



Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Template reviewed Nov 2021

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) was introduced as part of the Equality Act 2010, which protects people from discrimination in the workplace, in the provision of services and in wider society.

The duty requires all public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people

Public bodies demonstrate this due regard in different ways, including producing robust equality impact assessments when considering changes to policies and services.

An EqIA enables us to check the potential impacts on residents and employees of our policies, services and projects. It's an opportunity to challenge how we currently do things.

Carrying out an EqIA should not create extra work; it should be part of your normal service planning process. Most of the information required should already be available to you through other work already undertaken e.g. service user monitoring, analysis of complaints and national research.

The purpose of an EqIA is to *take account* of equality as plans develop, to promote and assist the consideration of equalities issues arising in plans and proposals and to ensure that where possible adverse or disproportionate impacts are minimised and positive impacts are maximised. As such where possible an EqIA should be started at the outset of a project/proposal and continually be developed and reviewed until a final proposal is adopted. An EqIA should be used to ensure decision makers have all the information they need regarding potential impacts to ensure they have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty when making judgements.

Carrying out EqIAs should be an integral part of policy or service development/change and larger projects may need more than one EqIA if different areas are impacted by the change.

Any project that requires consultation will automatically require an EqIA.

All approved and signed EqIAs are recorded in a central register. Please email your completed draft EqIA to equalities@buckinghamshire.gov.uk. Previous EqIAs can be made available for information upon request. For any questions or if you require support in completing your EqIA please contact Maria Damigos and Natalie Donhou Morley directly.



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Part A (Initial assessment) - Section 1 - Background

Proposal/Brief Title: Burial provision at new Cemetery Penn Road, Hazlemere

OneDrive link to report/policy: see meeting papers 18/01/2022

<https://buckinghamshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=344&Mid=17070&Ver=4>

Related policies: None

Date: 06/01/2022

Type of strategy, policy, project or service: Opening of new Buckinghamshire Council cemetery primarily serving the unparished area of High Wycombe

Please tick one of the following:

- ☐ Existing
- ☒ New or proposed
- ☐ Changing, update or revision
- ☐ Other (please explain)

This assessment was created by: Cemeteries & Crematoria Service

Name: Lindsey Vallis

Job Title: Head of Licensing, Cemeteries & Crematoria Services

Email address: lindsey.vallis@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Briefly describe the aims and objectives of the proposal below:

In 2017 Wycombe District Council approved the allocation of Special Expenses Reserve funding for the development of a new cemetery at Queensway, High Wycombe following referral from the High Wycombe Town Committee. The new Penn Road cemetery was completed and handed over to Buckinghamshire Council on the 27th November 2020. The cemetery will primarily serve the unparished area of High Wycombe who contribute towards its upkeep via their precept. Residents in other areas will be able to use the cemetery but will pay additional fees to do so. This is normal practice for cemeteries.

The Community Board profile for High Wycombe indicates that the area is more ethnically diverse than Buckinghamshire as a whole. Ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities) make up 36.3% of the population compared with 13.6% in Buckinghamshire overall, and 14.6% in England. The 2011 census shows that at that time 52.3% of the 108,000 population in the Wycombe constituency were Christians, 24% possessed no religion and 13.4% were Muslim, with several other religions making up the remaining 10.3%.

Whilst the cemetery is now complete from a planning and development perspective, (during which disabled access issues were considered and incorporated) there remain a number of



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key decisions and operational factors that need to be addressed before the cemetery can open for burials. These include enabling the soft landscaping works to settle and the grass on the site to grow, agreeing the type of burials, designated sections and plotting the grave positions across the site, agreeing new fees and charges and agreeing the cemetery rules and regulations. In addition the Council must ensure that the maintenance and grave-digging activity on the site is covered by the grounds maintenance contract which operates from the 1st January 2022. Given these factors it is proposed that a suitable opening date for the cemetery would be the 4th April 2022.

This EqIA relates primarily to the provision of burial plots as access issues have already been considered and dealt with as part of the project planning and build. Further details of the equalities considerations are available in the project background and planning papers and records of decision making.

What outcomes do we want to achieve?

Agreement and sign off of burial arrangements by High Wycombe Town Committee ahead of opening date of the 4th April 2022.

Does this proposal plan to withdraw a service, activity or presence? No

Please explain your answer:

N/A

Does this proposal plan to reduce a service, activity or presence? No

Please explain your answer:

N/A

Does this proposal plan to introduce, review or change a policy, strategy or procedure? Yes

Please explain your answer:

The cemetery is a new additional provision for the unparished area of High Wycombe and whilst many of the proposed arrangements for the cemetery will be the same as those currently offered in the High Wycombe Cemetery, there is also scope to provide different burial types.

Does this proposal affect service users and/or customers, or the wider community? Yes

Please explain your answer:

The arrangements put in place for the cemetery will have an impact on the public, visitors, staff, and key stakeholders including representatives of religious and cultural organisations and funeral directors.

