

Bath and North East Somerset Council

Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit

This toolkit or worksheet has been developed to use as a guide when conducting an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) on a policy, service or function. It includes questions that need to be answered by the person/team conducting the EIA, plus questions that could be asked of key stakeholders during consultation phases. It is intended that this is used as a working document throughout the EIA process: the final written report of the EIA should follow the same format and cover each of the sections within it.

It is important to consider all available information that could help determine both whether the policy could have any potential adverse impact and whether it meets the particular needs of different equalities groups. Please attach examples of any monitoring information, research and consultation reports that you have used to assess the potential impact upon the six equalities strands.

NB - Only fill in the sections that are relevant

Title of service, function or policy being assessed	Core Strategy options document – version September 2009 See appendix for summary report of the Core Strategy options document and the results of this equalities impact assessment
Name of directorate and service	Directorate: Customer Services Service: Planning Service
Name and role of officers completing the assessment	Liz Elford, Cleo Newcombe-Jones, Neil Best. Planning Policy officers.

Contact telephone number	01225 477648
Date of assessment period	August 2009

1. Identify the aims of the policy/service/function and how it is implemented.			
	Key questions	Answers / Notes	Actions required
1.1	Is this a new policy / function or service or a review of an existing one?	Review of Council's planning policy under a new planning system – also introducing new planning policies.	
1.2	What is the aim, objective or purpose of the policy/service/function?	<p>The Core Strategy forms a key part of the emerging planning policy framework for the District; the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF covers the period upto 2026 and the Core Strategy is the central document that will set out the long term spatial vision for Bath & North East Somerset. It will identify the broad locations for new housing, jobs and other strategic developments.</p> <p>There are several stages to the Core Strategy process before final adoption of the document, this equalities impact assessment is of the options stage, at which different strategic options are considered.</p>	EQIA to be carried out at future stages of the document .

1.3	<p>Whose needs is it designed to meet?</p> <p>Who are the main stakeholders?</p>	<p>For the benefit of the whole community, current and future generations. It will be utilised by the general public, developers and key stakeholders.</p> <p>Information on stakeholders and audience for the LDF is laid out in the Statement of Community Involvement which includes a list of consultation bodies at Appendix C, this also identifies the target groups for engagement. In addition planning policy hold a database of people who have registered an interest in the LDF and who are informed at critical stages.</p> <p>http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/BathNES/environmentandplanning/planning/localdevelopmentscheme/StatementOfCommunityInvolvement.htm</p>	
1.4	<p>Who defines or defined the policy/function? How much room for review is there?</p>	<p>National level policy, Planning Policy Statement 12 sets the framework to which local planning policy should adhere and the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West sets further regional context. Bath and North East Somerset have the opportunity to make local policies that conform to these national/regional policies through the LDF.</p>	
1.5	<p>Who implements the policy function? Is it possible for bias/prejudice to creep into the process?</p>	<p>Once the Core Strategy is adopted it will be implemented by Development management, the private sector and public service providers. The current options stage is a stepping stone towards the final adopted version and as such will not itself be directly implemented.</p> <p>There are checks and balances in the process, it is transparent and democratic. These include the process of internal and external consultation on the document, and will include independent examination at the submission Core Strategy stage. In its final form the document will be implemented by the planning committee and development management officers, there is also the right to appeal to the Secretary of State against the decisions made by the Council.</p>	

1.6	Are there any areas of the policy or function that are governed by discretionary judgement or judgement? If so is there clear guidance on how to exercise these?	<p>Judgements on the content of the Core Strategy options are made based on a robust evidence base. The evidence base for the Core Strategy options is substantial and available to view at: http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/NR/exeres/C4C564DB-853E-4351-B76A-1FD871D8CD75,frameless.htm?NRMODE=Published</p> <p>Policies will be more advanced at the next stage of the Core Strategy process and it is against these policies that decisions will be made.</p>	
1.7	What factors or forces are at play that could contribute or detract from the outcomes identified earlier in 1.2?	<p>Investment from the public and private sector will affect delivery of the Core Strategy. The recent downturn in the market for example could detract from the deliverability of housing. The planning system requires Core Strategies to be flexible to adjust to changing circumstances and this must be ingrained in the Core Strategy.</p> <p>Work which is being done to manage the deliverability of the Core Strategy includes the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, this ensures that proper plans are in place to address needs generated by future development as well as meeting existing deficiencies in accessing services and facilities.</p> <p>In addition policies will be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report which will allow for annual review of the progress of the policies to mitigate against emerging issues affecting the delivery of the strategy.</p>	
1.8	How do these outcomes meet or hinder other policies, values or objectives of the public authority (this	<p>The Core Strategy is central to the delivery of the vision of the Sustainable Community Strategy, and the Council's corporate vision.</p>	.

