

BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL - IMPACT ASSESSMENT

WHY DO I NEED TO DO AN ASSESSMENT?

This Impact Assessment isn't designed to 'catch you out'. It is designed to help you think about and improve the way you deliver your services by ensuring that they are as inclusive as possible.

It will help you to test the impact on people when reviewing or developing new policies, strategies and functions to find out if there is any adverse impact or illegal discrimination or any unmet need or requirements.

Legislation imposes duties on local authorities to promote equality and tackle discrimination related to Age, Disability, Gender (includes marital status, gender reassignment), Race (colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality) Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, However, we have also included discretionary but important additional categories relevant to our District in this assessment process: People Living in Rural Areas, People living in Urban Areas, People on Low Incomes and People for whom English is not their first Language.

To comply with legislation the Council is required to publish its Impact Assessments and these will be made available on our website.

WHAT HAS TO BE IMPACT ASSESSED?

You need to do an Assessment when reviewing, making changes to or developing new and existing policies, strategies and functions that are relevant to equality. This can be determined as follows:

RELEVANT – Impact Assessment must be done

- The policy, strategy or function will impact on people (residents, staff or people living, visiting or working in Braintree District)
- The policy, strategy or function may benefit some people or communities and not others

NOT RELEVANT – Impact Assessment not needed

- No intended impact on people
- The policy, strategy or function is administrative only

HOW DO I DO THIS ASSESSMENT?

By answering the questions in the following Assessment template you will be able to consider any possible positive or negative impacts that a new or existing policy, strategy or function may have on defined groups, using data as evidence, and take action accordingly.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT – INITIAL SCREENING

Name of Policy, Strategy or Function being assessed	Civic Affairs
Is this a new or existing Policy, Strategy or Function?	Existing
Person responsible for the assessment	Donna Walton, Civic Officer
Service Area	Chief Executive's
Head of Service	Allan Reid, Chief Executive
Date	4.4.11

1. What is the main purpose of the Policy, Strategy or Function?

The Civic Office is responsible for providing administrative support for Braintree District Council's Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The office is responsible for an annual programme of visits by the Chairman to local community groups and organisations and for organising events, hosted by the Chairman, to which members of the public are invited.

2. Who else will be involved in the delivery of this Strategy, Policy or Function?

If so, state who they are. They will need to be involved in producing this Impact Assessment

Current Chairman and Vice-Chairman

3. Who are you delivering your service to/who will be affected by the Strategy, Policy or Function?

Individual residents of the Braintree District, local organisations and community groups, local businesses, existing communities, Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council.

4. To ensure that you have all available information that could help you to undertake this Impact Assessment complete the following table to evidence which of the following sources of information you are using, or intend to use, to assess the impact of the Policy, Strategy or Function on people within the following equality groups: Disability, Race (colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality) Religion or Belief, Sex (marital status, gender reassignment), Sexual orientation, Age, People living in rural areas, People living in urban areas, People on low incomes, People for whom English is not their first language. The sources listed are for guidance so please add/substitute your own categories as appropriate.

Source	Reference (date/ relevant publication, etc)
Performance Indicators/Targets	N/A
User Satisfaction Surveys	N/A
Consultation results (new and existing)	N/A
Staff monitoring data	N/A
Complaints information	In accordance with Council policy
Demographic profiles (census, etc)	Census data 2001 – area profile of the District – demographic and cultural information to determine ethnicity and age ranges of the population
Local Needs Analysis (internal or external sources)	N/A
Staff Survey results	N/A
Research reports	N/A
Best Practice Information	In accordance with the National Association of Civic Officers advice on Best Practice
Benchmarking data	Benchmarking exercise undertaken 2009/10
Expert views of people representing the equality groups	N/A
Other – please state	Invitations issued by the civic office to all events hosted by the Chairman over the last 4 years. All engagements to which the Chairman has been invited by local organisations and groups over the past 4 years.

5. Based on the data indicated in question 4, assess the impact that the Policy, Strategy or Function could have on the groups below. The impact could be positive i.e. it will benefit this group, it could help to promote equality, access, or improve relations within equality groups. The impact could be negative i.e. it could disadvantage them. You need to explain the reasons for the impact assessment you have made

Equality Group	Category	Positive Impact	Negative Impact/ Risk	Explanation
Age	Children 0-16	✓		School visits, Democracy Week, Role of Council in Local Democracy.
	Young People 17-25	✓		Chairman's involvement in Jack Petchey Awards and Young People of Essex programme
	Ages 26-59	✓		Invitations to civic events and engagements attended by Chairman in local community.
	Older People 60+	✓		Regular invitations received and accepted to attend groups within the age range.
Disability	Blind/Partially Sighted	✓		Included in events and engagements. Information on website is designed to be accessible and font size can be altered. Civic events are held at venues which are DDA compliant and guests are invited to bring their own guest to assist them if necessary.
	Deaf/Hearing Impaired	✓		Included in events and engagements
	Wheelchair user/mobility difficulties			Included in events and engagements. Civic events are held at venues which are DDA compliant and guests are invited to bring their own guest to assist them if necessary.
	Learning Difficulties	✓		Included in events and engagements. Have been recipients of monies from Chairman's Charity Fund twice in past 5 years.
	Mental Health Difficulties	✓		Included in events and engagements. Recipients of monies from Chairman's Charity Fund.
Gender	Women	✓		
	Men	✓		

	Transgender			Possible negative impact but data not available.
Race	White including English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, Eastern European (Polish Slovak, etc) Other White background – please specify	✓		
	Asian including Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian, Vietnamese, Chinese, Other Asian background – please specify	✓		
	Black including Caribbean, Somali, Other African, Other Black background – please specify	✓		
	Mixed Dual Heritage including White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, Other mixed background – please specify	✓		
	Gypsies/Travellers		✓	This group has not been represented in either engagements to which the Chairman has been invited nor in events hosted by the Chairman.
Religion/Belief	Buddhist	✓		Invitations are issued to all known groups within the District, however uptake is limited. Different denominations are invited to participate in any civic services held. The Chairman is involved in multi-faith events held by BDC. Personal and religious beliefs are respected, the Chairman is expected to represent all sections of the community and not avoid invitations if they do not fit with his/her own personal beliefs and opinions.
	Christian	✓		
	Hindu	✓		
	Jewish	✓		
	Muslim	✓		
	Sikh	✓		
	Other – please specify			

Sexual Orientation	Lesbian Gay men Heterosexual Bi-sexual		✓	Limited information is available, but where details exist groups are invited to civic events. Defining sexual orientation is contentious and difficult – homosexual and transgender groups may therefore be underrepresented although according to Census information people living in same sex couples constitute only 0.15% of the District's population.
Social Inclusion	People living in rural areas	✓		The District is predominantly rural and the civic office seeks to promote the work of the Chairman across the whole District. The Chairman makes visits to local businesses in all three main towns. Monitoring of geographical distribution of Chairman's visits indicates an even spread of activity across the three main towns and between rural and urban areas.
	People living in urban areas	✓		
	People on low incomes	✓		
	English not first language		✓	Work should be undertaken on the Chairman's page on the internet giving language options and clearly stating that the Chairman is available to ALL residents throughout the District.

Other (optional)	Use to define Impact on any groups specific to this Strategy, Policy or Function not listed above.			
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6. Based on your answer to question 5, could the Policy, Strategy or Function discriminate against any of the groups below either directly or indirectly

NOTE: Direct Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their racial or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Indirect Discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would disadvantage people on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, unless the practice can be objectively justified by a legitimate aim

Group	Direct Yes/No	Indirect Yes/No	If Yes state how
Age	No		
Disability	No		
Gender	No		
Race		Possible	In relation to gypsies/travellers in particular. Liaise with other civic officers within Essex as to how they engage with this group.
Religion/Belief	No		
Sexual Orientation		Possible	Undertake further research to ascertain if there are any further groups in the District which could be contacted and included within the Chairman's visits and events
Social Inclusion	No		

- 7. Referring to your answers to questions 5 and 6, can you easily minimize or remove any negative impacts identified and if so how?**

Publications – offer assistance with large print, language options, promotion of Chairman’s pages on website.

Undertake research into organisations representing racial groups and invite them to participate in Chairman’s events and engagements. Publicise the work of the Chairman on the website and invite groups to make contact with the civic office.

- 8. If the negative impacts cannot be minimized or removed, they need to be justified. Please explain how and what the evidence for this is.**

You may want to refer back to the monitoring data you listed in Question 4 to answer this question.

- 9. If you have identified any impacts as positive in Question 5, are there any further ways in which you can adapt the policy, strategy or function to increase or extend its positive benefits for equality groups? Please explain your reasoning.**

10. Based on the information you have now provided in this assessment please proceed as follows:

Equality Impact Assessment	Action
No negative impacts have been identified and this has been justified with evidence	Go to Q11 and Sign Off
Negative impacts were identified but have been minimized or removed	Go to Q11 and Sign Off
There is insufficient evidence to reach a valid conclusion on the Impact	Go back and collect additional evidence/data and then complete a new Assessment
Negative impacts were identified but have not been minimized, removed or justified	Complete the Action Plan below and then sign off by completing Q11

11. Sign Off

Assessment Completed by (name & signature)	Donna Walton, Civic Officer
Senior Manager (name & signature)	Allan Reid, Chief Executive
Date:	29.6.11

A copy of the signed Impact Assessment and any Action Plan should be retained and appended to the relevant Policy/Strategy document or Business Plan. A signed hard copy and an electronic copy should be sent to Charmaine Dean, Head of Community Services. It is a statutory requirement to publish the results of Equality Impact Assessments. We will make these available on our website.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN

You now need to develop and implement an Action Plan to address the negative impacts identified that could not be minimized, removed or justified.

This should include more detailed research, further data collection or consultation with representatives from the equality group(s) who you have identified as being likely to suffer a negative impact/be disadvantaged by the Policy, Strategy or Function being assessed.

ACTION PLAN

Equality Group (e.g. young people, blind/partially sighted, etc)	Negative Impact Identified	Action	By Who	Start Date	End Date
Sexual Orientation	Possible under representation in engagements undertaken by Chairman and in invitations issued.	Undertake further research to ascertain if there are any further groups in the District which could be contacted and included within the Chairman's visits and events	Civic Office	1.6.11	30.11.11
Gypsies/travellers	Possible under representation in engagements undertaken by Chairman and in invitations issued.	Undertake further research to ascertain if there are any further groups in the District which could be contacted and included within the Chairman's visits and events. Contact other civic officers within Essex to enquire how they engage with these groups in their own areas and use any information in BDC if applicable.	Civic Office	1.6.11 1.6.11	30.11.11 1.9.11

ACTION PLAN MONITORING

How will you monitor progress of your Action Plan? And at what intervals?	Complete research into groups within the District by 30.11.11 Record invitations issued by Chairman by equality group each time an event is organised and compile data at end of each civic year which can be used accordingly. Monitor engagements carried out by Chairman to see which groups are inviting him/her to their events.
How frequently will this monitoring take place?	After each Chairman's event and end of each Civic Year.
Who will be responsible for this?	Civic Office.

Now go back to question 11 to complete and sign off this Assessment