



Shropshire Council
Legal and Democratic Services
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
SY2 6ND

Friday, 26 June 2020

Committee: Cabinet

Date: Monday, 6 July 2020

Time: 1.00 pm

Venue: THIS IS A VIRTUAL MEETING - PLEASE USE THE LINK ON THE AGENDA TO LISTEN TO THE MEETING

Members of the public will be able to listen to this meeting by clicking on this link:
[Cabinet 6 July Link](#)

- Please note that this meeting will be made available through Microsoft Teams Live Events - your device will need to meet the minimum specification as detailed on the Microsoft website at this link: [Device Specification](#)
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You are requested to attend the above meeting.
The Agenda is attached

Claire Porter
Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)

Members of Cabinet

Peter Nutting (Leader)
Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader)
Gwilym Butler
Dean Carroll
Lee Chapman
Steve Davenport
Robert Macey
David Minnery
Lezley Picton
Ed Potter

Your Committee Officer is:

Julie Fildes Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 01743 257723
Email: Julie.Fildes@shropshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

3 Minutes (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 15th June 2020, attached.

4 Public Question Time

To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public, notice of which has been given in accordance with Procedure Rule 14. Deadline for notification is no later than 1.00pm on 2nd July 2020.

5 Member Question Time

To receive any questions of which members of the council have given due notice, the deadline for notification for this meeting is 5.00pm on Wednesday 1 July 2020.

6 Scrutiny Items

7 Financial Outturn 2019/20

Lead Member – Councillor David Minnery - Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Support

Report of Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance (Section 151 Officer) to follow.

Contact: James Walton, 01743 258915

8 Treasury Management Update Quarter 4 2019/20

Lead Member – Councillor David Minnery – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Support.

Report of the Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance [Section 151 Officer] to follow.

Contact: James Walton, 01743258915

9 Financial Strategy 2021-22

Lead Member – Councillor Peter Nutting – Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy

Report of Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance [Section 151 Officer] to follow.

Contact: James Walton, 01743 258915

10 Shropshire Council Equality Objectives Action Plan 2020 to 2024 (Pages 5 - 54)

Lead Member – Councillor Gwilym Butler – Portfolio for Communities, Place Planning and Regulatory Services.

Report of the Director Workforce and Development attached.

Contact: Michele Leith, 01743 254402

11 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To resolve that, in accordance with the provision of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and Paragraph 10.4(3) of the Council's Access to Information Rule, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items.

12 Options for Temporary Accommodation

Lead Member – Councillor Robert Macy – Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning.

Exempt report of Director of Adult Services and Housing and Public Health to follow.

Contact: Andy Begley, 01743 258981

13 Proposed Highways and Environment Term Maintenance Contract Year 1 Settlement and Contract Amendment

Lead Member – Councillor Steve Davenport – Portfolio Holder for Highway and Transport.

Exempt report of Director of Place to follow.

Contact: Mark Barrow, 01743 258916

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Committee and Date

Cabinet

6th July 2020

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2020

In the THIS IS A VIRTUAL MEETING - PLEASE USE THE LINK ON THE AGENDA TO LISTEN TO THE MEETING

1.00 - 2.00 pm

Responsible Officer: Amanda Holyoak

Email: amanda.holyoak@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257714

Present

Councillor Peter Nutting (Chairman)

Councillors Steve Charmley (Deputy Leader), Gwilym Butler, Dean Carroll, Lee Chapman, Steve Davenport, Robert Macey, David Minnery, Lezley Picton and Ed Potter

93 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

94 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None were declared.

95 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1st June 2020 be approved as a correct record to be signed by the Leader.

96 Public Question Time (Pages 5 - 12)

A public question relating to Low Traffic Neighbourhoods was received from Rob Wilson.

A public question relating to the draft Housing Strategy was received from Charles Green on behalf of CPRE Shropshire.

A public question relating to active travel was received from Mark Fermor.

A public question relating to the draft Local Plan, Regulation 18 was received from David Cooper.

A public question relating to the Local Electricity Bill was received from Nick Saxby.

A public question relating to electric cars and charging points was received from Mary Davies.

The full questions submitted and the responses provided are attached to the signed minutes and the web page for the meeting.

97 Member Question Time (Pages 13 - 20)

A Member question relating to the Recovery Plan, followed by a supplementary question was received from Councillor Roger Evens. The full question and response provided are attached to the signed minutes and the webpage for the meeting.

98 Scrutiny Items

There were no scrutiny items.

99 Proposed Extension of Shrewsbury Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (No. 1) 2017

The Portfolio Holder for Communities, Place Planning and Regulatory Services introduced the report and stated that this was for a 3-year extension to the existing order starting on 1st August 2020. A consultation process with stake holders had been undertaken and had shown a high level of support for the order.

RESOLVED:

That the position as set out in the report be accepted and that the Shrewsbury Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (No.1) 2017, as set out in Appendix A, be extended from 1 August 2020 for a period not exceeding 3 years.

100 Housing Strategy

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning introduced the report and explained that the Housing Strategy was a consideration of the best use of resources to support the Councils policy of 'right home, right place'. He continued that there were a diverse range of housing needs to be catered for with a wide range of tenures. Members noted that the report set out the key challenges and specific action plans to ensure that housing developments in the county were of a high standard which met housing need.

In response to a Members question regarding the upgrading of infrastructure to support new housing developments, the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning explained that infrastructure requirements were dealt with under the Place Plans and Local Plans.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning, in responding to a Member's question, confirmed that the Council would act on empty properties to bring them back to a habitable standard where it had the authority to do so.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the work to date on developing the draft Housing Strategy be acknowledged and the proposed vision and objectives be endorsed.
- ii) That the draft Housing Strategy at Appendix 1 for public consultation for a period of six weeks be approved.
- iii) That a final version of the Housing Strategy be agreed, having considered any relevant consultation responses, and be brought back to Cabinet later in the summer for approval.

101 Consideration of Objection to Proposal to Introduce On-Street Holiday Let Permit Concessions in Ludlow

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport introduced the report and stated that this was an issue identified following the implementation of the Parking Strategy implemented from January 2018. He continued that it allowed holiday let operators to apply for a single permit attached to the property. This would support small businesses in the town and promote tourism.

Councillor Andy Boddington attended the meeting and was invited to address the Committee. He explained that Ludlow Town Council had asked for this provision to be extended to all tourist accommodation. He continued that it was recognised that parking provision in the town centre would not be sufficient to support this request.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the making of the proposed Traffic Regulation Order to introduce on-street holiday let permit concessions in Ludlow be authorised.
- ii) That holiday let owners be asked to provide feedback to the service area on numbers of people renting the properties with regard to those with physical or learning disabilities and /or caring responsibilities, for whom the location of the parking facilities is a significant consideration in terms of physical access. To contribute to better understanding of any positive impacts in equality and social inclusion terms, which may then be replicable elsewhere.

Signed (Chairman)

Date:

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Committee and Date

Cabinet 6th July 2020

Item

Public

REPORT HEADING

Shropshire Council Equality Objectives Action Plan 2020 to 2024

Responsible Officer Michele Leith, Director of Workforce and Transformation

e-mail: Michele.leith@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 254402 Fax

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Approval is sought for the 2020 to 2024 Equality Objectives Action Plan attached as Appendix A to this report. Shropshire Council is required to publish an Equality Objectives Action Plan at a minimum of four yearly intervals, in order to demonstrate continuing compliance with its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This Duty set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- 1.2 The requirement provides an opportunity to not only set out our proposed actions for the next four year period, covering 2020 to 2024, but also reflect upon progress made over the course of the four year period 2016 to 2020, in terms of equality, diversity and social inclusion. Appendix B sets out these previously agreed actions in tabular form.
- 1.3 Emphasis placed by the Council upon these actions, and visible commitment shown by the Council in so doing, aids the Council to meet its general equality duty under the PSED. This may be described as the duty on a public authority, when carrying out its functions, to have what is called *due regard* to three national equality aims.
- 1.4 The national equality aims are:
 - Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - Advancing equality of opportunity;
 - Fostering good relations.
- 1.5 Publication of an approved Equality Objectives Action Plan 2020 to 2024 will enable up to date positioning of the Council to assist in efforts to meet its PSED, seek to demonstrate and develop good practice in so doing, and facilitate timely links with other local and national policy and strategy development in the arena of equality, diversity, and social inclusion.

