



## Equality impact assessments – for services, policies and projects

### What is an equality impact assessment?

An equality impact assessment is an important part of our commitment to improving equality practice. The form will help us find out what impact or consequences our functions, policies, procedures and projects have on our citizens, employees and potential employees.

By undertaking an impact assessment, we are able to:

- Take into account the needs, experiences and circumstances of those groups of people who use (or don't / can't use) our services.
- Identify any inequalities people may experience.
- Think about the other ways in which we can deliver our services which will not lead to inequalities.
- Develop better policy-making, procedures and services.

Impact assessment are required by law; The Race Relations Amendment Act, The Disability Discrimination Act and the amended Sex Discrimination Act all require local authorities to assess the impact of their functions, policies, projects and services, or the likely impact of any that are proposed, on equality.

However, our view is that we should be using the results of impact assessment to improve service delivery so that we become more accountable to the people that we serve.

### Background

<b>Name of service / policy / project and date</b>	<b>Revised Policy for the award of rent support grants to Cheltenham's Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations</b>
<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Mark Sheldon, Director Resources</b>
<b>Other people involved in completing this form</b>	<b>Richard Gibson, Strategy and Engagement Manager</b>

## Step 1 - About the service / policy / project

<b>What is the aim of the service / policy / project and what outcomes is it contributing to</b>	<p>This policy aligns to the vision and objectives of the council's Asset Management Plan 2016/17 to 2020/21</p> <p>The vision for the Council's Asset Portfolio is: 'A fit for purpose property portfolio which drives delivery of our corporate vision and outcomes'</p> <p>The three specific asset management policy objectives are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To use our assets to sustain and grow Cheltenham's economic and cultural vitality and make a positive contribution to people's lives.</li> <li>2. To maintain a 'fit for purpose' property portfolio to support service delivery</li> <li>3. To make a positive contribution to the Council's financial position.</li> </ol> <p>Within the framework of the AMP, Council owned-buildings being leased to organisations that are open to the community at large and are working to further the aims of the Council's corporate priorities can be offered a rent support grant. The policy will set out the process for assessing the benefits of the services being delivered from the building provides to the community, and determine the level of rent support grant to be paid to the tenant.</p>
<b>Who are the primary customers of the service / policy / project and how do they / will they benefit</b>	<p>Only legally constituted, not-for-profit voluntary and community sector organisations who are occupying one of the Council's buildings on a market rent basis can apply for a rent support grant.</p>
<b>How and where is the service / policy / project implemented</b>	<p>At the point when a tenant is either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entering into a new lease</li> <li>• On a rent review</li> <li>• On lease renewal</li> </ul>
<b>What potential barriers might already exist to achieving these outcomes</b>	<p>None identified</p>

## Step 2 – What do you know already about your existing / potential customers

<b>What existing information and data do you have about your existing / potential customers e.g. Statistics, customer feedback, performance information</b>	<p>Property Services maintain a schedule of VCS organisations renting council property. There are 16 groups that are benefiting from a rent subsidy awarded under the previous policy.</p>
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<b>What does it tell you about who uses your service / policy and those that don't?</b>	There are a wide range of VCS organisations benefiting.
<b>What have you learnt about real barriers to your service from any consultation with customers and any stakeholder groups?</b>	None identified
<b>If not, who do you have plans to consult with about the service / policy / project?</b>	Initial consultation on the new scheme was undertaken with the VCS forum on 26 April 2016.

### Step 3 - Assessing Impact

How does your service / policy / project impact on different groups in the community?

Group	What are you already doing to benefit this group	What are you doing that might disadvantage this group	What could you do differently to benefit this group	No impact on this group
<b>Ethnicity / Race</b>				Out of the 16 groups, none have a specific focus on supporting BME groups
<b>Sex</b>				Out of the 16 groups, none have a specific focus on supporting gender specific support groups
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>				Out of the 16 groups, none have a specific focus on supporting gender reassignment support groups
<b>Age</b>	Out of the 16 groups, 6 groups support children and young people			
<b>Disability</b>				Out of the 16 groups, none have a specific focus on supporting disability support groups
<b>Religion or belief</b>				Out of the 16 groups, none have a specific focus on faith groups
<b>Sexual orientation</b>				Out of the 16 groups, none have a specific focus on LGBT groups
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>				Out of the 16 groups, none have a specific focus on supporting people who are married or in a civil partnership

<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>				Out of the 16 groups, none have a specific focus on supporting ante-natal or post-natal groups
<b>Other socially excluded groups or communities</b>	Out of the 16 groups, 6 groups people from socially excluded groups or serve areas of multiple deprivation.			

## Step 4 - what are the differences

<b>Are any groups affected in different ways to others as a result of the service / policy / project?</b>	Nothing particular has been identified from the EQIA process. We know that if the new policy introduces a cap on maximum amount of rent subsidy that the council will provide, this may impact on the finances of the 6 VCS organisations currently in receipt of 100% grants. Out of those, 2 are serving areas of multiple deprivation.
<b>Does your service / policy / project either directly or indirectly discriminate?</b>	No
<b>If yes, what can be done to improve this?</b>	N/A
<b>Are there any other ways in which the service / project can help support priority communities in Cheltenham?</b>	By being open and transparent about the way rent support grants are allocated, we feel that the new policy will support our priority communities.

## Step 5 – taking things forward

<b>What are the key actions to be carried out and how will they be resourced and monitored?</b>	None as a result of this EQIA
<b>Who will play a role in the decision-making process?</b>	Cabinet Member Finance
<b>What are your / the project's learning and development needs?</b>	None as a result of this EQIA
<b>How will you capture these actions in your service / project planning?</b>	None as a result of this EQIA