Equality Impact Assessment

1. Under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, when making decisions, Epping District Council must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, ie have due regard to:

   - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
   - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
   - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:

   - age
   - disability
   - gender
   - gender reassignment
   - marriage/civil partnership
   - pregnancy/maternity
   - race
   - religion/belief
   - sexual orientation.

3. In addition to the above protected characteristics you should consider the cross-cutting elements of the proposed policy, namely the social, economic and environmental impact (including rurality) as part of this assessment. These cross-cutting elements are not a characteristic protected by law but are regarded as good practice to include.

4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document should be used as a tool to test and analyse the nature and impact of either what we do or are planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.

5. Use the questions in this document to record your findings. This should include the nature and extent of the impact on those likely to be affected by the proposed policy or change.

6. Where this EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.

7. All **Cabinet, Council, and Portfolio Holder reports must be accompanied by an** EqIA. An EqIA should also be completed/reviewed at key stages of projects.

8. To assist you in completing this report, please ensure you read the guidance notes in the Equality Analysis Toolkit and refer to the following Factsheets:

   o Factsheet 1: Equality Profile of the Epping Forest District
   o Factsheet 2: Sources of information about equality protected characteristics
   o Factsheet 3: Glossary of equality related terms
   o Factsheet 4: Common misunderstandings about the Equality Duty
   o Factsheet 5: Frequently asked questions
   o Factsheet 6: Reporting equality analysis to a committee or other decision making body

Section 1: Identifying details

Your function, service area and team: Economic Development

If you are submitting this EqIA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team: N/A

Title of policy or decision: UK Shared Prosperity Fund investment plan

Officer completing the EqIA: Tel: ext. 4472   Email: mwarr@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Date of completing the assessment: 6/7/22

Section 2: Policy to be analysed

2.1	Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project? Yes
2.2	Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision):
	The investment plan sets out proposals for spend of the allocated £1 million Shared Prosperity Fund to Epping Forest district over the next three years. The primary goals of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund are to build pride in place and increase life chances by making visible and tangible improvements. The central mission is mission 9 which states that 'by 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing'
	What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (ie decommissioning or commissioning a service)?
	In order to unlock the allocated £1 million funding over three years the council is required to produce an investment plan in consultation with local stakeholders and local MPs. The final plan requires the approval of the leader of the council, the Chief Executive Officer and Section 151 Officer before submission on the 29th of July.
2.3	Does or will the policy or decision affect: • service users • employees • the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities?
	Yes. In producing the plan officers have consulted extensively on its contents as the plan was being developed. Officers have sought wherever possible to partner with

external organisations to resource the projects.   During this project officers will work to ensure where possible local procurement routes are sourced.

In order to achieve the aims of SPF the investment plan involves work to be undertaken internally through council departments but also involves significant work with outside agencies. A detailed risk management plan will be put in place to manage the external delivery and the council's own risk management system will be deployed to ensure risk is addressed within the council.

Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?

Provision of skills and pathways to work sits across a wide variety of local organisations and agencies and effective collaboration and coordination will be central to the approach to create maximum impact and minimise duplication, creating effective pathways into training and skills for local people.

Significant reporting requirements from government on expenditure will require detailed and coordinated project management throughout the period of the scheme. At the time of writing this report the expected final technical guidance from central government has still not been received.

2.4	Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources? Yes
2.5	Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes? Investment in deprived areas and rural areas, support for business and other projects in the plan are linked directly to the Council's core policies around economic vibrancy, health & wellbeing

Section 3: Evidence/data about the user population and consultation[1]

As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

3.1	What does the information tell you about those groups identified?

Dementia & the Economy

Rising to the Challenge: the power to Defeat Dementia (https://www.alzheimersresearchuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/DefeatDementiaPolicyReportFeb15.pdf) Dementia affects over 850,000 people in the UK and 44 million worldwide. It costs the economy in the UK £23.6 billion and over £360 billion globally each year.

