

Equality Impact Assessment / Equality Analysis

(Updated December 2022)

Item name	Details
Title of service or policy	IMAGINE Midsomer Norton – Town Centre
Name of directorate and service	Sustainable Economy Service
Name and role of officers completing the EIA	Beth Whalley
Date of assessment	2/11/24

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>The Bath & North East Somerset Council Regeneration Team delivers a range of projects which aim to transform our city and town centres, creating benefits for residents, local businesses and visitors while maintaining the importance of heritage spaces and responding to the climate change and ecological emergencies. This is achieved through public realm improvements, and the provision of new mixed-use development, housing, creative and community hubs, and on-street activity and animation. Regeneration projects are cross-service by their nature and their implementation is always the shared responsibility the Regeneration Team in collaboration with other B&NES departments alongside external organisations.</p> <p>In Midsomer Norton, the Regeneration Team, with funding support from the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's (MCA) Housing and Regeneration Enabling Fund (HREF), is preparing two interlinked plans for the next phase of regeneration in Midsomer Norton. This work follows on from the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme, a 4-year partnership project which delivered heritage led regeneration projects including the Town Hall, the Market Square, and a grant scheme for shopfront improvements.</p> <p>The Regeneration Action Plan (RAP) will identify priority projects for increasing the vibrancy of the town centre and attracting more visitors and investment. The area covers the length of Midsomer Norton High Street from the junction with Church Lane in the south west to where it meets Radstock Road in the north east. The Old Brewery Quarter Town Centre Masterplan (OBQ) comprises a long-term strategic vision for the lower High Street. The area encompasses allocated site SSV1, and is centred around the former Midsomer Norton Brewery buildings, located within the central High Street, and the surrounding core retail area.</p> <p>There will be ongoing engagement and communication on plans as they progress through different stages until final adoption. A separate Engagement and Communication Strategy has been prepared and will ensure that seldom-heard groups are involved in the preparation of the plans. Engagement is being delivered by the Regeneration 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 are involved in the preparation of the plan.</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>This project is a new plan which dovetails with previous regeneration work in the area and links in with linked B&NES Council policies, for example the Local Plan. It is not a national requirement but will help to fulfil several challenging national targets related to eg. housing.</p> <p>There is significant room for evaluation and adaptation within this project. The plan encompasses a long-term vision for the area and has an extensive scope which will allow for continuous review and adaptation over time to ensure the plan remains aligned with changing needs, technologies, and evolving sustainability and economic goals. Relevant engagement and consultation will take place at all stages of planning.</p>
<p>1.3 Do the aims of this policy link to or conflict with any other policies of the Council?</p>	<p>The project links perfectly with Bath & North East Somerset Council's framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve people's lives Addressing the Climate & Ecological Emergency Giving people a bigger say Prepare for the future Deliver for local residents Focus on prevention <p>The project aligns well with strategies at a national scale and B&NES level including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - B&NES Economic Strategy 2024 to 2034 - B&NES Public Realm and Movement Strategy - Emerging Local Plan to 2042 - Core Strategy and Placemaking Plan