	question will not always apply)		
1.9	How does the local authority interface with other bodies in relation to the implementation of this policy function? (this question will not always apply)	Through the Local Strategic Partnership, public services group, one-to-one meetings and formalised working relationships.	
1.1 0	Consider if any of the six equalities groups have particular needs relevant to the policy.	The Core Strategy covers the whole District and aims to meet the needs of the whole community whilst recognising that certain groups will need particular intervention to provide equality of opportunity. This includes the gypsy and travellers (race strand) group who have particular needs, whilst this options document addresses this through the core policies, there will be more focused policy in a separate development plan document which is a part of the LDF.	
1.1 1	Taking the six strands of equalities, is there anything in the policy that could discriminate or disadvantage	We do not know at this stage.	

	any groups of people?		
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2. Consideration of available data, research and information

	Key questions	Answers / Notes	Actions required
2.1	What do you already know about who uses and delivers this service or policy?	<p>We know about user profile for planning applications, but less about the wider groups of user who will benefit from planning policy and the Core Strategy.</p> <p>Aware that an understanding of the needs of residents in Bristol that may become part of the community of the SE Bristol urban extension is required. As such have obtained ward profiling data from Bristol and have held a joint stakeholders event.</p>	Need to gather information from the equalities mapping work to inform the next draft of the Core Strategy.
2.2	What quantitative data do you already have? (e.g census data, employee data, customer profile data etc)	Info on planning applications and demographic profile of District from the census, statistics in the Annual Monitoring Report, various evidence reports completed by consultants.	As at 2.1 – need to consider equalities mapping data.

		<p>More information on the evidence available at the link referenced at 1.6 of this form.</p> <p>Involvement with the Joint Authorities Planning and Data Group ensures up to date evidence sharing across the West of England area.</p>	
2.3	<p>What qualitative data do you already have? (e.g results of customer satisfaction surveys, results of previous consultations, staff survey findings etc).</p>	<p>Community engagement results from the Core Strategy launch document will be available through the consultation report published alongside the Core Strategy options.</p> <p>Council voicebox survey</p> <p>Record of written and informal comments.</p> <p>This data has provided information on the views of the public to feed into the identification of the issues and subsequent vision and objectives for the core strategy.</p>	
2.4	<p>What additional information is needed to ensure that all equality groups' needs are taken into account? Do you need to collect more data, carry out consultation at this stage?</p>	<p>We are aware that we need to develop our strategy for engaging the following groups:</p> <p>Faith/groups Small businesses</p>	<p>There are actions to take on board for development of the next drafting stage of the Core Strategy. These include:</p> <p>Contact Development and</p>

		<p>Children</p> <p>This gap will be addressed in the forthcoming consultation on the draft options document. The Statement of Community Involvement gives more information (at page 12) on how we will engage with these groups, and Appendix B provides information on the methods that will be used.</p> <p>Additionally we have discussed our engagement strategy with Planning Aid to ensure it reaches the right groups. From this we are aware that we need to engage with the more deprived areas.</p> <p>Gypsy and traveller concerns will be picked up in the separate Gypsy and Traveller development plan document.</p>	<p>Regeneration for information gathered on engagement with small business.</p> <p>Contact Children's services for more information on Children's consultation next year. This will be useful to inform consultation on the next draft of the Core Strategy.</p> <p>Contact the religion/belief faith forum contact on the LSP.</p>
2.5	How are you going to go about getting the extra information that is required?	<p>As part of the consultation programme.</p> <p>Working with communities.</p> <p>Assistance from planning Aid.</p>	<p>Ensure Consultation Strategy reflects this and actions listed at 2.4.</p>

