

# Equality Impact Assessment

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| Subject:      | <b>Council Plan 2019 – 2023</b> |
| Service area: | Strategy, Policy & Performance  |

## The General Equality Duty

Allerdale Borough Council, in the exercise of its functions, should:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

## Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (2011) covers the following nine protected characteristics: Age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, and marriage and civil partnership (full definitions given below).

Allerdale Borough Council also includes 'rurality' and 'socio-economic status' as additional categories in its equality impact assessments.

## Aims and Summary of the EIA

The Council Plan is a four year plan that sets out the Council's priorities and key activities. The Council Plan provides the direction and vision for Allerdale Borough Council, clearly stating our main priorities and aspirations for the people of Allerdale over the next four years.

The purpose of this EIA is to make sure that the Council does not bring about negative impacts on people with protected characteristics whilst taking forward the priorities of the Council Plan 2019-2023. These priorities are:

- Economic opportunity and growth
- Stronger and healthier communities
- Quality places to live

The Council Plan also identifies an overarching theme of Transforming the Council and sets out the Council's approach to securing a sustainable financial future for the organisation.

The Council Plan drives the organisation’s policies, the decisions the Council takes, the approach to the delivery of services, and the use of available resources. The reduction in central government funding for local government (at a time of changing demand for and expectation of services as the population changes) will continue to be a key challenge facing the Council over the next four years. The challenges we face will require us to do things differently in the future, but we are committed to ensuring that the appropriate and proportionate equality considerations are made alongside any proposed changes.

This EIA has highlighted what the Council will need to do to meet the Equality Duty as set out in the Equality Act (2010) when delivering the Council Plan. The EIA has done this by ensuring that:

- Population data, consultation feedback and survey data are being used to establish priorities.
- People protected under the Act are engaged in Council Plan consultation.
- The Corporate Business Plan will identify lead departments for delivery of activity under each priority theme who will take responsibility for taking any further action on equalities as required.
- The necessity for more specific Equality Impact Assessments on any service or policy changes or the introduction of new services is being flagged up.

The key finding of the EIA is that the Council’s Priority Themes as set out in the Council Plan all meet the Public Sector Equality Duty. Further work will be required as the Corporate Business Plan and service plans are finalised to decide what activity will require specific equality impact assessments. It is anticipated that any changes to services or policies or the introduction of new services or policies are likely to require equality impact assessments.

## Gathering information

| Type of information            | Findings  |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Demography and the Census 2011 | <p>The Cumbria Observatory has developed a set of Equality Briefings based on the 2011 Census:<br/> <a href="http://www.cumbriaobservatory.org.uk/Population/equality.asp">http://www.cumbriaobservatory.org.uk/Population/equality.asp</a></p> <p>These show the following trends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The numbers of 0-15 year olds fell in Allerdale between 2001-2011 (and across all of Cumbria’s districts), whilst the numbers of residents aged over 65 rose in Allerdale between 2001-2011 by 17% - a higher rate of increase than the national average (+11%). The 16-64 population increased slightly in Allerdale between 2001-2011.</li> <li>• Allerdale (and the whole of Cumbria’s) population is ageing faster than most of England and the district has slightly above average rates of disability. This is linked to ageing, but also people on long term out of work benefits.</li> </ul> |

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|--------------------------------|--|
|                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cumbria’s Black and Minority Ethnic population remains one of the lowest in England, but has grown from 1.8% to 3% from 2001-11. Allerdale has the smallest proportion (2.4%) of residents from BME groups in Cumbria and the second highest rate of White British residents of any district nationally (97.6%).</li> <li>• 28% of Allerdale's population is single (never been married) compared to 34.6% in England &amp; Wales, 52% are married (46.6% in England &amp; Wales) and 0.2% are part of a same-sex civil partnership (same as England &amp; Wales). The number of married residents in Allerdale has fallen slightly between 2001 and 2011.</li> <li>• 75.4% of Allerdale’s population stated their religion was Christianity (compared to 59.3% in England and Wales), with 17.3% stating that they had no religion. Other religions accounted for less than 1% of the population of Allerdale, much lower than England and Wales (8.4%).</li> <li>• In the 2011 Census residents were asked if their day-to-day activities were limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months. 10.1% in Allerdale reported that their day-to-day activities were limited a lot, and 10.7% reported that their day-to-day activities were limited a little. When compared to England &amp; Wales, Allerdale has a slightly higher proportion of residents whose day-to-day activities are limited (Allerdale: 20.8%, England &amp; Wales: 17.9%).</li> </ul> |
| Engagement on the Council Plan | The Council has engaged with the public and targeted groups on its proposed new Council Plan 2019-2023. This process began on 12 December 2018 and ended on 17 January 2019.   |

## Screening for Impacts

The information below sets out key considerations that should inform the implementation of each priority theme in order to ensure the delivery of the Council Plan pays due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act.

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| <b>Council Plan Priority: Economic opportunity and growth</b>   |
| Overall it is considered that this priority theme will have a positive impact on our residents by helping to grow the local economy and provide more and better employment opportunities. In particular there should be a positive impact on low income households, |

those with lower skills levels and aspirations, people experiencing difficulty accessing the housing market (often younger people and low income households), rural residents (through transport improvements).

In delivering this priority the following issues will need to be considered:

- Consideration of accessibility for all through the council's planning function and consideration of the impacts of developments on different sections of the population.
- How the Council can engage with employers to understand opportunities around apprenticeship schemes and how equality issues are considered in developing apprenticeships.
- How the Council can help to ensure that improvements in infrastructure and connectivity consider rurality.
- Consideration of rurality as part of the programme of support for business growth.

### **Council Plan Priority: Quality places to live**

Overall it is considered that this priority theme will have a positive impact on our residents by helping to support our towns as attractive places to live and work. In particular there should be a positive impact on people experiencing difficulty accessing the housing market (often younger people and low income households) through the provision of more affordable housing, as well as those in our rural communities particularly affected by housing affordability issues.

In delivering this priority the following issues will need to be considered:

- How delivery of town initiatives also support our wider rural communities
- Consideration of age, gender, rurality, socio-economic status and disability in developing our approaches to housing provision
- How best to engage with communities in the development and delivery of town improvement initiatives and consider implications for age, gender, disability, socio-economic status and rurality.

### **Council Plan Priority: Stronger and healthier communities**

Overall it is considered that this priority theme will have a positive impact on our residents and in particular on younger people, older people, those experiencing health issues, low income households, those experiencing fuel poverty (a particular problem in some rural areas), and those at risk of homelessness.

In delivering this priority the following issues will need to be considered:

- Addressing health inequalities through the delivery of the Joint Public Health Strategy improvement and action plans.
- How age, gender, rurality, socio-economic status, ethnicity and disability are considered in the delivery of leisure delivery plans.

- Consideration of social inclusion, disability, gender and age in developing projects in relation to reducing poverty and maximizing standards of living.
- Consideration of how local communities are engaged and helped to identify specific local issues relating to health and wellbeing

### **Overarching Theme: Transforming the Council**

Overall it is considered that this priority theme will have a positive impact on our residents and workforce.

In delivering this priority the following issues will need to be considered:

- Consideration of accessibility issues as services are made available online, in particular in terms of age and socio-economic status.
- How age, gender, rurality, socio-economic status and disability in particular are considered in any changes to the way services are delivered in our seven areas.
- Ensuring that changes to staffing and services pay due regard to the Equality Duty via Equality Impact Assessments of key functions and decisions
- Working with suppliers to understand the Equality Act and the implications of delivering goods and services in a rural area.
- Ensuring that staff and members can access training on equality to support planning and decision making
- Ensuring that the organisation values equality, that there are strong safeguards in place in relation to bullying, harassment and dealing with prejudice, and that staff are supported around work-place sickness, stress, disabilities or dealing with difficulties outside their working life

### **Definitions of protected characteristics**

**Age:** This refers to a person having a particular age or being within an age group (for example, 18-30 year olds).

**Civil partnership:** Legal recognition of a same-sex couple's relationship. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a range of legal matters.

**Disability:** A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Includes: Physical/sensory disability; mental health; learning disability.

**Gender reassignment:** This is the process of transitioning from one sex to another, considered a personal process rather than a medical one and it does not require someone to undergo medical treatment in order to be protected.

**Maternity:** The period after giving birth. It is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, including as a result of breastfeeding.

**Race:** It refers to a group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins. Includes, Asian, Black and White minority ethnic groups inc. Eastern Europeans, Irish people and Gypsy Travellers.

**Religion or belief:** “Religion” means any religion, including a reference to a lack of religion. “Belief” includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (for example, Atheism). The category includes, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and non religious beliefs such as Humanism.

**Sexual orientation:** This is whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

## **Additional Allerdale Borough Council characteristics**

**Rurality:** Allerdale is defined as ‘Rural - 80’ – this means we have at least 80 percent of our population in rural settlements and larger market towns.

**Socio-economic status:** This refers to a person or persons defined by their socio-economic group or other socio-economic classifications (e.g. low income families, or pensioners).