2. Consideration of available data, research and information

Key questions	Data, research and information that you can refer to
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<p>2.1 What equalities training have staff received to enable them to understand the needs of our diverse community?</p>	<p>All B&NES employees within the team have had Equalities training as part of our induction and ongoing mandatory training, covering the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>A number of service deliverers within the Council have received corporate equalities training.</p>
<p>2.2 What is the equalities profile of service users?</p>	<p>Local communities, residents and local businesses as well as potential collaborators, investors and delivery partners all have a stake in this project.</p> <p>The focus area of Midsomer Norton benefits from good schools and access to open countryside, but there are areas of deprivation – particularly Midsomer Norton West and Redfield North - with some of the highest rates of food insecurity risk, hospital admissions for self-harm and proportion of no qualifications in the district (see Strategic Evidence Base https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/strategic-evidence/document-library/strategic-evidence-base-summary-and-full-report)</p> <p>Information about the equalities profile of people in Bath & North East Somerset can be found at https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E06000022/</p>
<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>	<p>This is a new project, so no customer satisfaction surveys have taken place. The project is being delivered with the oversight of a Steering Group made up of local elected politicians, and in close communication with Midsomer Norton Town Council, who together represent the views of local residents and businesses.</p> <p>An engagement report will be created after the early engagement phase, and a consultation report will be created after formal consultation has taken place.</p>
<p>2.4 What engagement or consultation has been undertaken as part of this EIA and with whom? What were the results?</p>	<p>As the project is in the early stages of development, no formal engagement or consultation has yet been undertaken, though several events and activities are planned and these are detailed in the Engagement and Communications Strategy.</p> <p>The project follows on from the Midsomer Norton HSHAZ scheme, and is informed in part by this project's engagement and consultation work. A formal consultation on the redevelopment of The Island took place in December 2020, with responses focusing on themes of appropriate vehicle access, safety and accessibility for pedestrians, and the need for high-quality and</p>

	multi-use public space. An Engagement Coordinator was appointed as part of the project, working with Midsomer Norton Community Trust and a Cultural Consortium (made up of community representatives) to run a cultural programme which included creative community projects, new high street events, focus groups with young people and community and business drop-ins. Feedback to this programme was positive with responses to a drop-in engagement event (Spring 2023) indicating that the community wants to see more regular markets, more support for local businesses and producers, seasonal events and activities and opportunities for bringing people together, green pop-ups and events, co-working spaces, LGBTQ+-friendly spaces, and more public toilets.
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?	Events will be arranged to ensure that there are no barriers to participation (see further details below). The Engagement and Communications Strategy details methods for reaching seldom-heard groups. The online engagement platform, Participatr, is highly accessible and allows users to: change colours, contrast levels and fonts; zoom in up to 300% without the text spilling off the screen; navigate using just a keyboard; navigate using speech recognition software; and listen to text using a screen reader.

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

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	The programme of events and activities ensure that suitable methods of engagement are available to all groups.	Individuals (especially those with protected characteristics) may feel

	<p>This includes virtual and in-person engagement, digital interactive software, and online and physical consultation forms. Any media (including any options documents and draft plans, as well as films and audio content) produced by the service includes accompanying relevant accessible versions (eg. closed captions, transcripts and large print or easy read versions).</p> <p>The online engagement platform, Participatr, is highly accessible and allows users to: change colours, contrast levels and fonts; zoom in up to 300% without the text spilling off the screen; navigate using just a keyboard; navigate using speech recognition software; and listen to text using a screen reader.</p>	<p>isolated, excluded, or overwhelmed by the engagement process.</p> <p>We have provided a variety of methods to allow individuals to engage and have provided contact details should anyone want to contact us directly for more information or support.</p> <p>We have programmed engagement events at a range of existing, well-attended and long-running town events (including markets, seasonal events and Citizen’s Advice drop-ins) to ensure that a wide cross-section of the community have access to engagement materials and the project team.</p> <p>Actively seeking input from advocacy groups will ensure that the engagement process is inclusive and accessible to all individuals.</p>
<p>3.2 Sex – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on women and men.</p>	<p>The programme of events and activities ensure that suitable methods of engagement are available for everyone, regardless of their sex or gender.</p>	<p>Girls and young women can feel excluded from public spaces and events due to safety concerns.</p> <p>We will ensure that we offer appropriate opportunities for girls and women to give feedback to ensure that the plans created provide a safe welcoming space for all.</p> <p>https://www.makespaceforgirls.co.uk/</p>

