

Appendix 3 - PART B – Equality Analysis Form

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.

This form:

- Can be used to prompt discussions, ensure that due regard has been given and remove or minimise disadvantage for an individual or group with a protected characteristic
- Involves looking at what steps can be taken to advance and maximise equality as well as eliminate discrimination and negative consequences
- Should be completed before decisions are made, this will remove the need for remedial actions.

Note – An Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A) should be completed prior to this form.

When completing this form consider the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc. – see page 11 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: Local Growth Fund 2026/2027 allocation	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 03/02/2026	
Directorate: Policy, Strategy and Engagement	Service area: Policy, Performance and Intelligence
Lead Manager: Michael Holmes	Contact number: Michael.holmes@rotherham.gov.uk
Is this a: <input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other	
If other, please specify	

2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Name	Organisation	Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)
Michael Holmes	RMBC	Policy and Strategy Officer
Paul Stafford	RMBC	Policy Officer
Kellie Rodgers	RMBC	Research Officer

3. What is already known? - see page 10 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known)

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), now delivered through the government’s Local Growth Fund via the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority, has been a major source of investment in Rotherham since 2022. Across UKSPF and its continuation through the Local Growth Fund, Rotherham has received annual allocations to support three core priorities: Supporting Local Business, People and Skills, and Communities and Place.

In 2026/27 Rotherham will receive £2.95 million (a 10% reduction from 2025/26), made up of revenue and capital funding to continue activity across these themes.

The programme affects the whole borough, supporting residents, businesses, and communities. By improving skills and employability, strengthening local businesses, and funding cultural activities—including those aimed at children—the programme has the potential to reduce inequalities, tackle disadvantage, and promote more inclusive economic growth across Rotherham.

What equality information is available? (Include any engagement undertaken)

Available equality-related information highlights several key characteristics of Rotherham’s population across skills, employment, deprivation, and ethnic diversity.

Skills and Education

Rotherham has comparatively low levels of higher-level qualifications. Only 33.2% of working-age residents hold a degree-level qualification or higher, significantly below the national average of 47.2% (ONS Annual Population Survey, 2024). The borough also continues to face challenges in both retaining and attracting graduates.

Demographics and Young People

Rotherham has experienced modest growth in its younger population. The number of children aged under 15 increased from 46,000 in 2011 to 47,100 in 2021, representing a 2.4% rise. This is relevant for equality considerations concerning future service demand and workforce development.

Employment and Economic Activity

Between July 2024 and June 2025:

- 5.1% of economically active residents were unemployed (6,300 people).
- 24% of residents (38,900 people) were economically inactive, with 23.9% of this group (9,300 people) expressing a desire for employment.
- In 2023, 22.8% of households (18,100 households) were workless.

These indicators point to persistent labour market inequalities, particularly affecting lower-skilled residents and those facing barriers to work.

Ethnic Diversity

Rotherham is becoming increasingly diverse. The proportion of residents from ethnic minority communities rose from 8.1% in 2011 to 11.7% in 2021. Diversity is even more pronounced among young people, with 24% of school-age children coming from an ethnic minority background (DfE 2024/25). The Pakistani community remains the largest ethnic minority group.

Inequalities and Deprivation

Ethnic minority communities are disproportionately affected by deprivation.

- 40% of ethnic minority residents live in neighbourhoods ranked among the 10% most deprived nationally, compared with 21.4% of the population overall.
- Rotherham is within the top 15% most deprived areas in England, with 16,512 children living in absolute poverty in 2023/24 (DWP).

Are there any gaps in the information that you are aware of?

Limited information is available on which protected characteristic groups take up existing employment support and skills support.

What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

Ongoing coordination and oversight of Rotherham's Local Growth Fund (LGF) programme will continue to be led by the Policy, Strategy and Engagement directorate, working closely with finance colleagues and lead officers for each project or theme. While overall programme monitoring will be centrally coordinated, individual projects are responsible for putting in place effective monitoring and recording systems that capture the protected characteristics of beneficiaries. This ensures that equality impacts can be assessed consistently across the whole programme.

Most projects proposed for 2026/27 are continuations of existing activity, several of which already collect equalities data. For example:

- Launchpad currently captures age, employment status, ethnicity, nationality, gender and disability during initial assessments. From 2026/27, this data will be made usable for internal equality analysis through RiDO's CRM system.

