



Stage 1: Scope of the Equality Assessment

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

EAs are designed to be proportionate and relevant and thus the time spent completing the EA and the depth to which the questions are answered need to reflect the size and importance of what is being assessed

Your Equality Champion can help with completing the EA if necessary, or [guidance](#) can be found in the Documents section of the Equality and Safeguarding page on WySpace (via the Corporate tab)

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?

Voluntary Sector Grants over £5,000 awarded each year to community organisations. The Review will be considered as part of the assessment process for Annual revenue grant applications for 2014/15. Any decisions made will be implemented by each portfolio lead for Community Support Grants.

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

To review 11 grants, typically those over £5,000, with a view to assessing their value for money. The terms of reference of the review are

- To compare the organisations/services grant funded by WDC and the level of funding that they receive from WDC compared to other similar district councils. This will provide context for all of the grants that WDC currently provides and potentially identify any significant anomalies that require further consideration as part of this review.
- To analyse each organisation's annual accounts and Business Plan to assess other sources of funding and turnover and to assess the likely impact of changes in WDC funding. This will stress test each organisation's business plan to assess the degree to which it is reliant on grant funding and its ability to deal with lower levels of funding in the future, also taking account of reserves.
- To identify the volume and quality of service provided to assess the likely impact of changes in WDC funding. This is intended to be an objective assessment of the impact of resource levels and performance impacts to understand the relationship to inform future decision making.
- To assess whether there are any particular local circumstances that impact on funding either by leading to increased costs or demand or the reverse. This will identify any potential local characteristics which give rise to higher or lower costs that needs to be taken account of.
- To assess the likely impact of the recession on demand for particular types of services and whether this is likely to lead to funding changes. This will determine whether there is a temporary funding pressure on services due to the current economic situation which



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needs to be separately considered.

- To determine from the voluntary organisations what funding opportunities they have considered, where unsuccessful, reasons why (including evidence) and new opportunities under active consideration in order to assess whether organisations are pro-active in seeking new / additional funding opportunities or diversifying their income.
- To consider the robustness of the management information provided by voluntary organisations that supports their performance reporting to determine whether the performance information is reliable as a means of grant assessment.
- To consider the degree to which the body seeking funding provides services relevant to functions of WDC or whether they are of more relevance to those of another public body in order to assess whether the services are 'core' and degree of impact on the Council's operation if these ceased or reduced.

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

11 projects run by 11 voluntary/ community sector organisations and all the beneficiaries of them:

- Padstones
- Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme
- Wycombe Women's Aid Ltd
- Wycombe Homeless Connection
- High Wycombe Shop Mobility
- Wycombe Dial-a-Ride
- High Wycombe & District CAB
- Wycombe Youth Action
- SV2G
- Bucks Equalities Service
- VCS Infrastructure Contract

Grants from WDC are a contribution towards the provision of these services. The Council does not fund any of them in their entirety.

4. Are there any other organisations involved in delivery? (Other agencies, Voluntary sector) If so, please list them.

Voluntary organisations, Bucks County Council

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

The need to reduce the overall Council Budget in 2014/15

6. Does / could the service, the way you implement it, or the potential change directly affect any of the protected characteristic groups (public, Members or staff)? See Appendix 2 of the [Equality Framework](#).

Yes; every grant provides a service to members of the public.



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7. Does / will it affect how other services are provided?

Many of the projects are linked with other services and projects

8. Is there information e.g. survey data or complaints that suggest that it will / is affecting particular groups of people who share a protected characteristic? If so, how?

Yes; Some of the projects have a remit to provide services to particular groups.

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

Yes; grant reductions could lead to the reduction or loss of jobs within the organisations themselves (although this is not a WDC responsibility).

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

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

YES ✓ NO

11. If you have said NO what is the justification for your decision? (Please provide details. e.g. a top level assessment may need to be carried out now to meet Cabinet requirements but enough information for a full assessment isn't available at this time). If so a due date for the completion of the full EA **MUST** be provided

If the answer to Q10 is 'yes' continue with stages 2-4. Head of Service sign off will be required after Stage 4 only and a **Word electronic copy** should be returned to the Equality Officer for publication.

