

Why do you need to do this Equality Impact Check?

Our strategies and policies set out the way we will deliver our services (including employment opportunities). When we are developing them, we need to check that they are not going to create any barriers which could prevent people from accessing our services.

People in Southern Oxfordshire may face barriers because of things like **disability, gender (including transgender, pregnancy and maternity), age, sexual orientation, rural isolation, income, religion/belief or ethnicity.**

As well as thinking about how our services will meet the needs of these groups of people, we also need to consider how our draft strategies and policies will help us to:

- promote positive relations within communities
- give everyone a voice
- respect and value everyone
- protect people's human rights

This Equality Impact Check provides officers with a framework to help them work through these considerations in relation to their draft policy/strategy, ensuring that we are meeting our legal duties with regards to equality and diversity.

We have a statutory duty to carry out these assessments and they contribute towards our corporate priority to 'optimise access to services (Vale)/provide equality of access to our services' (South).

If you have any queries about this Check or would like some advice/support in completing it, please contact the Shared equalities officer (see contact details below).

Once you've completed this Equality Impact Check, please send the paperwork to the shared equality officer, along with a copy of the draft strategy/policy.

Cheryl Reeves (equalities officer)
Email: cheryl.reeves@southandvale.gov.uk
Telephone: x7324

OUTLINE OF THE DRAFT STRATEGY / POLICY YOU ARE CHECKING:

1. What are the aims and objectives of this draft strategy/policy?

We think that enforcement should be carried out fairly and in a way that avoids an unreasonable regulatory burden. We have adopted the principles of good enforcement and processes in compliance with the Regulators Code. Our enforcement actions will reflect the principles of being proportionate, transparent and open, consistent and fair, prioritise enforcement action on activities that present the greatest risk, equality and fairness and be accountable.

2. Who is the proposed strategy or policy designed to support / help / serve?

- Residents and visitors to south Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse
- Businesses and hackney carriage drivers and private hire operators and drivers

3. If the draft strategy/policy relates to an existing council service/function, has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) already been completed on the service/function?

No

Yes – please list any issues/barriers identified within the assessment that your draft strategy needs to address:

To ensure the needs of people protected by the Equality Act are taken account of such as; provision of information in alternative formats and access to interpreters or signers should the need arise.

4. Does the draft strategy or policy have the potential to cause a negative impact or discriminate against certain groups in the community?

Equality group	Yes	No	If 'yes', please explain how the strategy/policy could cause a negative impact or discriminate. If you can not justify this you will need to take mitigating action, complete the action plan at the end of this assessment.	If 'No,' What existing evidence (presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? E.g. Will the policy/strategy advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic? This means will they <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics. • Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
All groups		√		<p>The policy includes the following commitment 'Equality and fairness – we aim to have a fair approach to our enforcement activities. We will carefully consider the needs of anyone who is subject to enforcement action and be sensitive to the needs of people who may be particularly vulnerable during the enforcement process. – specific examples are referred to below but are not contained within the policy.</p>
People from ethnic minority groups		√		<p>Where a person has a limited understanding of English, in order that they can understand their rights and responsibilities relating to the enforcement action the council will arrange for an interpreter either face to face or on the telephone.</p> <p>Written warning letters comply with the councils' translation and interpretation policy, including the following strap line</p> <p>If you have difficulty reading this please call 01235 540...</p>

Equality group	Yes	No	If 'yes', please explain how the strategy/policy could cause a negative impact or discriminate. If you can not justify this you will need to take mitigating action, complete the action plan at the end of this assessment.	If 'No,' What existing evidence (presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? E.g. Will the policy/strategy advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic? This means will they <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics. • Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
People with disabilities <i>(including carers)</i>		✓		<p>In order to ensure that people with hearing impairments can communicate with the council relating to enforcement matters. In accordance with the council's translation and interpretation policy all enforcement letters contain the text phone number 18001 followed by the relevant team number.</p> <p>Equally the council can arrange a signer or lip speaker should this be required for the person to understand their rights and responsibilities relating to the enforcement action.</p> <p>We do not anticipate that the policy will have any negative impact on people with the following protected characteristics. All enforcement actions will reflect the principles of being proportionate, transparent and open, consistent and fair, prioritise enforcement action on activities that present the greatest risk, equality and fairness and be accountable. Should we identify/be made aware of different needs for these groups during the enforcement process, we will take steps to remove or minimise any disadvantage and do our best to meet their needs.</p>
Men or women <i>(including pregnant women, women on maternity and transgender people)</i>		✓		
Gay, lesbian or bisexual people		✓		
People from different religions/beliefs <i>(including people without a religion/belief)</i>		✓		

Equality group	Yes	No	If 'yes', please explain how the strategy/policy could cause a negative impact or discriminate. If you can not justify this you will need to take mitigating action, complete the action plan at the end of this assessment.	If 'No,' What existing evidence (presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? E.g. Will the policy/strategy advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic? This means will they <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics. • Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
Older or younger people		✓		As above
People living in rural areas		✓		
Local Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations				The draft policy does not relate to the Voluntary Community and Faith sector

5. Have reasonable adjustments been made for people with disabilities to ensure they can use the draft strategy or policy? This might mean treating disabled people better than non-disabled people in order to meet their needs

No

Yes - please provide detail:

The following alternative formats statement will be added to the end of the policy and staff are available to assist with the support of RNIB type talk, signers and lip speakers should the need arise.

Alternative formats of this publication are available on request. These include large print, Braille, audio, email, easy read and alternative languages.

Please contact [service team] on  [telephone number]

6. Have there been any equality related recommendations in the area that your draft policy/strategy is covering which have arisen from, for example, internal/external audits or scrutiny reports?

Recommendation made	Is this being addressed in your draft strategy or policy? If not, please explain why.
None	

7. Will the draft strategy or policy help to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it e.g will the changes help to tackle prejudice and promote understanding between the different groups

- No (*If you feel there is scope to improve how you foster good relations, amend your decision accordingly*)
- Yes – please explain how

The policy has been produced to ensure a consistent and fair approach thus reducing the possibility of prejudice behaviour by officers. It will have neutral impact on promoting understanding between different groups in the community.

8. Will the draft strategy or policy protect and promote human rights? [You may find it helpful to view the human rights articles and case studies on the intranet to help you decide]

- No – please explain why and how you will amend the draft policy/strategy to eliminate the effect (if you think the effect cannot be eliminated but can be justified, please also give details):
 - Yes
- Article 6 – Right to a fair trial
 Article 8 – The right to respect for a private and family life
 Article 14 – Prohibition of discrimination

9. Has there been consultation with relevant community groups to help inform this draft strategy or policy?

No, in line with our customer engagement charter we avoid unnecessary consultation. The principles set out in the enforcement policy are set out in the regulators code. Having a consultation when there is little we can substantively change was not

considered to be worthwhile.

10. Has the draft strategy or policy missed opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and positive attitudes?

No

Yes – please outline the plans you have to address the missed opportunities (complete table below)

Action plan for mitigating action or advancing equality of opportunity

Action	Person responsible	Target completion date
<p>To comply with the councils translation and interpretation policy the following statement should be added to the end of the policy</p> <p>Alternative formats of this publication are available on request. These include large print, Braille, audio, email, easy read and alternative languages.</p> <p>Please contact [service team] on [phone icon] [telephone number]</p>	<p>Ben Coleman</p>	<p>When policy is finalised</p>