		Actively seeking input from advocacy groups will ensure that the engagement process is inclusive and accessible to all individuals.
3.3 Pregnancy and maternity	The programme of events and activities ensure that suitable methods of engagement are available for everyone.	<p>This group may feel unable to visit if there is a lack of appropriate facilities.</p> <p>We will ensure that toilets and seating will be available during engagement events, that entrances and pathways are fully accessible for pushchair and prams, and that adequate seating is available for pregnant people and for feeding of babies, including breast and chest feeding.</p> <p>We will ensure that we offer appropriate opportunities for pregnant people to give feedback to ensure that the plans created provide a welcoming and accessible space for all.</p> <p>We have programmed engagement events at a range of existing long-running town events (including markets, seasonal events and library parent and baby groups) to ensure that attending an event is as easy as possible for this group.</p>
3.4 Gender reassignment – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on transgender people	The programme of events and activities ensure that suitable methods of engagement are available for everyone, regardless of their sex or gender identity.	<p>Individuals may feel isolated or excluded by the engagement process.</p> <p>We will ensure that we offer appropriate opportunities for transgender people to</p>

		<p>give feedback to ensure that the plans created provide a safe welcoming space for all.</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>The programme of events and activities is considerate of accessibility needs for disabled people. Wherever possible care has been taken to ensure that suitable methods of engagement are available for everyone.</p>	<p>Individuals may feel isolated, excluded, or overwhelmed by the engagement process. This group may also feel unable to visit engagement events if there is a lack of appropriate facilities.</p> <p>We have provided a variety of methods to allow individuals to engage and have provided contact details should anyone want to contact us directly for more information or support.</p> <p>The online engagement platform, Participatr, is highly accessible and allows users to: change colours, contrast levels and fonts; zoom in up to 300% without the text spilling off the screen; navigate using just a keyboard; navigate using speech recognition software; and listen to text using a screen reader.</p> <p>We will ensure that toilets and seating will be available during engagement events and that entrances and pathways are fully accessible.</p> <p>Actively seeking input from advocacy groups (eg. SWALLOW) will ensure that</p>

		<p>the engagement process is inclusive and accessible to all individuals.</p> <p>Interpretation services are available for individuals on request or where we are already aware of this requirement.</p>
<p>3.6 Age – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on different age groups</p>	<p>The programme of events and activities ensure that suitable methods of engagement are available for all ages, including young people and families as well as the elderly.</p>	<p>Individuals may feel isolated or excluded by the engagement process.</p> <p>We have provided a variety of methods to allow individuals to engage and have provided contact details should anyone want to contact us directly for more information or support. We are mindful of digital inclusion and will make paper copies of relevant plans and information available in the One Stop Shop/Library in Midsomer Norton High Street.</p> <p>We have programmed engagement events and workshops where a wide range of ages will already be in attendance (including markets, seasonal family events, skate clubs and dementia groups) to ensure that attending an event is as easy as possible for this group.</p> <p>A school's pack has been distributed to primary schools to enhance engagement opportunities, and workshops have been offered to Midsomer Norton youth services.</p>

<p>3.7 Race – identify the impact/potential impact on across different ethnic groups</p>	<p>The programme of events and activities ensure that suitable methods of engagement are available for everyone, regardless of their ethnicity.</p>	<p>Individuals may feel isolated or excluded by the engagement process.</p> <p>Actively seeking input from advocacy groups will ensure that the engagement process is inclusive and accessible to all individuals.</p> <p>We will ensure that we offer appropriate opportunities for people of all ethnic groups to give feedback to ensure that the plans created provide a welcoming and accessible space for all.</p> <p>Translation services are available for individuals on request or where we are already aware of this requirement.</p>
<p>3.8 Sexual orientation – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual people</p>	<p>The programme of events and activities ensure that suitable methods of engagement are available for everyone, regardless of their sexual orientation.</p>	<p>Individuals may feel isolated or excluded by the engagement process.</p> <p>Actively seeking input from advocacy groups will ensure that the engagement process is inclusive and accessible to all individuals.</p>
<p>3.9 Marriage and civil partnership – does the policy/strategy treat married and civil partnered people equally?</p>	<p>The nature of this project means there is a neutral impact.</p>	<p>No known risks have been identified</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>The programme of events and activities ensure that suitable methods of engagement are available for everyone, regardless of their faith.</p>	<p>Individuals may feel isolated or excluded by the engagement process.</p> <p>Actively seeking input from all active faith groups in the area will ensure that the</p>

