

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqIA : Not exercising option to extend agreement: Berkshire Vision- replaces version originally published on the 18th November 2021

Essential information

Items to be assessed: (please mark 'x')

| | | | | | | | |
|----------|--|------|--|---------|--|-------------------|---|
| Strategy | | Plan | | Project | | Service procedure | X |
|----------|--|------|--|---------|--|-------------------|---|

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Responsible officer | Lynne Lidster | Service area | Commissioning People | Directorate | Adults, Health and Housing |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------------|

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Stage 1: EqIA Screening (mandatory) | Date created: 20/08/21 | Stage 2 : Full assessment (if applicable) | Date created : xx/xx/xxxx |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|

Approved by Head of Service / Overseeing group/body / Project Sponsor:

"I am satisfied that an equality impact has been undertaken adequately."

Signed by (print): Hilary Hall, Director of Adults, Health and Housing

Dated: 24/08/21

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Guidance notes

What is an EqlA and why do we need to do it?

The Equality Act 2010 places a 'General Duty' on all public bodies to have 'due regard' to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them.
- Fostering good relations between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them.

EqlAs are a systematic way of taking equal opportunities into consideration when making a decision, and should be conducted when there is a new or reviewed strategy, policy, plan, project, service or procedure in order to determine whether there will likely be a detrimental and/or disproportionate impact on particular groups, including those within the workforce and customer/public groups. All completed EqlA Screenings are required to be publicly available on the council's website once they have been signed off by the relevant Head of Service or Strategic/Policy/Operational Group or Project Sponsor.

What are the "protected characteristics" under the law?

The following are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010: age; disability (including physical, learning and mental health conditions); gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

What's the process for conducting an EqlA?

The process for conducting an EqlA is set out at the end of this document. In brief, a Screening Assessment should be conducted for every new or reviewed strategy, policy, plan, project, service or procedure and the outcome of the Screening Assessment will indicate whether a Full Assessment should be undertaken.

Openness and transparency

RBWM has a 'Specific Duty' to publish information about people affected by our policies and practices. Your completed assessment should be sent to the Strategy & Performance Team for publication to the RBWM website once it has been signed off by the relevant manager, and/or Strategic, Policy, or Operational Group. If your proposals are being made to Cabinet or any other Committee, please append a copy of your completed Screening or Full Assessment to your report.

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Enforcement

Judicial review of an authority can be taken by any person, including the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) or a group of people, with an interest, in respect of alleged failure to comply with the general equality duty. Only the EHRC can enforce the specific duties. A failure to comply with the specific duties may however be used as evidence of a failure to comply with the general duty.

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Stage 1 : Screening (Mandatory)

1.1 What is the overall aim of your proposed strategy/policy/project etc and what are its key objectives?

The proposal is to not exercise the option to extend the current agreement with the charity so that the existing funding arrangements will expire on 31st March 2022.

The funding is currently provided to the charity under an agreement dated 13 March 2019 between Berkshire Vision and the Council which is a small contribution to the activities and services that the charity runs across the county. At 31st March 2021, the charity recorded £2.25m in reserves and as such it is not anticipated that any services will cease as a result of this decision.

The agreement provides funding of £16,400 per annum as a contribution towards the delivery of services for people with a visual impairment living in the Borough. The agreement runs for 3 years from April 2019, with an option to extend for a further period of 2 years. The Agreement provides that at 6 months before the initial 3-year contract period ends, (i.e. by end of September 2021) a meeting will be held between the parties to agree whether to extend for a further period of up to 2 years. In detail the funding contributes to the delivery of the following:

- A home visiting service
- Signposting to relevant information, services and activities
- Support and information
- Access to the wider service offer of Berkshire vision.

During the pandemic, many of the activities outlined above were limited or restricted to online / telephone support such as remote coffee mornings and quiz nights but face to face activities have resumed and new service are being opened, including a face-to-face befriending service for people with visual impairments, as well as the organisation of weekly outings and activities.