- 1.6 Members will be aware that national evidence to date has identified a disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 pandemic for groupings including Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority (BAME) communities, faith communities, younger people, older people, people with disabilities, and those for whom there is a gendered economic impact. These groupings all fall within what are termed Protected Characteristic groupings under the Equality Act 2010.
- 1.7 Considerations around social inclusion and access to services are also to the forefront of our minds as a large and sparsely populated rural county, as well as in the minds of national policymakers, as the impacts of the pandemic have thrown such inequalities into sharp relief.
- 1.8 The Equality Objectives Action Plan accordingly includes proposed actions for joint work to identify and seek to address the inequalities emerging to date across a range of groupings and communities affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. This should then facilitate tie in with national actions in response to a range of groupings affected, as well as to the recommendations made in the Public Health England report *“Beyond the data; understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups”*; PHE, June 2020

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet agrees to the publication of Shropshire Council’s Equality Objectives Action Plan for 2020 to 2024, in order to meet legal requirements for compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty placed upon the Council through the Equality Act 2010. (Appendix A)
- 2.2 Cabinet notes the progress made in this policy arena over the last four years, and the necessary and optimum linkages to be made between this document and associated corporate and partnership documentation, as part of good practice approaches towards meeting the needs of the diverse communities served by the Council and partners. (Appendix B)
- 2.3 Cabinet agrees to receive a progress report on equality developments at local and national level at a timely future date, at which point further recommendations may be tabled, specifically with regard to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic upon groupings and communities in Shropshire.

REPORT

3.) Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

3.1 Equality Legislation

- 3.1.1 The Equality Act 2010 legislation states that a listed authority must comply with both a general equality duty and with specific duties, as set out in the Act and described as the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).
- 3.1.2 To demonstrate full compliance with the general duty, we are required to publish annual information about our workforce diversity and service user diversity. In order to demonstrate full compliance with the specific duties, we are required to publish one or more equality objectives which we think we should achieve. The frequency for these is a minimum of every four years.
- 3.1.3 The regulations also specify that an authority listed in the Act must publish its equality information and equality objectives in a manner which is accessible to the public and may publish this information within another published document. Diversity reports are therefore on the Council website, along with the equality objectives action plan 2016 to 2020 and other associated materials, within the section “Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion”.
- 3.1.4 If the Council did not publish an action plan for the period 2020 to 2024, it would not be in a position to readily demonstrate compliance with the PSED. This would represent a major risk, not least in reputational terms, as it would involve breach of legal obligation, affect more than one group of stakeholders, attract the medium-term attention of legislative or regulatory bodies and potentially attract significant adverse media interest. This is likely to be heightened already, given what is known to date about the disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 pandemic upon people in Protected Characteristic groupings
- 3.1.5 Publication of the Equality Objectives Action Plan for 2020 to 2024 will allow the Council to further collaborate with communities and partners at a local level, with stakeholders at a local and sub-regional level, and with Government at a national level, in order to maximise the opportunities to realise policy intentions as per core corporate values around equality.
- 3.1.6 One risk of not taking this opportunity to be up to date and compliant is that it could weaken the efforts we make to influence national policy around equality, diversity and social inclusion. Examples include leading social inclusion efforts through the Shropshire Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly and the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), and collating and submitting evidence to parliamentary select committee inquiries around digital and social inclusion issues, the rural economy, and regional disparities. We have also engaged directly with Government Departments on such issues, for example with the Department of Health on the Industrial Strategy Grand Challenge of an Ageing Society.

- 3.1.7 Another risk, were the Equality Objectives Action Plan to not receive endorsement, is that the Council could be seen as ignoring the needs of the vulnerable and those at risk of social exclusion, despite the fact that such individuals form wider groupings of people who need to be identified and who may need support either as individuals or as groupings.

3.2 Equality and Social inclusion impact Assessments

- 3.2.1 A screening ESIIA has been undertaken for the Equality Objectives Action Plan. This indicates that a medium positive impact is anticipated for all groupings within the community and thus for the whole community, as the Council's equality objectives action plan sets out to meet the three national equality aims set out in the general equality duty placed upon local authorities under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).
- 3.2.2 The workforce of the Council is a key target group in the Council's equality endeavours, as are the elected Members of the Council as community leaders. The assistance of all staff across all service areas, in taking account of equality considerations in their everyday actions and in applying such considerations to planned changes to services, for example through ESIIAs, will help the Council to proactively meet its PSED as well as mitigate against any risks of non compliance.
- 3.2.3 We will continue to target efforts at identifying any gaps in equality and diversity data, and in finding out where there may be barriers to accessing particular services, and how this might be addressed, for people with one or more of the Protected Characteristics and for people at risk of social exclusion. This will be reported upon in the annual Service User and Workforce Diversity Reports published online.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 For 2019 to 2020 and future years, it is anticipated that the specialist staffing resource will be met from within existing commissioning unit budgets, and that staff time within service areas including Human Resources will be the main cost item for the Council.

5.0 Climate Change Appraisal

5.1 Carbon offsetting or mitigation

- 5.1.1 With regard to the planting of trees, there is a complementary action to carbon offsetting in that there is anticipated to be a low positive outcome in relation specifically to the growing of a Holocaust Memorial cherry tree orchard of remembrance across Shropshire. One tree is planted each year, with a primary school, and the aim over time is for a cherry tree orchard covering all quadrants of the county. This is by definition a gradual process, initiated in 2015, notwithstanding a growth spurt in 2016 that saw an additional five trees planted with secondary schools.

5.1.2 Each time a tree is planted, the children at the chosen primary school learn more about the natural environment and the need to care for the natural world that they see around them, as well as about the need to never forget the Holocaust and other genocides, and to care for the people around them. There are now twelve trees planted across Shropshire.

5.2 Other aspects of climate change mitigation

5.2.1 There is anticipated to continue to be a neutral to low positive outcome in relation to the following aspects of climate change mitigation, with efforts to introduce and maximise online resources matched by efforts to improve digital connectivity and reduce social isolation across the county. Any energy efficiency changes to the fabric of community assets and buildings that improves their energy and fuel outputs will be of benefit to the communities that make use of them, as well as to the wider environment, just as better use of local buildings that reduces or obviates the need to travel other than on foot or by bicycle will also be of benefit to the wider environment.

- Energy and fuel consumption
- Renewable energy generation
- Climate Change adaptation:

6. Background

6.1 National and international policy

6.1.1 Organisations are expected by national and international governments and bodies to have policies and practices that address equality and diversity effectively, and that place these matters at the heart of all decision making processes. For Shropshire Council, equality is about using national laws and policies alongside local commitments to protect human rights and to remove unfairness and discrimination.

6.1.2 In order to demonstrate proactive commitment to equality, the Council needs to be able to:

- Understand the social, economic and environmental context in which it operates;
- Forecast likely changes and challenges to any or all of the above;
- Ensure that the Council is equipped to continue to deliver on national and international equality aims and local policy drivers.

6.1.3 In so doing, the Council is mindful of **national and international policy and legislation**, including the Equality Act 2010. This Act, together with the Human Rights Act 1998 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, forms a robust framework of protection for equality, diversity, social inclusion and human rights.

6.1.4 In complying with the Act, and in seeking to be proactive, we show that we meet what is called the **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)**. This legislation states that a listed authority must comply with both a general equality duty and with specific duties, as set out in the Act.

6.1.5 The **general equality duty** may be described as the duty on a public authority, when carrying out its functions, to have what is called **due regard** to the three equality aims.

These are:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advancing equality of opportunity;
- Fostering good relations.

6.1.6 To demonstrate full compliance with the **specific duties**, the Council is required to publish:

- information about workforce diversity and about service user diversity, to demonstrate compliance with the general duty. The frequency for this is annual, with effect from 31st January 2012. The published information *“...must include, in particular, information relating to persons who share a protected characteristic who are: its employees (for listed authorities who employ 150 or more staff); and other persons affected by its policies and practices (for example, service users)”*

(“Technical Guidance on Public Sector Equality Duty for England”; Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2013; ISBN 978 1 84206 475 7; p.68, paragraph 6.7)

- one or more equality objectives which the Council thinks should be achieved to help with any of the things mentioned in the general equality duty. The frequency for these is a minimum of every four years, with effect from 6th April 2012.

6.2 Local policy

6.2.1 Equal opportunities form a core element of good policy making around communities and the places in which they live and work. This is partly in recognition that greater economic activity by all groups in society contributes to and boosts the local economy as well as aiding individual prosperity and physical and mental wellbeing. A society in which everyone feels valued, and where their skills and talents are used to the full, is a productive and resourceful society. It is also about social inclusion. A society in which everyone feels they have a part to play, and in which people respect the views of other people, is a resilient and caring society.

- 6.2.2 When we talk about **society**, we are talking about individuals and about the various or diverse groups who collectively make up society. This includes what we may call the vulnerable and those in need, as well as groups who happen to have something in common such as their age or their gender.
- 6.2.3 When we talk about **social inclusion**, the groups that we are thinking of in particular are: families and friends with caring responsibilities; people with health inequalities; households in poverty; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; and people considered to be vulnerable.
- 6.2.4 When we talk about people who are **vulnerable**, the definition that we are using to describe a vulnerable person is:

“An individual who is identified as having complex needs and/or requires additional support to enable them to access services and support”

- 6.2.5 **Complex needs** may be described as difficult personal circumstances and/or life events that affect individuals. The following list of circumstances and events is intended to be illustrative rather than exhaustive: alcohol and/or drug dependency; bereavements; adopted from care or leaving care; indebtedness; divorcing or terminating a civil partnership; experiencing redundancy, retirement or unemployment; experiencing homelessness; leaving the armed forces; leaving hospital; people who are victims of crime including domestic violence; people with one or more of the nine national Protected Characteristics.
- 6.2.6 When we talk about the **nine 'protected characteristics' groups**, these are something that we look at as well as social inclusion when considering the PSED obligations. The groups are, in alphabetical order:
- Age;
 - Disability;
 - Gender reassignment;
 - Marriage and civil partnership;
 - Pregnancy and maternity;
 - Race;
 - Religion and belief;
 - Sex;
 - Sexual orientation.
- .
- By interacting with all our communities and groupings within them, we also understand their needs better and include them more in our strategic thoughts and actions.
- 6.2.7 As with all of our communities of place and interest, we aim to involve people in ways in which they may want to be involved, can be encouraged to do so, and are able to do so, in order to support and sustain them as resilient communities. Our focus on developing our place- based approaches relates directly to this aim.

- 6.2.8 Considering equality, diversity and social inclusion enables us to plan and deliver services that are responsive to the needs of our diverse communities, with a workforce that is representative of those communities and that is sensitive to the needs of those communities. We do this in partnership not only with other public sector bodies but also with the business sector and the voluntary and community sector. Where this involves organisations arranging and delivering services on our behalf, for example where we have commissioned a service, they are expected to demonstrate that equality and diversity are similarly at the core of their own strategic thoughts and actions.
- 6.2.9 The needs of rural communities are also factored into this process and into other ways in which we develop and assess policy and strategy, such as through rural proofing and through joint work with other rural and unitary authorities, through the County Councils Network (CCN), the Rural Services Network (RSN), and the wider Local Government Association family. This is in recognition of the fact that Shropshire is a large, predominantly rural and sparsely populated county. There are therefore practical challenges and costs for the Council and partners in delivering services, and for communities in finding out about and accessing services, particularly in terms of physical and digital connectivity.
- 6.2.10 The recent PHE report has brought into sharp relief the additional challenges in BAME communities around finding out about and accessing service, in terms of the information and support that we provide, and the ways in which we seek to provide such help. This also brings in joint efforts across our area and work with other neighbouring authorities, public sector organisations, and the voluntary and community sector across our borders.

6.3 Local practice

- 6.3.1 Good practice suggests that a visible and coherent suite of documentation around equality, diversity and social inclusion demonstrates openness and transparency. It also provides an accessible route to the information and actions contained therein. The dedicated section on the external website may be found as follows: [Equality, diversity and social inclusion – Shropshire Council](#)
- 6.3.2 The Council sets out to visibly demonstrate equal treatment to people who are in Protected Characteristic groupings and people at risk of social exclusion, and to people who are not, through having what is termed 'due regard' to their needs and views when developing policy and strategy and when commissioning, procuring, arranging or delivering services.
- 6.3.3 This action plan represents one such way of demonstrating our open and transparent approach, since it provides a visible way in which to record and publish progress made in the four year period 2016 to 2020, and through which to set out proposals for meeting the national equality aims during the period 2020 to 2024.

6.4 Local progress 2016 to 2020

6.4.1 Over the course of the four year period, progress has been charted using three strands of activity

- Publish more visibly
- Collect data more proactively
- Work together more jointly

6.4.2 Examples of these activities have been reported in the annual service user diversity reports and workforce diversity reports published every December on the Council's website. These are in themselves an illustration of our approach to publishing what we do in this policy arena in a more visible and open way, with the reports now forming a library on the dedicated section of the website, and providing opportunity for trend analysis as well as a way in which to record examples of the efforts that are being made.

6.4.3 Turning to the actions around collecting data more proactively, and linking this to wider corporate efforts to establish and consolidating our evidence base around the needs of our communities and businesses, it is a legal requirement for local authorities to assess the equality and human rights impact of changes proposed or made to services. It is up to us as an authority to decide what form our equality impact assessment may take.

6.4.4 The decisions that we make when planning a service change need to be recorded, to demonstrate that we have thought about the possible equality impacts on communities and to show openness and transparency in your decision making processes. This is where Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessments (ESIAs) come in. Carrying out ESIAs helps us as a public authority to ensure that, as far as possible, we are taking actions to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010, and to thus demonstrate that the three equality aims are integral to our decision making processes.

6.4.5 The formal template is there not only to help the service area but also to act as a stand alone for a member of the public to read. Completed templates may be found within a library section on the dedicated web pages, as well as attached to committee reports, with an increasing usage of these as screening assessments over the last period.

6.4.6 The approach we use sets out to help to identify whether or not any new or significant changes to services, including policies, procedures, functions or projects, may have an adverse impact on a particular group of people, and whether the human rights of individuals may be affected

6.4.7 Service areas would ordinarily carry out a screening assessment, or Part One equality impact assessment. This enables energies to be focussed on review and monitoring and ongoing evidence collection about the positive or negative impacts of a service change upon groupings in the community, and for any adjustments to be considered and made accordingly.

- 6.4.8 Equality impact screenings are recommended at the start of a consultation process, and at the end, in order to utilise feedback from communities in shaping services. Where there have been low levels of response from particular groupings, eg younger people, further specific efforts may then be made to engage with them during development and implementation of the service change, as well as continuing ongoing engagement efforts and involving elected Members as community leaders.
- 6.4.9 In terms of working more jointly, this has been an area of real progress, within and external to the Council. Internal work involving staff across the Council enabled development and delivery of mandatory online equality training for all staff, complementing training for Members. An external work exemplar, referenced with regard to linkages with the natural environment, involves work with schools and interfaith forums to help children and young people to understand the messages of the Holocaust in ways that are age appropriate and meaningful, through the planting of a cherry tree orchard of remembrance across Shropshire..

6.5 Local proposals for 2020 to 2024

- 6.5.1 It is the policy intention to continue to work at weaving together a number of actions the three main activity strands. This includes a number of proposed actions.
- 6.5.2 Publish more visibly
- Refresh of online training materials and associated guidance, in order to equip the workforce and elected Members to build upon their understanding of equality, diversity and social inclusion issues, and their ability to help the Council to meet the three national equality aims. This will draw upon guidance from the EHRC and lessons arising from the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - Maintenance and development of the dedicated pages on the Council website, including links to guidance for groupings and for individuals.
- 6.5.3 Collect data more proactively
- Incorporation of health and well-being assessments into equality and social inclusion impact assessments for service areas, in order to equip service area to have due regard to the three aims when considering and planning service changes. This will draw upon best practice including experiences of other rural authorities
 - In specific reference to BAME communities, follow up on recommendations of the Runnymede Trust to the Women and Equalities Committee, and those within the PHE report “Beyond the data”, with regard to data collection. The latter is as follows:

“Research and data: to deepen our understanding of the wider socio-economic determinants, improve data recording of faith and ethnicity and greater use of community participatory research.”

6.5.4 Work more jointly

- Strengthen linkages with the community and voluntary sector and with interfaith forums, on initiatives including actions to enhance the positive as well as mitigate the negative equality impacts of the pandemic upon faith communities
- Continued support for national events and activities around HMD, Show Racism the Red Card, and World Mental Health Day, including proactive communications campaigns with other local authorities, and across sectors.

