

Equality Impact Assessment / Equality Analysis

(Updated December 2022)

Item name	Details
Title of service or policy	Bath and North East Somerset Council Local Plan 2022-2042 Options Consultation (Regulation 18)
Name of directorate and service	Planning Policy
Name and role of officers completing the EIA	Cindy Carter, Planning Policy Officer and Richard Daone, Deputy Head of Planning (Policy)
Date of assessment	January 2024

Equality Impact Assessment (or ‘Equality Analysis’) is a process of systematically analysing a new or existing policy or service to identify what impact or likely impact it will have on different groups within the community. The main aim is to identify any discriminatory or negative consequences for a particular group or sector of the community, and also to identify areas where equality can be better promoted. Equality impact Assessments (EIAs) can be carried out in relation to services provided to customers and residents as well as employment policies/strategies that relate to staffing matters.

This toolkit has been developed to use as a framework when carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) or Equality Analysis. **Not all sections will be relevant – so leave blank any that are not applicable.** It is intended that this is used as a working document throughout the process, and a final version will be published on the Council’s website.

1.1 Identify the aims of the policy or service and how it is implemented

Key questions	Answers / notes
<p>1.1 Briefly describe purpose of the service/policy e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How the service/policy is delivered and by whom ● If responsibility for its implementation is shared with other departments or organisations ● Intended outcomes 	<p>Bath and North East Somerset Council’s Development Plan comprises the Core Strategy, Placemaking Plan and the Local Plan Partial Update. Work has begun on the Council’s new Local Plan which will establish the planning framework for the district up to 2042. It will contain a vision, strategy and policies to guide and manage how the district grows and changes over the next 20 years, and how planning applications for new development are decided. It will also help to deliver the Council’s corporate priorities, including improving people’s lives, tackling the climate and ecological emergencies, preparing for the future, delivering for local residents and focusing on prevention.</p> <p>The Options Draft (Regulation 18) of the new Local Plan 2022-2042 outlines the overall vision and issues for the new Local Plan; setting out a range of options for dealing with issues which the plan needs to address. This draft follows on from the Launch Document https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/local_plan_launch_doc_easy_read_0.pdf which marked the formal start of the preparation of the Local Plan.</p> <p>There is ongoing engagement and communication on the new Local Plan as it progresses through its different stages until final adoption. The Engagement and Communication Strategy for the new Local Plan https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/engagement_and_communication_strategy.pdf</p>

	<p>sets out in detail the opportunities for communities and stakeholders, including seldom-heard groups to be involved in the preparation of the Plan. The Strategy is being delivered by the Planning Policy Team, with assistance where necessary from other services within the Council. The overall intended outcome of the strategy is to ensure that all communities and stakeholders across the district are involved in the preparation of the Local Plan.</p> <p>An EqlA was undertaken to inform the Launch Document and Engagement and Communication Strategy.</p> <p>Once adopted, the new Local Plan 2022-2042 will replace the current Local Plan and be implemented by various Council departments, including planning services, as well as other public service providers and the private sector. Intended outcomes from the new Local Plan will be monitored in the B&NES Local Authority Monitoring Report.</p>
<p>1.2 Provide brief details of the scope of the policy or service being reviewed, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is it a new service/policy or review of an existing one? ● Is it a national requirement?). ● How much room for review is there? 	<p>Local authorities are statutorily required to prepare a Local Plan and update as necessary. The preparation of the new Local Plan 2022-2042 is included in the B&NES Local Development Scheme (LDS), the Council’s formal Planning Policy work programme. Plan-making is a statutory process and follows national regulations.</p> <p>The Local Plan 2022-2042 is at the options stage. This provides the opportunity for the Council to test different options with local communities, stakeholders and the development industry without a formal commitment to a policy. The Options Draft therefore sets out policy approaches for consultation. This will enable the demonstration at examination that ‘reasonable alternatives’ have been considered in the plan-making process.</p> <p>The Plan will be subject to examination by a government appointed Planning Inspector to ascertain its ‘soundness’. The examining Inspector will need to ascertain that the plan is an appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence. Therefore, the options consultation stage in the process is necessary in order to explore various alternative approaches and proposals.</p>
<p>1.3 Do the aims of this policy link to or conflict with any other policies of the Council?</p>	<p>The Local Plan 2022-2042 is being prepared in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2023 and a number of Council strategies and will facilitate the delivery of Council objectives. The B&NES Council Corporate Strategy 2023-2027</p>

	(adopted July 2023) sets out the Council’s overarching strategic plan with the overriding purpose ‘to improve people’s lives.’ The two core policies within the Strategy focus on tackling the climate and nature emergency and giving people a bigger say. To translate the purpose into commitments, three principles have been identified: preparing for the future, delivering for local residents and focussing on prevention.
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2. Consideration of available data, research and information