3. Formal consultation (include within this section any consultation you are planning along with the results of any consultation you undertake)

	Key questions	Answers/notes	Actions required
3.1	Who do you need to consult with?	This is directed by Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations. Details of who we will consult with (as well as those groups statutorily required) along with processes involved, is detailed in our Statement of Community Involvement.	
3.2	What method / form of consultation can be used?	Our Statement of Community Involvement holds more detail on this, a toolbox of the methods to be drawn on during consultation is at Appendix B.	
3.3	What consultation was actually carried out as part of this EIA and with which groups?	Involvement from officers from other departments to act as 'critical friends'.	<p>Could involve the chairs of the three workers groups in the process. Due to time constraints this will be an action to complete as a part of the next draft of the Core Strategy.</p> <p>Send equalities impact assessment to dip-sampling group for further critique.</p>
3.4	What were the main issues arising from the consultation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Strategy has opportunity to have positive impacts on all equality strands • Need to be more careful with use of language, use more plain 	As detailed in action plan section below.

English and avoid jargon.

- Need more demographic information to ensure positive impacts are addressing needs of the existing population. Need to consider equalities mapping information as a part of this.
- Need to maximise opportunities to involve the target groups from the statement of community involvement in the consultation on the options document
- Need to strengthen robustness of the equalities impact assessment by maximising input from others within the Council
- Better incorporation of corporate equality policy and schemes
- Socio-economic strand added to the 6 main strands as a part of this assessment as it was considered particularly relevant to the Core Strategy, it will also be considered in future equalities impact assessments of stages of the Core Strategy.

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4. Assessment of impact

Based upon any data you have analysed, or the results of consultation or research, use the spaces below to list how the policy will or does actually work in practice for each equalities strand:

1. Consider whether the policy/function meets any particular needs of each of the six equalities groups.
2. Identify any differential impact (positive or adverse) for each of the six equalities groups
3. Include any examples of how the policy or service helps to promote race, disability and gender equality.

	General comments	Process points	
		<p>Whilst this equalities impact assessment has focussed on the content of the Core Strategy options document, it has inevitably come across some matters of process during assessment.</p> <p>The use of the language in the document, including use of acronyms and technical terms could be a barrier to understanding for many users, particularly affecting the young or those with learning difficulties. There is a need to use plain English more consistently. This has been set as an action.</p> <p>Future drafts should have descriptions of the images in text available for those unable to discern the images. Colour blindness should also be considered as the diagrams are developed further, using symbols as well as colours to illustrate information.</p>	
4.1	Gender – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> Overall impact: Positive </div>	

	<p>women, men and transgender people</p>	<p>Patterns of behaviour can be influenced by distribution of housing and employment in different ways by males/females. The options document is aiming to match jobs and houses, and create mixed use environments to avoid creating dormitory developments that leave young parents (typically mothers) feeling isolated.</p> <p>The core policies directly address issues of design, the public realm, public transport and fear of crime – all considering the best ways to minimise difficulties for various groups, including considering the particular issues women face.</p>
<p>4.2</p>	<p>Disability - identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on disabled people (ensure consideration of a range of impairments including visual and hearing impairments, mobility impairments, learning disability etc)</p>	<div data-bbox="606 602 1155 675" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Overall impact: Positive</p> </div> <p>Urban design policy refers to manual for streets which sets principles for accessibility for people with poor mobility around the streets and into buildings. Inclusion of Lifetime Homes, By Design and Building for Life standards also has positive impacts for this strand.</p> <p>Opportunity to include heightened support for home working in this section. At present the concept is championed in the rural areas, and could be of particular benefit to disability groups or older groups across the District, rather than in the rural areas alone.</p> <p>Nature Conservation/Landscape character core policies could benefit from greater reference to opportunities to access them, particularly for young people and people with disabilities.</p> <p>Transport and accessibility core policy could be improved by including reference to ‘accessible’ public transport.</p> <p>Opportunities to improve access to the Somerdale site in Keynsham through new development. Regeneration of the site presents opportunities for better premises and facilities. This allows for better access between the site and the town centre for people with mobility issues.</p>

