East Sussex
County Council

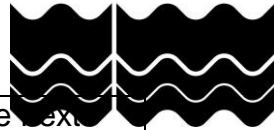# Equality Impact Analysis Template

Equality Impact Analysis (EqIA) (or Equality Impact Assessment) aims to make services and public policy better for all service-users and staff and supports value for money by getting council services right first time.

We use EqIAs to enable us to consider all relevant information from an Equality requirements perspective when procuring or restructuring a service or introducing a new policy or strategy. This analysis of impacts is then reflected in the relevant action plan to get the best outcomes for the Council, its staff and service-users[1].
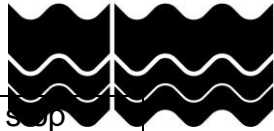
EqIAs are used to analyse and assess how the Council's work might impact differently on different groups of people[2]. EqIAs help the Council to make good decisions for its service-users, staff and residents and provide evidence that those decision conform with the Council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010[3].

This template sets out the steps you need to take to complete an EqIA for your project. Guidance for sections is in the endnotes. If you have any questions about your EqIA and/or how to complete this form, please use the contact details at the end of this form.

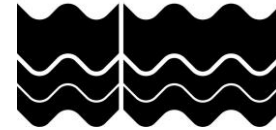|	
Title of Project/Service/Policy[4]	Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy
Team/Department[5]	Library Service
Directorate	Communities, Economy & Transport
Provide a comprehensive description of your Project (Service/Policy, etc.) including its Purpose and Scope[6]	The Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy 2018-23 is being updated to review progress and include changing/emerging needs and new information. The Covid-19 pandemic and other issues have led to changing needs for many of our residents, including a greater need to access online services for work, shopping, socialising and of course for health information and access to health services to support both physical and mental health. There is a need for children and young people to catch up on their education and also for those who lost their jobs to be supported back into employment. Many people experienced isolation and loneliness and need to regain their confidence and community networks.

This updated Strategy will set out the path for the Library and Information Service for the next five years, taking into consideration the Service's ability to support residents' needs with access to services in libraries, online and through community outreach that support reading and literacy, health and wellbeing, economic recovery and digital inclusion. Significant progress has been made in the three years since the launch of the previous Strategy. The Service has reviewed this work and analysed how it can best support residents going forward, building on good practice and adding new service offers.

The Strategy has been developed using the 'strategic commissioning framework'. This ensures a clear understanding of 'need', before identifying the best way to meet it. It also sets out a clear rationale for the review and decision-making process. The assessment of local needs must demonstrate that the proposals meet the requirements of section 7 Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to provide a comprehensive and efficient Library Service. A number of Technical Appendices have been prepared which collectively and comprehensively assess needs within East Sussex and establish the type of service offer that is required to deliver the Strategic Outcomes and to provide a comprehensive and efficient Library Service. The Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy draws on the conclusions of each of these documents.

The Strategy presents proposals for a needs-based library service, which means a library service where we prioritise our resources towards the achievement of outcomes that will best meet the needs of those who live, work and study in East Sussex. In order to do that, we had to reassess what those needs are and in which communities (of both people and place) they are greatest. We needed to understand how people are using the Library and Information Service, how that is changing, and what impact it might have on what we do in future. For further information on the analysis undertaken please refer to Technical Appendix 1 of the Strategy– Needs Assessment.

This document provides a clear evidence-based review of needs, both met and unmet, that it is considered impact on the current and future provision of the Library and Information Service. Understanding need enables us to identify the outcomes which the Library and Information Service is well-placed to help achieve, either, or by working with others. We could then identify how well our current library service is able to achieve those outcomes, what things we should continue to do or do differently, whether there are completely new services and activities we

	should provide because they would help achieve the outcomes, and whether we should stop doing some things completely. We also needed to consider if there were better ways of providing this needs-based library service that would make it more likely to achieve its goals. This is the basis of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy.

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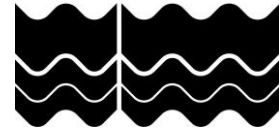## Initial assessment of whether your project requires an EqIA

When answering these questions, please keep in mind all legally protected equality characteristics (sex/gender, gender reassignment, religion or belief, age, disability, ethnicity/race, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity) of the people actually or potentially receiving and benefiting from the services or the policy.

In particular consider whether there are any potential equality related barriers that people may experience when getting to know about, accessing or receiving the service or the policy to be introduced or changed.

Discuss the results of your Equality assessment with the Equality Lead for your department and agree whether improvements or changes need to be made to any aspect of your Project.

	Question	Yes	No	Don't Know
1	Is there evidence of different needs, experiences, issues or priorities on the basis of the equality characteristics (listed below) in relation to the service or policy/strategy area?	y		
2	Are there any proposed changes in the service/policy that may affect how services are run and/or used or the ways the policy will impact different groups?	y		
3	Are there any proposed changes in the service/policy that may affect service-users/staff/residents directly?	y		
4	Is there potential for, or evidence that, the service/policy may adversely affect inclusiveness or harm good relations between different groups of people?		n	
5	Is there any potential for, or evidence that any part of the service/aspects of the policy could have a direct or indirect discriminatory effect on service-users/staff/residents?		n	
6	Is there any stakeholder (Council staff, residents, trade unions, service-users, VCSE organisations) concerned about actual, potential, or perceived discrimination/unequal treatment in the service or the Policy on the basis of the equality characteristics set out above that may lead to taking legal action against the Council?		n	
7	Is there any evidence or indication of higher or lower uptake of the service by, or the impact of the policy on, people who share the equality characteristics set out above?	y		

If you have answered "YES" or "DON'T KNOW" to any of the questions above, then the completion of an EqIA is necessary.
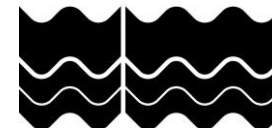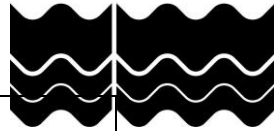
The need for an EqIA will depend on:

- How many questions you have answered "yes", or "don't know" to;
- The likelihood of the Council facing legal action in relation to the effects of service or the policy may have on groups sharing protected characteristics; and
- The likelihood of adverse publicity and reputational damage for the Council.

