

Why do an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)?

- 1. Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) is part of Oxford City Council’s **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (Equality Act 2010)**.

The General PSED enables Oxford City Council to:
 - a. **identify and remove discrimination,**
 - b. **identify ways to advance equality of opportunity,**
 - c. **foster good relations.**
- 2. **An EqIA must be done before making any decision(s)** that may have an impact on people and/or services that people use and depend on.
- 3. An **EqIA form is one of many tools** that can simplify and structure your equalities assessment.
- 4. We are passionate about equalities, and we highly recommend that **Corporate Management Team (CMT) reports and all projects must attach an EqIA.**

A good EqIA has the following attributes:

- 1. **Comprehensively considers the 9 protected characteristics.**

1. Age	6. Race & Ethnicity
2. Disability	7. Religion or Belief
3. Gender Reassignment	8. Sex
4. Marriage & Civil Partnership	9. Sexual Orientation
5. Pregnancy & Maternity	Socio-economic inequalities (voluntary adoption)

- 2. It has **considered equality of treatment** towards service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members
- 3. Sufficiently considered **potential and real impact** of proposal or policy on service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members.
- 4. **Systematically recorded and reported** any potential and real impact of your proposal or policy on service users, residents, employees, partners, council suppliers & contractors, and Council Members
- 5. **Collected, recorded, & reported sufficient information and data** on how your policy or proposal will have an impact.
- 6. Offers **mitigations or adjustments** if a PSED has been impacted.
- 7. Provides clear **justifications** for your decisions.
- 8. It is written in **plain English** with simple short sentence structures.

Section 1: General overview of the activity under consideration

1.	Name of activity being assessed.	Local Government Reorganisation: Project approval to initiate a procurement process for a Strategic Partner to support Oxford City Council in the design and implementation of a Greater Oxford in the event that the 3 Councils Local Government Reorganisation submission is confirmed by Government as their preferred model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.	2.	The implementation date of the activity under consideration:	To be confirmed. Approval to initiate a procurement to commence a procurement process.
3.	Directorate/Department(s):	Corporate Services Directorate	4.	Service Area(s):	Corporate Services
5.	Who is (are) the assessment lead(s):	Lucy Cherry Corporate Policy & Partnerships Officer Law, Governance and Strategy lcherry@oxford.gov.uk	6.	Contact details, in case there are queries:	Mish Tullar Transition Director Corporate Resources Directorate mtullar@oxford.gov.uk
7.	Is this a new or ongoing EqlA?	NEW ☒	8.	If this is an extension of a previous EqlA, please indicate where the previous EqlA is located and share the link to the said EqlA.	N/A
9.	Date this EqlA started:	09 July 2026			
10.	Will this EqlA be attached to Corporate Management Team (CMT) reports/updates, which will be published online?	Attached to a report for the Single Member Decision.	11.	Give a date (tentative or otherwise) when this assessment will be taken to the CMT.	Not applicable.

Section 2: About the activity, change, or policy that is being assessed.

12.	Type of activity being considered:	☐ Budget	☐ Decommissioning	☒ Commissioning	☐ Changes to an existing activity
		☒ New Activity	☒ Others. Procurement of a strategic partner consultancy, subject to the Governments decision for Local Government Reorganisation for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. Approval to initiate a procurement to commence a procurement process.		
13.	Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Corporate strategy (2024-2028) does this activity fulfil?	☒ Good, affordable homes	☒ Strong, fair economy	☒ Thriving Communities	☒ Zero Carbon Oxford
14.	Which priority area(s) within Oxford City Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2022) does this activity fulfil?	☒ Responsive services and customer care.	☒ Diverse and engaged workforce.	☒ Leadership & organisational commitment.	☒ Understanding and working with our communities.
15.	Outline the aims, objectives, & priorities of the activity being considered.	Aim: Secure specialist capacity and capability to support the design and implementation of a Greater Oxford Council, if Government confirms the 3 Councils model. Objectives: 1. Support systemwide programme design (operating model, service design, organisation design, transition planning). 2. Ensure equality and accessibility are embedded in commissioned services. Priorities: • Inclusive service design • Strong governance • <u>Data</u>-led understanding of needs			

		- Fair workforce transition - Effective engagement and communications.
16.	Please outline the consequences of not implementing this activity.	- Reduced programme capacity and specialist expertise to deliver a complex LGR transition at pace. - Higher risk of inconsistent approaches across the council(s). - Reduced ability to embed inclusive design and robust data early. - Potential for delays, avoidable costs, and reputational and legal risk if equality impacts are not properly considered in later design decisions. - Failure to meet the Government's timeline for LGR.

