

Stage 1: Scope of the Equality Impact Assessment

**** NB. It is important that your Equality Champion (See Corporate, Equality and Young People on WySpace for a current list) is aware that the EIA is being undertaken, and is kept updated throughout the entire process ****

1. What is being assessed? (Title or description of the policy, strategy, service, function (this includes reports to Cabinet as appropriate)).

And who implements this policy, strategy, service or function?

Seven day burial service at High Wycombe Cemetery as part of a report to High Wycombe Town Committee in January 2016

2. What is the purpose? (A short statement about its aim or objectives)

For High Wycombe Town Committee to consider providing a seven day burial service at High Wycombe Cemetery.

3. Who is affected? (The people it covers)

People wishing to have a burial or interment of cremated remains on a Sunday and Bank Holiday.

4. Are there any other organisations involved in delivery? (Other agencies, Voluntary sector)

Funeral directors, Coroner's Office and the Grounds Maintenance contractors

5. What are the external drivers for change? (i.e. Legal, National Policy, Partnership, etc)

Currently a burial service is provided weekdays and standby service on Saturdays. Councillors have requested High Wycombe Town Committee consider the option to provide a standby burial service on Sunday and bank holidays.

6. Does the service, or the way you implement it, affect the public, Members or staff directly?

Yes – the public and staff

7. Does it affect how other services are provided?

No – the costs calculated would be covered by the relevant interment fee.

8. Is there information e.g. survey data or complaints that suggest that it is affecting particular groups of people?

No – The Sunday and Bank Holiday burial service could be used by more than one faith.

9. Does it have employment implications? (eg Recruitment policy)

Yes, additional standby arrangements would need to be agreed with staff

If you have answered 'yes' to one or more of questions 6,7,8 or 9 you will need to carry out a full Equality Impact Assessment.

10. Using the assessment in Questions 6-9 above, should a full assessment be carried out?

YES

11. What is the justification for the decision about full assessment? (Please provide details)

Yes to 6 and 9 above.

If the answer to Q10 is 'yes' stages 2-4 of the assessment must be completed within 3 months. If applicable, it will also need to be completed in line with the rolling 3 year plan. Head of Service sign off will be required after Stage 4 only.

*If the answer to Q10 is 'no' the EIA will need to go through the **challenge process** and needs to be sent to Claire Hook, Equality Officer at claire_hook@wycombe.gov.uk. Then, if following the challenge process*

a) it is agreed with the Equality Officer that no further Stages need to be completed please ensure that your Head of Service signs off the assessment (below) and returns it to the Equality Officer for publication.

OR

b) it is agreed with the Equality Officer that Stages 2-4 need to be completed there is no need for Head of Service sign off at this until Stages 2-4 have been completed.

12. Who undertook this assessment?

Name: Sarah Randall

Job Title: Commissioning Manager

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Email: sarah_randall@wycombe.gov.uk

This preliminary impact assessment was approved by the following Head of Service:

Name:

Date:

NB Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that the EIA accurately reflects the service area and has been completed in line with the rolling 3 year programme.

Stage 2: Information Gathering

1. Have you carried out work to identify the profile of your users or do you have information that describes the profile? (Please state all sources of information you have used to map and understand the individuals and their needs)

Statistics from the last five years show the use of the Saturday burial service is not linked to only one faith group. Muslim and other burials have taken place infrequently on Saturdays and there have been a small number of interments of ashes. The statistics also show a small number of additional burials on a Monday but it is not known whether these would have taken the option for a Sunday burial if it was offered as it is not currently offered.

2. Please describe the groups and / or mechanisms you use to engage / consult with service users?

High Wycombe Town Committee

3. Is this ongoing? (if not please give reasons why)

Yes

4. Have you done any work to understand the impacts of your service/ policy/ review on these user groups? This may include any consultation/ research / studies you have used.

Research has shown the following points:

- The Islamic faith indicates that Muslims should be buried as soon as is practical.
- The Jewish faith has similar requirements, although there are few Jewish burials in High Wycombe.
- This service should be offered to all communities but only Muslim community funeral directors are likely to promote and support the service. Christian Ministers are unlikely to be available for burials on a Sunday. Most Funeral Directors only have emergency cover for collection of bodies not for providing funerals on a Sunday.

5. Is there any further consultation or research planned?

No

6. If there are gaps in your knowledge are there any experts/relevant groups that can be contacted to get further views or evidence on these issues?

