



EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA) - SCREENING TEMPLATE

GUIDANCE TOOL This Tool assists services in determining whether their plans and decisions will require a full Equalities Analysis. EAs help the Council comply with its duty under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have “due regard” to specified equality matters. They are required in most cases but, in some cases, an EA is not necessary or is only necessary for certain aspects of a decision. Full guidance on the Council’s duties and EAs and the full EA template is available at <http://forestnet.lbwf.gov.uk/index/residents-first/equalities/equality-analysis.htm>

The Council understands that whilst its equalities duty applies to all services, it is going to be more relevant to some decisions than others. We need to be pragmatic and ensure that the detail of Equality Analyses (EAs) are proportionate to the impact of decisions on the equality

duty. In some cases a full EA is not necessary and/or the equalities duties do not apply. In other cases, only part of a decision will require an EA to ensure the Council has due regard to its equality duties. The following examples are intended to assist:

Where will a full EA be required?	Where might an EA not be required?
<p>In short, wherever a decision has a more than minimal or theoretical adverse or negative impact on those with protected characteristics, for example, if the Council is considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ceasing a service • Reducing a service or reducing it in particular areas, e.g. closing an office in Leyton but not Walthamstow • Changes to the way a service is delivered, e.g. moving to personalisation or moving to online access only • Changes to eligibility criteria, rules or practices for a service • Changes to discretionary fees and charges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where it can be proven that the decision has no equalities impact– with particular focus on negative impacts on service users and residents • Where it can be proven that the decision has a minimal or theoretical equalities impact (and so does not need to be considered) • Where the decision is mandatory and there is no element of discretion (e.g. to adopt a member’s code of conduct or similar) • In rare cases, where a previous EA exists and a review shows that it is still relevant at the time of the final decision, i.e. the facts have not changed

Important:

- The EA screening tool should not be used to mask over any equality impacts or as a “get out”.
- There can be a negative equality impact even if you think that overall, you are proposing changes that will make services better. If there is an adverse or negative impact, you must complete a full EA.
- **Negative** impacts are often indirect, i.e. a rule that is on its face of universal impact but has greater impact on some groups in practice e.g. due to the ethnic makeup of an area.
- In most cases, the screening process requires a degree of collation and analysis of

- evidence. If this requires a lot of work, consider whether it is actually simpler to omit the screening process and undertake a full EA.
- The equality duty **continues** up to and after the final decision. If proposals or facts change before the final decision, any screening tool will need to be reviewed and evidenced.
 - Any consultation undertaken should also inform the screening process, e.g. issues raised by those affected. Monitoring should take place after a decision as part of service delivery.
 - The completed screening template will be attached to Cabinet or other decision making report and so it must include sufficient detail to justify the decision not to carry out a full EA.

What to do?

The screening process should be used on **ALL** new proposals, policies, projects, functions, saving proposals, major developments or planning applications, or when revising them, if there is no negative equality impact or there is uncertainty about whether there is a negative equality impact. **However**, If your proposal is of a significant nature and it is apparent from the outset that a full EA will be required, then you do not need to complete this screening template and can progress directly to a full EA. If a negative/adverse impact has been identified during completion of the screening tool, a full EA **MUST** be undertaken.

proposal does not have any negative/adverse impact. **If your proposal is going to Cabinet or Committee (e.g. Planning or Licensing) and you are not undertaking a full EA, you must:**

- share your report and completed screening tool with Carla Johnson, Performance & Improvement Team, who will check and challenge your findings *and*
- use the following wording under the Equality & Diversity paragraph in the Cabinet report: *“An initial screening exercise of the equality impact of this decision was undertaken and determined there was no / minimal impact*



If you have not identified any negative/ adverse impacts arising from your proposal you do not need to undertake a full EA. However, make sure you have explained clearly why the

(delete as appropriate) on the Council's equality duty." Attach the completed template as an appendix to your report.