4.3	<p>Age – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on different age groups</p>	<div data-bbox="596 261 1144 334" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Overall impact: Positive</p> </div> <p>The importance of local distinctiveness and landmarks brought out in the various sections will help to provide aide memoirs to the older generation who are increasingly suffering from illnesses such as dementia.</p> <p>Climate change may have implications for older people as temperatures change and more summer deaths ensue and the policy seeks to address this.</p> <p>Climate change issues for inter-generational equity, decisions taken will affect the young in the future, and this has been reflected.</p> <p>Urban design refers to lifetime homes, positive impact to respond to the changing needs of different age groups throughout their lives.</p> <p>Meeting housing needs section presents opportunity to consider the needs of the older population and students in more detail.</p> <p>Nature Conservation/Landscape character core policies present opportunities to facilitate people accessing them; particularly for young people and people with disabilities.</p> <p>A prosperous economy - opportunity to include more reference to skills and training, particularly in terms of life long learning, keeping older people involved and re-skilling. Could also benefit from reference to the voluntary groups and their importance for the economy.</p> <p>There are positive references to social places for young people, toddlers and older people in the Midsomer Norton and Radstock chapter in particular.</p>
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4.4	<p>Race – identify the impact/potential impact on different black and minority ethnic groups</p>	<div data-bbox="598 240 1144 310" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Overall impact: Neutral</p> </div> <p>Whilst there are no negative impacts in this strand, there are few positive impacts and as such this strand is neutral. The action to investigate more information on demographic profile of the District from the Equalities mapping will assist in beginning to identify opportunities for positive impacts for this strand.</p> <p>The Core Policies does include positive impact for the gypsy, travellers and travelling show people group through a dedicated policy. There will also be a dedicated Development Plan Document for this group. In addition the core policies provide for maximising opportunities for social inclusion through the community facilities policy.</p>
4.5	<p>Sexual orientation - identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on lesbians, gay men, bisexual and heterosexual people</p>	<div data-bbox="598 678 1144 748" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Overall impact: Neutral</p> </div> <p>None of the sections of the document have an adverse impact on this group. It is however felt that little is known of particular needs of this group, and this is a gap that requires future action.</p>
4.6	<p>Religion/belief – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on people of different religious/faith groups and also upon those with no religion.</p>	<div data-bbox="573 954 1119 1024" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Overall impact: Positive</p> </div> <p>The Core policies make a positive impact through considering the needs of community facilities for faith groups. In addition it is required that new development should provide timely delivery of appropriate infrastructure for faith group requirements.</p> <p>Opportunities for further positive impacts include considering the actual functionality of multi use community buildings to meet specific needs. Some religious groups may require purpose built accommodation. Further consultation with faith groups is an action to address this.</p>

	<p>Socio-economic inequality</p>	<p>Assessors felt that this was an important aspect of equality that is not covered in the equalities impact assessment that would be useful to consider.</p> <p>Renewable energy core policy should ensure that it does not exclude those who are unable to afford the latest technologies.</p> <p>Opportunity to steer process on retro-fitting buildings. The focus is on ensuring zero carbon buildings for new developments but should be mindful of the existing stock. An amendment to this affect could also be warranted in the SE Bristol urban extension vision final paragraph.</p> <p>Opportunity to minimise fuel poverty through responses to the low carbon economy and climate change.</p> <p>The Regional Spatial Strategy has prescribed limited development to the rural areas and the challenge of Core Strategy is to ensure that this does not lead to urban/rural inequity.</p> <p>The rural exceptions policy provides more opportunity for affordable housing in the rural areas to retain social balance.</p>	
	<p>Key questions</p>	<p>Answers/notes</p>	<p>Actions required</p>
<p>4.7</p>	<p>Have you identified any areas in which the policy/service or function is indirectly or directly discriminatory? If you answer yes to this please refer to legal services on whether this is justifiable within</p>	<p>No, however if the actions are not adequately set then there is the potential to be discriminatory.</p>	

