

Somerset Equality Impact Assessment

Before completing this EIA please ensure you have read the EIA guidance notes – available from your Equality Officer

Organisation prepared for	Somerset County Council, Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Somerset West and Taunton Council, South Somerset District Council		
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Version	1.0	Date Completed	24th September 2020
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Description of what is being impact assessed

Towards a Climate Resilient Somerset – Somerset’s Climate Emergency Strategy Strategy and Draft Strategic Action Plan

The Action Plan describes, in high level terms, the activity that will take place, and the changes that will be delivered, as part of the Councils’ response to addressing the Climate Emergency. Further detail regarding a number of these activities will be necessary in due course and will be contained within various project plans that will flow from this Action Plan, but which do not exist at this point in time.

This EIA therefore identifies in general terms the likely impact of this work on different groups of people taken in the round, rather than on an action-by-action basis (although some of the actions will be referenced where appropriate). If necessary, depending upon the type of action proposed (specifically where an individual or group would see or experience a direct physical change as a result of an action with the Action Plan), specific EIAs will be necessary in order to help shape the relevant delivery plan for that action.

It also needs to be recognised that not all people sharing a protected characteristic within the county will necessarily experience the same impact (be it positive or negative) from a particular action.

Evidence

What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups? Sources such as the [Office of National Statistics](#), [Somerset Intelligence Partnership](#), [Somerset's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis \(JSNA\)](#), Staff and/ or [area profiles](#), should be detailed here

The Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy and associated appendices including the strategic action plan has been reviewed.

As explained below, a review of data as well of wider consultation will be necessary at a later point when it comes to detailed design of actions that will have a direct impact on individuals and groups with protected characteristics.

Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups? If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?

Officers within Somerset County Council with and overview of the Equalities function, who have experience of identifying impacts on those with protected characteristics have been consulted for this initial identification of potential impacts.

Wider external consultation will be necessary in relation to delivery plans of some of the actions within the Action Plan where an individual or group would see or experience a direct change as a result of an action

Analysis of impact on protected groups

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. Consider how this policy/service will achieve these aims. In the table below, using the evidence outlined above and your own understanding, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Based on this information, make an assessment of the likely outcome, before you have implemented any mitigation.

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
Age	<p>The factors that make people vulnerable to the impacts of climate change are most acute amongst particular groups; older people are one of these categories. Older people are physiologically at most risk of health impacts from extreme heat and cold. This Strategy and associated action plans aims to help mitigate the effect and risk of climate change on older people with this protected group and should be seen as delivering, over time, a positive impact.</p> <p>Those potentially most likely to gain from actions around improving energy efficiency within the home are people who traditionally suffer from fuel poverty, which includes a significant proportion of older people.</p> <p>Recouping any personal investment required in the form of energy bill savings is likely to be over the medium/long-term and, therefore, may be of disproportionately less benefit to older people.</p>	X		X X

	<p>Particular care and attention should however be given to mitigate or eliminate any potential negative impacts for the group relating to the focus on active travel within the plan (e.g walking and cycling). Important to encouraging walking amongst older people in particular to ensure mental and physical health and wellbeing, is the provision of facilities such as toilets and benches. Installation of such amenities within the pedestrian environment should be a consideration if walking is to be maximised amongst all equality groups.</p> <p>Climate Change and action to address climate issues are seen to be of particular interest to younger people and enabling the young people to be engaged in initiatives and observe that direct action is being will be a positive outcome for this age group</p>			<p>X</p> <p>X</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>The factors that make people vulnerable to the impacts of climate change are most acute amongst particular groups; people with disabilities are one of these categories. People with certain disabilities (particularly circulatory and respiratory conditions) are physiologically at most risk of health impacts from extreme heat and cold. The Strategy and associated action plans aim to help mitigate the effect and risk of climate change so should be seen as delivering, over time, a positive impact.</p> <p>Air pollutants can worsen respiratory conditions such as asthma. The actions of this Strategy will, over time, help improve air quality within the county and should therefore, have a particularly positive impact for those with such conditions.</p> <p>Additionally, those potentially most likely to gain from actions around</p>			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>

	<p>improving energy efficiency within the home are people who traditionally suffer from fuel poverty, notably older and disabled groups.</p> <p>However, depending on grants available, the affordability to invest in energy efficiency improvement schemes could disproportionately affect those with lower disposable incomes which data tells us could include disabled people.</p> <p>Particular care and attention should be given to mitigate or eliminate any potential negative impacts for the group relating to the focus on active travel. As with older people, it is important to encourage walking amongst people with disabilities, is the provision of facilities such as toilets, benches and flat and ramped routes for wheelchair users. Installation of such amenities within the pedestrian environment should be a consideration if walking is to be maximised amongst all equality groups.</p> <p>Encouragement of electric modes of transport such as e-bikes and e-scooters have posed particular risks to people with visual impairment in other areas. Particularly short-term rentals of e-scooters. Their speed and almost silent operation are an issue as is inconsiderate parking, where there have been numerous examples of them being left on pavements, creating a significant trip hazard for the visually impaired. Separation of pedestrians and e-scooter and bike riders within any pedestrianised space will help mitigate this risk together with dedicated parking bays / racks for these modes of transport. The involvement of people with disabilities in designing schemes could help in mitigating the risks involved</p>	X		X
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	Careful consideration to people with language disabilities should be made when designing and implementing community communications campaigns with regard to promoting climate action initiatives	X		
Gender reassignment	Mitigating the impacts of climate change should be seen as delivering, over time, a positive impact for everyone, including people within this group. No additional impacts, from the proposed Strategy and associated action plans have been identified that would disproportionately affect this group.			X
Marriage and civil partnership	Mitigating the impacts of climate change should be seen as delivering, over time, a positive impact for everyone, including people within this group. No additional impacts, from the proposed Strategy and associated action plans, have been identified that would disproportionately affect this group.			X
Pregnancy and maternity	Air pollutants can cause respiratory illness in pregnant women and also lead to low birth weight or pre-term birth. This proposal will, over time, help improve local air quality and should have a positive impact on some pregnant women.			X
	More pedestrian and other active travel routes will positively impact pre and post-natal women			X
	No additional impacts, from the proposed Strategy and associated action plans have been identified that would disproportionately affect this group.			X

Race and ethnicity	Mitigating the impacts of climate change should be seen as delivering, over time, a positive impact for everyone, including people within this group. No additional impacts, from the proposed Strategy and associated action plans have been identified that would disproportionately affect this group.			X
Religion or belief	Mitigating the impacts of climate change should be seen as delivering, over time, a positive impact for everyone, including people within this group. No additional impacts, from the proposed Strategy and associated action plans have been identified that would disproportionately affect this group.			X
Sex	Mitigating the impacts of climate change should be seen as delivering, over time, a positive impact for everyone, including people within this group. No additional impacts, from the proposed Strategy and associated action plans have been identified that would disproportionately affect this group.			X
Sexual orientation	Mitigating the impacts of climate change should be seen as delivering, over time, a positive impact for everyone, including people within this group. No additional impacts, from the proposed Strategy and associated action plans have been identified that would disproportionately affect this group.			X
Other, e.g. carers, veterans, homeless, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.	<p><u>Low Income</u> - Mitigating the impacts of climate change should be seen as delivering, over time, a positive impact for everyone, including people within this group</p> <p>Individuals and households on low incomes may be particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change during prolonged periods of hot or cold weather in particular; due to their inability to afford fuel</p>			X

	<p>for adequately heating or cooling their homes. This Strategy and associated action plans aims to help mitigate the effect and risk of climate change so should be seen as delivering, over time, a positive impact. In particular the action around improving energy efficiency within the home will be particularly positive to low income households that experience fuel poverty. However, this group may, by definition, be least likely to be able to afford to pay for energy efficiency initiatives within their homes, therefore without government support and may miss out on the opportunity, thereby being disadvantaged.</p> <p><u>Carers</u> - Mitigating the impacts of climate change should be seen as delivering, over time, a positive impact for everyone, including people within this group.</p> <p>However, the possible negative impacts identified within the Disability group are also likely to apply to this group.</p> <p>Rural Isolation - Mitigating the impacts of climate change should be seen as delivering, over time, a positive impact for everyone, including people within this group. The positive impacts will include greater access to public transport, better rural broadband connectivity and access to alternative energy sources. No negative impacts, from the proposed Strategy and associated action plans, have been identified that would disproportionately affect this group.</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>		<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>
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Negative outcomes action plan

Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
Age - Recouping any personal investment required for energy savings initiatives. Lobby for and promote government schemes and grants	31/12/2021	Energy and Built Environment workstreams	Lobbying of central government and promotion of schemes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disabilities – Affordability of energy savings initiatives Lobby for and promote government schemes and grants	31/12/2021	Energy and Built Environment workstreams	Lobbying of central government and promotion of schemes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disabilities – The unintended consequences of promotion of use of e-bikes, e-scooters etc Involve disabled groups in the design and development of schemes	31/12/2021	Transport and Energy Workstreams	Involvement of people with disabilities in the design and development of schemes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Low Income - Affordability of energy savings initiatives Lobby for and promote government schemes and grants	31/12/2021	Energy and Built Environment workstreams	Lobbying of central government and promotion of schemes	<input type="checkbox"/>

Carers – As disabilities, above	31/12/2021	Transport, Energy and Communications workstreams	Involvement of people with disabilities and carers in designing of schemes and tools	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.				
Completed by:	Jon Doyle			
Date	24th September 2020			
Signed off by:				
Date				
Equality Lead/Manager sign off date:				
To be reviewed by: (officer name)				
Review date:				