If the answer to Q10 is 'no' the EIA will need to go through the **challenge process** to ensure that no further stages are required either at this time or ever, and needs to be sent to Claire Hook, Equality Officer for discussion and possible further explanation 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 the Head of Service needs to sign off the assessment (below) and return a Word electronic copy 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 until Stages 2-4 have been completed at which point a **Word electronic copy** should be returned to the Equality Officer for publication.

12. Who undertook this assessment?



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Name: Jackie Pinney
Job Title: Performance Support Manager
Phone: 01494 421820
Email: jackie_pinney@wycombe.gov.uk

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

Name:

Service:

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 current programme.



Stage 2: Information Gathering

1. Under the Equality Act we need to comply with certain General duties, These ask; What will the review or change to the Service / policy etc. currently being assessed do to:

eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation for any / all of the protected characteristics. (See Appendix 2 of the [Equality Framework](#)) Also bear in mind the impact on the needs of refugees and migrants where relevant.

The outcome of the review will not impact on the elimination of unlawful discrimination. It does however consider the financial means the organisations have to provide their service, their sustainability, whether the service is statutory or not, opportunities for other non-Council funding etc in order to minimise the impact of any decisions involving the organisations being awarded less funding than they have applied for or which they have received previously.

advance equality of opportunity for any / all of the protected characteristics

All organisations are required to provide information about equality of opportunity as part of their grant application. This is taken into account as part of the grant assessment process. Equality will not be advanced as a result of the review and the awarding of grants. Any potential negative implication have been considered as those organisations who have a reduction in grant have demonstrated sustainability either through having reserves or through other external funding. In some cases the organisations are not providing a service which the Council is statutorily required to provide.

foster good relations for any / all of the protected characteristics

The process is seen to be open, transparent and fair as the assessment has considered a number of different factors including comparisons with the funding given to similar organisations by Wycombe’s neighbouring authorities and those included in CIPFA’s list of ‘nearest neighbours’.

2. Have you carried out work to identify the profile of your users or do you have information that describes the profile? (Please state the main sources of information you have used to map and understand the individuals and their needs, and what this has told you about them).

Each organisation provided comprehensive details about their user groups as part of the review exercise and in their grant application. No organisation works exclusively with people from any single protected characteristic. They generally work across a number of different groups and have a wide profile of users.

3. Please describe the groups and / or mechanisms you use to engage with service users, as well as a summary of the consultation findings if applicable. (Also include any relevant consultations undertaken by other organisations involved in delivery (Stage 1 Q4)).

Each organisation is responsible for consulting with and involving their users in their project or service. The annual Grant Application Form includes the following question:

Please tell us how users are involved in the development, management and delivery of the project/service:



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Each project is assessed using a systematic process, which includes an assessment of this answer. Projects are only awarded grants if they provide a satisfactory answer.

3a. Is this on-going? (if not please give reasons why)

Organisations complete application forms annually, and are required to demonstrate ongoing user involvement, as well as evidence that users need their service or project.

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.

(If 'yes' what has this told you)?

Each group has been asked to state the impact of reducing or withdrawing their funding. They are asked about their level of reserves, other funding they may be able to access and their Sustainability policy. Their answers are described in the grant review report and these are reflected in the recommendations made about their application for a grant for 2014-15.

5. Is there any further consultation or research planned?

Yes No ✓ The organisations provide information annually as part of the grant application process so carry out this work themselves.

If 'yes', remember to include this as an action in Stage 4

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?

Yes No ✓

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

Remember to include contacting them, and (if relevant), the use of their views to determine actions in Stage 4

7. Do you need to carry out further research?

Yes No ✓ The review did a comparative analysis of the funding given by other authorities

7a. If yes give details (remembering to include this as an action in Stage 4)

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 relevant protected characteristics with respect to this policy / procedure / function / review. (Include here past actions that have benefitted specific groups. E.g. in the past you may have undertaken work to benefit a particular group who may, therefore, be excluded from this new piece of work, and this needs explaining. This section is therefore not always applicable).