Key questions	Data, research and information that you can refer to
2.1 What equalities training have staff received to enable them to understand the needs of our diverse community?	<p>A number of planning policy team members have received equalities training.</p> <p>A number of service deliverers within the Council have received corporate equalities training.</p>
2.2 What is the equalities profile of service users?	<p>The B&NES Local Plan 2022-2042 covers the full B&NES Council local authority area. Link to the most up to date data for the B&NES area (including Equalities data) can be found at: https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/strategic-evidence</p> <p>The B&NES Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) January 2024 Draft includes data relating to the housing needs of different groups, including older people and disabled people.</p>
2.3 Are there any recent customer satisfaction surveys to refer to? What were the results? Are there any gaps? Or differences in experience/outcomes?	<p>During the Launch consultation, equality data was collected and will continue to be collected as we progress with consultation on the Options, Publication and Submission Drafts of the new Local Plan to measure performance and implement improvement in relation to equality and diversity.</p>
2.4 What engagement or consultation has been undertaken	<p>In line with the Engagement and Consultation Strategy for the Local Plan 2022-2042 (informed by the B&NES Statement of Community Involvement for Planning 2022), consultation has</p>

<p>as part of this EIA and with whom? What were the results?</p>	<p>taken place with a wide range of stakeholders, including targeted engagement with SCI seldom-heard groups to inform the development of the Options Draft (Reg.18) of the new Local Plan.</p>
<p>2.5 If you are planning to undertake any consultation in the future regarding this service or policy, how will you include equalities considerations within this?</p>	<p>There is ongoing engagement and communication on the new Local Plan as it progresses through its different stages until final adoption. The Engagement and Communication Strategy for the new Local Plan https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/engagement_and_communication_strategy.pdf sets out in detail the opportunities for communities and stakeholders, including seldom-heard groups to be involved in the preparation of the Plan. The Strategy is being delivered by the Planning Policy Team, with assistance where necessary from other services within the Council. The overall intended outcome of the strategy is to ensure that all communities and stakeholders across the district are involved in the preparation of the Local Plan.</p> <p>The Options Document and consultation on the B&NES website will be published in an accessible format and include contact details for further accessibility requirements. There will be a variety of opportunities to provide feedback.</p> <p>Equalities data and feedback will continue to inform how we measure performance and improvement in relation to equality and diversity.</p>

3. Assessment of impact: 'Equality analysis'

Based upon any data you have considered, or the results of consultation or research, use the spaces below to demonstrate you have analysed how the service or policy:

- Meets any particular needs of equalities groups or could help promote equality in some way.
- Could have a negative or adverse impact for any of the equalities groups

The B&NES Local Plan 2022-2042 – Options Document

The Options document represents an early stage in the preparation of the Local Plan. Throughout the preparation process the equalities impact of the Local Plan will be carefully considered. At the Options stage the EqIA is primarily focussed on identifying and referencing the opportunities for the Local Plan to address equalities issues and the needs of people with protected characteristics. The Options document includes options as relates Housing, Climate Change, Nature and Ecosystem Services, Green Belt, Jobs and Economy, Healthy and Vibrant Communities, Heritage and Design, Sustainable Transport, Pollution, Contamination and Safety and Minerals and Waste together with Spatial options setting out the fundamental principles that will guide the strategy across B&NES for accommodating new housing, employment development and supporting infrastructure, whilst addressing climate, nature and health and well-being needs.

At the Draft Local Plan (Reg 19) stage the Council will be setting out its proposed policies. As the Local Plan progresses towards the Draft Local Plan, the equalities impact of proposed policies will be identified and considered with reference to appropriate equalities data. The EqIA is therefore, an iterative process that will help to ensure the Local Plan addresses equalities issues and that its policies provide opportunities to ensure development proposals properly address the needs of everyone including people with protected characteristics.

Key questions	Examples of what the service has done to promote equality	Examples of actual or potential negative or adverse impact and what steps have been or could be taken to address this
3.1 Issues relating to all groups and protected characteristics	<p>Opportunities for the Local Plan to address equalities issues and needs of people with protected characteristic include:</p> <p><i>Development Management Policy Options</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposals to support wider affordable housing delivery within B&NES to benefit all. - Rural Exceptions Site, First Homes Exception Site and Community-Led 	

