



Equality Impact Assessment Screening tool

Sense checking if a full EIA is required and to evidence due regard under the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010).



Purpose and when to use this tool

Use this tool to identify whether a decision could affect people with protected characteristics and whether you therefore need to complete a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

An Equality Impact Assessment is a structured analysis of how a proposal might affect different people with protected characteristics in different ways. It enables decision-makers to consider potential positive and negative impacts, identify mitigations, and maximise opportunities to advance equality. Completing and using EIAs is part of evidencing due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which is part of the [Equality Act 2010](#).

Under the PSED, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a [protected characteristic](#) and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a [protected characteristic](#) and those who do not.

Do I need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment?

This tool will help you decide whether a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is needed. It will also enable you to evidence that you have paid “due regard” to the different protected characteristics when making your decision, including when you have decided a full EIA is not needed.

Key to determining whether an EIA is required is whether any aspect of a new policy, function or service, or changes to an existing one, will have an impact on residents, service users or staff sharing protected characteristics. If it will, then it is likely that an EIA will need to be completed

If proposals could impact residents or staff across one or both new authorities, it is highly likely an EIA will be needed. Below are examples that could trigger the need for a full EIA – this is not an exhaustive list:

- **Service changes affecting residents’ experience, including:**



- Approach to service transition (disaggregation, aggregation, hosting, etc)
- Changes to eligibility, access or delivery models arising from LGR
- Budget setting for the new unitary councils
- Other policy and strategic choices affecting communities
- **Workforce and organisational changes, which could include:**
 - TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations) to the new unitary councils
 - Changes to working practices, locations or terms and conditions of employment
- **Programme implementation, which could include:**
 - Major procurement and contract decisions
 - Decisions on estate, ie buildings owned across all 12 sovereign councils

How to complete this screening tool

Complete the table in this document to assist you in thinking about potential equality impacts on the protected characteristics listed. Completing the table should help you decide if a full EIA is needed.

When completing this screening tool, consider:

1. What is changing and why.
2. Whether the proposal affect residents, service users, carers, staff or partners (access, eligibility, locations, channels, charges, terms, workforce changes)?
3. If there are different effects on people who share a protected characteristic (including indirect impacts)?
4. If there is limited or no evidence to rule out differential impact?
5. How each protected characteristic might be affected, using the table.
6. What evidence exists and any known gaps.
7. What your conclusion and next steps are (e.g. complete full EIA, gather more evidence, consult, record an EIA is not needed and why).

What kinds of impact should I consider?

Direct and indirect impacts: A rule that applies to everyone can still disadvantage some groups (indirect discrimination). Consider delivery channels (e.g. digital-only), eligibility thresholds, charging, opening hours, site moves, language/communication, and procurement/commissioning.



Intersectional and cumulative impacts: People may share more than one characteristic (e.g. older disabled women). Consider how impacts might combine or build up across multiple changes.

Positive, neutral, negative: Capture benefits as well as risks. Where there are risks, identify proportionate mitigations and how you will monitor them.

What next?

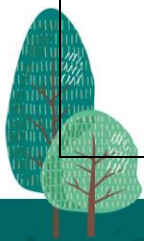
If the decision is made that a full EIA needs to be completed, you can proceed to the Template document, which can be found alongside this document and the [EIA Guidance](#) on the website. This will outline the steps you need to take to complete the EIA.

If you decide not to complete an EIA, you must record this. This might take the form of minutes of a meeting, an internal email or a record in a service plan. Most importantly, it must make clear why you have concluded that an EIA is unnecessary. If you are unsure whether a full EIA is needed or not, contact devolutionandlgr.pmo@surreycc.gov.uk for further support.

Impact of the proposals on residents, service users and staff with protected characteristics

Title of proposal	Description (what is changing and why)
Shadow Authority committee meeting times proposal	Proposal to move the Shadow Authority committee meeting times to start at 10am, 2pm, 5pm or 7pm

Protected characteristics	Potentially impacted (Yes/No/Unsure)	Additional details (evidence, risks, proposed mitigations, next steps – gather more evidence, consult, conduct full EIA)
Age – including younger and older people (e.g. are specific age groups excluded? Would the same process affect age groups in different ways?)	Yes	Younger people are more likely to be able to attend evening meetings due to potentially having work commitments in the daytime. Older people may be less keen to attend meetings in the evening due to



		to travel concerns at night and/or health and safety risks.
Disability- including hearing and/or visual impairments, physical disability, neurodevelopmental impairments, and long-term conditions (e.g. are information/questionnaires/consent forms available in different formats upon request?)	Yes	Dependent on the disability, people may find attendance easier or more challenging at different times of the day dependent on their needs and requirements.
Gender Reassignment (e.g. Is confidentiality of the resident or staff member maintained?)	No	N/A
Pregnancy & Maternity (e.g. are services suitable and accessible for pregnant and/or breastfeeding women?)	Yes	Pregnant women may be reluctant to attend meetings at night due to safety concerns.
Race- including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality (e.g. any specific needs identified for certain groups? Are interpretation and translation services required?)	No	N/A
Religion & Belief (e.g. are locations affected by closures or restrictions? Is there equal access to the service or potential barriers to participation?)	Yes	There is a potential for Muslim councillors to be impacted by meetings taking place during Ramadan.
Sex (e.g. is gender neutral language used in the way the policy or information leaflet is written? Are there different access requirements?)	Yes	There may be a reluctance for women and girls to want to attend evening meetings due to personal safety concerns when travelling at night.
Sexual orientation (e.g. is inclusive language used? Are there different access rates?)	No	N/A
Marital status/civil partnership (e.g. would there be any difference because the individual is/is not married/in a civil partnership?)	No	N/A

Have you identified any potential direct or indirect impacts on people with protected characteristics? If yes, you will need to complete a full Equality Impact Assessment.

No – not at this stage. Further analysis will need to be undertaken when there is a proposed way forward.



If 'No' please provide an explanation as to why an EIA is not required:

The screening assessment has shown that depending on what meeting time option the West Surrey Standards Committee wish to put forward to the shadow authority for approval, a full EIA will need to be completed to ensure that all protected characteristics are fully considered when the shadow authority makes a decision on the council diary for the remainder of the shadow year.

Sign-off: Susan Sale

Date: 23rd June 2026