Around 10 people per quarter are referred in-to the service; mostly from the NHS Eye Clinic; with around the same number being signposted on to other services each quarter. Over the life of the existing contract, on average there have been around 20 - 25 people over a quarter being supported by the organisation, although this number did increase during the first lockdown.

As explained in more detail in the protected characteristics section below, there are a range of voluntary and charity sector organisations that provide information, advice, telephone befriending and support for people likely to belong to the protected groups of age and disability. In addition, there are other sources of provision in Berkshire that offers 1:1 support and assessment services for people with visual or dual sensory impairment, which could be an alternative source of support.

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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1.2 What evidence is available to suggest that your proposal could have an impact on people (including staff and customers) with protected characteristics? Consider each of the protected characteristics in turn and identify whether your proposal is Relevant or Not Relevant to that characteristic. If Relevant, please assess the level of impact as either High / Medium / Low and whether the impact is Positive (i.e. contributes to promoting equality or improving relations within an equality group) or Negative (i.e. could disadvantage them). Please document your evidence for each assessment you make, including a justification of why you may have identified the proposal as “Not Relevant”.

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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| Protected characteristics | Relevance | Level | Positive/negative | Evidence |
|---------------------------|-----------|-------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Age | Relevant | Low | Neutral | <p>Part of the service provides a signposting function for people referred from the NHS Eye Clinic Liaison Officer.</p> <p>The service signposts the individual on to other services for support and help, including the individual's General Practitioner; Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB); Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Talking Therapies; Blind Veterans UK; Specsavers Opticians; Macular Society; Citizens Advice Bureau; Department of Work and Pensions. This signposting role is also undertaken by other voluntary and community sector organisations who are likely to work with individuals with sight loss, including G.P. Social Prescribers and the C.A.B.</p> <p>The organisation also provides a telephone befriending service across Berkshire, helping to reduce feelings of social isolation. This service is also provided by other voluntary sector organisations within the Borough, including Age Concern and Age Concern Slough and Berkshire East and therefore could be an alternative source of support for individuals.</p> <p>On 31st March 2021, the charity recorded £2.25m in reserves and as such it is not anticipated that any services will cease as a result of this decision.</p> |

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| <p>Disability</p> | <p>Relevant</p> | <p>Low</p> | <p>Neutral</p> | <p>Part of the service provides a signposting function for people referred from the NHS Eye Clinic Liaison Officer. Typically, the service signposts the individual on to other services for support and help, including the individual's General Practitioner; Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB); Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Talking Therapies; Blind Veterans UK; Opticians; Macular Society; Citizens Advice Bureau; Department of Work and Pensions. This signposting role is also undertaken by other voluntary and community sector organisations who are likely to work with individuals with sight loss, including G.P. Social Prescribers and the C.A.B.</p> <p>The organisation also provides a telephone befriending service across Berkshire, helping to reduce feelings of social isolation. This service is also provided by other voluntary sector organisations, including Age Concern and Age Concern Slough and Berkshire East and therefore could be an alternative source of support for individuals.</p> <p>On 31st March 2021, the charity recorded £2.25m in reserves and as such it is not anticipated that any services will cease as a result of this decision.</p> |
| <p>Gender re-assignment</p> | <p>Not Relevant</p> | | | <p>The Council funding contributes to delivery of services by the Charity to people primarily having the protected characteristics of age and disability (older and disabled people) living in the Borough.</p> |

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|-----------------------------------|--------------|--|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Marriage/civil partnership | Not Relevant | | | The Council funding contributes to delivery of services by the Charity to people primarily having the protected characteristics of age and disability (older and disabled people) living in the Borough. |
| Pregnancy and maternity | Not Relevant | | | The Council funding contributes to delivery of services by the Charity to people primarily having the protected characteristics of age and disability (older and disabled people) living in the Borough. |
| Race | Not Relevant | | | The Council funding contributes to delivery of services by the Charity to people primarily having the protected characteristics of age and disability (older and disabled people) living in the Borough. |
| Religion and belief | Not Relevant | | | The Council funding contributes to delivery of services by the Charity to people primarily having the protected characteristics of age and disability (older and disabled people) living in the Borough. |
| Sex | Not Relevant | | | The Council funding contributes to delivery of services by the Charity to people primarily having the protected characteristics of age and disability (older and disabled people) living in the Borough. |
| Sexual orientation | Not Relevant | | | The Council funding contributes to delivery of services by the Charity to people primarily having the protected characteristics of age and disability (older and disabled people) living in the Borough. |