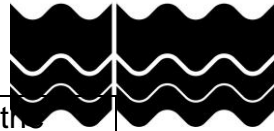| Low risk	Medium risk	High risk
x		

1. Update on previous EqIAs and outcomes of previous actions (if applicable)[7]

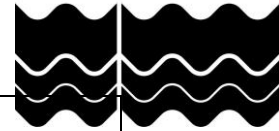| What actions did you plan last time? (List them from the previous EqIA)	What improved as a result? What outcomes have these actions achieved?	What further actions do you need to take? (add these to the Action Plan below)
A detailed Needs Assessment has been undertaken which has identified areas of greatest needs in the county and a Gap Analysis has identified how the service could be enhanced or changed to best address these needs. For example, targeted outreach services for children and families in areas of need where this is currently not provided.	The Service has focussed on support for the most vulnerable people since the launch of the Strategy e.g., young people with mental health issues, people who need support to improve their literacy, isolated people and supported families. There is an increase in our outreach offer to communities with higher need, for example, we are working closely with children's centres in areas of the highest need, targeting schools in areas of the highest need and supporting the literacy work of the Hastings Opportunity Area.	We have updated the Needs Assessment and identified emerging/changing needs since the launch of the Strategy in 2018. We are incorporating new activities in the updated Strategy to address gaps in provision to meet these needs which include: • We will support children to recover lost education, build their confidence and increase their social interaction by providing homework clubs with enrichment activities to support their physical and mental health • We will increase our services which support people into employment, targeting support for 18–24-year-olds who are experiencing high levels of unemployment. We will provide access to training, skills and qualifications, as well as interview support

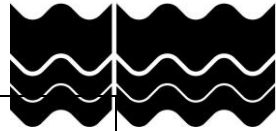|		
		• We will work with ESCC colleagues and external partners to help job seekers by lending them devices and providing training so they can access websites and information to help with their job search and improve their skills • We will develop initiatives to encourage people, including our volunteers, to return to library buildings, building social interaction and helping to combat isolation • We will work with colleagues to support programmes which build food security for individuals and communities. Food security means that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life • We will work with partners to provide hygiene products to help combat period poverty

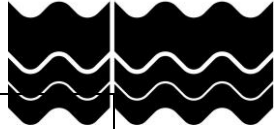|		
		• We will support the work of the Family Focus team, working closely with key workers to support their initiatives such as anti-bullying and promoting the benefits of accessing library services to build confidence and improve resilience • We will work to ensure vulnerable people have access to online services, including health services, by lending equipment as well as providing connectivity to the internet and training for those who need to improve their digital skills
In order to minimise any negative impact of the library closures and withdrawal of the Mobile Library service, the range of alternative provision available will be promoted at libraries and on the Mobile Library prior to the closures. Access to the Library and Information Service is not restricted to library buildings and the range of services offered through the library service will continue to be advertised via the County Council's website. We will also promote the service and what it can offer to specific groups via our outreach activities.	• Alternative provision was promoted on the mobile library and at libraries prior to closure • As set out in the Strategy and based on the evidence of need, we have continued to provide a range of different ways to access our services, but with an increasing focus on online provision and library services delivered in other settings (for example other service locations,	We will work closely with other County Council services and partners to make sure that we reach communities and individuals with the greatest needs. We will promote and deliver our offer, working closely with other services in different settings including children's centres, schools, youth centres and community venues. We will develop our loan services to care homes which had to be suspended in 2020/21.

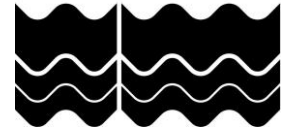|		
	community venues and people's homes). This has enabled us to meet a wider range of needs. We have increased our outreach offer and worked closely with partners to engage with hard-to-reach groups e.g., children's centres • Since the launch of the Strategy there has been significant development and improvement of our eLibrary website, as well as development to improve accessibility of our East Sussex County Council website pages. We have regularly promoted the eLibrary and other online resources in our monthly newsletter.	
Free internet access in libraries will continue in our network of 17 libraries and for those customers that lack the skills to use the eLibrary, we will continue to offer training in libraries led by staff and volunteers, as well as self-help training courses online. In addition, we will improve our promotion of the eLibrary and better promote how easy it is to use, including online videos on the Libraries	We continue to provide free internet access and Wi-Fi in our network of 17 libraries. In 2019/20, 1,995 people were supported in 10 libraries by 25 volunteers to improve their skills using computers and the internet through our successful IT for You initiative. We launched IT for You at Home, a new initiative, last year. Participants are lent a	We are aiming to expand access to the IT for You at Home project by procuring up to 1000 devices (tablets, chromebooks), building up our bank of trained volunteers and continuing to develop the referral system for key workers to put forward participants.