	<p>Development Exception Site policy options support opportunities to meet identified local community needs within rural areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Housing policy options provide policy options to ensure that that the housing needs of different groups in the community are reflected in planning policies, including those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, disabled people, service families and the Traveller community.- Housing accessibility standards propose options for accessible and adaptable housing and wheelchair housing, whilst options for residential space standards propose a good standard and quality of internal space to benefit all, including older and disabled people.- Housing mix policy options support a housing mix that meets the needs of local communities, including young people, essential local workers and an ageing population.- Proposed policy options to address the Climate and Nature Emergency provide opportunities to support sustainable energy and residents with rising energy costs to benefit all. There are opportunities to support inclusive design access for all within relevant natural environment policies to ensure access for	
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	<p>all to green infrastructure, open spaces and nature recovery opportunities to benefit all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Healthy Places policy options include that development must contribute toward creating healthy places, including encouraging active travel, creating inclusive and accessible public realm, and supplying access to green space whilst Health Impact Assessment options include requiring HIAs to be undertaken for major developments to support health and well-being for all.- Hot Food Takeaways proposed policy options outline that childhood obesity in B&NES is worse in more deprived areas and in these areas, there are higher levels of hot food takeaways and that children in these areas with more hot food takeaways have higher levels of obesity. Policy options propose some restrictions in terms of where hot food takeaways will be allowed.- There are opportunities to support inclusive design access for all and secure by design within design policy and design code principles and include reference to best practice design to support people of all abilities to ensure that communities are accessible to all.	
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	<p><i>Spatial Policy Options</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordable housing delivery within residential development to be sought in accordance with policy. - Opportunities for a mix of housing, including to meet the needs of different groups in the community. - Opportunities to support sustainable energy and residents with rising energy costs. - Opportunities to support inclusive design and to ensure access for all to green infrastructure and open spaces and nature recovery opportunities. - The public realm and facilities should provide inclusive design to support access for all and achieve healthy, inclusive, and safe places. - Consider sustainable transport opportunities and transport requirements for managing development to support accessibility for all, including older people and disabled people. 	
<p>3.2 Sex – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on women and men.</p>	<p>To provide the planning policy framework to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The delivery of inclusive design. - The location and design of development is accessible to all and secure by design, including open space, the public realm and transport infrastructure. 	<p>As the Local Plan progresses towards the Draft Local Plan, the equalities impact of proposed policies will be identified and considered with reference to appropriate equalities data.</p>

<p>3.3 Pregnancy and maternity</p>	<p>To provide the planning policy framework to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The delivery of inclusive design. Inclusive design access for all and accessibility standards help meet the access needs of not only older and disabled people, but the whole community, including pregnant & breastfeeding/feeding parents & parents with pushchairs. - The location and design of development is accessible to all and secure by design, including open space, the public realm and transport infrastructure. 	<p>As the Local Plan progresses towards the Draft Local Plan, the equalities impact of proposed policies will be identified and considered with reference to appropriate equalities data.</p>
<p>3.4 Gender reassignment – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on transgender people</p>	<p>To provide the planning policy framework to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The delivery of inclusive design. - The location and design of development is accessible to all and secure by design, including open space, the public realm and transport infrastructure. 	<p>As the Local Plan progresses towards the Draft Local Plan, the equalities impact of proposed policies will be identified and considered with reference to appropriate equalities data.</p>
<p>3.5 Disability – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on disabled people (ensure consideration both physical, sensory and mental impairments and mental health)</p>	<p>To provide the planning policy framework to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The delivery of inclusive design. Inclusive design access for all together with accessibility and space standards help to meet the need of disabled people. Options include accessibility standards for adaptable and accessible housing and wheelchair housing. 	<p>As the Local Plan progresses towards the Draft Local Plan, the equalities impact of proposed policies will be identified and considered with reference to appropriate equalities data.</p>

	- The location and design of development is accessible to all including open space, the public realm and transport infrastructure.	
3.6 Age – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on different age groups	To provide the planning policy framework to support: - The delivery of affordable housing, including for younger and older people. - The location and design of development is accessible to all and secure by design, including open spaces, the public realm and transport infrastructure. The risks of digital exclusion particularly for older people will be considered within consultation.	As the Local Plan progresses towards the Draft Local Plan, the equalities impact of proposed policies will be identified and considered with reference to appropriate equalities data.
3.7 Race – identify the impact/potential impact on across different ethnic groups	The Housing policy options provide a range of policy options to ensure that that the housing needs of different groups in the community are reflected in planning policies, including the Traveller community.	As the Local Plan progresses towards the Draft Local Plan, the equalities impact of proposed policies will be identified and considered with reference to appropriate equalities data.
3.8 Sexual orientation – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual people	Opportunities to consider proposed policy and equality considerations have been highlighted above and proposed actions are set out under Section 4.	As the Local Plan progresses towards the Draft Local Plan, the equalities impact of proposed policies will be identified and considered with reference to appropriate equalities data.
3.9 Marriage and civil partnership – does the policy/strategy treat married and civil partnered people equally?	Opportunities to consider proposed policy and equality considerations have been	As the Local Plan progresses towards the Draft Local Plan, the equalities impact of proposed policies will be identified and