Section 3: Understanding service users, residents, staff and any other impacted parties.

17.	Have you undertaken any consultations in the form of surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups?	- No formal consultation is required in relation to this decision. - Internal engagement took place with the Chief Executive, S151 Officer, Monitoring Officer; at the Leaders and Group Leaders meetings, with relevant senior and strategic officers, and through the Councils internal LGR Transition Board. - Requirements will be built into the Specification of Requirement and Invitation To Tender.
18.	List information and data used to understand who your residents or staff are and how they will be impacted.	- Horizon Scanning and Insight. - Third-party research - Reports - Partnership and Stakeholder liaison - Skills data - Financial data.
19.	If you have not done any consultations or collected data & information, are you planning to do so in the future?	No formal consultation will be undertaken for this enabling procurement decision.

Section 4: Impact analysis.

This is an enabling decision (procurement). Direct equality impacts are limited at this stage, but there is potential for indirect impacts through the way future services, governance and workforce changes are designed and implemented. The assessment therefore focuses on risks, safeguards and required actions to embed equality into the programme and supplier deliverables.

20.	Who does the activity impact?	Service Users	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
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	Members of staff	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
	General public	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
	Partner / Community Organisation	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
	City Councillors	Yes ☒	No ☐	Don't Know ☐
	Council suppliers and contractors	Yes ☐	No ☒	Don't Know ☐

21.

Does the activity impact positively or negatively on any protected characteristics as stated within Equality (Act 2010)?
This is an enabling decision (procurement). Direct equality impacts are limited at this stage, but there is potential for indirect impacts through the way future services, governance and workforce changes are designed and implemented.

Protected Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Don't know	Data/information/evidence supporting your assessment	Analysis & insight Mitigations
Age	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No adverse impact identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as

						implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Disability (Visible and invisible)	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Gender re-assignment	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Marriage & Civil Partnership	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage.

						Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Race, Ethnicity and/or Citizenship	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Pregnancy & Maternity	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-

						council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Religion or Belief	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Sex	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.

Sexual Orientation	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Socio-economic inequalities such as: This was voluntarily adopted by <u>Oxford City Council on the 13th of March 2024.</u>	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Council of Sanctuary	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development

						and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Children and Young People (SEND, education, early years)	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Adult Social Care and Independent Living	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.

						As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Transport and Access to Services	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Health and Inequalities	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Community Safety and Cohesion	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage.

						Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Carers and Unpaid Carers	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Homeless population	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-

						council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Council employees	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
Cabinet Members	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.

Council suppliers & contractors	☐	☐	Yes ☒	☐	No specific impacts identified at this stage.	No direct impacts are expected at the procurement stage. Equality considerations will be fully addressed during the development and implementation of the Service Specification of Requirements and Invitation to Tender, if the Government selects the three-council LGR model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. As with other factors, more detailed analysis will be carried out as implementation plans are developed and delivered.
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Section 5: Conclusion(s) of your Full Impact Assessment

22.	Conclusions.	☐	Stop and reconsider the activity.	☐	Adjust activity before beginning the activity and continue to monitor.	Yes ☒	No major change(s) or adjustments and continue with activity but continue to monitor.	☐	No major change(s) or adjustments and continue with the activity. No need to monitor in the future.
23.	Please explain how you have reached your conclusions above.	Conclusion (proportionate for an enabling decision): - Given the scale, complexity and compressed timescales associated with the design and implementation phase, existing officer capacity alone would not be sufficient to meet the programme requirements without additional specialist support. - Proceed with the procurement, subject to embedding the equality requirements in the Specification of Requirements and Invitation To Tender procurement materials; and is subject to the Government's decision on Local Government Reorganisation for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.							