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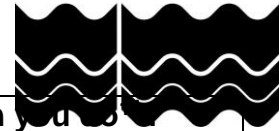|		
website homepage, also advertised on our Facebook page and via posters in libraries, and via People's Network screens. Free bookmarks will also be available in libraries for customers to take away that give a step-by-step guide to using the eLibrary, with a link to the online video. We will also introduce online computer buddy support, whereby customers can remotely chat via the web with a volunteer to get advice on how to use the eLibrary.	device with internet access and are supported either by staff or by a volunteer to use online services from home either by phone or online. We continue to develop and promote our eLibrary and our online offer and have made improvements to the way information is presented on our website. We are funded by NHS Digital Skills to work in partnership to deliver new outreach projects and services to support digital inclusion in the community, delivering training in care homes, sheltered accommodation and other settings. The focus is helping people to go online to access health and wellbeing digital services such as the NHS App.	
The Home Library Service is a service whereby volunteers collect books and other materials from library buildings and drive them to the homes of eligible customers. The service currently has 186 volunteers who collect and distribute books and other lending materials to 159 library customers. All library customers who cannot get to a library due to ill-health, disability or caring responsibilities are eligible for the scheme and this will continue to be offered. To	We continue to offer the home library service to customers who cannot get to a library due to ill-health, disability or caring responsibilities. In 2020, staff delivered the home library instead of volunteers during lockdown periods.	We have initiated a project to examine the current model for the Home Library Service, and to recommend how it can be developed to engage with more people who would benefit from access. The results of this piece of work will be acted upon to improve the quality and reach of the service. We aim to encourage more people to volunteer by offering a range of training opportunities

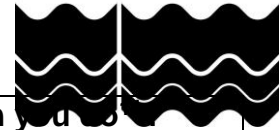|		
ensure current recipients of this scheme can continue to access the service, we will continue to work with our existing volunteers to put in place reasonable measures to support them to continue to volunteer with us. If our existing volunteers are unable to continue to work with us, customers will be matched with other volunteers. It is anticipated that if the proposals are implemented, there may be an increase in requests for the Home Library Service among older customers that due to very limited mobility may be unable to travel further to an alternative library. Extension of the Home Library Service is reliant on volunteer capacity and we will continue to advertise with leaflets in libraries and on the East Sussex website.		

2. Review of information, equality analysis and potential actions

Consider the actual or potential impact of your project (service, or policy) against each of the equality characteristics.
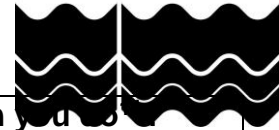
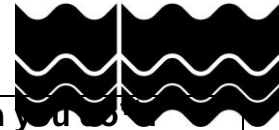| Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know[8]? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you[9]? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean[10]? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do[11]? All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Age[12]	The highest number of responses to the 2018 consultation questionnaire came from those aged 65-74 (27%). This was to be expected as, according to results from earlier surveys of library customers, nearly half (45%) of regular adult visitors to libraries in East Sussex are aged 65 and over and half (50%) are retired.	For some older residents, visiting the library and engaging with staff may be one of a few, if not the only, interaction during their day. The role of the service to provide an inclusive environment and provide services that encourages older residents to continue visiting is considered important by staff. Older residents have advised that the library service is one of few places they can receive the advice and assistance they require to access materials or	Given that almost half of frequent users of libraries are aged 65 and over, those in this age category have the potential to be disproportionately affected by the changes to the service. However older people (aged 75+), that represent 19% of respondents, are likely to be most affected by the changes due to the increased likelihood of reduced mobility and therefore these people may find it harder to travel further to an alternative library either on foot, public transport or by car. Those aged	The service will continue to provide materials for different age groups including graphic novels aimed at younger readers and large print books for older residents. Events, aimed at all or specific groups, will continue to be scheduled designed to encourage engagements with the LIS. The service is also committed to working with partners to provide training and support for all, including older residents, to be able to

Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know[8]? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you[9]? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean[10]? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do[11]? All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
		services that are solely available online.

Young adults (16 – 24-year-olds) disproportionately underuse the library in terms of membership and access to services. Having sought feedback from younger stakeholders, they would like to see the LIS provide wider range of materials regarding mental health support as well materials relating to environmental concerns. This is an issue recognised nationally by library services. | 75+ are also known to be less likely to use the internet, and therefore the eLibrary, due to a lack of skills. Age is a key factor in people's level of digital skills and therefore use of the internet. | use online materials, including the library's e-offer.

The service's Audience Development Officer will continue to review local requirements regarding materials and information and work with partners and residents to develop the LIS' offer when gaps are identified.

The LIS will also continue and develop the actions listed in Section 1 of this document to meet the needs of those from varying age groups. |

Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know[8]? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you[9]? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean[10]? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do[ ] All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Disability[13]	The results of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy consultation, held in 2017, showed that 15% of respondents identified themselves as having a disability, compared to 20.3% of residents of East Sussex who have a long-term health condition or disability. The number of respondents with a disability is comparable to the response rate to the consultation on changes to opening hours conducted in 2016 (13.6%). Of library users in East Sussex, those with a disability use the library in greater proportion than their	Library staff have highlighted that some customers who have mobility issues have indicated accessing some buildings is difficult and enough to put some off from using the facilities.	The needs assessment has identified that there are health and wellbeing needs which the Library and Information Service can meet by supporting community and individual resilience, health improvement and reducing health inequalities through the provision of safe and inclusive spaces, quality assured self-help information and resource materials tailored for residents of all ages, as well as direct signposting to other services. More specifically for people with disabilities, our strategy builds on our existing services provided in libraries for those with disabilities and	The service will continue to work with Property Services to consider and/or address any building amendments required to provide or ease access to our buildings.

