



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. The full EA template is available here:

<https://foresthub.walthamforest.gov.uk/services/information-governance/governance-and-law/council-meetings>

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?

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:

- 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

Where might an EA not be required?

- 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 Equalities (equalities@walthamforest.gov.uk), 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: Fostering Recruitment and Retention programme: Northeast London

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

Six northeast London boroughs have been successful in securing funding from the Department of Education (DfE) to test new, regional ways of working to increase the number of local authority foster carers. Waltham Forest is the lead local authority (LA) working in partnership with LB Newham, LB Redbridge, LB Barking and Dagenham, LB Tower Hamlets & LB Havering. The Fostering Recruitment and Retention programme contains three strands of work:

- A Fostering Recruitment Hub that that supports prospective foster carers from their initial enquiry and right through the application process. This centrally-run 'front door' provides a single point of contact for those enquiring about fostering and ongoing emotional and practical advice on the approval process. Local authorities are expected to standardise processes wherever possible and work towards agreeing common terms and conditions for foster carers.
- A foster care recruitment communications campaign to drive interest to recruitment hubs and boost the number of quality enquiries.
- Roll out of the 'Mockingbird' fostering model to enhance the offer to new applicants and boost retention of existing carers. With funding to develop new Mockingbird "constellations", carers and the children that live with them will be supported to build strong and supportive relationships, empowering them to support each other and overcome problems before they escalate.

Our vision as a region is to have enough skilled and nurturing foster carers providing loving and stable homes to meet the needs of all our children. To do this, our ambition is that the recruitment hub provides prospective carers with timely and accurate information and support alongside the assessment and approval process so they feel valued and have a positive recruitment experience. Ultimately, this will lead to an increase in the quality and quantity of fostering enquires and better conversion rates.


As the lead local authority for the cluster, LB Waltham Forest will host the Fostering Recruitment Hub ('single front door') and will be responsible for overseeing the operations and management of the Hub.

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. https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/statistics-about-borough
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometimes children in care are moved away from their communities to live with a foster family from an independent fostering agency, as there are no locally available foster carers who are a good match. By increasing the number and diversity of locally available carers, more children will have the opportunity to remain living in their community, attending their local school and continuing to receive support from their local networks.

Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	As a region, we have agreed to prioritise the recruitment of carers who can love and care for children with additional needs. By increasing the number of locally available, skilled foster carers and extending our Mockingbird provision, we can reduce the likelihood of residential care for children with additional needs and help meet their aspirations for the future.
Pregnancy and Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Children of all different backgrounds can be in care. In many cases, it can be beneficial for a child to be placed with foster carers who share their cultural background - however, due to the national shortage of foster carers, this is not always possible. The new service will prioritise the development of a fostering community across the northeast London cluster, formed by a diverse range of individuals from a range of different backgrounds, that reflect the local community. This approach will positively impact care-experienced young people as through better matching of alternative homes, they should experience greater long-term stability and outcomes.
Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Children of all different backgrounds can be in care. In many cases, it can be beneficial for a child to be placed with foster carers who share their cultural background - however, due to the national shortage of foster carers, this is not always possible. The new service will prioritise the development of a fostering community across the northeast London cluster, formed by a diverse range of individuals from a range of different backgrounds, that reflect the local community. This approach will positively impact care-experienced young people as through better matching of alternative homes, they should experience greater long-term stability and outcomes.
Sex (Including Gender Re-assignment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We recognise that families, including fostering families come in all shapes and sizes, each offering a completely unique upbringing. Our regional marketing campaigns will reflect this, targeted to reflect the demographic makeup of our children in care. By extending the diversity of our fostering community, this approach will positively impact care-experienced young people, as through better matching of alternative homes, they should experience greater long-term stability and outcomes.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.

<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>We are seeking to expand the pool of local authority carers across northeast London – we do not anticipate any adverse equality implications.</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>Foster carers across the cluster have been invited to support the design and delivery of the recruitment hub. By January 2024, 17 carers had expressed their interest in getting involved. So far, carers have influenced the design of the recruitment hub through an online workshop considering “supporting prospective foster carers – what works?”. Carers told us about the type of information they believe prospective carers need to receive right at the outset of their journey and considered what their role could be in supporting prospective carers through the assessment process. As a region, we have agreed to introduce a ‘buddy system’, matching prospective carers with experienced carers so they can start building supportive relationships and networks with other carers from the outset.</p> <p>Carers have taken part in a workshop designed to generate ideas for a name and ‘strapline’ for the new service; they have been asked to vote on the final choices and the option with the most votes will be the service name / strapline proposed to the Department for Education.</p> <p>Carers participate in the governance of the pilot, including membership of the Project Board and contributing via our Corporate Parenting Panel. A carer also formed part of the recruitment panel for the Fostering Recruitment Hub Team Manager.</p>		
<p>7. As a result of this screening is a full EA necessary (Please check <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> appropriate box)</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Briefly explain your answer. No adverse impact anticipated</p>
<p>8. Name of Lead Officer: Janice Horslen</p>		<p>Job title: Project Manager</p>	<p>Date screening tool completed: 5 Feb 2024</p>

<p>Signed off by Head of Service:</p>		<p>Name:</p>	<p>Roberta Onyekwelu</p>	<p>Date:</p>	<p>20 2 24</p>
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