An intervention that delays onset of dementia would also generate significant cost savings to the economy.
• In 2030 dementia would cost the economy £5.9 billion less (£32.2 billion compared to £38.1 billion) if onset could be delayed by two years in 2020.
• In 2050 dementia would cost the economy £12.9 billion less (£46.5 billion compared to £59.4 billion) if onset could be delayed by two years in 2020.
• In 2030 dementia would cost the economy £14.1 billion less (£24.0 billion compared to £38.1 billion) if onset could be delayed by five years in 2020.
• In 2050 dementia would cost the economy £21.2 billion less (£38.2 billion compared to £59.4 billion) if onset could be delayed by five years in 2020

Lack of Digital Skills and the Economy

The economic impact of Basic Digital Skills and inclusion in the UK

https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/insights/economic-impact-basic-digital-skills/

"…it's become clear that not only do we need to know the cost of reaching a 100% skilled nation, but we also need to be able to clearly measure the value this will translate into - for individuals, and for the UK economy as a whole. And, as predicted, the benefits are huge. In this new report, **in terms of productivity, there is a benefit of £358 million for individuals, and £243 million for government in additional revenue. The cost savings that government will realise from tax receipts and NHS savings alone will mean the investment will pay for itself. And this is on top of the huge social benefits to individuals of Basic Digital Skills, from reduced isolation through to cost savings (£143 per person, per year), and time savings (30 minutes per person per transaction)**.

"...**all jobs and workplaces are now underpinned by digital technology**. **This means it's vital that we can provide people with the skills they need to both find employment, and to use digital technology on a day to day basis in their work**, leading to major rewards not only for individuals, but also for national productivity."

How the internet still fails disabled people
https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/jun/29/disabled-people-internet-extra-costs-commission-scope

Using a computer is still something many disabled people struggle with. According to the Office for National Statistics, in May 2015, 27% of disabled adults had never used the internet, compared to 11% of non-disabled adults. In 2013, Ofcom said that factors beyond age and income, possibly related to the individual's disability, contribute to limited internet access.

The Extra Costs Commission, launched by the disability charity Scope, did a year-long enquiry exploring the extra costs faced by disabled people, estimated to be on average £550 more a month. In the report released in June 2015 they cite that disabled people could save money by learning how to use the internet, for example by using cost comparison websites, yet disabled people were not online because of a lack of training, cost of equipment and the accessibility of web content."

The increasing spread of the Internet holds much potential for enhancing opportunities for people with disabilities.

truth, lies and the internet a report into young people's digital fluency

"...digital natives (12-18 year olds) are very confident users of the internet, but are not particularly competent. There is some evidence to show that young people are discerning, careful internet users, but much else that indicates that the skills of digital natives do not match their own self-reportage:
- Too many digital natives do not apply checks on the information they access – around one in four 12-15 year olds make no checks at all when visiting a new website
- Aesthetics over quality: decisions about information is based on site design, rather than more accurate checks
- Lack of teaching – only one-third of 9-19 year olds have been taught how to judge the reliability of online information

Digital Skills for Jobseekers

Digital Skills You Really Need For Life And Work
https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/5-digital-skills-you-really-need-for-life-and-work/

"There is no getting away from it – we live in a digital world. Computers are at the heart of so many of the things we do in life and in work, and you'll be hard pressed nowadays to find a job posting that doesn't list some version of "computer literacy" as an essential skill.

The government have recently released a new report, the Essential Digital Skills Framework. This outlines the main skills that all adults should have so that we can safely and effectively take part in digital life."

Upskilling for the digital world: New world. New skills - PwC
https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/issues/upskilling.html

"…The need to upskill, and reskill, the workforce has never been more urgent. Everyone should be able to live, learn, work and participate in the digital world. **Bridging the digital divide of a global skills gap is a complex problem that requires all stakeholders to work together** to make the world a more resilient, more capable and more inclusive place.

Organisations are transforming their workforces to drive productivity, innovation and growth. **Upskilling is key. It's about anticipating the right skills for the future, laying the cultural foundation, delivering modern upskilling programmes**, and building a learning and development function with the right EdTech to deliver a vastly better return on upskilling investment.