	highlighted above and proposed actions are set out under Section 4.	considered with reference to appropriate equalities data.
3.10 Religion/belief – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on people of different religious/faith groups and also upon those with no religion.	Opportunities to consider proposed policy and equality considerations have been highlighted above and proposed actions are set out under Section 4.	As the Local Plan progresses towards the Draft Local Plan, the equalities impact of proposed policies will be identified and considered with reference to appropriate equalities data.
3.11 Socio-economically disadvantaged* – identify the impact on people who are disadvantaged due to factors like family background, educational attainment, neighbourhood, employment status can influence life chances (this is not a legal requirement, but is a local priority).	To provide the planning policy framework to support including: - The delivery of affordable housing. - Opportunities to support sustainable energy and residents with rising energy costs. The risks of digital exclusion particularly for people on lower incomes will be considered within consultation.	As the Local Plan progresses towards the Draft Local Plan, the equalities impact of proposed policies will be identified and considered with reference to appropriate equalities data.
3.12 Rural communities* identify the impact / potential impact on people living in rural communities	To provide the policy framework to support: -The delivery of affordable housing, including in rural communities. Rural Exceptions Site, First Homes Exception Site and Community-Led Development Exception Site policy options further support opportunities to meet identified local community needs within rural areas.	As the Local Plan progresses towards the Draft Local Plan, the equalities impact of proposed policies will be identified and considered with reference to appropriate equalities data.
3.13 Armed Forces Community ** serving members; reservists; veterans and their families, including the bereaved. Public services are required	The Housing policy options provide a range of policy options to ensure that that the housing needs of different groups in the community are reflected in planning	As the Local Plan progresses towards the Draft Local Plan, the equalities impact of proposed policies will be identified and

by law to pay due regard to the Armed Forces Community when developing policy, procedures and making decisions, particularly in the areas of public housing, education and healthcare (to remove disadvantage and consider special provision).	policies, including those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, disabled people, service families and the Traveller community.	considered with reference to appropriate equalities data.
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*There is no requirement within the public sector duty of the Equality Act to consider groups who may be disadvantaged due to socio economic status, or because of living in a rural area. However, these are significant issues within B&NES and have therefore been included here.

** The Equality Act does not cover armed forces community. However, the Armed Forces Bill (which came in on 22 Nov 2022) introduces a requirement to pay ‘due regard’ to make sure the Armed Forces Community are not disadvantaged when accessing public services.

4. Bath and North East Somerset Council & NHS B&NES Equality Impact Assessment Improvement Plan

Please list actions that you plan to take as a result of this assessment/analysis. These actions should be based upon the analysis of data and engagement, any gaps in the data you have identified, and any steps you will be taking to address any negative impacts or remove barriers. The actions need to be built into your service planning framework. Actions/targets should be measurable, achievable, realistic and time framed.

Issues identified	Actions required	Progress milestones	Officer responsible	By when
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<p>The Engagement and Communication Strategy for the B&NES Local Plan 2022-2042 to continue to include equality considerations within consultation processes as the Plan to Examination in Public.</p>	<p>Consultation to meet the statutory requirements set out in the Town and Country Planning Regulations and Bath and B&NES Statement of Community Involvement for Planning 2022.</p>		<p>Planning Policy Team</p>	<p>On-going</p>
<p>Accessible format of Options document and consultation on the B&NES website and opportunities for feedback.</p>	<p>The Options Document and consultation on the B&NES website will be published in an accessible format and include contact details for further accessibility requirements. There will be a variety of opportunities to provide feedback.</p>		<p>Planning Policy Team</p>	<p>Options Document Consultation Feb/March 2024</p>
<p>Equality data collection and feedback.</p>	<p>Equality data collection and feedback to continue to inform how we measure performance and improvement in relation to equality and diversity.</p>		<p>Planning Policy Team</p>	<p>Different consultation stages of the Local Plan 2022-2042.</p>
<p>Identified opportunities within the Reg. 18 EqIA to address equalities issues and the needs of people with protected characteristics within policy development for the Publication Draft of the new B&NES Local Plan 2022-2042.</p>	<p>Lead policy officers to consider equality considerations within policy development for the Publication Draft of the new B&NES Local Plan 2022-2042.</p>		<p>Planning Policy Team</p>	<p>December 2024</p>

Viability testing to consider impact of development requirements in the B&NES Local Plan on wider planning obligations and any equality impacts.	Viability testing of proposed policy.		Planning Policy Team	2024
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5. Sign off and publishing

Once you have completed this form, it needs to be 'approved' by your Divisional Director or their nominated officer. Following this sign off, send a copy to the Equalities Team (equality@bathnes.gov.uk), who will publish it on the Council's and/or NHS B&NES' website. Keep a copy for your own records.

Signed off by: Gary Collins, Head of Planning

Date: 6th February 2024