Does this proposal affect employees? Yes



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Please explain your answer:

Employees within the Cemeteries Service will operate the cemetery day to day, co-ordinate contractors, deal with enquiries and facilitate burials

Will employees require training to deliver this proposal? Yes

Please explain your answer:

This is a new facility so service staff will need training on the arrangements that are put in place as well as familiarisation with the site and processes in place prior to opening.

Has any engagement /consultation been carried out, or is planned in the future? Yes

Please explain your answer:

To inform the arrangements for the cemetery the Cemeteries Service carried out a targeted closed consultation with key stakeholders and partners to understand their views and take on board feedback on core proposed arrangements for the cemetery. Benchmarking activities with other cemeteries have also been undertaken to inform burial provision type and fees and charges. The online consultation ran from 17th November to the 1st December 2021 and responses were received and considered up to the 24th December 2021. In total 24 organisations were contacted for their views as well as local ward councillors. These organisations were predominantly within the unparished area of High Wycombe as the cemetery will primarily serve this area, but also included 2 churches in the Hazlemere area that are in very close proximity to the new cemetery. Organisations consulted included those from Baptist, Church of England, Hindu, Methodist, Muslim and Roman Catholic faiths.

Section 2 - Impacts

Please highlight potential impacts (including unintended impacts or consequences) for each protected characteristic*/equality groups below. Where there are negative or positive impacts please give more details of the impact. Where the impacts are unclear please explain why.

Age*

Positive

Negative

Unclear

None

Details:

Disability*

Positive

Negative

Unclear

None



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Details:

Users of the cemetery are likely to be of all ages and may or may not have a disability. The site is level and accessible. Disabled access requirements have been considered during the planning and development of the site with car access into the office building and around the site for those that need it, disabled toilet and disabled parking provision. Disabled access to designated sections and grave plots will be considered during the final layout of the site prior to the commencement of burials.

Pregnancy & maternity*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Race & Ethnicity*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Marriage & Civil Partnership*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Religion & Belief*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

The cemetery provision will seek to meet the needs of all faiths and/or beliefs. Some faiths and/or beliefs have specific restrictions or requirements in relation to burials. The combined cemetery provision across the High Wycombe and Penn Road sites will seek to meet these, where reasonable.

Specific issues relating to religion and belief informed by the demographic of the area that the cemetery will provisionally serve have been considered when proposing arrangements for the site. These include:

- consideration of the consecration of ground
- the provision of shroud burials
- the provision of burial chambers/vaults
- alignment of a designated Muslim section to Mecca



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Sex*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Sexual Orientation*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Gender Reassignment*

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Gender identity

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Carers

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Rural isolation

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Single parent families

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

Poverty (social & economic deprivation)

Positive	Negative	Unclear	None
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Details:

The cemetery will make use of the Children's Funeral Fund to offer burials, provide funding for the fees charged for the burial of a child under the age of 18 or stillborn after



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the 24th week of pregnancy, and for associated expenses. CFF funding is available regardless of the income of the child's parent(s), guardian or carer, but it is subject to eligibility criteria which also sets out what fees can be covered including rights of burial purchase and interment fees. The aim of the scheme is that burial and cremation services are provided to families free at the point of need, with authorities then claiming reimbursement from the Fund. It is proposed that arrangements at the High Wycombe cemetery (which is not eligible for the scheme and where some elements of children's burials have historically been funded by the High Wycombe Town Committee) will be brought in line so that both cemeteries offer the same free at point of need experience.

Military families / veterans

Positive

Negative

Unclear

None

Details:

Section 3 – Is a full assessment required?

If you have answered yes to any of the initial assessment questions in section 1 of this EqIA, or have indicated a negative or unclear impact in section 2, it is likely you will need to complete part B of the EqIA form. Should you need guidance as to whether a full EqIA is needed at this time please contact Maria Damigos or Natalie Donhou Morley before continuing.

Following completion of part A, is part B completion required?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

X Not required at this time

Explain your answer:

The cemetery will provide a new additional cemetery provision for the unparished area of High Wycombe and improve the existing provision by providing greater choice in terms of burial type and accessibility for those of all faiths and/or beliefs. There are no negative or unclear potential impacts identified for protected characteristic*/equality groups listed above.

Have you completed an DPIA for this project/change? No

(As you are completing an EqIA, you may also require a DPIA - for more information please contact dataprotection@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

Section 4 – Sign off (Only complete when NOT completing Part B)

Officer completing this assessment: Lindsey Vallis Date: 06/01/2022

Equality advice sought from: Preetinder Cheema Date: 15/11/2021



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Maria Damigos

Date: 05/01/2022

Service Director sign off:

Martin Dickman

Date: 06/01/2022

CMT sign off (*if deemed necessary by Service Director*) sign off: (Please insert name) Date:
(Please insert Date)

Next review Date: (Please insert Date)

If required please complete part B (full assessment)