The Importance of (Street) Markets

Markets and the High Street
https://www.mission4markets.uk/issues/markets-and-the-high-street.html

"…Markets are high street hubs. The evidence from Markets Matter and the success of the Great British Market Awards is that a town centre is more likely to be more successful if people are working together. And that is whether it is via a town team, town centre forum, or other stakeholder group. It is more likely that success will be achieved by sharing of ideas and responsibilities.

Shopping habits are changing and currently there is a great deal of work being undertaken to embrace the digital revolution. Markets need to be part of this campaign and perhaps there is no greater example than the Love Your Local Market campaign that is almost run exclusively via social media.

Love Your Local Market is about celebrating the role of markets and helping to attract new market traders. In 2015 Love Your Local Market was celebrated by 1,200 markets in the United Kingdom and also in 16 European countries and a number of other countries worldwide"

Economic Value of Playgrounds

The social, economic and physical benefits of playgrounds

https://urbanplay.com.au/the-social-economic-and-physical-benefits-of-playgrounds/

"A well-designed park supports economic, social and physical growth. It fosters community engagement by creating a space for families to come together, boosting the success of the local economy and encouraging healthier lifestyle choices.

"…The benefits of inclusive play are not limited to children with different abilities and extends to the entire community, supporting equality, diversity and acceptance for all. Parks and playgrounds create spaces for communities to connect through shared experience and foster community engagement. They provide a venue for social cohesion and encourage interaction of people from different social and cultural demographics."

The economic benefits of playgrounds

https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/economic-benefits-playgrounds-simon-filleul/

"…A study based in New York found that for every $1 spent on planting and maintaining trees, $5.60 of environmental and property values were gained. It's clear to see green space is incredibly valued in this urban jungle.

Economic Value of social media

Why Your Business Should Have an Active Social Media Presence
Why Your Business Should Have an Active Social Media Presence - Small Business Trends (smallbiztrends.com)

"…Regardless of your industry or business size, social media can be a powerful tool to grow your business. It can help you get more visibility, reach out to a broader audience, and generate more qualified leads.

Not only can it help you increase your sales and revenue, but it can also help you create more cost-effective campaigns. You can leverage social media to gain more credibility and improve your brand recall value.

By tracking your campaign results, you can optimize future social media campaigns for better results. All in all, it has multiple benefits…"

Why engaging on social media is so important
https://www.maybetech.com/blog/social-media-tips/why-engaging-on-social-media-is-so-important/

Why is engaging on social media so important? Well, think of it this way. If a customer walks into your shop, would you welcome them and start a conversation? If you are with people who are receptive to knowing more about your business, do you tell them what you offer? Of course you do! And for exactly the same reasons, you should be engaging with your social media followers and in relevant online conversations.

'The power of engagement cannot be understated as a means of strengthening relationships and trust in your brand, and social media is the best platform to facilitate this. It's immediate, it's accessible - it's where your audience is already at'. (Social Media Today).

Consistently engaging your followers will help you form lasting relationships with them and ultimately secure repeat sales. Being part of relevant online conversations will increase your reach and help you spread the word about your business. So both of these should be vital parts of your social media strategy. It is 'social' media, after all!

How A Loyalty App Benefits Your Business
https://yoyogroup.com/business/how-a-loyalty-app-can-benefit-your-business/

1. It Helps You Stay In Touch With Your Customers: An average customer checks their mobile phone upwards of about 50 times a day. With a loyalty app, this access will allow your business to stay connected with your customers all the time and be sure that they'll be receptive to your marketing campaign messages. You will be able to attract their attention to the important updates better and faster if you add a push notification option.

2. It Allows You To Personalise Your Offers: Many customers expect businesses to send them personalised offers based on their purchase history. Also, almost half of buyers tend to purchase products that they don't initially plan to buy after receiving a personalised recommendation. Personalisation is often an underrated factor to loyalty programme success – highlighted by the fact that only 22% of loyalty programme members say they are very satisfied with the level of personalisation they receive. So, a loyalty app can help boost sales dramatically by providing customer segmentation and targeting abilities, based on basket-level data (ultimately turning payment information into actionable insights). Plus, it helps customers to save time searching for new products.

