

Rochford District Council

Equalities Impact Assessment
Report Template

Name of Policy or function being assessed:

Core Strategy

Date Impact Assessment started: November 2009

Date Impact Assessment completed: January 2010

Guidance on Completion

1. Usage

- 1.1 This template is used to record the details of the Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) of the Council's policies and functions.
- 1.2 The conclusions and recommendations of the report are used to inform policy development prior to implementation or to make changes to policy that have been implemented.

2. Stages of Assessment

- 2.1 The EIA process has two stages, initial and full assessments.
- 2.2 An initial assessment must be completed before a full assessment can be carried out and stage.
- 2.3 Each stage of the assessment must be approved by the relevant Head of Service.

3. Reporting & publication of EIAs

- 3.1 An electronic copy of each assessment (whether initial or full) must be sent to the Head of the Equalities and Diversity Group within a month of publication.
- 3.2 This must include an action plan where recommendations are made, with names responsibility and deadlines for meeting targets
- 3.3 The Head of the Equalities and Diversity Group will then ensure that the EIAs are published on the website

4. DEFINITIONS

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

In Rochford Equality Impact Assessments (often known as EIAs) is a process of systematically exploring the potential for a policy or function to have unequal impact on a particular group or community. This includes the impact of a policy or function on employees, existing and potential service users, the wider community and where relevant, staff employed in contracted-out services.

Impact assessments in Rochford consider the potential for the policy or function to have unequal impact or a detriment on any group likely to face disadvantage. This includes groups defined by their ethnicity, gender, disability, religious belief, sexual orientation, and age.

As well as addressing the wider equalities and diversity issues, officers should ensure that their impact assessments identify and act upon issues of **community cohesion**. Officers will be asked to:

- Ascertain whether there is evidence that certain communities/groups are segregated from the wider community.
- Consider if there is a way of changing the policy or function to tackle segregation and promote contact between various groups for example cross –cultural contact, intergeneration contact, multi-fait contact etc.
- Carry out targeted consultation with identified communities/ groups, where there is evidence of segregation.

POLICY

A policy is generally a written Council document setting out the basis on which future decisions should be taken. However, the definition of a policy is wide under the RR(A)A. The CRE guidance states, “Ideally, your policies should be clearly and plainly written. However, in reality, some policies are built into everyday procedures and customs”. The Guidance goes on to advise, “you should take ‘policies’ to mean the full range of formal and informal decisions you make in carrying out your duties, and all the ways in which you use your powers – or decide not to. You should therefore include in any assessment of a policy an examination of long-standing ‘custom and practice’ and management decisions, as well as your formal written policy”. This reflects the need for the general duties to be adhered to throughout all activities within an Authority.

FUNCTION

This represents a collection of Council activities that have a common and clearly defined purpose. This can be defined in terms of its statutory duties and powers, or the organisational structures that the Council has chosen to adopt. The term includes functions, which are directed internally such as Human Resources and Accountancy, as well as front-line functions, such as the Youth Service Function, and Council Tax Collection. In many cases, the functions may equate to the same organisational structures defined by team or service plans.

EQUALITY TARGET GROUPS

The Council has identified six equality target groups that are central to its equalities agenda. These also reflect national priorities and build on the focus given by the national Equality Standard. Consideration of these different groups is included in the Equalities Impact Assessment Template. The equality target groups are: race; gender; disability; sexual orientation; age and religion.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Part 1 - Initial Assessment

- Step 1 – Confirming ownership & commitment**
- Step 2 - Identifying the aims & objectives of your policy or function**
- Step 3 – Examining your baseline data**
- Step 4 – Identifying negative (adverse) or differential impact**
- Step 5 – Comparing with other local authorities**
- Step 6- Conclusions**
- Step 7 – Deciding whether a full assessment is required**
- Step 8 – Signing off initial assessment**

Part 2- Full Assessment

- Step1 – Consulting with people who are likely to be affected**
- Step 2 – Identifying measures to mitigate disproportionate or adverse impact**
- Step 3 – Finalising the Conclusions**
- Step 4 – Finalising recommendations**
- Step 5 – Developing and action plan**
- Step 6 – Putting in place monitoring & review structures**
- Step 7 – Signing off full assessment**

Part 1 - Initial Assessment (Screening)

Key Notes

1. This assessment should be conducted for existing, new and revised policies or functions.
2. It is used to determine whether the policy or function has any equalities implications and would be based on the following information:
 - Existing knowledge (internal and external)
 - Existing Data (internal and external)
 - Best estimates of the scope of the issues covered by the policy, service or function
3. You can start by pulling together a project team, pair up with a colleague or carry out the initial assessment alone. If you carry out the initial assessment alone, you must seek advice and support from another officer who must be named in Step 1.

Step 1 – Confirming ownership & Commitment

1a. Name of lead officer and critical friend involved in carrying out assessment

Jody Owens-Hughes
Samuel Hollingworth

b. What are you assessing?

Core Strategy Submission Document

c. Is it new or existing?

New – Replacing Rochford District Council Replacement Local Plan 2006

Step 2- Identifying the aims & objectives of your policy or function

2a. What are the aims and objectives of the area being assessed?

Aim

- To set out the overall strategy for the District until 2025

Objectives

- Making a difference to our people
- Making a difference to our community
- Making a difference to our environment
- Making a difference to our local economy

b. How do they relate to the Department's objectives in the Service Plan?

Supporting the ageing population – Lifetime Homes Standard Policy H6, Healthcare – Policy CLT4, Leisure Facilities – Policy CLT9, Public Transport – Policy T3, Travel Plans – Policy T5, Cycling and Walking – Policy T6, Retail in Town

Centres – Policy RTC1, Sequential approach to retail development – Policy RTC2, Village and Neighbourhood Shops – Policy RT3

Fostering Greater community cohesion – Affordable Housing – Policy H4, Dwelling Types – Policy H5, Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation – Policy H7, Design – Policy CP1

Strengthening the Third Sector – Community Facilities, Employment Growth – Policy ED1

Increasing Accessibility to Services – Extensions to residential envelopes and phasing – Policies H2 and H3, Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation – Policy H7. The Community Infrastructure, Leisure and Tourism chapter seeks to ensure that local communities have a sufficient range of social infrastructure in accessible locations. The Transport chapter seeks to improve community access to local services through encouraging a range of sustainable transport methods and improving east to west connections.

Keeping Rochford Safe The need to create safe and inclusive communities with the extension of residential envelopes is considered in the housing chapter. Regeneration of the Districts commercial centres of Rayleigh Hockley and Rochford through Area Action Plans gives the opportunity to design out crime and address anti social behaviour issues. Policy CLT8 will provide appropriate and inclusive youth facilities in accessible locations.

Encouraging Economic Development The Economic Development chapter seeks to encourage employment growth within the District, realise the potential of London Southend Airport and environs and strategically reallocate employment land in the District where necessary.

Promoting a Greener District Extensions to residential envelopes and phasing – Policy H2, Extension to residential envelopes - Policy H3, Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation – Policy H7, Public Transport – Policy T3, South Essex Rapid Transit – Policy T4, Travel Plans – Policy T5, Cycling and Walking – Policy T6, Greenways – Policy T7, Parking Standards – Policy T8. The Environment chapter seeks to protect and enhance

c. Whose need is it designed to meet? To meet the needs of the Community – present and future

d. How is it implemented? Adoption of the Core Strategy by the District Council.

e. What are its current priorities? To set a spatial strategy for the development of the District to 2025.

Step 3 - Examining your baseline data

3. What are the profiles of the:

a. Users of the service that the policy or function relate to?

The users of the service that the Core Strategy relates to are the residents of the District and all Stakeholders including business users, proprietors, visitors, commuters, employees, employers, health services, and education providers.

Step 4- Identifying negative (adverse) or differential impact

4. Using the baseline data from above exists that the assessment area affects groups differently? (Consider all the six equality strands i.e. Race, Gender, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion/Belief, Age). For example disabled people are benefiting less than non-disabled people or are not benefiting at all.

a. **Access** to the services provided under the policy or function?

- Race – The Core Strategy itself can be printed in large print or in Braille, and can be translated into other languages if necessary. Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs are also met within the Core Strategy. The policies within the Core Strategy apply to the community as a whole.
- Gender- A variety of consultation methods have been used, in order to be inclusive of all members of society. This has included internet consultation, static exhibitions, newspaper articles, and posters. The policies within the Core Strategy apply to all members of the community.
- Disability- Disability has been considered throughout the document in that the Lifetime Homes Standard must be reached by all new homes, giving the opportunity to be accessed by wheelchair users. New developments are required to undergo a Health Impact Assessment, and additional healthcare facilities will be provided.
- Religion- A variety of consultation methods have been used, in order to be inclusive of all members of society. The Core Strategy promotes community facilities without reference to any specific function so as to avoid excluded certain groups.
- Age – The Lifetimes Homes Standard caters for the needs of the elderly population of Rochford. Throughout the document, provision has been made for youth facilities. The Core Strategy accounts for the needs of all members of the community.
- Community Cohesion – Throughout the document, community cohesion is key. New developments are required where applicable to provide community uses and community centre in order to enhance community cohesion. Developments are required to be accessible to town centres by a variety of transport methods reducing the risk of social exclusion and therefore enhancing community cohesion.

b. **Complaints** on the grounds of discrimination or any other grounds?

- None.

c. **Concerns** from staff?

- None.

Step 5 – Comparing with other local authorities

5a. How does your policy or function compare to other local authorities?

b. Have you examined other local authority's' Equalities Impact Assessments for a similar policy or function?

Yes

c. If so, what were the findings?

Core Strategies are generally inclusive of the community and have the aim of meeting the needs of the present and the future population of the District or Borough covered.

Step 6 - Conclusions

6a. What are your conclusions in relation to whether the policy or function has equalities implications? (This is a summary of the main points from Q4 & 5 above)

The Core Strategy accounts for the needs of the community as a whole, and as such there are no equalities implications.

b. Are the equalities implications justifiable by law or other requirements?

N/A

Step 7 – Deciding whether a full assessment is required

7. Is Full Assessment required?

No – The Core Strategy accounts for the needs of the community as a whole, and as such there are no adverse equalities implications

Step 8 – Signing off the Initial assessment

8a. Name and role of person(s) completing the assessment

b. Date assessment completed: 8th January 2010

c. Service Head Approval and Signature:

Date:

