

WCC Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

EqIAs evidence that you have considered the impact or potential impact on groups in our community who share protected characteristics. These are characteristics that are protected against discrimination by the Equality Act 2010. We are required by law under the Public Sector Equality duty (PSED) which is contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act and requires public authorities to have due regard to several equality considerations when exercising their functions.

Completing an EQIA is the simplest way to demonstrate that the Council has considered the equality impacts of its decisions and it reduces the risk of legal challenge. EQIAs should be carried out at the earliest stages of policy or project development or a service review, and then updated as the policy or review develops. EQIAs must be undertaken when it is possible for the findings to inform the final decision.

When do I need to complete an EqIA? You need to complete an EqIA when:

- Planning or developing new services including business services, policies, strategies, practices and plans
- Reviewing, amending or substantially changing existing services, policies, strategies, practices and plans
- Considering a change management process or organisational review, particularly those that could involve relocating staff or rationalisation of posts
- Reviewing or introducing forms, leaflets, guidance, codes of practice such as changes to how residents access services
- When considering and developing a tender document for procurement of services

Who should complete an EqIA?

The person completing the EqIA should have detailed knowledge of the proposal or project. They should be able to identify the impact on those with protected characteristics be they residents, workforce, visitors or others. They should also have knowledge or access to any consultations and where relevant, have knowledge of the area of the Borough that is impacted. The ownership and responsibility for an EqIA lies at Head of Service level and above, however, managers and staff play a key role in the assessment process as they will be involved in implementing the necessary actions identified and integrating equalities into planning. As a rule, any work that needs a decision e.g. Lead Member decision or Leadership Team should be signed off by the Executive Director. Anything that is not going through a formal decision-making process can be signed off by Head of service.

At what point do I need to complete an EqIA?

You need to complete an EqIA at the very beginning when considering your proposal and therefore before a decision is taken.

Please note an EqIA is a live document which means it must be regularly reviewed and updated considering new evidence or information.

It is important to consider equalities issues at every stage of the process. You may not have all the data you need at the beginning, or you may not have finalised what your project will look like. However, an EqIA is there to help guide your thinking on how your work might affect different groups in our community and support your planning and consultation work.

Where can I get support to complete an EqIA?

There are resources available on the SharePoint site, including example EqIAs. You can also get support from the EqIA Champion in your Team/Directorate, see the SharePoint site for details. You can email any queries to the EqIA inbox equalities@westminster.gov.uk . Finally further support is available for strategic and crosscutting EqIAs from Andre Johnsen – Community Equalities Manager (ajohnsen@westminster.gov.uk). If your EqIA focuses on workforce changes or development, then contact Jennifer Samuels (jsamuels2@westminster.gov.uk).

SECTION 1: Programme details

<p>Name of the policy, project, service, or strategy being assessed, and a brief overview of its aims and objectives</p>	<p>EUC Device Refresh Project</p> <p>Aim</p> <p>The aim of this project is to modernise the council's end-user devices by replacing the ageing fleet of laptops and upgrading the Operating system. This will ensure the organisation’s hardware and software meet current and future business needs to enable a more flexible, productive, and secure working environment for staff.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <p>The recommended option is to procure and deploy new laptops for all 2,700-council staff, using Intune endpoint deployment. The option also includes providing training and support for staff to use the new devices effectively. The option will create a change in the council's IT infrastructure, service delivery, and working culture. The option will be a standalone project, but it will complement other initiatives in the council's digital ambitions</p> <p>The main objectives of this project are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procure and deploy new laptops for all 2,700-council staff, using Intune endpoint deployment with selected Supplier • Ensure that the new laptops and operating systems (Windows 11 and MacOs) are compatible with the council's existing and planned IT systems and applications and meet the required security and performance standards. • Provide training and support for staff to use the new laptops effectively, and to adopt new ways of working that leverage the benefits of the devices. • Manage the transition from the old to the new devices smoothly, with minimal disruption to the council's operations and services.
<p>Name of person completing this EqIA</p>	<p>Philomena Oghenovo & Seranna Ramlochan</p>

Name of Director	Becky Chapman
Team	Digital and Innovation
Directorate	Finance and Resources
Contact Email	poghenovo@westminster.gov.uk
Where is this EqIA stored. (This is to ensure colleagues can pick this up in your absence.)	EUC Device Refresh Project Teams Site (link)
Is this EqIA accompanying a report that is going through a formal decision process? If so which meeting, is it going to for decision?	Cabinet Member Report 20th August 2024 briefing

SECTION 2: EqIA Screening – Do you need to complete a full EqIA?

Please complete the checklist below, including impact to help determine if a full EqIA is necessary.

Please see table in Section 3 for a breakdown of the protected characteristics

Question	Answer (Yes, No, Unclear)	Impact (Positive, Negative or Neutral)
Does your programme have the potential to disproportionately affect men, women or those who identify as non-binary?	No	Neutral
Does your programme have the potential to disproportionately affect people of a particular race or ethnicity? This includes refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and gypsies and travellers.	No	
Does your programme have the potential to disproportionately affect people with a disability? Consider physical and learning disabilities and mental health conditions.	Yes, work is being completed with accessibility partner	Positive
Does your programme have the potential to disproportionately affect people of certain sexual orientations?	No	
Does your programme have the potential to disproportionately affect people of different age groups? Consider children and elderly populations.	No	
Does your programme have the potential to disproportionately affect those undergoing or intending to undergo the process of gender reassignment?	No	

<p>Does your programme have the potential to disproportionately affect those due to pregnancy or maternity?</p> <p>The Equality Act protects women or birthing people from discrimination from when you become pregnant until your right to maternity leave ends and you return to work. If you do not have the right to maternity leave this is 2 weeks after the child is born.</p>	No	
<p>Does your programme have the potential to disproportionately affect people of different faiths and beliefs?</p>	No	
<p>Does your programme have the potential to disproportionately affect people on low incomes or living in poverty?</p>	No	
<p>Does your programme have the potential to disproportionately affect people living in the most deprived areas of RBKC?</p> <p>Think about North Kensington, in particular Golborne, Notting Dale, Dalgarno and those living on the Worlds End Estate. There is further detail in Section 3 below in the socioeconomic and geographical box.</p>	No	

If you have assessed the impact to any of the above questions to be Negative or Unclear, then you will need to complete Sections 3, 4.

If you have assessed the impact as Positive, explain the rational for this below and then go to Section 5.

Please use this space to outline service user data showing who is impacted by this decision, any consultation that has been conducted with these groups and how they will be positively impacted.

The impact on circa 130 individuals who rely on assistive technologies is primarily expected to be positive, as the project is designed to enhance their accessibility through better software and new hardware compatibility with Windows 11. The targeted support, personalized training, and comprehensive testing will help ensure that users with physical or learning disabilities experience minimal disruption and can continue to perform their work effectively.

SECTION 3: Assessing the Impact

Please use this section to assess the impact of the programme on those with protected characteristics. Please answer the following questions in your assessment for each characteristic.

- 1. How many people currently use the service? Or who and how many people will be affected by the policy or strategy?** Over 3,500 staff members
- 2. What consultation have you completed to gather feedback from service users? Or what other relevant data have you gathered to support your work?**

The enterprise end-user device project is a critical initiative to enable WCC staff to work efficiently and securely, both remotely and on-site, and to support the delivery of high-quality services to the residents and businesses of Westminster. The project will also contribute to WCC's strategic objectives of creating a fairer, greener and more prosperous Westminster, by enhancing digital inclusion, reducing carbon footprint and ensuring value for money for Fairer economy.

A user-based research initiative was conducted by the external supplier Hable in 3rd Quarter 2023, involving a Council-wide Persona Mapping Survey with 1,002 responses and focus group sessions across various directorates. These sessions aimed to understand staff pain points with current devices, identify key personas within the Council, and recommend suitable devices. The survey revealed three main personas: Standard Hybrid User, Mobile User, and Power User.

Subsequently, a Device Roadshow showcased various device options at City Hall, Lisson Grove, and online, where 1,300 staff participated, helping the project team recommend the best devices for each persona based

on their work styles. The Council has an opportunity to change its current offerings and deliver a blended estate.

This ensures modern devices that meet the user's needs, responsibilities, and expectations. By procuring Microsoft and Apple Mac devices, the Council can provide its mobile staff with high-quality and versatile devices that best fits their role and work style. This will enhance the users' satisfaction, engagement, and motivation, and ultimately improve their performance and productivity.

- 3. How will you ensure that the policy, project, service, or strategy will be accessible to all groups? and how will you address or break down any barriers to achieving this.** To ensure the laptop refresh and Windows 11 upgrade project is accessible to all groups, particularly those from protected groups under the Equality Act 2010, we have taken specific steps to meet the unique needs of individuals with disabilities and other protected characteristics. These steps are aimed at ensuring that no group is disproportionately disadvantaged by the upgrade and that participation in the workplace is fully supported.

Third-party provide Blazie consulted with over 70 assistive technology users to understand their specific needs, ensuring that their input shapes the project. This includes recognising the unique requirements of individuals with disabilities, such as those with visual impairments, hearing impairments, physical disabilities, and specific learning difficulties. By identifying the diverse range of assistive technologies in use, we are better equipped to ensure compatibility with Windows 11 and to provide targeted support.

For those with different needs, such as those requiring specific assistive technologies or additional support, we are seeking personalised training and setup assistance. For example, users of Dragon, JAWS, or other specialized software will receive individualized attention to ensure a smooth transition. This approach encourages participation by ensuring that individuals with disabilities can continue to engage fully with their work.

We are actively addressing potential barriers, such as compatibility issues with assistive technologies, by conducting thorough testing and making necessary adjustments. We are also reviewing software and hardware provision processes to ensure that all required tools are installed and functional on new machines.

By taking these steps, we aim to create an environment where people from protected groups can fully participate and where any specific needs are met through careful planning and execution.

- 4. How is this group impacted and determine whether the proposed activity will have a positive, neutral or negative impact.**

The impact on individuals who rely on assistive technologies is primarily expected to be positive, as the project is designed to enhance their accessibility through better software and new hardware compatibility with Windows 11. The targeted support, personalised training, and comprehensive testing will help ensure that users with disabilities experience minimal disruption and can continue to perform their work effectively.

However, there could be some neutral or negative impacts if certain assistive technologies do not fully integrate with Windows 11 or if the transition process is challenging for some users. These potential issues are being addressed through careful planning and mitigation strategies.

5. If the impact is negative, what mitigations will you put in place to reduce the impact?

To reduce any potential negative impact, the following mitigations are in place:

Compatibility Testing: Comprehensive testing of all assistive technologies and hardware to ensure that they work seamlessly with Windows 11, reducing the risk of functionality loss or disruption.

Dedicated Support: Providing ongoing support, both during and after the upgrade, to address any issues users may face and to offer solutions promptly.

Refresher Training: Offering additional training sessions for users who may need extra help adapting to the new system, ensuring they feel confident in using Windows 11.

6. If the impact is positive, what actions have you taken to achieve a positive impact?

To achieve a positive impact, we have:

- Enhanced Accessibility Features: Ensured that all users have access to the latest accessibility features in Windows 11, such as improved dictation, screen readers, and built-in assistive technologies like Copilot.
- Streamlined Setup: Improved the setup process to ensure that all required assistive technologies and configurations are pre-installed on new devices, reducing downtime and improving user satisfaction.
- Empowerment through Training: Empowered users by offering training and resources that not only help them transition but also enhance their ability to use the technology effectively in their daily tasks.

Protected characteristic	Analysis	Impact (Positive, Negative or Neutral)
Age	Not applicable	Neutral
Disability	<p>Data on service users/those affected:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Circa 130 staff members with accessibility needs known to the Digital and Innovation service within Westminster City Council, including users of various assistive technologies and hardware. 2. Consultation outcomes for this group: <p>Consultation involved contacting over 70 users to understand their current use of assistive technologies, specific requirements, and potential issues with the transition to Windows 11.</p> <p>Identified a range of assistive technologies in use, such as Dragon, JAWS, ZoomText, and Read & Write, as well as hardware like specialized keyboards and dictation tools.</p> 3. Analysis of impact: 	Positive

	<p>The transition to Windows 11 may pose challenges for users reliant on assistive technologies, particularly where customisations or complex setups are involved. Concerns include compatibility issues, the need for additional training, and ensuring continuity of functionality across new systems.</p> <p>4. Mitigations for negative impact/actions taken for positive impact:</p> <p>General Mitigations: Streamlining the software and hardware provision processes to ensure that all required tools are installed on new machines. Offering introductory sessions on Windows 11 and additional support during the rollout to ease the transition.</p> <p>5. Specific Actions being progressed Tailored training and setup support for users of tools like Dragon and Read & Write. For complex cases, individual assessments and the export of settings from Windows 10 to 11 to maintain user-specific configurations. Additional recommendations for transitioning users to more appropriate or updated technologies where necessary, such as moving from Supernova to ZoomText.</p>	
Gender reassignment	Not applicable	Neutral
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Not applicable	Neutral
Pregnancy and maternity	Not applicable	Neutral
Race	Not applicable	Neutral
Religion/belief	Not applicable	Neutral
Sex	Not applicable	Neutral
Sexual Orientation	Not applicable	Neutral
<p>In addition to the nine protected characteristics, where relevant we ask that you also think about the socio-economic and geographical considerations of our residents. Some data has been included below for your reference.</p>		



Socio-economic and Geographical		Neutral
Other Groups		Neutral

SECTION 4: Action Plan

Have you identified the need to reduce or remove any negative impacts, conduct work with those from protected groups to participate where their participation is disproportionately low, or fill any data gaps? If so, complete the Action Plan below to show the work that is planned.

Issue identified	Planned Action	Lead Officer and Timeframe
N/A	N/A	N/A

SECTION 5: Sign-off

Director/ Head of Service Name	Becky Chapman
Contact Email	bchapman@westminster.gov.uk
Date of sign off	29th August 2024
Review	
It is important to consider equalities issues at every stage of the process. Remember an EqIA is a live document which means it must be regularly reviewed and updated considering new evidence or information, for example, have you now completed your consultation or has there been news on funding. Please ask your Director or Head of Service to sign-off at every review stage. You can have as many reviews as are appropriate for your work.	
Date of 1 st Review	12.08.24
Name of Reviewer	Becky Chapman
Director signature	
Date of 2 nd Review	29th August 2024
Name of Reviewer	Becky Chapman
Director signature	
Date of 3 rd Review	
Name of Reviewer	
Director signature	