	legislation.		
4.8	<p>If you have identified any adverse impact(s) can it be avoided, can we make changes, can we lessen it etc? (NB: If you have identified a differential or adverse impact that amounts to unlawful discrimination, then you are duty bound to act to ensure that the Council acts lawfully by changing the policy or proposal in question).</p>	<p>No adverse impacts have been identified. Opportunities for positive impact will be taken forward and incorporated in the next stage of the Core Strategy (initial draft document).</p>	
4.9	<p>Are there additional measures that could be adopted to further equality of opportunity in the context of this policy/service/function and to meet the particular needs of equalities groups that you have identified?</p>	<p>There is a need for better research on the equalities make up of the District and the impact of this upon the options, research in to the equalities mapping data has been highlighted as an action. Additionally a better understanding of the needs of people falling under the sexual orientation strand in particular is required.</p>	<p>Refine engagement strategy to include the groups referenced at 2.4 above and address sexual orientation.</p>

5.	Internal processes for the organisation – to be explored at the end of the EIA process.		
Making a decision in the light of data, alternatives and consultations			
	Key questions	Answers/notes	Actions required
5.1	How will the organisation's decision making process be used to take this forward?	The results of this impact assessment will be taken forward via the action plan to be considered at the next drafting stage of the Core Strategy.	Responses to actions to be documented.
Monitoring for adverse impact in the future			
	Key questions	Answers/notes	Actions required
5.2	What have we found out in completing this EIA? What can we learn for the future?	That there are many ways in which the Core Strategy can have a positive impact on the various equality strands. Whilst many of the draft policies are already having a positive impact, there are means by which we can further enhance the positive impact.	Ongoing consideration at each drafting stage of the Core Strategy.
5.3	Who will carry out monitoring?	Planning policy team	

5.4	What needs to be monitored?	Progress on the actions listed in section 6 of this report	
5.5	What method(s) of monitoring will be used?	Monitoring the action schedule in section 6 of this report. Results of the actions taken will be referred to at the next drafting stage.	
5.6	How will the monitoring information be published?	The schedule detailing the actions relating to this equalities impact assessment to be published alongside the next draft of the Core Strategy.	

Publication of results of the equality impact assessment

	Key questions	Answers/notes	Actions required
5.7	Who will take responsibility for writing up the EIA report?	Planning policy team.	
5.8	How will the results of the EIA be published?	Alongside the consultation version of the Core Strategy options document in autumn 2009.	
5.9	Who will take responsibility for this?	Planning Policy.	

6. Bath and North East Somerset Council Equality Impact Assessment Improvement Plan

Please list actions that you plan to take as a result of this assessment (continue on separate sheets as necessary). These actions need to be built into the service planning framework and targets should be measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound.

Title of service/function or policy being assessed:

Name and role of officers completing assessment:

Date assessment completed:

Issues identified	Actions required	Progress milestones	Officer responsible	By when
Use of language. Needs to be more accessible, avoiding acronyms and jargon. This is a problem for the general user, and in particular for the young.	Drafting of the document in plain English	1. Specialists to be involved in re-drafting document to plain, conversational English. 2. Core strategy options document chapter leads to incorporate plain English amendments before autumn public consultation.	Planning policy team	End August 2009. Autumn 2009
More information on demographics required.	Incorporate Equalities Mapping data.	All chapters of the core strategy to consider this and fill in schedule detailing how equalities mapping data has been incorporated.	Planning policy team	For next draft of Core Strategy.
Maximise opportunities to involve Statement of Community Involvement target groups in the consultation on the options	Liaise with relevant officers and community representatives regarding the identified gap groups.	Contact Development and Regeneration for information gathered on engagement with small business.	Planning policy team	For next draft of Core Strategy.

document and subsequent stages of the Core Strategy.		<p>Contact the religion/belief faith forum contact on the LSP.</p> <p>Contact Children's services for more information on Children's consultation next year – (Mary Kearney-Jones).</p>		
Strengthen robustness of the equalities impact assessment of the Core Strategy.	<p>Send this EQIA to dip-sampling group for further internal critique.</p> <p>Involve the chairs of the three workers groups in the process.</p>	<p>1. Request to be considered for dip sampling.</p> <p>2. Present this EQIA to dip-sampling group.</p> <p>Incorporate this into the timetable for the equalities impact assessment of the next draft of the Core Strategy.</p>	Planning policy team	<p>For next draft of Core Strategy.</p> <p>For next draft.</p>
Points made under each equality strand to be taken on board by each chapter lead. Opportunities for further positive impact that have been identified under each strand to be itemised in a schedule and responded to at the next draft of the Core Strategy.	For investigation/incorporation at the next stage of the document.	<p>1. Schedule of opportunities for improving positive impacts to be generated.</p> <p>2. Lead officers on chapters to consider schedule and amend document accordingly.</p>	Planning policy team	<p>October 2009</p> <p>In development of next draft of Core Strategy</p>
Require better consideration of corporate equality policy and	Find out more information from the corporate equality policy	Glean relevant data from these documents and add to schedule	Planning policy team	Next draft of

schemes.	and equality schemes.	for consideration in re-drafting of the document.		document.
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Once you have completed this form, use it as a basis for writing a report of the Equality Impact Assessment. Keep a copy of the form as a record of the processes you have been through in carrying out the EIA and send one copy to the Equalities Team (equality@bathnes.gov.uk, or by post to Equalities Team, Keynsham Town Hall, Bristol, BS31 1NL

Please contact your directorate equalities officer for advice and guidance.

Major Projects: Cordelia Johnney
Support Services Cordelia Johnney
Customer services – Cordelia Johnney
Improvement and performance – Louise Murphy
Children’s services – Louise Murphy
Adult Social services and housing – Samantha Jones
Democratic and legal services - Samantha Jones

Corporate Equalities Team

November 2007

APPENDIX - Summary Report

Bath and North East Somerset Council

**Policy Title: Core Strategy Options
Equality Impact Assessment Report
Date: September 2009**

Co-ordinator of Policy:

Planning Policy Team

Persons carrying out Equality Impact Assessment:

Planning policy officers

1. Introduction

The Planning Policy approach for the District

The Core Strategy options document represents a review of the Council's planning policy under the new planning system and as directed by Planning Policy Statement 12, the Government's policy for local spatial planning.

The Core Strategy forms a key part of the emerging planning policy framework for the District; the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF covers the period upto 2026 and the Core Strategy is the central document that will set out the long term spatial vision for Bath & North East Somerset. It will identify the broad locations for new housing, jobs and other strategic developments. The Core Strategy is central to the delivery of the vision of the Sustainable Community Strategy, and the Council's corporate vision.

There are several stages to the Core Strategy process before final adoption of the document, the current stage considers the different strategic options. The results of this equalities impact assessment will be considered as the next stage of the Core Strategy is drafted, this will be the draft submission stage.

The users of the Core Strategy

The Core Strategy will benefit the whole community, current and future generations. Information on the key stakeholders and audience for the LDF is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement which includes a list of consultation bodies at Appendix C, this also identifies the target groups for engagement. In addition planning policy hold a database of people who have registered an interest in the LDF and who are informed at critical stages.

2. General problems and issues already identified that might affect the policy from meeting its aims

Content of the Core Strategy options document

- Need more demographic information to be able to create more positive impacts for different groups of people, particularly under the different strands. Need to consider equalities mapping information as a part of this.
- Some points of wording that could be altered to make positive impact more explicit – these have been itemised for attention in the action plan for this equalities impact assessment.
- An additional strand has been added for consideration in future equalities impact assessments of the evolving Core Strategy. This is the Socio-economic strand; deemed particularly relevant due to the opportunity that the Core Strategy has to address current and future inequalities based on socioeconomic status.

Processes associated with the development of the Core Strategy

- Need to be more careful with use of language, use more plain English and avoid jargon to ensure that it is more accessible to users.
- Need to maximise opportunities to involve the target groups from the statement of community involvement in the consultation on the options document, faith groups, children and small businesses in particular.
- Need to strengthen robustness of the equalities impact assessment by maximising input from across the Council, such as through the 'dip-sampling' process. In addition there should be better consideration of the corporate equality policy and schemes.

3. What data was analysed as part of this Equality Impact Assessment process and what did it tell us?

This assessment looked at the content of the core strategy options document itself. The evidence base for the core strategy has fed into these options, and whilst not analysed directly as a part of this assessment, the evidence base is critical to supporting the document.

4. Assessment of impact on equality groups

It is felt that the overall impact of the Core Strategy options is positive. The impact on all strands (with the exception of sexual orientation and race) is considered to be positive. The impact on sexual orientation and race was found to be neutral.

There are already several commendable elements in the options document which engender positive impact and it is felt that there are other opportunities that can be seized in the next draft of the document to complement these. The positive impacts are now discussed in more detail under each strand.

Gender – positive impact

Positive impact for both women and men in terms of creating mixed use developments and matching jobs with homes. This avoids creating residential developments with little daytime activity in which young parents (typically mothers) without access to a car feel isolated.

In addition the document recognises the importance of different employment types and for the development of skills and training opportunities; this allows for a range of opportunities for both men and women to ensure there are jobs suitable for them whether they wish to take on a job that is typically done by their gender or not.

The Core Policies promote high quality urban design, including addressing issues such as fear of crime which holds positive impact for women.

Disability – positive impact

The core policy on urban design has positive impacts through creating more accessible and user-friendly environments through standards such as Lifetime Homes, Secured By Design, Manual for Streets, By Design and Building for Life.

Working at home to be supported in the rural areas section, which facilitates opportunities for those with mobility issues to have a flexible approach to work. This is a positive impact which could be supported more widely throughout the District through the Core Policies section.

The redevelopment of the Somerdale site in Keynsham presents the opportunity to improve existing access difficulties to the site from the high street for people with mobility issues.

Age – positive impact

The core policies seek to address the implications of climate change for older people, such as projected increase in summer deaths.

The commitment to Lifetime Homes standards provides a positive impact on the ability for people to quickly adapt their homes as they go through different life stages.

Increased local distinctiveness promoted through the document will have positive impacts for the ageing population through strengthened identity and aide memoirs to support increased instances of dementia.

The Council's Older people's strategy could be picked up on more explicitly in the document.

The commitment to providing affordable housing supports the wider need in the population, but is particularly positive for the young, newly forming households.

The objective to create social places for young people and toddlers in the Midsomer Norton and Radstock chapter is commendable.

Race – neutral

Whilst there are no negative impacts in this strand, there are few positive impacts and as such this strand is neutral. The action to investigate more information on demographic profile of the District from the Equalities mapping will assist in beginning to identify opportunities for positive impacts for this strand.

The Core Policies does include positive impact for the gypsy, travellers and travelling show people group through a dedicated policy. There will also be a dedicated Development Plan Document for this group. In addition the core policies provide for maximising opportunities for social inclusion through the community facilities policy.

Sexual Orientation -neutral

The impact on this strand was neutral as whilst there are no adverse impacts for this group, there is an information gap in terms of the particular needs of this group. In order to make a positive impact, this information gap should be overcome.

Religion/belief – positive impact

The Core policies make a positive impact through considering the needs of community facilities for faith groups. In addition it is required that new development should provide timely delivery of appropriate infrastructure for faith group requirements.

Improved engagement with faith groups has been raised as an action to further maximise opportunities for positive impact.

Socio-economic inequality

This strand has been added for the purposes of this assessment as it was deemed particularly relevant. In addition, consideration of inequalities based on financial status is a part of the Council's wider corporate equality commitment.

As referenced above there are many opportunities for re-dressing imbalances of socio-economic inequality. These include improving the balance between homes and jobs, improving the quality of the housing stock through the core policies, providing more affordable homes, opportunities to decrease fuel poverty through responses to climate change and emerging renewable energy solutions.

The rural exceptions policy will provide greater opportunity for affordable housing where it is most needed to retain social balance in the rural areas. It will be important for the Core Strategy to ensure that the prescription of limited development to the rural areas by the Regional Spatial Strategy does not lead to rural/urban inequity.

There is opportunity to further promote the role of the voluntary sector to the economy and to community involvement.

5. Monitoring arrangements

The schedule of actions are attached in the equalities impact assessment toolkit and this will be monitored according to the timescales given. The equalities impact assessment of the next draft of the Core Strategy will incorporate a response to these actions.

6. Conclusions and action plan

This report concludes that the Core Strategy options document has many positive impacts on the various equality strands. There are opportunities to strengthen the positive impact at the next draft of the document, suggested points to address are listed in the action plan in the equalities impact assessment toolkit.

Signed off by (.....) Directorate Equalities Group
Date...