7.0 **Additional Information**

- 7.1 As a Council, we are very much being guided by and taking a lead from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). They have been giving evidence to the UK Parliament Women and Equalities Committee Inquiry into Covid-19 (*“Unequal Impact: Coronavirus (Covid-19) and the impact on people with Protected Characteristics”*) about actions to be taken by central government and by local authorities. They are very keen to see the PSED used as the framework for such actions.
- 7.2 The most recent EHRC session with the Committee predates George Floyd’s untimely and awful death by a few days. However, the session was used by the EHRC to reiterate calls made by them in 2017 for a national race equality strategy, and it would be timely to make reference to this in developing a local proposed action for 2020 to 2024 around combating racism. This could usefully in itself point to our 2019 achieved action of supporting the “Show Racism the Red Card” campaign, and set out efforts to work through schools, other public sector organisations, etc on local positive action, and to draw upon any further guidance that also emerges from the EHRC following George Floyd’s death.
- 7.3 There is also an opportunity for us to submit evidence to the Women and Equalities Committee on behalf of the communities of Shropshire, as the Committee has launched three sub inquiries: one on impact for BAME communities, one on gendered economic impact, and one on disability and access to services.
- 7.4 Their separation of these strands bears out the importance of this approach in enabling a clear focus on the nuances of inequality for different groupings affected by the pandemic. The closing dates for these three sub inquiries are 10th July, 13th July and 13th July respectively.

Conclusions

The EHRC have been unequivocal in session with the Women and Equalities Committee about the usefulness of the PSED, urging that the PSED and equality impact assessments be utilised by Government Departments and by local authorities. Please see quotes below:

“...the Equality Act provides a useful framework, and the public sector equality duty in particular is something that we would be really keen for the Government, individual Departments and local authorities to use as a way forward. The template exists. What we do not want to do is to be issuing investigations in relation to why the public sector equality duty was not used as much or as effectively as it might have been; we would like to do that much more through dialogue.

“...We think it is an effective framework, but sadly we do not think that there is enough engagement, understanding or fear about the consequences of not using it. I would certainly like us to be in dialogue more, and also to demonstrate that the public sector equality duty is to be taken seriously and is a powerful tool to deal with the issues that we are all concerned about—not just saving lives but actually building back better to address these inequality issues that are particularly acute at the moment.”

It would be irresponsible of the Council not to approve the updated Equality Objectives Action Plan given its core role in assisting the Council to not only comply with the PSED but also proactively respond to and engage with our communities at this time of crisis.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) Cllr Peter Nutting, Leader of the Council
Local Member All
Appendices Appendix A: Equality Objectives Action Plan 2020 to 2024 Appendix B: Equality Objectives Action Plan 2016 to 2020 Appendix C: Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)

Appendix A to Report to Cabinet 06072020: Shropshire Council Equality Objectives Action Plan 2020 to 2024 DRAFT
Proposals 2020 to 2024

Overall Strategic Action A: publish more visibly

Key Action	By whom	By when	Commentary 2020
1. Maintain online resource materials on equalities, diversity and social inclusion in one location on the external website at www.shropshire.gov.uk ,	Rurality and Equalities Specialist; Web Support Team	Ongoing	<p>This is so that information is presented as logically and visibly as possible, with links to further sources, including the website of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). The web location for content is badged: "equality, diversity and social inclusion".</p> <p>The focus is on the internet, for internal and external audiences alike, whilst Council efforts continue to aid digital inclusion and offer alternatives such as support and advice via telephone.</p> <p>The information includes ESIIAs, in order to help internal and external audiences to understand what is expected from these and why, and in order to show use made of these impact assessments in decision making</p> <p>Content is kept under review, as are signposts to other sources. Further material is added every year around Holocaust Memorial Day activities, whilst the annual diversity reports form a visible reference for changes over time.</p>

Key Action	By whom	By when	Commentary 2020
2. Publish and present contextual equality information in a range of ways and through local and national opportunities that arise, in order to visibly develop collective understanding about issues and needs, and to optimise use to be made in Council and service area policy and strategy development of all opportunities to aid understanding of equality, diversity social inclusion issues.	Intelligence and Insight Manager; Performance Intelligence and Policy Team; Communications Team; Service Areas	Ongoing	<p>This is an area for development in order to demonstrate visibly that the Council is seeking to learn about different equality issues for different groupings, through mechanisms including engagement with communities, and to share that learning with the wider general public.</p> <p>Current examples include area profiles shared with Members as community leaders and published on the website; Census profiles; and the annual service user and workforce diversity reports also published on the Council website.</p>
3. Utilise appropriate communication channels including social media and face to face, in order to promote opportunities to foster good relations between people from diverse communities of place and interest and people with protected characteristics	Intelligence and insight Teams; Customer Service Team; Web Support Team; Communications Team	Ongoing	<p>Examples are collated and online presence utilised, including partner organisation websites. One example is Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD), which includes mini-site on the Council website, features on local media, and publicity and recording of activities on the national HMD Trust website</p> <p>This then raises the profile of Shropshire as a welcoming place, as well as providing opportunity for young people from across the county to work with representatives of a range of faith communities.</p>

Overall Strategic Action B: collect and analyse more proactively

Key Action	By whom	By when	Commentary 2020
1. Consolidate and draw upon service user and community profile evidence base and report back in annual service user diversity reports, using all opportunities that present themselves to add to the evidence base and utilise robust up to date data in decision making processes.	Intelligence and Insight Manager; Rurality and Equalities Specialist; Performance Intelligence and Policy Team; Service Areas	Ongoing; linked to publication of data in the annual service user diversity report	<p>The Intelligence and Insight teams proactively gather intelligence from local and national sources and produce reports for Members as well as publishing information and data on the website.</p> <p>Specialist officers additionally identify opportunities to submit evidence to UK Parliamentary Inquiries and to Government Departments in order to influence national policy.</p> <p>This is pertinent to our situation as a rural authority with physical and digital connectivity issues for a range of groupings.</p> <p>Service areas make use of ESIIAs in order to collate and present evidence about the communities, service users and stakeholders with whom they work, and demonstrate ongoing engagement with specific target groups.</p> <p>Comparison work into rural authority approaches utilises County Council Network (CCN) work and Rural Services Network (RSN) resources, and</p>

			opportunities to contribute to data collection through collective and collaborative working eg on fairer funding for rural authorities.
2. In specific reference to BAME communities, follow up on recommendations of the Runnymede Trust to the current Women and Equalities Committee Inquiry around the unequal impacts of Covid-19 for BAME groupings, and those within the Public Health England (PHE) June 2020 report <i>"Beyond the data; understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups"</i> ; with regard to data collection and to liaison with faith communities and the voluntary and community sector.	Intelligence and Insight Manager; Rurality and Equalities Specialist; Performance Intelligence and Policy Team; Feedback and Insight Team; interfaith forums and faith communities; Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly (VCSA)	October 2020, and annual review	<p>The Runnymede Trust has recommended action in this area, and the PHE has recommended action in this area as follows:</p> <p><i>"Research and data: to deepen our understanding of the wider socio-economic determinants, improve data recording of faith and ethnicity and greater use of community participatory research."</i></p> <p>The Council will keep a watching brief on the progress of the inquiry, and opportunities to feed in information to sub inquiries.</p>
3. Incorporate health and well-being assessments into equality and social inclusion impact assessments for service areas, in order to equip service area to have due regard to the three aims when considering and planning service changes, and to link in with climate change appraisals to form a coherent suite of materials.	Rurality and Equalities Specialist; Public Health Team; HR; Leap into Learning Team		<p>Further development, publishing and promotion of these resources and guidance on carrying out Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessments (ESIAs) will draw upon best practice experiences of other authorities.</p> <p>Service areas make use of ESIAs in order to collate and present evidence about the communities, service users and stakeholders with whom they work,</p>

.			<p>and demonstrate ongoing engagement with specific target groups.</p> <p>The templates are on both the website and the intranet, together with examples. An interim revision of these has factored in the need to take account of health and well being impacts.</p> <p>Guidance on equality, diversity and social inclusion approaches, and how to record these, was provided for all staff as part of mandatory online training, through a package launched in autumn 2018. This is now due for a refresh.</p>
4. Collect data about service user participation in service area activity and about participation by partner organisations and the wider community in service area activity and in public events including consultation opportunities	Intelligence and Insight Manager; Rurality and Equalities Specialist; Performance Intelligence and Policy Team; Service Areas; Community and Voluntary Sector Assembly	Ongoing	<p>Collection of equality data at public events involves usage of a standard monitoring chart. The Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly (VCSA) utilises this at events, and feedback is used to improve both the form itself and the events themselves.</p> <p>Further work is required in this area, including with regard to service users and communities unable to participate in activity due to the Covid-19 pandemic eg closure of leisure facilities eg access to places of worship, or unable to access guidance and services online due to lack of digital connectivity and or to lack of digital skills.</p>