		<p>engagement process is inclusive and accessible to all individuals.</p> <p>Information packs have been sent out to all churches and an engagement event is being held at Midsomer Norton Methodist Church.</p> <p>Project information is available at Unit 14, where the Muslim prayer group meets weekly.</p>
<p>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).</p>	<p>The programme of events and activities ensure that suitable methods of engagement are available for everyone, regardless of their socio-economic background. All engagement events are free to attend.</p>	<p>Individuals may feel isolated or excluded by the engagement process.</p> <p>All engagement events are free to attend. Travel funding has been earmarked to ensure that people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds are able to travel to attend focus groups and workshops during the engagement process.</p> <p>Actively seeking input from advocacy groups will ensure that the engagement process is inclusive and accessible to all individuals.</p> <p>Information packs have been circulated to local food banks and community centres in socio-economically disadvantaged areas (eg. Orchard Hall).</p>

<p>3.12 Rural communities* identify the impact / potential impact on people living in rural communities</p>	<p>Midsomer Norton is an urban area, but its high street facilities serve the surrounding villages and rural communities. The programme of events and activities aims to give rural people an opportunity to have their say in the development of their local town centre.</p>	<p>We have provided a variety of methods to allow individuals to engage, including virtual events and online interactive activities for those that are unable to travel.</p> <p>The project leaflet campaign also includes outreach via the mobile library and village community centres to ensure that the engagement process is inclusive and accessible to all individuals.</p>
<p>3.13 Armed Forces Community ** serving members; reservists; veterans and their families, including the bereaved. Public services are required 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).</p>	<p>The programme of events and activities ensure that suitable methods of engagement are available for everyone.</p>	<p>There is not an armed forces community based in the area, however, individuals and families unknown to the Council may feel isolated or excluded by the engagement process.</p> <p>Actively seeking input from advocacy groups (eg. the Midsomer Norton and Radstock Branch of the Royal British Legion) will ensure that the engagement process is inclusive and accessible to all individuals.</p>
<p>3.14 Care Experienced *** This working definition is currently under review and therefore subject to change:</p> <p>In B&NES, you are ‘care-experienced’ if you spent any time in your childhood in Local Authority care, living away from your parent(s) for example, you were adopted, lived in residential, foster care,</p>	<p>The programme of events and activities ensure that suitable methods of engagement are available for everyone.</p>	<p>Individuals and families may feel isolated or excluded by the engagement process.</p> <p>Actively seeking input from advocacy groups (eg. Off The Record’s In Care Councils) will ensure that the engagement process is inclusive and accessible to all individuals.</p>

kinship care, or a special guardianship arrangement.		
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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
Pop-ups at wide variety of events to ensure inclusive access to the engagement and project team.	Schedule range of pop-ups at free events, and check event calendar with community groups.	Pop-ups scheduled at three different town events.	BW	Sept 25
Ensure all engagement material (including in print and online) is fully accessible.	Accessibility check the website, Participatr platform, and graphic material.	Website accessibility checked prior to launch.	BW	Sept 25

Ensure accessible event spaces, with level access and gender-neutral toilets.	Check venues ahead of time	All events held in accessible venues.	BW	Sept 25
Ensure that the engagement process is inclusive and accessible to all individuals.	Actively seek input from advocacy groups	Advocacy groups and local charities contacted with programme information.	BW	Sept 25
Ensure that groups are able to contact us directly for more information or support.	Provide a variety of methods to allow individuals to engage with the programme, including directly contacting the team by email	Included contact form on project website.	BW	Sept 25
Ensure that individuals from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds are able to attend.	Schedule range of free-to-attend events and earmark travel fund for project focus groups and workshops	All programmed events free-to-attend. Offer travel funds for next stage of engagement events.	BW	Sept 25

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: Cleo Newcombe-Jones
(nominated senior officer)

(Divisional Director or

Date: 4/11/24