Age, Disability, Gender,

A clear grant application process is followed each year to



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<p>Gender reassignment, Religion / Belief, Sexual orientation, marriage / civil partnership, Pregnancy / maternity (See Appendix 2 of the Equality Framework)</p>	<p>ensure that the assessment of applications is impartial, consistent and fair and that the protected characteristics are not disadvantaged. Organisations awarded grants are subject to quarterly monitoring to ensure that the grants are used effectively for their given purpose.</p>
<p>2. From the information above and the description of your service state the likely positive and negative impacts for each protected characteristic. (This relates to the proposal currently being assessed)</p> <p>Also consider the wider impact - whilst low income isn't a protected characteristic in itself it might be highly relevant to the area being assessed. For example: older or younger people may well have a lower income than the middle aged population, and people with disabilities are more likely to be out of work or paid less than the general population, as are those from an ethnic minority background. And, currently, there are more single mothers than single fathers and this may mean a lower income.</p>	
<p>Age, Disability, Gender, Gender reassignment, Religion / Belief, Sexual orientation, marriage / civil partnership, Pregnancy / maternity (see Appendix 2 of the Equality Framework)</p>	<p>For the majority of the organisations awarded reduced grants the negative impacts have been mitigated. The services will not have to cease as a result of a reduction in funding but the organisations may need to consider alternative provision using reserves and/or obtaining other sources of funding or by finding other means of increasing income.</p> <p>There will be greater negative impacts for a few of the organisations whose grants have been reduced more significantly. For example the reduction in grant to Wycombe Women's Aid will have an impact in terms of age (i.e children's services) but it is not the statutory duty of WDC to provide such a service. Age and disability may be affected by a reduction in grant to Dial-a-Ride, but again this is not a statutory responsibility for WDC.</p>
<p>Again remember to include any actions in Stage 4 as necessary.</p>	
<p>3. Which negative impacts are:</p> <p>a) Unavoidable? Please explain your answers and ensure an action is included in Stage 4 to mitigate these wherever possible</p> <p>Reductions in grants are unavoidable as the Council has to reduce its expenditure but any negative impacts will be reduced through positive actions by the organisations to mitigate the shortfall in funding from the Council and through support from WDC Officers responsible for grants within their service areas.</p>	



Stage 4: Monitoring (Publication and Review)

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

Equality Improvement Plan (EIP)

Equality Target (see note below)	Equality Action (see note below)	Intended outcome (see note below)	Deadline for completion this MUST be included – on-going is not acceptable	WDC officer responsible	Job Title	Review date (see note below)
Ensuring that organisations are aware of the decision about their grant application and are supported	The relevant WDC Officer to liaise with the organisations affected by the decisions	Organisations are supported in being able to sustain the services they provide	January 2014	Barbara Eccleston	Grants Officer	

Equality Target

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).

Equality Action

Many actions may work towards one target. (e.g. i) devise pre-evaluation process, ii) devise post-evaluation process, iii) implement evaluation, iv) collate findings & make recommendations)

What actions are you taking towards this target and how will success against the action be monitored?



Intended outcome

Relates to how the results of the action will be used (e.g. for an action to consult provide an intended outcome showing what you will use info. for and how this will make a real-life equality improvement for people).

This should link to:

- any information you still need to obtain - Stage 2
- any impacts you are attempting to mitigate, or achieve - Stage 3
- how it contributes to the Equality Act General Duties - Stage 3

Review date

Date when we can review expected progress as a result of changes made (e.g., dependant on the nature of the action this may be 3 ,6 , 9 or even 12 months after the action has been completed)

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



**WDC Disability Guidance
Equality Assessment form**

July 2013

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I have read the Equality Assessment and am satisfied all available evidence has been accurately assessed for its impact on the protected characteristics. Mitigations, where appropriate, have been identified and actioned accordingly I confirm all actions are agreed and this is EA approved for publication

Head of Service signature: Elaine Jewell

Service Area: Community Services

Date: 9 December 2014

An **electronic Word version** should now be sent to the Equalities Officer for publication.

Date received by Equalities Officer: 10 Dec 2013

NB Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that the EIA accurately reflects the service area.