

## EqIA - Equality Impact Assessment

### Step 1: Introduction

**Policy or Service to be assessed:**

Community boards set-up

**Service and lead officer:**

Sara Turnbull

**Officers involved in the EqIA:**

Sara Turnbull, Leone Dale

**What are you impact assessing?**

- Existing
- New/proposed
- Changing/Update revision

**Other, please list:**

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### Step 2: Scoping – what are you assessing?

**Q1 What is the title of your service/strategy/policy/project?**

Community Boards: proposals for creation of Community Boards

**Q2 What is the aim of your service/strategy/policy/project?**

- Enable Buckinghamshire Council councillors to make recommendations on local issues, alongside key partners such as parish councillors and other community representatives.
- Empower Buckinghamshire Council councillors and communities to influence service design and delivery on local issues.
- Facilitate communities to come together with Buckinghamshire Council councillors and partners to find solutions to local issues.

**Q3 Who does/will it have an impact on? E.g. public, visitors, staff, members, partners?**

The proposal will affect:

- All residents: this will be a new mechanism for ensuring their voices are heard; improving connections with Buckinghamshire Council Members and the new Council; and responding to identified needs of communities.
- Staff: A separate and subsequent HR staffing assessment and process will follow,

once a policy decision has been made by the Shadow Executive on the set-up of community boards.

- Members: Membership of the new community boards will include Buckinghamshire Councillors. This proposal also seeks to support elected members and help them to help their communities.
- Town and Parish Councils are proposed key participants in community boards.
- Partners: Community groups, the not-for profit sector, businesses and statutory partners will have the opportunity to become involved with community boards in their local area.

**Q4 Will there be an impact on any other functions, services or policies? If so, please provide more detail**

Community boards will have a significant impact for all service areas of the Council. They will provide services with opportunities to:

- Consult on major service changes;
- Gain resident and local stakeholder views and on the design and delivery of public sector services; and
- Support more effective partnership working on tackling local issues.
- Provide greater insight on issues affecting their area.

**Q5 Are there any potential barriers to implementing changes to your service/strategy/policy/ project?**

No.

**Q6 Who else will be involved in implementing this service/strategy/policy/project?**

All senior officers.  
 All Members.  
 Town and parish councils.  
 All key partners.

**Step 3: Information gathering – what do you need to know about your customers?**

**Q7 What data do you already have about your service users, or the people your policy or strategy will have an impact on, that is broken down by equality strand?**

Age/Disability:	N/a
Gender re-assignment:	N/a
Race:	N/a
Religion or belief:	N/a
Sex:	N/a
Sexual orientation:	N/a

Pregnancy and maternity:	N/a
Marriage & Civil Partnership:	N/a
Other (please give full details of why this is included)	This is a corporate initiative and therefore is relevant to all residents. The implementation plan will include the development of area profiles, including demographic information to inform priority setting.

**Q8 Do you need any further information broken down by equality strand to inform this EqIA?**

- Yes  
 No

Community boards are a mechanism for community engagement and will consider a wide-range of different issues as consultees. Equalities considerations will be considered on a case-by-case basis in regard to agenda items and local funding, as well as to maximise participation from people from all sections of local communities.

**Q9 Is there any potential for direct or indirect discrimination?**

- Yes  
 No  
 Don't know

If yes, please provide more detail on how you will monitor/overcome this  
 If don't know, please provide more information on how you will decide this

The policy document does not have potential for direct or indirect discrimination. A key part of implementation will be in proactively seeking opportunities to engage residents in different ways to maximise participation from all groups.

## Step 4: Making a judgement about impacts

**Q9 What impact do you consider your policy or strategy will have on each of the strands within each equality strand?**

Age:	Should community board meetings take place during the day only, there could be an impact on the ability of certain age groups to attend who typically work a full day-time job or in attend school, college or university.
Disability:	All community board meetings will need to be held in venues which are accessible to wheelchair users or others with mobility difficulties. Meetings style could impact those with a visual or hearing impairment or even those with a learning disability.
Gender re-assignment:	N/a
Race & Ethnicity :	Meetings will be held in English which could impact groups who do not use English as their first language or at all.

Religion or belief:	N/a
Sex:	N/a
Sexual orientation:	N/a
Pregnancy and maternity:	Time of day and location of meetings could have an impact on parents with young children and who do not have access to childcare.
Marriage & Civil Partnership:	N/a
Other:	N/a

**Conclusion:**

The introduction of community boards themselves is a high level policy initiative. The way in which this policy is implemented will impact on all residents, groups.

Ensuring participation opportunities will need to be a key consideration during the implementation planning.

As implementation progresses, issues will be reviewed and this assessment will be updated with any further issues or impacts identified. We will also consider each board locally and whether specific local arrangements can be made to accommodate identified local issues.

A consultation ran from 12 August to 30 September 2019 (Annex 1 Consultation Report). It was concluded that the underrepresentation of different groups, particularly those from less affluent backgrounds and Black and Minority Ethnic groups supports the need to reach out in different ways to maximise participation. The different views in the consultation results in regard to gender illustrate the impact that representation could have on priority setting.

A key part of the implementation planning will be in supporting community boards to maximise participation of different groups, including through a range of channels and opportunities for community engagement beyond committee style evening meetings only.

## Step 5: Recommendations (i.e. what are you going to improve/change?)

Issue	Action	Performance target (what difference will it make)	Lead Officer	Achieved
Ensuring mechanisms are in place to increase participation opportunities for residents.	Variety of participation mechanisms to engage with residents outside of meetings and promote attendance at meetings.	Evidence of improved participation from residents across the various channels.	Sara Turnbull	
Encouraging engagement from protected groups.	Each board will agree a communications & engagement plan for its work relating to its area priorities. As part of this plan consideration will be given to how different groups and opportunities for maximising involvement.	Each board has a tailored communications plan for local engagement and monitors participation levels.	Sara Turnbull	
Meetings made as accessible as possible.	All community board meeting venues to be disability accessible.	Feedback from attendees/ potential attendees. Evidence of participation to show that those who want to attend meetings are not prevented from doing so.	Sara Turnbull	
Possible impact of meeting style/ content on protected groups. E.g. visual or hearing impairments or language barriers.	It is not possible to anticipate all potential issues. Consideration will be given to responding to requests for assistance. Possible examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilisation of internal skill sets. E.g. interpreters, sign language users etc.</li> <li>Pre-engage with community groups or those affected to discuss participation options.</li> <li>Use technology to assist where possible.</li> </ul>	Ensure engagement of protected groups and that the Council remains open to working with residents to find solutions where possible.	Sara Turnbull	
Impact on ability to attend the meetings – relates to time of meetings and travelling options	The following will be considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Variable meeting times.</li> <li>Availability of meetings papers online.</li> <li>Other engagement opportunities beyond meetings.</li> </ul>	Evidence of improved participation from residents across the various channels.	Sara Turnbull	
<b>Date:</b>	7 November 2019			
<b>Next review date:</b>	31 March 2020			