

Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A)

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an equality analysis.

Directorate: Finance and Customer Services	Service area: Finance
Lead person: Rob Mahon	Contact number: 01709 254518

1. Title:

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

Service / Function

Other

If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

The Council has a framework of budgetary monitoring and reporting that ensures budget management is exercised within annual cash limits.

Each month the Budget Manager receives timely information on income and expenditure to enable them to fulfil their budgetary responsibilities. Following the review of the budget information, each budget manager provides a forecast of their projected outturn position on each service. The Strategic Director subsequently provides a consolidated forecast for their directorate to the Chief Finance Officer and relevant Cabinet Member.

A budget monitoring report, which includes an up-to-date outturn forecast, information about significant variances from approved budgets and proposals for dealing with them, is submitted to Cabinet at least 6 times a year, culminating with the Councils Financial Outturn report.

Whilst the framework described above relates to revenue budgets, the capital programme is also similarly monitored and reported alongside the Council's revenue position.

The financial monitoring position report summarises the key variances for each directorate and considers the key financial pressures and risks.

This report is the penultimate financial report in the financial year, it sets out the Council's outturn position in brief as the full revenue outturn position is not presented to cabinet until July. The report also covers off any other key items to be noted at the time.

Given that the revenue and capital budgets have been approved by Council in February each year, when equality assessments would have been considered at that time in respect of the budget proposals, there are no further issues in respect of equality and diversity.

The report also addresses the use of a further allocation of Household Support Fund (HSF) grant. The allocation covers the period 1st April 2024 to 30th September 2024. The funding must be used or allocated during that time. It is the use of HSF that is directly relevant to equalities issues.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and any other relevant characteristics (for example socio-economic status, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background and education or skills levels).

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	X	
Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	X	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>	X	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal?		X

<i>(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i>		
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>		X
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i>		X

If you have answered **no** to all the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals prior to carrying out an **Equality Analysis**.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below and use the prompts for guidance.

- How have you considered equality and diversity?

The Household Support Fund (HSF) programme of activity in Rotherham primarily added value and extension to existing means of support for low income and vulnerable families. These are households that are shown through various data sources to be impacted by socio economic inequalities. Data detailing the households' receiving support is collected through the administration of each activity and where required will meet statutory requirements for administration of that provision.

The conditions attached to reporting of HSF spend and outputs require data covering:

- Households with children.
- Pensioner households.
- Households including someone with a disability.
- Other households (only adults with none of the other conditions).

- Key findings

The data available is from the HSF monitoring returns for 2023/24. This data shows total awards for households from all measures of support:

17,741 households with children.

334 pensioner households.

10,158 households including someone with a disability.

7,191 other households.

The programme for April to September 2024 is intended to deliver similar outcomes for the types of vulnerable households.

- Actions

The use of both proactive and application-based approaches to access HSF supported provision enables vulnerable low-income households to be targeted, directly tackling socio economic inequalities, and for a wider number of households to also access support.

Access through community-based provision including the Open Arms programme will help to ensure that the overall approach is inclusive.

Data relating to equalities will be collected and analysed in accordance with Council policy and that required to monitoring returns for the HSF programme.

No further action or a full equality assessment is required.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	N/A
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Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	N/A
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Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	N/A
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5. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:

Name	Job title	Date
Rob Mahon	Assistant Director of Financial Services	10/05/2024

6. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date screening completed

09 May 2024

If relates to a Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, Council or a Significant Operational Decision – report date and date sent for publication

Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement
equality@rotherham.gov.uk