We will support children and adults with disabilities and long-term health conditions, such as visual impairments, to be confident using adapted reading materials and technology. The LIS will continue to establish partnerships with local groups in view of improving the experience of those with certain disabilities when using our service. |
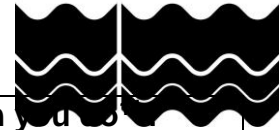
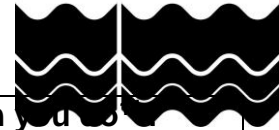| Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know[8]? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you[9]? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean[10]? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do? All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
	actual numbers in the East Sussex population.		includes services for those with visual impairment, hearing impairment and learning disabilities.	With regard to stock and other materials, consideration will be given to provide materials for those with wide ranging disabilities. Staff will continue to be encouraged to engage with training provided in relation to different disabilities in view of improving the customer experience for those with disabilities.
Gender reassignment[14]	No data available from previous surveys. Any other ESCC source suitable?	No feedback received from service users or staff.	The LIS is committed to making trans-inclusive spaces. Given lack of current information, the service will explore this characteristic further.	The LIS will continue to work with local and national partners to ensure the service provides a welcoming environment for transgender and non-binary people. The service will also assess

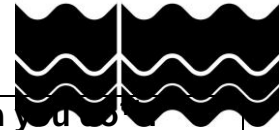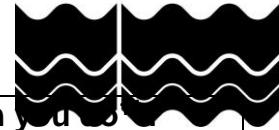| Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know[8]? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you[9]? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean[10]? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
				how it can capture data from this community to support this work. The LIS will review the findings of the LGBTQ+ Joint Strategic Needs Assessment when published to gauge what improvements the service can make for those with this shared characteristic. The service will also review staff awareness of ESCC's policies related to violence and aggression as well as unreasonable customer behaviour to ensure libraries remain a safe space for those with this shared characteristic.

2021

Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know[8]? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you[9]? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean[10]? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do? All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Pregnancy and maternity[15]	A monitoring question about pregnancy or maternity was not included in the 2017 consultation on the Libraries Strategy or 2018's PLUS survey as it is not considered to be relevant to library access.	No feedback received from service users or staff.	This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for pregnant library users.	No actions have been identified as necessary at this stage. However, this will be regularly reviewed.
Race/ethnicity[16] Including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers	The response rate from all white respondents to 2018's PULSE survey was 96%. This is identical to the most recent census data from 2011. These figures demonstrate that other ethnic groups are much less affected than those in the All-White category.

During the development of the Libraries Strategic | Feedback from schemes the LIS have initiated, including the work with Syrian refugees based at Hastings Library, has been overwhelmingly positive. The commitment and support from staff has been welcomed by partners and those participating in the schemes.

From analysis regarding English as an additional | This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for library users from different ethnic backgrounds. | The service will continue to support and promote Black History Month. It is proposed that new dual-language rhyming/storytelling sessions for refugee families be included in the future offer at specific locations. Work to recruit volunteers in order for these sessions to run consistently is ongoing. |
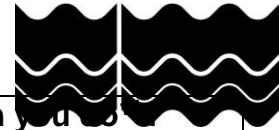
Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know[8]? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you[9]? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean[10]? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
	Commissioning Strategy in 2018, a need was identified to support reading and literacy among refugee families in some communities. The service is aware of an increasing requirement to work with people of different races and ethnicities and have worked with local partners to ensure the LIS is available to support those from all backgrounds.	language, it is evident that the proportion of residents who use English as an additional language is higher in the urban centres of the county – Eastbourne and Hastings particularly.		The LIS will continue to analyse countywide analysis in regard to EAL and whether any specific services or events in particular areas of East Sussex would benefit residents.

A review of 2021 Census data will be completed, and consideration will be given to stock purchasing and partnership working pending the analysis.

This will include a review of staff awareness of ESCC's policies related to violence and aggression as well as unreasonable customer behaviour. |

2021

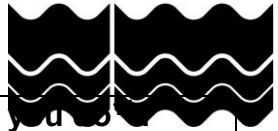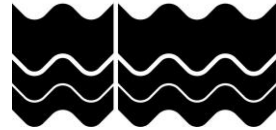| Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know[8]? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you[9]? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean[10]? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do[11] All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Religion or belief[17]	From 2018's PULSE survey, 56% of those who stated a religion or faith indicated they were a Christian. The next most selected answer was 'No religion' which was selected by 38% of those who completed the survey.	No feedback received from service users or staff.	This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for library users of different religions.	Staff will continue to promote an inclusive environment for people of all faiths and beliefs. This will include a review of staff awareness of ESCC's policies related to violence and aggression as well as unreasonable customer behaviour.
Sex/Gender[18]	The results of the 2018 consultation showed that 68% of respondents were female. Similarly, data from other user surveys indicates that on average 62% of library users are female. Women therefore have the potential to be disproportionately affected by the changes to the service as they represent a higher	No feedback received from service users or staff.	This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for library users of different sex/gender.	The LIS will continue to promote national events including Men's Health Week and Women's History Month. Work will also continue with local groups to support specific work with both men and women.

2021

Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know[8]? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you[9]? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean[10]? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do? All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
	number of our customers. It is also the case that, of library users in East Sussex, women use libraries in greater proportion to their actual numbers in the East Sussex population.			
Sexual orientation[19]	The statistics for current library users, collected in 2018, match the most recent census data for East Sussex.	No feedback received from service users or staff.	This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for library users of different sexual orientations.	The LIS will continue to work with local partners to ensure a safe and accessible environment is open to the LGBTQ+ community. The service will also promote reading and online materials across the year and specifically during LGBT History Month. The LIS will also review the findings of the LGBTQ+ Joint Strategic Needs Assessment when published to gauge what

Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know[8]? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you[9]? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean[10]? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
				improvements the service can make for those with this shared characteristic.
Marriage and civil partnership[20]	There are no disproportionate impacts upon people sharing this characteristic.	No feedback received from service users or staff.	This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for library users of different relationship statuses including those married or in a civil partnership.	No actions have been identified as necessary at this stage. However, this will be regularly reviewed.
Impacts on community cohesion[21]	N/A	Staff have advised that events such as Rhymetime and Storytime have a positive effect in terms of community cohesion by presenting an opportunity for families to meet. The return of these events since the pausing of them during the pandemic		The LIS is very keen to be involved in schemes or events that will improve local community cohesion relating to any group. An example of this is the ongoing partnership the LIS has with Mencap in providing IT For You service.

Protected characteristics groups under the Equality Act 2010	What do you know[8]? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you[9]? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean[10]? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
		have been greeted very positively by families.		Staff will be consulted as to whether there are any existing community groups the service could work with closer.

Additional categories
(identified locally as potentially causing / worsening inequality)

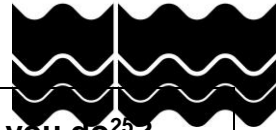| Characteristic	What do you know[22]?	What do people tell you[23]?	What does this mean[24]?	What can you do[25]?
Rurality[26]	27% of respondents to the 2018 consultation on our stated they lived in rural locations. This figure is comparable to the rurality of the county.	No feedback received from service users or staff.	This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for library users who live in rural areas.	The LIS will continue to work with internal and external partners relating to broadband connectivity and usage across the county to ensure libraries in rural settings provide suitable and adequate services to local residents in relation to internet and computer access.
Carers	Results from 2017's public consultation showed that 36% of total respondents access the library service on behalf of somebody else, although these are not necessarily formal carers.

44% of these on behalf of a child under 16, 39% of these on behalf of an adult and 16% on behalf of an adult and a child. | No feedback received from service users or staff. | This review of the Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy is not considered to have an impact for library users who access the library service on behalf of other people or consider themselves as a carer. | This LIS will continue to work with local and national partners, including Care for the Carers, in supporting schemes that assist those with this shared characteristic. |
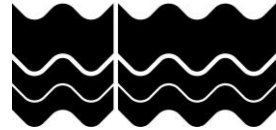
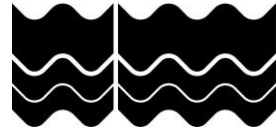| Characteristic	What do you know[22]?	What do people tell you[23]?	What does this mean[24]?	What can you do[25]?
Other groups that may be differently affected (including but not only: homeless people, substance users, care leavers – see end note)[27]	No specific data about other groups available from previous surveys	Partners in health care and social services have identified the library services as important for the wellbeing of homeless and rough sleepers. The clients do not want to be identified but can be supported. They are a diverse range of ages and backgrounds.	The organisations working in this area see the creation of relaxed drop in areas as a way of supporting homeless and rough sleepers. Collections of books and materials would enhance the centres offer and help promote access to lifelong learning, wellbeing and information sources.	Identifying groups working in this area would help us share knowledge and experience. We can provide a range of materials including books and eResources, also sessions with their staff and customers. Staff guidance and training will help library teams develop skills that can be used to support customers affected by issues. This guidance and training will be informed by continuing partnerships with local groups. The centres will be an opportunity to project our learning services and IT for you offers.

Characteristic	What do you know[22]?	What do people tell you[23]?	What does this mean[24]?	What can you do[25]?

Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations[28] - include assessment of cumulative impacts (where a change in one service/policy/project may have an impact on another)

The LIS considers inclusivity of those with protected characteristics as a core element of its offer and strives to develop its offer with the evolving needs of its users. As highlighted in the EqIA completed in 2018, actions were developed (highlighted in Section 1) to improve access to services those with shared protected characteristics.

This assessment builds upon those actions, many of which will continue, but also looks to ensure the LIS is working effectively with local and national partners to ensure the LIS' offer is relevant and suitable for the varied user-base it has. Whether it is working to ensure those from varying age groups have access to materials and information that will improve their lives or providing a wider range of language materials for those to who English is an additional language, the LIS will strive to ensure the service is inclusive of all.

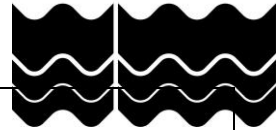## 3. List detailed data and/or community feedback that informed your EqIA

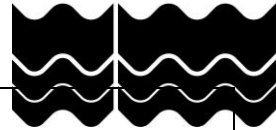| Source and type of data (e.g. research, or direct engagement (interviews), responses to questionnaires, etc.)	Date	Gaps in data	Actions to fill these gaps: who else do you need to engage with? (add these to the Action Plan below, with a timeframe)
PLUS survey	2018	This survey did not ask questions about all protected characteristics.	A service-specific assessment of 2021 Census data completed when the data is published in 2022.
Public Consultation – Libraries Strategy	2018	This survey did not ask questions about all protected characteristics.	A service-specific assessment of 2021 Census data completed when the data is published in 2022.
Consultation with LIS staff	Aug – Sep 2021	There were some protected characteristics that no verbatim, anecdotal feedback was provided about.	It was identified that staff did not regularly log issues, both positive and negative, regarding the use of LIS by people who share varying protected characteristics. From 2022, staff will be encouraged to forward details of how the service

4.   Prioritised Action Plan[29]

NB: These actions must now be transferred to service or business plans and monitored to ensure they achieve the outcomes identified.
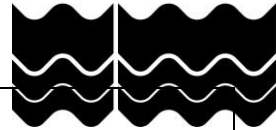
Impact identified and group(s) affected	Action planned	Expected outcome	Measure of success	Timeframe
Sexual orientation Gender reassignment A lack of information regarding those who use the LIS and share the protected characteristics above highlights a risk the service	Analyse the findings of the LGBTQ+ Joint Strategic Needs Assessment by the management team.	The findings of this report will inform decisions to ensure the LIS is more inclusive for those who share these protected characteristics.	Management team review report, when complete, and agree actions based on findings (to be built into this EqIA, as needed).	2022 - 2027
All protected characteristics The current Census data available for analysis is from 2011 and therefore could be considered out of date.	A review of Census data, when released in 2022, will be undertaken by the management team	A review of Census data will ensure the LIS' offer to residents meets the needs of local demographics and the service can develop areas of the service in line with changes relating to local demographics	Management team review analysis, when complete, and agree actions based on findings (to be built into this EqIA, as needed).	2022 - 2027
Sexual orientation Gender reassignment Race/ethnicity Religion/belief	A staff awareness campaign will be launched relating to both ESCC's Managing	Staff confidence when managing difficult situations with violence, aggressive or	All staff receive updates regarding relevant policies.	2022 - 2023

A lack of staff awareness regarding certain ESCC policies could limit degree of comfort and safety some of those with the protected characteristics above experience in library buildings.	Unreasonable Customer Behaviour and Violence and Aggression policies to ensure staff are best equipped to manage situations	unreasonable customers will improve. As a consequence, customers who share particular protected characteristics will have an improved experience when in library buildings or using LIS services and will feel more comfortable and safer.		
Children and young people	We will support children to recover lost education, build their confidence and increase their social interaction by providing homework clubs with enrichment activities to support their physical and mental health	Children will be supported to feel more confident and resilient, contributing to their wellbeing.

They will be supported to catch up on their education and will know the resources available to them in libraries and online library services which can help them. | The service develop offers and initiatives to assist those affected by this identified impact. | 2022 - 2027 |
| **Unemployed 18-24 year olds** | We will increase our services to support people into employment, targeting support for 18-24 year olds who are experiencing high levels of unemployment. We will | Employment chances for young people will be increased as they are more confident and have more skills | The service develop offers and initiatives to assist those affected by this identified impact. | 2022 - 2027 |

	provide access to training, skills and qualifications, as well as interview support			
Learners who need flexible approaches to studying	We will improve our learning offer by giving learners the option of accessing tutor support remotely so that they have the flexibility they need to study at a library or at home.	People will be able to achieve the qualifications they need to improve their life chances, taking an approach that works best for them	The service develop offers and initiatives to assist those affected by this identified impact.	2022 - 2027
People who are lonely or isolated	We will develop initiatives to encourage people, including our volunteers, to return to library buildings, building social interaction and helping to combat isolation	People who are lonely or isolated will feel part of the community, make connections with others, build their confidence and resilience	The service develop offers and initiatives to assist those affected by this identified impact.	2022 - 2027
People suffering from food insecurity	We will work with colleagues to support programmes which build food security for individuals and communities. Food security means that all people, at all times, have	People will be supported to have improved food security	The service develop offers and initiatives to assist those affected by this identified impact.	2022 - 2027

	physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life			
Families	We will support the work of the Family Focus team, working closely with key workers to support their initiatives such as anti-bullying and promoting the benefits of accessing library services to improve resilience.	Families will be more resilient and will be confident about accessing the resources library services offer	The service develop offers and initiatives to assist those affected by this identified impact.	2022 - 2027
Digitally excluded people	We will work to ensure vulnerable people have access to online services, including health services, by lending equipment as well as providing connectivity to the internet and training for those who need to improve their digital skills	Digitally excluded people will have access to the online services they need for improved physical and mental wellbeing	The service develop offers and initiatives to assist those affected by this identified impact.	2022 - 2027
(Add more rows as needed)				

EqIA sign-off: (for the EqIA to be final an email must be sent from the relevant people agreeing it, or this section must be signed)
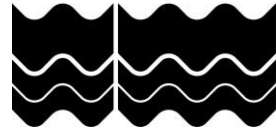
Staff member competing Equality Impact Analysis: Jack Pierce   **Date: 12/10/2021**

Directorate Management Team rep or Head of Service: Natalie Anderson   **Date:**

Equality lead: Sarah Tighe-Ford   **Date: 12/10/2021**

Guidance end-notes

[1] The following principles, drawn from case law, explain what we must do to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act:

- **Knowledge:** everyone working for the Council must be aware of the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010 and ensure they comply with them appropriately in their daily work.
- **Timeliness:** the duty applies at the time of considering policy options and/or <u>before</u> a final decision is taken – not afterwards.
- **Real Consideration:** the duty must be an integral, rigorous part of your decision-making process and influence the process.
- **Sufficient Information:** you must assess what information you have and what is further needed to give proper consideration.
- **No delegation:** the Council is responsible for ensuring that any contracted services, which are provided on its behalf need also to comply with the same legal obligations under the Equality Act of 2010. You need, therefore, to ensure that the relevant contracts make these obligations clear to the supplier. It is a duty that cannot be delegated.
- **Review:** the equality duty is a continuing duty. It applies when a policy or service is developed/agreed, and when it is implemented and reviewed.
- **Proper Record Keeping:** to prove that the Council has fulfilled its legal obligations under the Equality Act you must keep records of the process you follow and the impacts identified.

NB: Filling out this EqIA in itself does not meet the requirements of the Council's equality duty. All the requirements above must be fulfilled, or the EqIA (and any decision based on it) may be open to challenge. An EqIA therefore can provide evidence that the Council has taken practical steps comply with its equality duty and provide a <u>record</u> that to demonstrate that it has done so.
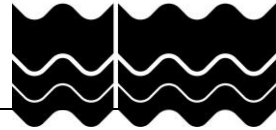
[2] **Our duties in the Equality Act 2010**
As a public sector organisation, we have a legal duty (under the Equality Act 2010) to show that we have identified and considered the actual and potential impact of our activities on people who share any of the legally 'protected characteristics' (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership).

This applies to policies, services (including commissioned services), and our employees. The level of detail of this consideration will depend on the nature of your project, who it might affect, those groups' vulnerability, and the seriousness of any potential impacts it might have. We use this EqIA template to gather information and assess the impact of our project in these areas.

The following are the duties in the Act. You must give 'due regard' (pay conscious attention) to the need to:
- **avoid, reduce, minimise or eliminate any negative impact** (if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately).
- **promote equality of opportunity**. This means the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by equality groups
- Take steps to meet the needs of equality groups
- Encourage equality groups to participate in public life or any other activity where participation is disproportionately low
- Consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary

- **foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not**. This means:
  - Tackle prejudice
  - Promote understanding

[3] **EqIAs are always proportionate** to:
- The nature of the service, or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The number of people affected
- The size of the likely impact
- The vulnerability of the people affected

The greater the potential adverse impact of the proposed service or policy on a protected group (e.g. disabled people), the more thorough and demanding our process must be so that we comply with the Equality Act of 2010.
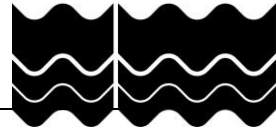
[4] **Title of EqIA:** This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing

[5] **Team/Department:** Main team responsible for the policy, practice, service or function being assessed

[6] **Focus of EqIA:** A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section. Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time - eg: 'Equality Impact Analysis (EqIA)'

This section should explain what you are assessing:
- What are the main aims or purpose of the service, policy, strategy, practice, or function?
- Who implements, carries out or delivers the service, policy, strategy, practice, or function? Please state where this is more than one person/team/body and where other organisations deliver under procurement or partnership arrangements.
- How does it fit with other services?

- Who is affected by the service, policy, strategy, practice, or function, or by how it is delivered? Who are the external and internal service-users, groups, or communities?
- What outcomes do you want to achieve, why and for whom? Eg: what do you want to provide, what changes, or improvements, are required and what should the benefits be?
- What do existing or previous reviews of the service, policy, strategy, practice, or function indicate to you?
- What is the reason <u>for</u> the proposal, or change (financial, service scope, legal requirements, etc)? The Equality Act requires us to make these clear.
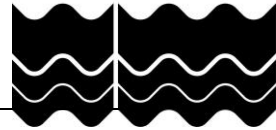
[7] **Previous actions:** If there is no previous EqIA, or this assessment is for a new service, then simply write 'not applicable'.

[8] **Data:** Make sure you have enough information to inform your EqIA.
- What data relevant to the impact on protected groups of the policy/decision/service is available?[8]
- What further evidence is needed and how can you get it? (Eg: further research or engagement with the affected groups).
- What do you already know about needs, access and outcomes? Focus on each of the protected characteristics in turn. Eg: who uses the service? Who doesn't and why? Are there differences in outcomes? Why?
- Have there been any important demographic changes or trends locally? What might they mean for the service or function?
- Does data/monitoring show that any policies or practices create particular problems or difficulties for any groups?
- Do any equality objectives already exist? What is current performance like against them?
- Is the service having a positive or negative effect on particular people in the community, or particular groups / communities?

[9] **Engagement:** You must engage appropriately with those likely to be affected to fulfil the Council's duties under the Equality Act.
- What do people tell you about the services, the policy or the strategy?
- Are there patterns or differences in what people from different groups tell you?
- What information or data will you need from communities?
- How should people be consulted? Consider:
  (a) consult when proposals are still at a formative stage;
  (b) explain what is proposed and why, to allow intelligent consideration and response;
  (c) allow enough time for consultation;
  (d) make sure what people tell you is properly considered in the final decision.
- Try to consult in ways that ensure all different perspectives can be captured and considered.
- Identify any gaps in who has been consulted and identify ways to address this.

[10] Your EqIA must get to grips fully and properly with actual and potential impacts.
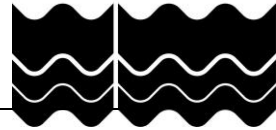- The Council's obligations under the Equality Act of 2010 do not stop you taking decisions, or introducing well needed changes; however, they require that you take decisions and make changes conscientiously and deliberately confront the anticipated impacts on people.
- Be realistic: don't exaggerate speculative risks and negative impacts.
- Be detailed and specific so decision-makers have a concrete sense of potential effects. Instead of "the policy is likely to disadvantage older women", say how many or what percentage are likely to be affected, how, and to what extent.
- Questions to ask when assessing impacts depend on the context. Examples:
  - Are one or more protected groups affected differently and/or disadvantaged? How, and to what extent?
  - Is there evidence of higher/lower uptake among different groups? Which, and to what extent?
  - If there are likely to be different impacts on different groups, is that consistent with the overall objective?
  - If there is negative differential impact, how can you minimise that while taking into account your overall aims
  - Do the effects amount to unlawful discrimination? If so, the plan must be modified.
  - Does the proposal advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations? If not, could it?

[11] Consider all three aims of the Act: removing barriers, and also identifying positive actions to be taken.
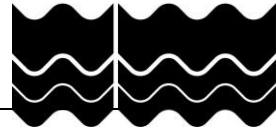- Where you have identified impacts you must state what actions will be taken to remove, reduce or avoid any negative impacts and maximise any positive impacts or advance equality of opportunity.
- Be specific and detailed and explain how far these actions are expected to address the negative impacts.
- If mitigating measures are contemplated, explain clearly what the measures are, and the extent to which they can be expected to reduce / remove the adverse effects identified.
- An EqIA which has attempted to airbrush the facts is an EqIA that is vulnerable to challenge.

