry level employment, training and development opportunities for young Essex residents with local Essex businesses

**What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve?:** Enable inclusive economic growth

**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, Target economic development to areas of opportunity

**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 EqlA relates:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/kickstart-scheme>

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/kickstart-scheme>

### 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):** Essex is already seeing an unprecedented surge in unemployment, with the claimant count for December 2020 of 50,765 at its highest since the 1990s recession. Moreover, Essex residents aged 16-24 continue to be disproportionately impacted by the economic outcomes of Covid-19 and over 10,000 are currently unemployed and will be further impacted at the end of the furlough period in April 2021.

Research has shown that work experience and underpinning skills are the most significant barriers to young people gaining sustained and gainful employment. To that end, the Government has announced the Kickstart Scheme as part of the 'Plan for Jobs' initiative, which will provide pay directly to employers for creating new jobs for 16-24-year olds, with a 6-month duration and a minimum of 25 hours per week on at least minimum wage. The funding enables young people to start work placements with employers up to December 2021 and gain the valuable paid employment skills necessary to support their progression into future paid employment.

In support of the Kickstart Scheme, ECC has established a 'Kickstart Gateway' to facilitate creation of circa 600 employment opportunities for Essex residents aged 16-24 with Essex employers and help to support this disproportionately impacted cohort

**Does or will the policy or decision affect:**

**Service users:** No

**Employees:** Yes

**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?:** 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)?:** Yes

**Please describe the steps you have taken to meet the digital accessibility requirements:** For Kickstart roles hosted within ECC, the council's Working For Essex website has conducted a full programme of User, Systems, Operational and Accessibility testing as part of the implementation of the entry level system for job application and general web information and guidance. The website is fully compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 AA standard and the product is cloud based, with supplier led updates, and as such is expected to evolve to meet any changes in accessibility legislation.

The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) will market Kickstart opportunities to Universal Credit claimants aged 16-24 years via their Work Coaches. This will enable DWP to target the offer to young people who would otherwise struggle to find work independently in the market. Vacancies are normally advertised on the DWP jobs portal that is also fully compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 AA standard

**Please describe the steps you have taken to test the accessibility of the website, system or application:**

The web-based nature of the entry level system enables access from multiple devices supporting user accessibility and has been tested via ECC's expert accessibility partner. This is the standard approach that is taken by ECC Technology Services and the accessibility project team

**Please describe the steps you have taken to maintain accessibility once it has gone live:** Where more in-depth accessibility testing is required with expert users, this service will be procured via ECC's accessibility partner.

## 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

**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:** ECC are both politically and corporately committed to a suite of interventions to help improve the long-term employment opportunities for Essex young residents aged 16-24, who are being disproportionately and negatively affected by the economic impact of Covid-19. The Kickstart Scheme will support their individual health, wellbeing and prosperity, whilst enabling the wider economic recovery of the County. ECC's facilitation and implementation of this Government Kickstart Scheme is in support of the council's organisational objectives to respect employees, create an inclusive environment in everything we do, recognise the inequalities in our communities whilst ensuring that our work reduces this, giving support to the most vulnerable groups.

In addition, ECC and the LGA are lobbying the DWP to widen the eligibility for Kickstart opportunities, to 16-24 year olds that are not Universal Credit claimants.

## Age

**Nature of impact:** Positive

**Please provide more details about the nature of impact:** The scheme supports paid employment and training opportunities for Essex residents aged 16-24 year

**Extent of impact:** Medium

**Please provide more details about the extent of impact:** The positive impact on those individuals who are successful in securing a Kickstart placement will be significant. ECC, as a single organisation, will not be able to facilitate Kickstart placements for all 10,000 young unemployed Essex residents, but aim to facilitate placements for circa 600 young people. ECC will work with local district and borough councils and Essex employers to generate as many employment opportunities as possible within the timeframe of the announced scheme and will work with other local Gateway bodies to maximise the number of Kickstart opportunities available

## **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:** 25/02/2021

**Name of person completing the EqlA:** Sarah Read

**Email address of person completing the EqlA:** Sarah.Read@essex.gov.uk

**Your function:** Place and Public Health

**Your service area:** Sustainable Growth

**Your team:** Economic Growth

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

**Email address of Head of Service:** andrew.burgess@essex.co.uk