Key Action	By whom	By when	Commentary 2020
5. Analyse internal information on workforce, and compare with good practice authorities, in order to identify and comment on trends and prioritise where the gaps may be in representation within the workforce of groups with Protected Characteristics.	Human Resources Team; Rurality and Equalities Specialist, Performance Intelligence and Policy Team	September 2016; reviews each year linked to annual workforce diversity report	<p>Comparison work is maintained as a watching brief.</p> <p>Positive approaches towards recruitment and retention are reported upon in the annual workforce diversity report eg flexible working</p> <p>For example, in February 2019 Shropshire Council achieved the Disability Confident Leader Level 3 Award (this scheme replaces the Disability Symbol Two Ticks initiative)</p>
6. Evaluate perceived effectiveness of communication methods for people experiencing or observing discrimination, harassment or victimisation, in order to ensure that service users and members of the public feel equipped to come forward where any such incidents occur, including perceived hate crime	Public Protection Team; Feedback and Insight Team; Communications Team; Shropshire Council Service Areas	ongoing	<p>Easy-to-understand hate crime reporting forms were developed through a joint agency hate crime reporting group.</p> <p>It is important to add that whilst the Reporting Group no longer exists, data is still collected by the Police and reporting by individuals is encouraged through processes promoted on the Council's website.</p> <p>This work area is an area for taking forward, given spikes in hate crime incidents attributed to Brexit and potentially to the Covid-19 pandemic</p>

Key Action	By whom	By when	Commentary 2020
7. Establish current patterns of hate crime incident reporting, in order to help target inter agency efforts to collect and monitor such data, and to publicise reporting channels including online	Public Protection Team; Feedback and Insight Team; Communications Team; Shropshire Council Service Areas	Ongoing	<p>Research was undertaken through the Group to analyse levels of hate crime under reporting in the county. Progress reports were made to the Group.</p> <p>This work area is an area for taking forward, given spikes in hate crime incidents attributed to Brexit and potentially to the Covid-19 pandemic</p>

Overall Strategic Action C: work more jointly

Key Action	By whom	By when	Commentary
1. Promote Holocaust Memorial Day, 27 th January each year across the county and more widely	Intelligence and Insight Teams; Inter Faith Forums; Communications Team; Web Support Team; Outdoor Recreation Team; libraries; primary and secondary schools and colleges.	January each year	<p>Activities are focussed on work with primary schools and interfaith forums. There are now 12 trees in the HMD memorial cherry tree orchard being grown with schools across Shropshire</p> <p>Details about activities are published as press releases, as a mini-site on the Council website, and via the national Holocaust Memorial Day Trust website.</p> <p>The South Shropshire Interfaith Forum was also supported by the Council in a successful artwork project involving Syrian refugee families, which became one of the 75 Flames chosen for a national event in 2020 to mark the 75 years since the liberation of Auschwitz.</p>
2. Continue to promote national events, in order to pool resources for maximum effect and increase understanding amongst the general public, service users and communities of the challenges faced by people with Protected Characteristics and people at risk of social exclusion.	Intelligence and Insight Teams; Service Areas; Communications Team; other strategic and collaborative partnership working arrangements	Ongoing	Intelligence and Insight Team officers monitor calendar details of key dates and events, and arrange briefings and or press releases as appropriate, utilising LGA, EHRC and other national resources.

Key Action	By whom	By when	Commentary 2020
3. Evaluate perceived effectiveness of joint local events and initiatives and joint promotion of national events in helping service users and communities to feel better equipped to recognise discrimination, harassment and victimisation against groups and individuals, and to feel better able to know what to do next.	Intelligence and Insight teams; Service Areas; other strategic and collaborative partnership working arrangements	October 2020	<p>Evaluation of Holocaust Memorial Day involves elected Members, the South Shropshire Interfaith Forum and the Shrewsbury Interfaith Forum, who are linked into the VCSA (Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly); local primary schools, and local Members for the schools involved. this takes place on an annual basis ahead of the next year's events.</p> <p>This exemplar now needs to be replicated for other events such as Show Racism the Red Card, supported by the Council and Unite in 2019, and for future events or campaigns.</p>
4. Share materials across sectors, in order to pool resources for maximum effect and increase understanding amongst the general public, service users and communities of the challenges faced by people with Protected Characteristics and people at risk of social exclusion.	Intelligence and Insight teams; Communications Team; Shropshire Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly; other strategic and collaborative partnership working arrangements	Ongoing	<p>Explore feasibility of running joint sub-regional local events on specific topics, supported by officers in the Commissioning Unit to aid linkages across sectors and organisational boundaries eg mental well-being and employment, eg digital skills.</p> <p>This work area was not fully explored in the 2016 to 2020 period, and is an area for taking forward, adapting in order to maximise current and planned collaborative arrangements across sectors and across borders.</p>

Key Action	By whom	By when	Commentary 2020
5. Keep abreast of good practice in training and guidance on developing and maintaining good relations with groupings in the community, achieving progress towards the three national equality aims, ie.: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations, and introduce this as part of Shropshire Council guidance, training programmes and briefings for officers and elected Members.	Human Resources Team; Rurality and Equalities Specialist, Performance Intelligence and Policy Team	October 2020; reviews to link to preparation of annual diversity reports	<p>This will aid Shropshire Council to meet its general equality duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty.</p> <p>Research is continuing to be undertaken into how other rural authorities, public sector organisations, the private sector, and the voluntary and community sector approach training and guidance.</p> <p>Training sessions were arranged for all Members in 2017, following elections that year. An online training module for all staff was developed as part of a mandatory package of training resources, rolled out in autumn 2018.</p> <p>Support for staff in understanding the PSED and in making use of ESIIAs for service changes, was incorporated into the online training module rolled out in autumn 2018.</p>
6. Keep abreast of good practice in training and guidance around discrimination, harassment or victimisation, including around recruitment, induction and retention, and where appropriate introduce this as part of	Human Resources Team; Rurality and Equalities Specialist, Performance Intelligence and Policy Team	October 2020; reviews to link to preparation of annual diversity reports	Research is undertaken into how other rural authorities, public sector organisations eg NHS Foundation Trusts, the private sector, and the voluntary and community sector approach training and guidance.

Shropshire Council training programmes and briefings for managers.			<p>This is shared with Human Resources, to particularly aid in appointing officer training, linked to safeguarding; in one-off support and guidance; in induction of new employees and elected Members.</p> <p>There are additional courses for managers, delivered through HR, as well as an Equality Policy developed through HR and available on the intranet</p>
7. Evaluate increased understanding amongst officers and elected Members about the challenges faced by people with Protected Characteristics and people at risk of social exclusion	Human Resources Team; Rurality and Equalities Specialist, Performance Intelligence and Policy Team	October 2020	<p>Members were asked for feedback following attendance at workshop sessions held in July 2017, following elections held that year.</p> <p>Staff feedback is obtained on completion of the module on equality, diversity and social inclusion, as with all other modules within the online training package developed and introduced in autumn 2018</p> <p>Feedback has been positive in terms of views on content and approach, with practical suggestions made for improvement to technical operability as well as the sharing of perspectives based upon personal experiences.</p> <p>It is important to note that we do not have a gauge at present as to how well equipped staff or Members feel to deal</p>

			with issues as they occur, a year and a half or more on from training, and that a stocktake would be timely.
8. Support positive joint approaches towards recruitment and retention of young people in local businesses and within the Council	Human Resources Team	Ongoing, in line with Council and partnership objectives	<p>Shropshire Council continues to promote the development of employees through its on-line learning system, making learning more accessible and flexible to all employees, and in addition through the apprenticeship framework.</p> <p>Apprenticeship are delivered by local and national providers and offer flexibility in the way they deliver training to meet the needs of the organisation. Shropshire Council continues to work with these providers to develop apprenticeships for the future, providing greater flexibility to all employees in accessing apprenticeships</p> <p>The Council is a member of the National Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network which commits to making a change to the diversity and inclusion of apprenticeships both internally and externally, improving social mobility while building a skilled, diverse workforce.</p>

Appendix B to Report to Cabinet 06072020: Shropshire Council Equality Objectives Action Plan 2020 to 2024

Progress 2016 to 2020

Overall Strategic Action A: publish more visibly

Key Action	By whom	By when	Commentary 2020
<p>A. i.) Organise online resource materials on equalities, diversity and social inclusion into one location on the external website at www.shropshire.gov.uk,</p> <p>This is so that information is presented as logically and visibly as possible, with links to further material that may be helpful, and keep under review to ensure timeliness and relevance.</p>	Rurality and Equalities Specialist; Digital Services Team	July 2014, with review every three months thereafter	<p>The web location for content is badged: "equality, diversity and social inclusion"</p> <p>The focus is on the internet, for internal and external audiences alike, whilst Council efforts continue to aid digital inclusion and offer alternatives such as support and advice via telephone.</p> <p>Content is kept under review, as are signposts to other parts of the Council website. Further material is added every year around Holocaust Memorial Day activities, whilst the annual diversity reports form a visible reference for changes over time.</p>
<p>A. ii.) Publish examples of Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessments (ESIAs) in one place on the website together with the refreshed guidance, in order to help internal and external audiences to understand what is expected and why, and in order to show use made of these impact assessments in decision making</p>	Rurality and Equalities Specialist; Digital Services Team	Ongoing	<p>Equality impact assessment materials have been revised every two years at timely stocktake moments. The templates are available on the website and on the Council intranet, together with examples.</p> <p>Further guidance was provided for all staff as part of mandatory online</p>

