Equality impact assessment – 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

Name of project and date	Public Realm Planting Strategic Review November 2017
Lead officer	Emma Morgan
Other people involved in completing this form	Adam Reynolds Ralph Pullin

Step 1 - About the project

What is the aim of the project and what outcomes is it contributing to	The project aims to examine the options and make recommendations for Cheltenham Borough Council's (CBC) approach to public realm planting and assess the impact of an alternative strategy. The project contributes to two specific outcomes within the corporate strategy: • ''vision for Cheltenham's town centre and its public realm'' (ENV2); and • Our economic strategy, to sustain and grow Cheltenham's economic and cultural vitality, specifically, to develop a ''longer term strategy for place making'' and a ''strategic approach to tourism'' (ECON 1 & 4). The Place strategy core values of creativity, pioneering and nurturing are reflected in the review and subsequent recommendation.
Who are the primary customers of the project and how do they / will they benefit	Residents and visitors to Cheltenham will benefit from enhancement of the townscape and associated economic developments due to increased appeal of the town as a visitor and business destination. Ubico staff will benefit from a new planting and maintenance regime, requiring additional training and expanding their skillset.
How and where is the project implemented	The planting strategy review will cover all areas within green space and the public realm throughout the town.
What potential barriers might already exist to achieving these outcomes	Public opinion. Officer resource.

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

What existing information and data do you have about your existing / potential customers e.g. Statistics, customer feedback, performance information	Previous social media feedback regarding small sustainable planting schemes throughout the town. Stakeholder feedback from engagement presentations regarding perennial planting during September andOctober2017
What does it tell you about who uses your service and those that don't?	There is strong support for the adoption of perennial planting, based on aesthetic, environmental, financial benefits and the subsequent enhancement of Cheltenham. There is also strong support from a number of groups who have concerns relating to heritage, visual impact and maintenance levels from the proposed planting strategy and potential adverse effect on Cheltenham.
What have you learnt about real	This is a flagship issue.

barriers to your service from any consultation with customers and any stakeholder groups?	There is a perception of Tradition versus Modernism. A robust maintenance regime is regarded as essential for perennial planting schemes. Due regard must be given to appropriate planting i.e. the right plants in the right place. Planting schemes must be suitably designed.
If not, who do you have plans to consult with about the project?	Members will continue to be engaged with for input on the proposal to develop perennial planting schemes.

Step 3 - Assessing Impact

How does your 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
Ethnicity / Race		Stakeholder engagement presentation is in English only	Ensure visual information enhances the written text	
Sex				✓
Gender Reassignment				✓
Age				✓
Disability		Annual bedding focuses on the visual impact of flowers and therefore disadvantages those with visual impairment.	Greater plant diversity will present opportunities to enhance and expand sensory perception	
Religion or belief				✓
Sexual orientation				✓
Marriage and Civil Partnership				✓

Pregnancy & Maternity				✓
Other socially excluded groups or communities				✓

Step 4 - what are the differences

Are any groups affected in different ways to others as a result of the project?	No
Does your project either directly or indirectly discriminate?	No.
If yes, what can be done to improve this?	
Are there any other ways in which the project can help support priority communities in Cheltenham?	Opportunities to continue to involve groups of volunteers in the design, planting and maintenance of schemes within the public realm could be developed.

Step 5 – taking things forward

What are the key actions to be carried out and how will they be resourced and monitored?	An appraisal of options for public realm planting strategy, with recommendations, will be developed by CBC and Ubico officers and submitted to Cabinet for decision in December.
Who will play a role in the decision-making process?	Cabinet.
What are your / the project's learning and development needs?	
How will you capture these actions in your project planning?	Milestone plan, action log, risks and issues log, decision log.