3. Swift mobilisation following the Government's formal announcement mitigates the risk of delay to programme delivery and ensures the Council is well-positioned to meet the Government's timeline and mobilisation expectations.
4. The Council must ensure that the procurement exercise is conducted in full compliance with the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023 and the subordinate regulations. Including adherence to the principles of transparency, fair competition and value for money. The procurement must also be carried out in accordance with the Council's Contract Rules. The project team has worked closely with Legal Services and Procurement colleagues to develop an appropriate procurement strategy for this requirement. The proposed approach has been designed to ensure compliance with the Procurement Act 2023, the Procurement Regulations and the Council's Contract Rules, whilst also securing a competitive process capable of meeting the Council's operational and strategic requirements in relation to Local Government Reorganisation. The procurement documentation, evaluation methodology and governance arrangements will continue to be subject to legal oversight throughout the procurement process to ensure that the Council acts lawfully, transparently and in accordance with the principles of equal treatment and value for money.
5. This decision directly supports the successful delivery of LGR in Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. It does not involve major or long-term commitments that could limit the choices of a future council.
6. An initial equalities impact assessment will be included as part of the Cabinet report ahead of any contract award decision. Full equality impact assessment considerations are expected to be addressed as part of the LGR programme design and implementation phase.
7. The decision allows an appointment needed to support ongoing service delivery and does not involve major or long-term commitments that could limit the choices of a future council.
8. An Invitation To Tender documents (ITT) and a Specification of Requirements (SoRs) should clearly align with the strategic ambitions set out in the 3 Councils proposal to Government. This includes reflecting the six-pillar framework underpinning the preferred three unitary model and supporting the creation of a place-based authority with strong local identity, clear accountability, and proximity to the communities they serve.
 - Identity
 - Voice
 - Fit for the future
 - Quality of Life
 - Homes
 - Prosperity.

ITT and SoRs should balance improved outcomes for residents with financial sustainability, including showing how service redesign will improve outcomes while also delivering efficiency savings and value for money and, adopt a public service reform approach, focusing on prevention, early intervention, and improved resident outcomes.

ITT need to require a Bidder to detail how the organisation will deliver additional and measurable social value through a contract in support of the Council's priorities (Good, affordable homes; Strong, fair economy; Thriving communities; Zero carbon Oxford; Well-run Council).

9. A successful Bidder should be required to perform its obligations under any agreement (including those in relation to the Services) in accordance with all applicable equality law (whether in relation to race, sex, gender reassignment, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy, maternity or otherwise); and take all necessary steps, and inform the Council of the steps taken, to prevent unlawful discrimination designated as such by any court or tribunal, or the Equality and Human Rights Commission or (any successor organisation). They shall also comply with all applicable anti-slavery and human trafficking laws, statutes, regulations and codes from time to time in force (Anti-slavery Laws) including but not limited to the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and comply with the Council's Anti-Slavery Policy.
10. It would be a condition that for the duration of the agreement and any extensions thereof a successful Bidder:
 - Pays all Supplier Personnel who are employed or otherwise engaged by the Supplier to provide the Services not less than the Oxford Living Wage (unless otherwise directed by the Council) as set annually by the Council;
 - Agrees to increase the amount which it pays to Supplier Personnel by the same amount as any increase to the Oxford Living Wage within twelve (12) months of the date on which any increase in the Oxford Living Wage is announced by the Council (unless otherwise directed by the Council); and
 - Co-operates and provides all reasonable assistance to the Council in monitoring the effect of the Oxford Living Wage on the quality of the Services provided under this agreement.

Section 6: Monitoring and review plan.

The responsibility for maintaining a monitoring arrangement of the EqlA action plan lies with the service/team completing the EqlA. These arrangements must be built into the performance management framework such as KPIs or Risk Registers.

24.	Who or which team or service area will be responsible for monitoring equalities impact?	LGR Programme governance (e.g. Transition Board)		
25.	Who (individual, team, or service area) will be responsible for carrying out the EqlA review?	Programme team with systemwide support across the Council; periodic review through governance checkpoints and prior to major design decisions.		
26.	How often will the equality impact be reviewed for this activity?	At least annually	27.	Date when the EqlA will be reviewed again. Periodic review through governance checkpoints and prior to major design decisions.

Section 7: Sign-off

Name: Mish Tullar
Job Title: Transition Director

Signature:

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