			<p>training, through a course package launched in autumn 2018.</p> <p>*This work area is an area for taking forward, as the Council agreed in 2020 to the introduction of health impact assessments, complementing climate change appraisals and ESIA materials.</p>
A. iii.) Publish and present contextual equality information in a range of ways and through local, national and European opportunities that arise, in order to enable use to be made in corporate and service area policy and strategy development of all opportunities to aid social inclusion.	Commissioning Unit Manager; Performance Intelligence and Policy Team; Communications Team; Service Areas	Ongoing	<p>Examples collated and online presence utilised, including partner organisation websites and Marches LEP website.</p> <p>Examples include area profiles shared with Members as community leaders and published on the website; Census profiles; and the annual service user and workforce diversity monitoring reports also published on the Council website.</p>
A. iv.) Utilise appropriate communication channels including social media and face to face, in order to promote opportunities to foster good relations between people from diverse communities of place and interest as well as people with Protected Characteristics.	Commissioning Unit Manager; Digital Services Manager; Customer Service Team; Communications Team	Ongoing	<p>Examples collated and online presence utilised, including partner organisation websites and Marches LEP website. An example would be detail about Holocaust Memorial Day activities, published as press releases, and as a mini-site on the Council website, featured in local media and recorded on the national Holocaust Memorial Day Trust website. Other examples would be linkages made to support work to welcome Syrian refugees to the county.</p>

Overall Strategic Action B: collect and analyse more proactively

Key Action	By whom	By when	Commentary 2020
B. i.) Analyse service user and community profile evidence base and report back in annual service user diversity reports, in order to prioritise where the gaps are in the evidence base and seek to fill them.	Commissioning Unit Manager; Rurality and Equalities Specialist; Performance Intelligence and Policy Team; Service Areas	September 2016; reviews each year linked to annual service user diversity report	<p>Comparison work into rural authority approaches utilises County Council network (CCN) and Rural Services network (RSN) resources, and opportunities to contribute to data collection. An example would be response made for the CCN report on Social Mobility, published in 2018.</p> <p>Service areas also make use of ESIIAs in order to collate and present evidence about the communities, service users and stakeholders with whom they work</p>
B. ii.) Collect data about service user participation in service area activity and about participation by partner organisations and the wider community in service area activity and in public events including consultation opportunities	Commissioning Unit Manager; Rurality and Equalities Specialist; Performance Intelligence and Policy Team; Service Areas; Community and Voluntary Sector Assembly	Ongoing	Collection involves usage of a standard monitoring chart at public events. The Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly (VCSA) has kindly acted as a pilot in this regard, and continues to use it at events. The chart has previously been used as an interactive and non-intrusive way to gather such information from members of the community in upwards of 40 community toolkit events within rural parishes and market towns. It was also adapted for use in adult social care consultation event involving service users and carers, where again it was used as an interactive tool with use of stickers.

Key Action	By Whom	By When	Commentary 2020
B. iii.) Analyse internal information on workforce, and compare with good practice authorities, in order to identify and comment on trends and prioritise where the gaps may be in representation within the workforce of groups with Protected Characteristics.	Human Resources Team; Rurality and Equalities Specialist, Performance Intelligence and Policy Team	September 2016; reviews each year linked to annual workforce diversity report	<p>Comparison work is maintained as a watching brief. An example would be Coventry CC approaches towards supporting staff with disabilities requiring workplace adjustments, undertaken as part of office reorganisations there.</p> <p>Positive approaches towards recruitment and retention link to research into projected population shift in specific locations eg influx of students to University Centre Shrewsbury</p> <p>Shropshire Council introduced a Care Leaver Apprenticeship programme in 2018 to enable apprenticeship and development opportunities for Care Leavers and Looked After Children.</p> <p>The Council is part of the Apprenticeship Diversity Network and utilises this network and Apprenticeship Training Providers to advertise recruitment opportunities more widely across the County and beyond.</p>
B. iv.) Identify good practice in training and guidance around discrimination, harassment or victimisation, including around recruitment, induction and retention, and where appropriate introduce this as part of Shropshire	Human Resources Team; Rurality and Equalities Specialist, Performance Intelligence and Policy Team	March 2016; reviews are linked to preparation of annual workforce	Research is undertaken into how other rural authorities, public sector organisations eg NHS Foundation Trusts, the private sector, and the voluntary and community sector approach training and guidance.

Council training programmes and briefings for officers and elected Members.		diversity report	<p>This is shared with Human Resources, to particularly aid in appointing officer training, linked to safeguarding; in one-off support and guidance; in induction of new employees and elected Members.</p> <p>Training session were arranged for all Members in 2017. An online training module for all staff was developed as part of a mandatory package of training resources, rolled out in autumn 2018.</p>
B. v.) Evaluate perceived effectiveness of briefings and training programmes, in order to ensure officers and Members feel equipped and encouraged to come forward where any such incidents occur	Human Resources Team; Performance Intelligence and Policy Team; Communications Team	March 2017	<p>Discussions were undertaken into how this may best be achieved for town and parish councils, and bespoke training was provided through HR to councils that came forward.</p> <p>Members were asked for feedback following attendance at workshop sessions held in July 2017, following local elections.</p> <p>Staff feedback is obtained on completion of the module on equality, diversity and social inclusion, as with all other modules within the online training package developed and introduced in autumn 2018.</p> <p>Feedback has been positive in terms of views on content and approach, with</p>

			<p>practical suggestions made for improvement to technical operability as well as the sharing of perspectives based upon personal experiences.</p> <p>It is important to note that we do not have a gauge at present as to how well equipped staff and Members feel to deal with issues as they occur, a year and a half or more on from training, and that a stocktake would be timely.</p>
B. vi.)Evaluate perceived effectiveness of communication methods for people experiencing or observing discrimination, harassment or victimisation, in order to ensure that service users and members of the public feel equipped to come forward where any such incidents occur, including perceived hate crime	Joint Agency Hate Crime Reporting Group; Community Safety Team; Feedback and Insight Team; Communications Team; Shropshire Council Service Areas	September 2016	<p>Easy-to-understand hate crime reporting forms were progressed as an action through the Joint Agency Hate Crime Reporting Group, with leadership from Andrew Gough in achieving completion of this action.</p> <p>Evaluation was linked to corporate research into projected population shift in specific locations eg influx of students to the new university in Shrewsbury, and to support for work to welcome Syrian refugees to the county.</p> <p>It is important to add that whilst the Reporting Group no longer exists, data is still collected by the Police and reporting by individuals is encouraged through processes promoted on the Council's website.</p>

			*This work area is an area for taking forward, given spikes in hate crime incidents attributed to Brexit and potentially to the Covid-19 pandemic
B. vii.) Evaluate perceived effectiveness of refreshed inter agency hate crime reporting materials, in order to ensure officers and Members feel equipped and encouraged to make use of these and refer the community to these where any such incidents occur	Joint Agency Hate Crime Reporting Group; Community Safety Team; Feedback and Insight Team; Communications Team; Shropshire Council Service Areas	March 2017	<p>Refreshed inter agency hate crime material formed part of a Cultural and Diversity Day in Shrewsbury in July 2015. Further discussions were undertaken through the Reporting Group into how training and support may best be achieved for Shropshire Council officers and Members. Guidance on hate crime was subsequently included in the online training course for staff.</p> <p>*This work area is an area for taking forward, given spikes in hate crime incidents attributed to Brexit and potentially to the Covid-19 pandemic</p>
B. viii.) Establish current patterns of hate crime incident reporting, in order to help target inter agency efforts to collect and monitor such data, and to publicise reporting channels including online	Joint Agency Hate Crime Reporting Group; Community Safety Team; Communications Team	Ongoing	<p>Research was undertaken through the Group to analyse levels of hate crime under reporting in the county. Progress reports were made to the Group.</p> <p>*This work area is an area for taking forward, given spikes in hate crime incidents attributed to Brexit and potentially to the Covid-19 pandemic</p>