[12] **Age**: People of all ages

[13] **Disability**: A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The definition includes: sensory impairments, impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects, progressive, organ specific, developmental, learning difficulties, mental health conditions and mental illnesses, produced by injury to the body or brain. Persons with cancer, multiple sclerosis or HIV infection are all now deemed to be disabled persons from the point of diagnosis. Carers of disabled people are protected within the Act by association.

[14] **Gender Reassignment:** In the Act a transgender person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. A person does <u>not</u> need to be under medical supervision to be protected

[15] **Pregnancy and Maternity:** Protection is during pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which the woman is entitled.

[16] **Race/Ethnicity:** This includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality, and includes refugees and migrants, and Gypsies and Travellers. Refugees and migrants means people whose intention is to stay in the UK for at least twelve months (excluding visitors, short term students or tourists). This definition includes asylum seekers; voluntary and involuntary migrants; people who are undocumented; and the children of migrants, even if they were born in the UK.

[17] **Religion and Belief:** Religion includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief. The Act also covers lack of religion or belief.

[18] **Sex/Gender:** Both men and women are covered under the Act.

[19] **Sexual Orientation:** The Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people

[20] **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** Only in relation to due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.

[21] **Community Cohesion:** potential impacts on how well people from different communities get on together. The council has a legal duty to foster good relations between groups of people who share different protected characteristics. Some actions or policies may have impacts – or perceived impacts – on how groups see one another or in terms of how the council's resources are seen to be allocated. There may also be opportunities to positively impact on good relations between groups.

[22] **Data:** Make sure you have enough information to inform your EqIA.
- What data relevant to the impact on protected groups of the policy/decision/service is available?[22]
- What further evidence is needed and how can you get it? (Eg: further research or engagement with the affected groups).
- What do you already know about needs, access and outcomes? Focus on each of the protected characteristics in turn. Eg: who uses the service? Who doesn't and why? Are there differences in outcomes? Why?
- Have there been any important demographic changes or trends locally? What might they mean for the service or function?
- Does data/monitoring show that any policies or practices create particular problems or difficulties for any groups?
- Do any equality objectives already exist? What is current performance like against them?

- Is the service having a positive or negative effect on particular people in the community, or particular groups or communities?
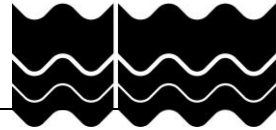
[23] **Engagement:** You must engage appropriately with those likely to be affected to fulfil the Council's duties under the Equality Act .
- What do people tell you about the services, the policy or the strategy?
- Are there patterns or differences in what people from different groups tell you?
- What information or data will you need from communities?
- How should people be consulted? Consider:
    (a) consult when proposals are still at a formative stage;
    (b) explain what is proposed and why, to allow intelligent consideration and response;
    (c) allow enough time for consultation;
    (d) make sure what people tell you is properly considered in the final decision.
- Try to consult in ways that ensure all different perspectives can be captured and considered.
- Identify any gaps in who has been consulted and identify ways to address this.

[24] Your EqIA must get to grips fully and properly with actual and potential impacts.
- The Council's obligations under the Equality Act of 2010 do not stop you taking decisions, or introducing well needed changes; however, they require that take decisions and make changes conscientiously and deliberately confront the anticipated impacts on people.
- Be realistic: don't exaggerate speculative risks and negative impacts.
- Be detailed and specific so decision-makers have a concrete sense of potential effects. Instead of "the policy is likely to disadvantage older women", say how many or what percentage are likely to be affected, how, and to what extent.
- Questions to ask when assessing impacts depend on the context. Examples:
    o Are one or more protected groups affected differently and/or disadvantaged? How, and to what extent?
    o Is there evidence of higher/lower uptake among different groups? Which, and to what extent?
    o If there are likely to be different impacts on different groups, is that consistent with the overall objective?
    o If there is negative differential impact, how can you minimise that while taking into account your overall aims
    o Do the effects amount to unlawful discrimination? If so the plan must be modified.
    o Does the proposal advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations? If not, could it?

[25] Consider all three aims of the Act: removing barriers, and also identifying positive actions to be taken.

- Where you have identified impacts you must state what actions will be taken to remove, reduce or avoid any negative impacts and maximise any positive impacts or advance equality of opportunity.
- Be specific and detailed and explain how far these actions are expected to address the negative impacts.
- If mitigating measures are contemplated, explain clearly what the measures are, and the extent to which they can be expected to reduce / remove the adverse effects identified.
- An EqIA which has attempted to airbrush the facts is an EqIA that is vulnerable to challenge.

[26] **Rurality:** deprivation is experienced differently between people living in rural and urban areas. In rural areas issues can include isolation, access to services (eg: GPs, pharmacies, libraries, schools), low income / part-time work, infrequent public transport, high transport costs, lack of affordable housing and higher fuel costs. Deprivation can also be more dispersed and less visible.

[27] **Other groups that may be differently affected:** this may vary by services, but examples include: homeless people, substance misusers, people experiencing domestic/sexual violence, looked after children or care leavers, current or former armed forces personnel (or their families), people on the Autistic spectrum etc.

[28] **Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations**
- Make a frank and realistic assessment of the overall extent to which the negative impacts can be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures. Explain what positive impacts will result from the actions and how you can make the most of these.
- Countervailing considerations: These may include the reasons behind the formulation of the policy, the benefits it is expected to deliver, budget reductions, the need to avert a graver crisis by introducing a policy now and not later, and so on. The weight of these factors in favour of implementing the policy must then be measured against the weight of any evidence as to the potential negative equality impacts of the policy.
- Are there any further recommendations? Is further engagement needed? Is more research or monitoring needed? Does there need to be a change in the proposal itself?

[29] **Action Planning:** The Council's obligation under the Equality Act of 2010 is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further equality assessment and consultation are needed.