1. Proposal / Project Title: Enabling VCS growth through our Voluntary and Community Sector property estate

2. Brief summary of the above: (include main aims, proposed outcomes, recommendations / decisions sought)

The report seeks approval to begin a pilot phase of implementation for a new VCS Leasing Policy which sets out a standardised rent discount level, standard VCS Lease and application process. The policy is likely to result in both rent increases and decreases for VCS tenants of Council properties on the VCS Premises List. The key features which we seek approval for are:

- A standard VCS lease of five years will be offered with consistent elements, including lease length and terms. The specifics of the agreement will be negotiated on an individual basis based on the needs of the organisation.
- VCS organisations that occupy a property on the VCS Property Premises list (VCS Tenants) will be eligible to apply for a standardised rent discount of a minimum of 70% from commercial rental value (final rate to be determined).
- To determine eligibility, new and current VCS tenants will be required to complete an assessment. Assessments will be made against published awarding criteria and VCS tenants will be supported to complete applications by an independent facilitator.
- Rent discounts will be granted subject to Service Level Agreements that outline their responsibilities and objectives for the social value they will contribute to the community for the duration of the agreed rent discount.

The decision we seek from cabinet is on the overarching principles of the VCS leasing policy and permission to go ahead with recommended activity which will enable the development of the final policy. This includes a yearlong process of engagement, collaboration and piloting of a new scheme which will introduce measures to create more fairness and equity across leasing agreements with the VCS and enable a better understanding of the social return on the council's investment in the sector via the asset portfolio.

Cabinet is recommended to:

- Endorse the policy framework and principles of a VCS Leasing Policy.
- Approve further consultation with VCS tenants and wider stakeholders on these principles and development of the policy in full.
- Note that the policy will be piloted with an initial tranche of approximately 10 VCS Tenants over the forthcoming year, with the full policy returning to Cabinet for approval in approximately 12 months.

3. Considering the equality aims (eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; foster good relations) indicate for each protected group whether there may be a positive impact, negative (adverse) impact, or no impact arising from the proposal.

4. Protected Characteristic (Equality Group) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	No Impact	Briefly explain your answer. Consider evidence, data and any consultation. http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/Pages/Services/Statistics-economic-information-and-analysis.aspx
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Any rent increases on the current cohort of community tenants during the 12-month pilot is not believed to have a negative impact on this group.
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above

Pregnancy and Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above
Sex (Including Gender Re-assignment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above
<p>5. There are no negative/adverse impact(s) If you have not identified any negative/adverse impacts please briefly explain your answer, providing evidence to support decision.</p>	<p>The overarching aim of the policy is to create fairness and equity across the council's VCS asset portfolio. Key outcomes of the scheme are to maximise social value for the community and build capacity of community tenants for a more sustainable future. This therefore creates an opportunity to increase the likelihood of better health, wellbeing and social outcomes of protected groups brought about by a resilient and impactful cohort of community tenants.</p> <p>The only negative impact of the policy will be where rent increases are required of VCS tenants. From our current understanding of the VCS tenants that hold leases with the Council and the groups that we understand to use those assets, no equalities impacts are identified by the potential rent increases. However, Communities and Participation and Property do not hold thorough records on the demographics using each of the community assets, and so only a limited assessment can be made at this stage.</p> <p>Going forward, one output of this policy will be a new self-assessment tool and monitoring arrangement for and with community tenants which will gather data and insights on user profiles, which we do not currently possess, therefore enabling us to get a deeper sense of the potential positive/negative impacts of the leasing policy on protected groups. This data will be collected over the next 12 months and a full assessment of the impact of the policy will be conducted following the pilot period, ahead of Council approval of the fully detailed policy. If the assessment at that time finds that protected characteristics are overrepresented in the groups facing a rental increase, further assessment of the policy will be conducted.</p> <p>The list of community assets in scope for this policy is included in Appendix 1.</p>			
<p>6. Describe how opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations for any of the protected characteristics has been taken up (where relevant).</p>	<p>We seek to deepen our understanding of EDI within the Community Asset portfolio through codesigning and piloting the self-assessment and monitoring process with community tenants and analysing the data collected. This will enable us to ensure that the final VCS leasing policy mitigates any risks of overrepresentation of protected characteristics where rents are likely to increase.</p>			
	Yes	No	Briefly explain your answer.	

7. As a result of this screening is a full EA necessary (Please check <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> appropriate box)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	We do not currently hold, or have access to, the data that would enable us to undertake a full EA. The piloting of the scheme over the next 12 months will create opportunities to collect this data via the cohort of community tenants. We will undertake a full EA in preparation for the cabinet decision on the full and complete policy.
8. Name of Lead Officer: Hannah Owen		Job title: Head of Transformation & Innovation	Date screening tool completed: 25 September 1990

Signed off by Head of Service:	H.E.Owen	Name:	Hannah Owen	Date:	11/10/2023
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