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Outcome, action and public reporting

| Screening Assessment Outcome | Yes / No / Not at this stage | Further Action Required / Action to be taken | Responsible Officer and / or Lead Strategic Group | Timescale for Resolution of negative impact / Delivery of positive impact |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Was a significant level of negative impact identified? | Not at this stage – EIA is subject to consideration by Members first. | | | |
| Does the strategy, policy, plan etc require amendment to have a positive impact? | Not at this stage in the process. | | | |

If you answered **yes** to either / both of the questions above a Full Assessment is advisable and so please proceed to Stage 2. If you answered “No” or “Not at this Stage” to either / both of the questions above please consider any next steps that may be taken (e.g. monitor future impacts as part of implementation, re-screen the project at its next delivery milestone etc).

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Stage 2 : Full assessment

2.1 : Scope and define

2.1.1 Who are the main beneficiaries of the proposed strategy / policy / plan / project / service / procedure? List the groups who the work is targeting/aimed at.

2.1.2 Who has been involved in the creation of the proposed strategy / policy / plan / project / service / procedure? List those groups who the work is targeting/aimed at.

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2.2 : Information gathering/evidence

2.2.1 What secondary data have you used in this assessment? *Common sources of secondary data include: censuses, organisational records.*

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2.2.2 What primary data have you used to inform this assessment? *Common sources of primary data include: consultation through interviews, focus groups, questionnaires.*

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Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation

| Protected Characteristic | Advancing the Equality Duty : Does the proposal advance the Equality Duty Statement in relation to the protected characteristic (Yes/No) | If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low) | Negative impact : Does the proposal disadvantage them (Yes / No) | If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low) | Please provide explanatory detail relating to your assessment and outline any key actions to (a) advance the Equality Duty and (b) reduce negative impact on each protected characteristic. |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Age | | | | | |
| Disability | | | | | |
| Gender reassignment | | | | | |
| Marriage and civil partnership | | | | | |
| Pregnancy and maternity | | | | | |
| Race | | | | | |
| Religion and belief | | | | | |
| Sex | | | | | |
| Sexual orientation | | | | | |

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Advance equality of opportunity

| Protected Characteristic | Advancing the Equality Duty : Does the proposal advance the Equality Duty Statement in relation to the protected characteristic (Yes/No) | If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low) | Negative impact : Does the proposal disadvantage them (Yes / No) | If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low) | Please provide explanatory detail relating to your assessment and outline any key actions to (a) advance the Equality Duty and (b) reduce negative impact on each protected characteristic. |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Age | | | | | |
| Disability | | | | | |
| Gender reassignment | | | | | |
| Marriage and civil partnership | | | | | |
| Pregnancy and maternity | | | | | |
| Race | | | | | |
| Religion and belief | | | | | |
| Sex | | | | | |
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Foster good relations

| Protected Characteristic | Advancing the Equality Duty : Does the proposal advance the Equality Duty Statement in relation to the protected characteristic (Yes/No) | If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low) | Negative impact : Does the proposal disadvantage them (Yes / No) | If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low) | Please provide explanatory detail relating to your assessment and outline any key actions to (a) advance the Equality Duty and (b) reduce negative impact on each protected characteristic. |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Age | | | | | |
| Disability | | | | | |
| Gender reassignment | | | | | |
| Marriage and civil partnership | | | | | |
| Pregnancy and maternity | | | | | |
| Race | | | | | |
| Religion and belief | | | | | |
| Sex | | | | | |
| Sexual orientation | | | | | |

2.4 Has your delivery plan been updated to incorporate the activities identified in this assessment to mitigate any identified negative impacts? If so please summarise any updates.

These could be service, equality, project or other delivery plans. If you did not have sufficient data to complete a thorough impact assessment, then an action should be incorporated to collect this information in the future.

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