No

6a. If Yes, please list them and explain how you will obtain their views:

N/A

7. Do you need to carry out further research?

No

7a. If yes give details:

N/A

Stage 3: Making a Judgement (Analysis)

| | |
|--|---|
| 1. Please state what you have done to date to take into account the needs / promote service for each of the protected characteristics with respect to this policy / procedure / function / review. | |
| Age | This is a proposed change of service and will be promoted if approved. No work regarding this protected characteristic has been carried out as it has not been relevant to the proposal. |
| Disability | This is a proposed change of service and will be promoted if approved. No work regarding this protected characteristic has been carried out as it has not been relevant to the proposal. |
| Gender | This is a proposed change of service and will be promoted if approved. No work regarding this protected characteristic has been carried out as it has not been relevant to the proposal. |
| Gender reassignment | This is a proposed change of service and will be promoted if approved. No work regarding this protected characteristic has been carried out as it has not been relevant to the proposal. |
| Low income | The higher cost of burials on a Sunday and bank holiday is similar to that of Saturday and these have been considered previously, and a decision reached that full recovery of burial costs are the minimum necessary, even though full recovery of all cemetery related costs is not achieved. Cremation, which costs less than a burial, is available to all. The alternative would be to have the burial on a weekday. |
| Race | This is a proposed change of service and will be promoted if approved. No work regarding this protected characteristic has been carried out as it has not been relevant to the proposal. |
| Religion / belief | The proposed increase in Sunday and bank holiday burial fees if the service is approved will impact anyone who wishes to hold a burial on a Sunday or Bank Holiday and this is not limited to any one religion |
| Sexual orientation | This is a proposed change of service and will be promoted if approved. No work regarding this protected characteristic has been carried out as it has not been relevant to the proposal. |
| Marriage / civil partnership | This is a proposed change of service and will be promoted if approved. No work regarding this protected characteristic has been carried out as it has not been relevant to the proposal. |
| Pregnancy / maternity | This is a proposed change of service and will be promoted if approved. No work regarding this protected characteristic has been carried out as it has not been relevant to the proposal. |
| 2. From the information above and the description of your service state the likely positive and negative impacts for each protected characteristic. | |
| Age | No change |
| Disability | No change |
| Gender | No change |
| Gender reassignment | No change |

| | |
|--|---|
| Low income | There is already an additional charge for Saturday burials so the proposed Sunday and bank Holiday charges is unlikely to affect this group who will have already discounted a Saturday/Sunday/Bank Holiday burial. |
| Race | No change |
| Religion / belief | The service will be a positive benefit to certain religious groups, such as those of Muslim and Jewish faiths that seek short notice burials but the additional cost will be a negative impact |
| Sexual orientation | No change |
| Marriage / civil partnership | No change |
| Pregnancy / Maternity | No change |
| 3. Which impacts are: a) Avoidable? Please explain your answers. N/A | |
| b) Unavoidable? Please explain your answers If the cost of Sunday/Bank Holiday burials is to be covered by the Sunday/Bank Holiday burial fees then this increase is unavoidable. | |

Stage 4: Monitoring (Publication and Review)

1. Please state the actions you will take to promote equality or to address any adverse impact

Equality Improvement Plan (EIP)

| Equality Target | Equality Action (many actions may work towards one target) | Intended outcome * | Deadline for completion | WDC officer responsible | Job Title | Email address | Phone number |
|---|--|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| (eg Improved evaluation by school children attending formal sessions) | (eg i) devise pre-evaluation process, ii) devise post-evaluation process, iii) implement evaluation, iv) collate findings & make recommendations) | | | | | | |
| Greater choice for service users | If the new service is approved then all paperwork will make it clear that the new standby service exists and the cost of Sunday and bank holiday burials covers the costs incurred in undertaking the burial | Clarity for customers using the service. | | Andy Sherwood | Contract Manager | andy_sherwood@wycombe.gov.uk | 01494 421821 |

- Intended outcome relates to how the results of the action will be used. (for eg. If you have an action to consult please provide an intended outcome that shows what you will use the information gained for, and how this will make a real-life equality improvement for people).
- Please note that all actions MUST have a completion date – ‘ongoing’ is not acceptable.

NB you will be required to provide quarterly updates on these actions to your Equality Champion until they are completed.

Confirmation that actions are agreed and EIA approved for publication:

Head of Service signature... ..

Date received by Equalities Officer... ..

NB Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that the EIA accurately reflects the service area and has been completed in line with the rolling 3 year programme.