

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) – screening template

This tool assists services in determining whether the decisions, proposals, or policies they are seeking to make will require a full Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA). EqIAs 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 EqIA is not necessary or is only necessary for certain aspects of a decision. Please email equalities@walthamforest.gov.uk for a copy of a full EqIA template.

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 the EqIA is proportionate to the impact of decisions on the equality

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

Where will a full EqIA be required?	Where might an EqIA 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 decisions, proposals, or policies has no equalities impact— with particular focus on negative impacts on service users and residents. • Where it can be proven that the decisions, proposals, or policies has a minimal or theoretical equalities impact (and so does not need to be considered). • Where the decisions, proposals, or policies 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 EqIA exists and a review shows that it is still relevant at the time of the final decisions, proposals, or policies, i.e., the facts have not changed.

Important:

- The screening tool should not be used to mask 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 EqIA.
- **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 simpler to omit the

- screening process and undertake a full EqIA.
- 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 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 EqIA.

What to do?

The screening process should be used on **ALL** new decisions, 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 EqIA will be required, then you do not need to complete this screening template and can progress **directly to a full EqIA**. If a negative/adverse impact has been identified during completion of the screening tool, a full EqIA **MUST** be undertaken. If you have not identified any negative/ adverse impacts arising from your proposal, you do not need to undertake a full EqIA. However, make sure you have explained clearly why the

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 EqIA, you must:**

1. Share your report and completed screening tool with Equalities (equalities@walthamforest.gov.uk), who will check and challenge your findings and
2. 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 (delete as appropriate) on the Council’s equality duty.” Attach the completed template as an appendix to your report.

1 Proposal / Project Title: Proposed New Smoke Control Order

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

The whole borough of Waltham Forest is a Smoke Control Area (SCA). However, the SCA is fragmented, with historical records indicating that 30 individual SCAs have been made since 1962, each covered by a Smoke Control Order (SCO). Information and records are incomplete and there is a need to replace the existing SCOs with a single SCO that covers the whole borough. This approach would support effective enforcement against activities identified as giving rise to harmful emissions, particularly fine particulates and contribute to meeting the goals of the Council's AQAP.

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"/>	Exposure to air pollution at a young age can negatively affect lung growth, inhibit brain development and increase the risk of developing some health conditions including asthma. Higher air pollution has been strongly linked to the development of dementia, the leading cause of death in the UK, that disproportionately affects older people. This project will help the Council to continue to reduce harmful emissions from domestic wood burning and improve local air quality.
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People with certain disabilities are more susceptible to diseases linked to exposure to air pollution than those without disabilities. Air pollution also appears to increase the risk of several chronic diseases that contribute to the progression of disability. This project will help the Council to continue to reduce harmful emissions from domestic wood burning and improve local air quality.
Pregnancy and Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There is evidence that gestational exposure to air pollution increases the risk for low birth weight, preterm birth, congenital malformation, intrauterine growth restriction and neonatal mortality. This project will help the Council to continue to reduce harmful emissions from domestic wood burning and improve local air quality.
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Sex (Including Gender Re-assignment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.

Care Leavers*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.
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.	The creation of a new Smoke Control Order applies equally to all residents of Waltham Forest, as such, the impact on most of the protected characteristics is neutral. It is also expected to have a positive impact on certain age groups who are more susceptible to air pollution (e.g. children and older people), as well as on people with certain disabilities and pregnant women.			
6 Describe how opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations for any of the protected characteristics has been taken up (where relevant).	Click here to enter text.			
7 As a result of this screening is a full EA necessary (Please check <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> appropriate box)	Yes	No	Briefly explain your answer.	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Based on the assessments outlined above it is not believed that there is any equality detriment in the decision being sought.	
8 Name of Lead Officer: Christina Zervou	Job title: Service Manager Air Quality & Environmental Protection		Date EqIA screener completed: 17 September 2025	

Signed off by Head of Service:

Name:

Julia Morris

Date: