

Initial Equalities Impact Assessment. Corporate Plan 2014-2018

1. Which group (s) of people has been identified as being disadvantaged by your proposals? What are the equality impacts?

The Corporate Plan is the City Council's key strategic document. This Corporate Plan updates and takes forward the themes in the plan that was agreed by Council last year. It sets out the strategic direction of the Council over the next five years.

It is subject to an annual review and is directly relevant to the Section 149 general Equality Duty for the public sector under the Equality Act 2010 where public bodies must specifically show due regard to the need to:

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

The protected characteristics covered by the Equality Duty are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (Note: only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality)
- Religion or belief (including the lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Corporate Plan sets out the significant challenges and opportunities that Oxford presents as a city:

- Ethnically and culturally diverse with the third highest minority non white ethnic population in the south east at approximately 19.6% and an estimated 8% of white non-British residents
- 19.3% residents were born outside the UK
- Experienced population growth of 13.4% over the last decade
- House prices are nearly 10 times average earnings
- A social housing waiting list of approaching 6000
- 12 of its 85 "super output areas" are among the 20% most deprived areas in England
- Nearly one-quarter of Oxford's children (5,000) live in poverty, 3,000 people of pensionable age and 9,000 people of working age

- Has the highest proportion of students at 26% (32,000 full time students) of the working age population
- Although only 1:10 16-24 year olds are not in education, education or training (amongst the lowest in the country) 1:5 are unemployed (close to the national average)

The Corporate Plan 2014-18 sets out the ways in which the Council will continue with, and expand upon, its existing work programmes in order to address these challenges. It reinforces and will be supported by the Council's refreshed 2012-2015 Corporate Equality Scheme.

The last external Audit Commission report on the Council's equalities work in 2009 stated that:

"The Council has achieved real improvements for vulnerable communities over the last five years, with a range of physical, economic and social projects. Leadership is effective in promoting equalities and diversity externally. It provides long term financial support to voluntary groups to build capacity and there are positive examples of engagement with the local community which work well. The Council promotes community cohesion and gives commitment and support to events in the City which help the understanding and engagement of differing sectors of the community."

The Corporate Plan sets out the ongoing ambition of the Council to reduce the extent of inequality and to improve the lives of the most vulnerable members of our community. It sets out a firm commitment to:

- improve equality and diversity
- ensure that services are fully accessible to all community groups
- ensure that work programmes are scoped to continue to target and protect the most vulnerable people in our communities
- promote new opportunities for people living in the more deprived communities in our city, particularly through its programmes to promote educational attainment and youth ambition.

The City Council's overriding concern in formulating its Corporate Plan and budget has been to protect vulnerable communities.

2. In brief, what changes are you planning to make to your current or proposed new or changed policy, strategy, procedure, project or service to minimise or eliminate the adverse equality impacts?

Please provide further details of the proposed actions, timetable for making the changes and the person(s) responsible for making the changes on the resultant action plan

The Corporate Plan 2014-2018 sets out the Council's priorities for action over the next four years which will combine to invest in Oxford's future to create a world class city for everyone. This ambition is undiminished.

The Plan has five key priorities:

- A vibrant and sustainable economy
- Meeting housing needs
- Strong and active communities
- Cleaner, greener Oxford
- An efficient and effective Council

Our guiding principles in constructing the budget were to:

- Continuing to invest in the city (for example, through our programme to build new homes and to improve the city's leisure facilities). The delivery of this programme is already well advanced.
- Working with our partners to build on the city-region's knowledge economy and attract inward investment.
- Expanding the options and opportunities available to young people - particularly in the more deprived areas of the city - through our programmes to improve educational attainment and promote youth ambition. The educational attainment programme is already delivering impressive results
- Continuing to improve the quality of houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) in the private rented sector. Since the introduction in 2011 of the HMO licencing scheme which requires every HMO to be licenced, around 3,000 HMOs have been improved and made safe for occupants.
- Embedding the principles of sustainability and carbon reduction at the heart of everything that the Council does and working through Low Carbon Oxford to grow the green economy.

These resource commitments are supported by 10 corporate Equality Objectives and 22 headline measures (four or five within each priority, with the 15 key measures with equalities implications in bold):

A vibrant sustainable economy:

- Increase the percentage of council spend with local business to 48% by 2015/16
- Increase the number of jobs supported Council investment projects and other spend to over 900 by 2016/17
- Increase the number of apprenticeships created through Council investment for those who live in Oxford to 28 by 2014/15
- Increase the percentage of pupils in schools supported by the Council's educational attainment programme achieving level 3 in English and Maths at Key Stage 2 to 80% by 2015/16

Meeting housing need:

- Increase the number of individual HMOs subject to agreed licence provisions to 3,890 by 2015/16
- Ensure the number of households in Oxford in temporary accommodation is no more than 120 each year
- Ensure no new rough sleepers spend more than one consecutive night on the streets each year
- Increase the number of affordable homes for rent delivered to 350 by 2015/16
- Increase our investment in creating great estates (target under development)

Strong and active communities:

- Increase the number of young people accessing youth engagement projects and activities outside school hours to 6,000 by 2016/17
- Ensure 9 sports facilities are improved by investment from the Council with works completed within each financial year
- Increase the percentage of adults participating in sport (as measured by the Annual Sport England Active People Survey) to more than 27.5% by 2016/17
- Improve satisfaction with our neighbourhoods to 92% by 2016/17

Cleaner, greener Oxford:

- Improve satisfaction with our street cleansing to 75% by 2015/16
- Reduce the Council's carbon footprint by 5% each year
- Increase the number of enforcements carried out as a result of environmental offences (e.g. noisy parties, dog fouling, littering) (target under development)
- Reduce the average amount of waste sent to landfill per household each year to 430kg by 2014/15
- Increase the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling, composting or anaerobic digestion each year to 52% by 2015/16

An efficient and effective council:

- Increase the percentage of customers satisfied at their first point of contact to 85% by 2015/16
- Deliver a further £3.143m in efficiency savings between 2013/14 and 2016/17
- Increase the level of self-service transactions that are carried out through the Council's website (target under development)
- Achieve and retain IIP Gold accreditation for the Council from 2014/15

All stakeholders within the City (including residents, visitors, customers, businesses, strategic partnerships, and elected representatives) benefit directly from the implementation of the plan and detailed outcomes are set out in the plan itself against all the key objectives.

The respective actions noted are embedded within annual service planning

and performance is monitored through directorate meetings, wider leadership team, performance boards, two scrutiny committees and City Executive Board.

The Corporate Plan has specific actions around providing opportunities for young people. The differential impact resulting from providing new opportunities reflects the need to engage more effectively, tackle social inclusion and address (as far as possible) employment through apprenticeships and other initiatives. The Council will also address issues around social marginalisation and anti social behaviour in order to have a positive impact on the fabric of neighbourhoods.

A notable differential impact surrounds the issue of socio economics and poverty (removed from the Equality Act 2010) as the Corporate Plan has comprehensive actions around increasing the number of affordable homes within the city (either through rental, low cost or social housing provision). This will directly enable those who are unable to secure decent housing at an affordable cost and as such is a defensible differential but positive impact.

It should be noted that the Council previously set a corporate programme containing 5 core objectives that were supported by equality impact assessments at service level and service level equality indicators that were reported on and tracked via the CorVu performance management system. A programme of 185 service level and corporate strategic assessments were carried out between 2008-2011 and all key strategies underpinning the 2011-2015 Corporate Plan have undergone EqlAs and wider public consultation in 2011 where all groups had the opportunity to comment on the plan. A forward plan of all policies which require an EqlA is posted on the Council website.

3. Please provide details of whom you will consult on the proposed changes and if you do not plan to consult, please provide the rationale behind that decision.

Please note that you are required to involve disabled people in decisions that impact on them

- The consultation period will begin 16th December, following City Executive Board approval on 11th December. The consultation will last until 30th January 2014. A draft amended in the light of consultation will come back to City Executive Board on 12th February 2014.
- A website link will be sent to all key stakeholders and community groups and an item will also be placed in the Oxford Mail, directing people to the web link.

4. Can the adverse impacts you identified during the initial screening be justified without making any adjustments to the existing or new policy, strategy, procedure, project or service?

Please set out the basis on which you justify making no adjustments

The changes made to the Corporate Plan as part of the review process strengthen and enhance the Council's commitment to maintaining the quality and access to its services.

- Investing in Oxford's future
 - delivering physical regeneration projects – Barton, Cowley and Northway, Blackbird Leys Pool – in order to deliver new housing and create jobs
 - maintaining and improving on the Decent Homes Standard in Council homes
 - completing the play area improvement programme
 - Investing in our sports pavilions so that sporting clubs are encouraged to expand.
- Protecting vulnerable communities
 - improving the quality of houses in multiple occupation in the private rented sector; and striving to reduce the numbers of people in temporary accommodation
 - challenging the cycle of deprivation by strengthening early intervention and other social programmes aimed at children and families as part of a broader campaign to enhance educational attainment
 - maintaining and increasing our funding for the voluntary and charitable bodies who provide money and other advice, particularly in areas of the city where need is greatest
 - developing an integrated programme of assistance for neighbourhoods whose character is being adversely affected by high levels of private sector renting and entertainment venues
 - Maintaining a coherent offer - including culture, sport and community activities - for young people who are at risk of becoming socially alienated

Strengthening community engagement

- embedding Area Forums, Neighbourhood Boards, and Councillor budgets for local projects
- building community capacity for self-help and participation as a way of continuing to improve our neighbourhoods
- building community cohesion by using cultural and other binding events and activities to encourage different community groups to celebrate each other
- continuing to improve our website as a means of encouraging customers to engage with the Council in convenient and cost

- o effective ways
- o being open and transparent in all our activities.

Providing leadership to the city

- o supporting proactive partnership initiatives such as the Oxford Strategic Partnership, Low Carbon Oxford, and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)
- o creating the right environment for economic growth in our area; and the transition to a low carbon economy.

5. You are legally required to monitor and review the proposed changes after implementation to check they work as planned and to screen for unexpected equality impacts.

Please provide details of how you will monitor/evaluate or review your proposals and when the review will take place

The Corporate Plan is reviewed and updated on an annual basis. Progress on implementing the projects and work-streams will be monitored on a monthly basis through team meetings, directorate meetings, Wider Leadership team meetings, and Directors' meetings. Progress is reported to the City Executive Board on a quarterly basis.

Lead officer responsible for signing off the EqIA: Peter McQuitty

Role: Head of Policy, Culture and Communications

Date: 11th December 2013

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