Overall Strategic Action C: work more jointly

Key Action	By whom	By when	Commentary
C. i.) Share materials across sectors, in order to pool resources for maximum effect and increase understanding amongst the general public, service users and communities of the challenges faced by people with Protected Characteristics and people at risk of social exclusion.	Commissioning Unit; Communications Team; Marches LEP Social Inclusion Mini Group; Shropshire Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly; other strategic and collaborative partnership working arrangements	Ongoing; actions to be planned for 2016/2017	<p>Explore feasibility of running joint sub-regional local events on specific topics, supported by officers in the Commissioning Unit to aid linkages across sectors and organisational boundaries eg mental well-being and employment, eg digital skills.</p> <p>Explore potential actions through the Marches LEP Social Inclusion Mini Group, to follow up on activity already completed.</p> <p>*This work area was not fully explored, and is an area for taking forward, adapting in order to maximise current and planned collaborative arrangements across sectors and across borders.</p>
C. ii.) Promote Holocaust Memorial Day, 27 th January each year across the county and more widely	Commissioning Unit; Inter Faith Forums; Communications Team; Digital Services Team; Outdoor Recreation Team; libraries; primary and secondary schools and colleges..	January each year	<p>Activities are focussed on work with primary schools and interfaith forums.</p> <p>There are now 12 trees in the HMD memorial cherry tree orchard being grown with schools across Shropshire</p> <p>Details about activities are published as press releases, as a mini-site on the</p>

			<p>Council website, and via the national Holocaust Memorial Day Trust website.</p> <p>The South Shropshire Interfaith Forum was also supported by the Council in a successful artwork project involving Syrian refugee families, which became one of the 75 Flames chosen for a national event in 2020 to mark the 75 years since the liberation of Auschwitz.</p>
C. iii.) Continue to promote national events, in order to pool resources for maximum effect and increase understanding amongst the general public, service users and communities of the challenges faced by people with Protected Characteristics and people at risk of social exclusion.	Commissioning Unit; Service Areas; Communications Team; other strategic and collaborative partnership working arrangements	Ongoing	Commissioning Unit officers monitor calendar details of key dates and events, and arrange briefings and or press releases as appropriate, utilising LGA, EHRC and other national resources.
C. iv.) Evaluate perceived effectiveness of joint local events and initiatives and joint promotion of national events in helping service users and communities to feel better equipped to recognise discrimination, harassment and victimisation against groups and individuals, and to feel better able to know what to do next.	Commissioning Unit; Service Areas; Communications Team; Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly; Marches LEP; other strategic and collaborative partnership working arrangements,	March 2017	<p>Evaluation of Holocaust Memorial Day involves elected Members, the South Shropshire Interfaith Forum and the Shrewsbury Interfaith Forum, who are linked into the VCSA (Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly); local primary schools, and local Members for the schools involved.</p> <p>This takes place on an annual basis ahead of the next year's events.</p>

			This exemplar now needs to be replicated for other events such as Show Racism the Red Card, supported by the Council and Unite in 2019, and for future events or campaigns.
C. v.) Identify good partnership practices at local and national level in achieving progress towards the three national equality aims, ie.: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations, in order to aid Shropshire Council to meet its general equality duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty and to monitor application of corporate values.	Rurality and Equalities Specialist, Performance Intelligence and Policy Team	March 2017	<p>Examples such as the NHS workforce race equality standard were utilised to develop materials, and in so doing to seek to help meet the three aims.</p> <p>The support that was anticipated for staff in understanding the PSED and in making use of ESIIAs for service changes, was incorporated into the online training module rolled out in autumn 2018.</p>
C. vi.) Identify good practice in training and guidance on developing and maintaining good relations, including around recruitment, induction and retention, and where appropriate, introduce this as part of Shropshire Council training programmes and briefings for officers and elected Members.	Human Resources Team; Rurality and Equalities Specialist, Performance Intelligence and Policy Team	March 2016; reviews are linked to preparation of annual workforce diversity report	<p>Research is undertaken into how other rural authorities, public sector organisations, the private sector, and the voluntary and community sector approach training and guidance.</p> <p>This is shared with Human Resources, to particularly aid in appointing officer training, linked to safeguarding; in one-off support and guidance; in induction of new employees and elected Members.</p> <p>Training session were arranged for all Members in 2017, following elections that year.</p>

			<p>An online training module for all staff was developed as part of a mandatory package of training resources, rolled out in autumn 2018.</p> <p>There are additional courses for managers, delivered through HR, as well as an Equality Policy developed through HR and available on the intranet</p>
C. vii.) Evaluate increased understanding amongst officers and elected Members about the challenges faced by people with Protected Characteristics and people at risk of social exclusion	Human Resources Team; Rurality and Equalities Specialist, Performance Intelligence and Policy Team	March 2017	<p>Discussions were undertaken into how this may best also be achieved for town and parish councils, and bespoke training was provided through HR to councils that came forward.</p> <p>Members were asked for feedback following attendance at workshop sessions held in July 2017, following elections held that year.</p> <p>Staff feedback is obtained on completion of the module on equality, diversity and social inclusion, as with all other modules within the online training package developed and introduced in autumn 2018</p> <p>Feedback has been positive in terms of views on content and approach, with practical suggestions made for improvement to technical operability as</p>

			<p>well as the sharing of perspectives based upon personal experiences.</p> <p>It is important to note that we do not have a gauge at present as to how well equipped staff or Members feel to deal with issues as they occur, a year and a half or more on from training, and that a stocktake would be timely.</p>
C. viii.) Support positive joint approaches towards recruitment and retention of young people in local businesses across the sub region	Human Resources Team; Marches LEP Social Inclusion Mini Group	Ongoing, in line with Council and partnership objectives	<p>An increase in Shropshire Council Teams is creating apprenticeship opportunities for young people to access varied levels of apprenticeships including degree level courses to encourage retention of young people within the county i.e. Social Work, Chartered Surveyors etc.</p> <p>The Council's most recent graduate programme (2018-2020) supported them with development opportunities and additional qualifications via the Apprenticeship Levy.</p> <p>In 2020 Shropshire Council will look to implement the Levy Transfer with a priority to support hard to reach groups, those who have been affected by Covid-19, unemployed and NEETs and young people aged 16-19.</p>

			This all builds upon previous activity including a graduate scheme which ran at Shropshire Council, which saw 21 graduates placed between 2011 and 2015
C. ix.) Utilise appropriate communication channels including social media and face to face, in order to promote opportunities to foster good relations between people from diverse communities of place and interest and people with protected characteristics	Commissioning Unit; Customer Service Team; Digital Services Team; Communications Team	Ongoing	<p>Examples are collated and online presence utilised, including partner organisation and Marches LEP websites.</p> <p>One example is Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD), which includes mini-site on the Council website, features on local media, and publicity and recording of activities on the national HMD Trust website, thereby raising the profile of Shropshire as a welcoming place as well as providing opportunity for young people to work with representatives of a range of faith communities.</p>

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Shropshire Council Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)
Part One Screening Record 2020

A. Summary Sheet on Accountability and Actions

Name of proposed service change

Shropshire Council Equality Objectives Action Plan 2020 to 2024

Name of lead officer carrying out the screening

Mrs Lois Dale

Decision, review and monitoring

Decision	Yes	No
Part One ESIIA Only?	Yes	
Proceed to Part Two Full Report?		No

If completion of a Part One assessment is an appropriate and proportionate action at this stage, please use the boxes below and sign off as indicated. If a Part Two report is required, please move on to full report stage.

Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change in terms of equality and social inclusion considerations

Screening indicates that a medium positive impact is anticipated for all groupings within the community and thus for the whole community, as the Council's equality objectives action plan sets out to help the Council make progress towards achieving the three national equality aims set out in the general equality duty placed upon local authorities under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

The workforce of the Council is a key target group in the Council's equality endeavours, as are the elected Members of the Council as community leaders. The assistance of all staff across all service areas, in taking account of equality considerations in their everyday actions and in applying such considerations to planned changes to services, for example through ESIIAs, will help the Council to proactively meet its PSED as well as mitigate against any risks of non compliance.

Publication of the Equality Objectives Action Plan for 2020 to 2024 will allow the Council to further collaborate with communities and partners at a local level, with stakeholders at a local and sub-regional level, and with Government at a national level. This will maximise the opportunities to realise policy intentions and in so doing increase positive impacts across groupings. It will also enable the Council to build upon progress made during the period 2016 to 2020.

National evidence to date has identified a disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 pandemic for groupings including Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority (BAME) communities, faith communities, younger people, older people, people with disabilities, and those for whom there

is a gendered economic impact. These groupings all fall within what are termed Protected Characteristic groupings under the Equality Act 2010.