Across all projects, quarterly monitoring will be strengthened to ensure a consistent focus on equality impacts. Projects will be expected to review data and information regularly to identify trends, potential barriers, and any disparities in take-up or impact. Where equality-

related issues are identified, they will be discussed with delivery partners to explore potential adjustments to project design or outreach.

This enhanced monitoring approach will ensure the programme continues to meet the needs of Rotherham's diverse communities and helps inform future programme development.

Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)	In 2022, the Council undertook extensive engagement to shape the original UKSPF proposals. Throughout May and June of that year, a wide range of internal services - including CYPS, Housing, Finance, Transport, Digital, Public Health, Neighbourhoods, Community Safety, and Culture - were consulted through a series of meetings to identify priorities, refine project ideas, and align proposals with existing strategies. External partners were also engaged, including Partnership CEOs, the Business Growth Board, cultural partners, and voluntary and community sector organisations. This collective engagement helped shape a programme that largely built upon existing activity while responding to emerging needs and community feedback
Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)	See above.

4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)

How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups? (Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance)

The programme meets the needs of different communities and groups by delivering support in accessible neighbourhood settings and targeting residents who face the greatest barriers to participation.

Skills projects, including Ambition, Advance and Core Skills, offer flexible training for both young people and adults, helping residents at different life stages move closer to or progress within employment.

Business support programmes are strengthening equality monitoring to ensure fair access for entrepreneurs from all backgrounds. Strengthened requirements across the programme to collect and act on protected-characteristics data help ensure that any disparities are identified and addressed, enabling services to respond appropriately to the needs of all protected groups.

Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups?

The programme is not expected to create significant barriers for protected groups. Most LGF projects are specifically designed to reduce inequalities and support people who face barriers to accessing mainstream services. Some risk of under-representation remains if certain groups find it harder to access support, but this is mitigated through community-based delivery and proactive outreach.

Launchpad works with referral partners, including DWP, to improve access for marginalised communities and offers an introductory self-employment workshop in response to increased referrals from disadvantaged groups.

Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers?

The programme provides a range of positive impacts by funding activity that directly removes barriers to participation for disadvantaged groups. For example, a £441,203 investment in skills projects—including Ambition, Advance and Core Skills—will help people at different life stages build confidence, gain qualifications and progress toward employment, addressing inequalities experienced by those furthest from the labour market.

In addition, the programme will fund an extensive events programme, offering free and inclusive cultural activities that increase participation across diverse communities and create opportunities for volunteering and community engagement.

Overall, LGF activity contributes to breaking down social, economic and access-related barriers for residents with protected characteristics.

What affect will the Policy/Service have on community relations? (may also need to consider activity which may be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another)

By providing a programme of events this will provide an opportunity to bring different communities together, potentially strengthening community cohesion in the borough.

Please list any **actions and targets** that need to be taken as a consequence of this assessment on the action plan below and ensure that they are added into your service plan for monitoring purposes – see page 12 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

If the analysis is done at the right time, i.e. early before decisions are made, changes should be built in before the policy or change is signed off. This will remove the need for remedial actions. Where this is achieved, the only action required will be to monitor the impact of the policy/service/change on communities or groups according to their protected characteristic - See page 11 of the Equality Screening and Analysis guidance

Title of analysis: Local Growth Fund proposals – 2026/2027
Directorate and service area: Policy, Strategy and Engagement; Policy, Performance and Intelligence
Lead Manager: Michael Holmes
Summary of findings:
The analysis shows that the Local Growth Fund proposals for 2026/27 are expected to have a positive impact on reducing inequalities across Rotherham by targeting support toward residents, communities and businesses who face disadvantage. The programme continues to address key local needs—including low skills levels, high economic inactivity, and significant deprivation. No major barriers were identified for protected characteristic groups, and strengthened monitoring arrangements will help to ensure that any emerging disparities are identified and addressed.

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Amend monitoring returns to explicitly capture EDI information	All	07/26

***A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups**

6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Name	Job title	Date
Chris Paddock	Interim Director of Policy, Strategy and Engagement	12/02/2026
Chris Read	The Leader of the Council	

7. Publishing

The Equality Analysis will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this Equality Analysis 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 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 Equality Analysis completed	05/02/2026
Report title and date	Local Growth Fund 2026/27 allocation – Cabinet 16th March 2025
Date report sent for publication	
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	05/02/2026