

Equality Impact Assessment - Originator Review

Reference: EQIA354225755

Submitted: 05 August 2021 14:38 PM

Executive summary

Title of policy or decision: To approve the ongoing funding for the Future of Volunteering Project

Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision): The aim of this project is to develop a new volunteering system for Essex that helps channel the energy of our communities, and build a model that is fit for purpose and can meet the demands of the community. We aim to develop an approach that:

- Enables volunteers to volunteer in a flexible way within a fluid volunteering system where volunteers can passport easily into opportunities across the system
- Embeds a US style Community Emergency Response Team [CERT] model that stands-up volunteers – who are stood down if not required. Building a “Local Resilience Capability” for Essex.
- A whole system approach that encompasses individual volunteering alongside corporate volunteering.
- Underpinned by technology that can match both people and kit resources to meet needs within the system.

What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve?: Help create great places to grow up, live and work

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, 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

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): This will result in a system that truly puts volunteers in control of how and when they volunteer. Enabling them to get involved in their local communities in a way that suits them, to learn new skills and make new connections. This is a great opportunity for young adults to have career pathways into partner organisations. Partner organisations such as the Police, Fire Service, EWS and Community Voluntary Services (CVS) will all be part of this model, therefore a volunteer could carry out a role with any of these organisations. They will be able to acquire new skills and experience through the training and development scheme we will provide, hence building their social CV which could lead to employment opportunities.

It also allows us to help those vulnerable members of our communities that need additional support and care. By providing this care through volunteers we are reducing the visits to GPs, A&E, and other statutory services who would have had to deal with requests from the community in the absence of another provider. Volunteers carry out key roles such as picking up medication, delivering shopping for those vulnerable members of the community, gardening, providing transport, offering a befriending service and providing transport so people can get to medical appointments. Research has shown that one of the main reasons we had such a high response to volunteering during COVID was the volunteer roles were less specialised than previous ones so there was a lower barrier to entry which attracted more people from the community to volunteer.

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?: No

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

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: This project aims to help those vulnerable members of society who require support with shopping, medication, gardening etc as well as putting in place support to help communities come through emergencies i.e. flooding. The volunteers themselves will be welcome from all backgrounds and we are looking to recruit a diverse range of individuals as that is a core principle that is important to us. The positive effects for disabled / older people / vulnerable people is that they have support within their communities to help support them with their daily activities. So during the pandemic we have helped those shielding with shopping, gardening, transport, picking up medication etc. We continue to support the community this way even after shielding has closed.

Age

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: The positive effects for disabled / older people / vulnerable people is that they have support within their communities to help support them with their daily activities. So during the pandemic we have helped those shielding with shopping, gardening, transport, picking up medication etc. We continue to support the community this way even after shielding has closed.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: Many of the vulnerable people that have been helped have been elderly due to the need to protect them over the pandemic. EWS volunteers have helped them to live their daily lives without seeking support from social care or Community Agent by doing shopping, picking up prescriptions, gardening, befriending, transporting them to appointments, picking up medications.

Disability - learning disability

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: The positive effects for disabled / older people / vulnerable people is that they have support within their communities to help support them with their daily activities. So during the pandemic we have helped those shielding with shopping, gardening, transport, picking up medication etc. We continue to support the community this way even after shielding has closed.

Extent of impact: Low

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: Through the pandemic we have enabled those with disabilities to lead an independent life as possible. Through assisting them with their daily routines and supporting them with their shopping, gardening, telephone befriending, picking up medication, transporting them to appointments.

Disability - mental health issues

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: The positive effects for disabled / older people / vulnerable people is that they have support within their communities to help support them with their daily activities. So during the pandemic we have helped those shielding with shopping, gardening, transport, picking up medication etc. We continue to support the community this way even after shielding has closed.

Extent of impact: Medium

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: Through the pandemic we have helped those who suffer mental health issues to live an independent life and help with their daily lives as previously stated. EWS volunteers have helped them to live their daily lives without seeking support from social care or Community Agents by doing shopping, picking up prescriptions, gardening, befriending, transporting them to appointments, picking up medications.

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: 05/08/2021

Name of person completing the EqlA: Sukhjinder Binns

Email address of person completing the EqlA: Sukhjinder.Binns@essex.gov.uk

Your function: Corporate and Customer Services

Your service area: People and Transformation

Your team: TDS

Are you submitting this EqlA on behalf of another function, service area or team?: Yes

Name of person completing the EqlA: Sukhjinder Binns

Function: Place and Public Health

Service area: Public Health

Team: Strengthening Communities Team

Email address of Head of Service: kirsty.ocallaghan@essex.gov.uk