3. It Makes Your Loyalty Programme More Convenient: Customers don't have to worry about loyalty cards that might get lost. Neither do they need to check a business's website in order to find some discounts. The only thing that is required to get a reward is an app installed on a smartphone. It will also notify customers about special offers.

	4. It Grows Your Business Faster: Loyalty apps allow businesses to be flexible with their rewards. Since any ideas can be tested in practice straight away, you'll better understand your target audience, their needs, and preferences. This means that you'll be able to tailor your marketing campaigns to fit their needs that will facilitate the growth of your sales and business. 5. It Improves Your Customer Support: Loyalty apps are not only about bonuses and offers. They can also serve as a customer support mechanism and a way to gain valuable customer feedback. These days, thanks to the latest technologies, you can let your customers ask any questions related to your services or products anytime. 6. It Lets You Stand Out From Competitors: What can be better than a solution that's different from all the others on the market? By being innovative, you can attract more prospects and turn them into your loyal customers. To get started with building your digital customer loyalty programme, you have to prioritise the customer experience first. **The Importance of Town Centre Footfall Monitoring** **REVIEW OF HIGH STREET FOOTFALL JULY 2019 - JUNE 2020** https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/media/b5dnkp4z/hstf-footfall-report-2020-for-publication.pdf "…Footfall is a key indicator of a town centre's vitality and viability; it tells us much about the nature of high streets, how they are used, and how they are changing. Yet despite its importance, the majority of high streets do not monitor footfall. This is a serious barrier to understanding the situation facing England's towns as they attempt to recover from the impact of COVID-19 and achieve longer-term transformation. "…For local authorities and place leaders that want to make evidenced-based decisions and that may, for capacity or funding reasons, need to choose only one dataset – then this should be footfall."
3.2	Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision? A full list of consultees is appended to the Cabinet report. The contributions of the consultees have directly influenced the nature, location and ambition of the projects include within the investment plan. These discussions have helped identify where projects can be delivered within the council's own delivery and staffing resource and where alternative external resources will be required to realise the ambition of the plan.

3.3	If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary: The plan is a live document right up until it is submitted and as a result further consultation and contributions from affected organisations will, where necessary and appropriate, be sought and incorporated into the plan.

Section 4: Impact of policy or decision

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
Age (all ages)	Positive - Improved access to digital skills, re-skilling , employment opportunities, leisure opportunities, shopping opportunities and vibrant town centres	H
Disability	Positive - Improved access to digital skills, re-skilling , employment opportunities, leisure opportunities, shopping opportunities vibrant town centres	H
Gender	Neutral – The planned activities do not address features and attributes specifically relevant to this protected category.	
Gender reassignment	Neutral (as above)	
Marriage/civil partnership	Neutral (as above)	
Pregnancy/maternity	Neutral (as above)	
Race	Neutral (as above)	
Religion/belief	Neutral (as above)	
Sexual orientation	Neutral (as above)	

Section 5: Conclusion			
		Tick Yes/No as appropriate	
5.1	Does the EqIA in Section 4 indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?	**No X**	
		~~Yes~~ ☐	~~If '**YES**', use the action plan at **Section 6** to describe the adverse impacts and what mitigating actions you could put in place.~~

Section 6: Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

What are the potential adverse impacts?	What are the mitigating actions?	Date they will be achieved.
N/A	N/A	N/A

Section 7: Sign off
I confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately.
(A typed signature is sufficient.)

Signature of Head of Service: John Houston	Date: 6/7/22
Signature of person completing the EqIA: Michael Warr	Date: 6/7/22

Advice

Keep your director informed of all equality & diversity issues. We recommend that you forward a copy of every EqIA you undertake to the director responsible for the service area. Retain a copy of this EqIA for your records. If this EqIA relates to a continuing project, ensure this document is kept under review and updated, eg after a consultation has been undertaken.