The recent Public Health England (PHE) report, entitled: *“Beyond the data; understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups”*, has brought into sharp relief the additional challenges in BAME communities around finding out about and accessing services, in terms of the information and support that we provide, and the ways in which we seek to provide such help. This also brings in joint efforts across our area and work with other neighbouring authorities, public sector organisations, and the voluntary and community sector across our borders

Considerations around social inclusion and access to services are to the forefront of our minds as a large and sparsely populated rural county, as well as in the minds of national policymakers, as the impacts of the pandemic have thrown such inequalities into sharp relief.

The Equality Objectives Action Plan accordingly includes proposed actions for joint work to identify and seek to address the inequalities emerging to date across a range of groupings and communities affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. This should then facilitate tie in with national actions in response to a range of groupings affected, as well as to the recommendations made in the Public Health England report.

The work will usefully build upon the relationships already established with faith communities as part of the Council’s ongoing efforts to work with communities and schools to commemorate annual Holocaust Memorial Day, through planting a cherry tree every year and in so doing growing a cherry tree orchard of remembrance across the county. The aims are to ensure that the Holocaust and other genocides are never forgotten, to learn more about this history of persecution towards groupings, and to help children to understand the importance of fostering good relationships between people of different faiths.

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change in terms of equality and social inclusion considerations

We will continue to target efforts at identifying any gaps in equality and diversity data, and in finding out where there may be barriers to accessing particular services, and how this might be addressed, for people with one or more of the Protected Characteristics and for people at risk of social exclusion. This will be reported upon in the annual Service User and Workforce Diversity Reports published online.

Cabinet is also being asked to agree to receive a progress report on equality developments at local and national level at a timely future date, at which point further recommendations may be tabled, specifically with regard to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic upon groupings and communities in Shropshire.

The Council is developing actions to enhance any positive impacts for groupings arising from the pandemic, due to realising the potential of online services to increase social inclusion, eg for faith communities eg for younger people, older people, and people at risk of social isolation, subject to acquisition of digital skills and to assured digital connectivity.

Research has been scoped out and is underway into the impact for groupings of a lack of physical access to facilities such as leisure centres, day centres and open spaces during the pandemic, and to schools and colleges.

Any changes to service configurations towards greater use of online resources will need to ensure that the importance of physical access to such facilities and amenities, not least in minimising social isolation, remains to the forefront of our minds.

Associated ESIIAs

A screening ESIIA was carried out for the previous Equality and Objectives Action Plan 2016 to 2020, reported to Cabinet on 13th July 2016.

Actions to mitigate negative impact, enhance positive impact, and review and monitor overall impacts in terms of any other considerations. This includes climate change and health and well being considerations

Cabinet gave recent approval to the use of health impact assessments. This proposal provides an early opportunity for utilising the guidance that has been developed for use in this regard, in order to more fully capture the health and well being benefits anticipated. It is timely that such approval was sought and given, as the decision was made just before the Covid-19 pandemic reached Shropshire, and as the Council will be able to focus and shape local outcomes to improve health and well being across groupings through joint efforts across sectors, utilising emerging national evidence and national learning points. This is particularly so for people in BAME groupings, for men, for people who are obese, and for older people.



Maximising the positive equality impacts in terms of economic benefits is focussed upon joint efforts to influence national policy around social inclusion, including through the Rural Services Network, and joint work through the Shropshire Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly and the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This has involved collating and submitting evidence to parliamentary select committee inquiries around digital and social inclusion issues, the rural economy, and regional disparities. We also engage directly with Government Departments on such issues, for example with the Department of Health on the Industrial Strategy Grand Challenge of an Ageing Society. We will continue to do so.

The groupings likely to benefit in economic terms are younger people, people who do not have digital skills to enable them to make the most of online opportunities to access services and support, and people at risk of physical and digital isolation, whether they live in one of our more rural areas or within one of our market towns and villages.

Looking at environmental impacts, with regard to the planting of trees, there is a complementary action to carbon offsetting in that there is anticipated to be a low positive outcome in relation specifically to the growing of a Holocaust Memorial cherry tree orchard of remembrance across Shropshire, with a tree planted with a different primary school each year. Each time a tree is planted, the children at the school learn more about the natural environment and the need to care for the natural world that they see around them, as well as about the need to never forget the Holocaust and other genocides, and to care for the people around them. There are now twelve trees planted across Shropshire.

This action could be complemented by other environmental activities through schools and maximisation of use of outdoor amenities and green spaces, to further promote mental and physical well being and opportunities for people to access such amenities regardless of their location within Shropshire. This could for example include transport arrangements.

Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
Lead officer carrying out the screening Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist		22 nd June 2020
Any internal support* Tom Dodds, Intelligence and Insight Manager		25 th June 2020
Any external support**		

**This refers to other officers within the service area*

***This refers either to support external to the service but within the Council, eg from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist, or support external to the Council, eg from a peer authority*

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
Lead officer's name		22 nd June 2020
Accountable officer's name		25 th June 2020

**This may either be the Head of Service or the lead officer*

B. Detailed Screening Assessment

Aims of the service change and description

The Equality Act 2010 legislation states that a local authority listed in the Act must comply with both a general equality duty and with specific duties, as set out in the Act and described as the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This includes Shropshire Council as a local unitary authority.

To demonstrate full compliance with the general duty, we are required to publish annual information about our workforce diversity and service user diversity. In order to demonstrate full compliance with the specific duties, we are required to publish one or more equality objectives which we think we should achieve. The frequency for these is a minimum of every four years.

The regulations also specify that an authority listed in the Act must publish its equality information and equality objectives in a manner which is accessible to the public and may publish this information within another published document. Diversity reports are therefore on the Council website, along with the equality objectives action plan 2016 to 2020 and other associated materials, within the section "Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion".

If the Council did not publish an action plan for the period 2020 to 2024, it would not be in a position to readily demonstrate compliance with the PSED. This would represent a major risk, not least in reputational terms, as it would involve breach of legal obligation, affect more than one group of stakeholders, attract the medium-term attention of legislative or regulatory bodies and potentially attract significant adverse media interest. This is likely to be heightened already, given what is known to date about the disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 pandemic upon people in Protected Characteristic groupings

Publication of the Equality Objectives Action Plan for 2020 to 2024 will allow the Council to further collaborate with communities and partners at a local level, with stakeholders at a local and sub-regional level, and with Government at a national level, in order to maximise the opportunities to realise policy intentions as per core corporate values around equality.

The requirement provides an opportunity to not only set out our proposed actions for the next four year period, covering 2020 to 2024, but also reflect upon progress made over the course of the four year period 2016 to 2020, in terms of equality, diversity and social inclusion.

Emphasis placed by the Council upon these actions, and visible commitment shown by the Council in so doing, aids the Council to meet its general equality duty under the PSED. This may be described as the duty on a public authority, when carrying out its functions, to have what is called *due regard* to three national equality aims.

The national equality aims are:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advancing equality of opportunity;
- Fostering good relations.

Publication of an approved Equality Objectives Action Plan 2020 to 2024 will thus enable up to date positioning of the Council to assist in efforts to meet its PSED, seek to demonstrate and develop good practice in so doing, and facilitate timely links with other local and national policy and strategy development in the arena of equality, diversity, and social inclusion.

National evidence to date has identified a disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 pandemic for groupings including Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority (BAME) communities, faith communities, younger people, older people, people with disabilities, and those for whom there is a gendered economic impact. These groupings all fall within what are termed Protected Characteristic groupings under the Equality Act 2010.

Considerations around social inclusion and access to services are also to the forefront of our minds as a large and sparsely populated rural county, as well as in the minds of national policymakers, as the impacts of the pandemic have thrown such inequalities into sharp relief.

The Equality Objectives Action Plan accordingly includes proposed actions for joint work to identify and seek to address the inequalities emerging to date across a range of groupings and communities affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. This should then facilitate tie in with national actions in response to a range of groupings affected, as well as to the recommendations made in the Public Health England report *“Beyond the data; understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups”*; PHE, June 2020.

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

All those who live in, work in and visit Shropshire.

All those who seek to serve and support communities and groupings within them across Shropshire, including, in alphabetical order:

- Equality and Human Rights Commission
- Government Departments and agencies
- Holocaust Memorial Day Trust
- Inter faith forums and faith communities
- Local authorities and collectives thereof, including the County Councils Network (CCN), the Local Government Association (LGA), the Rural Services Network (RSN), and the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)
- Local Members of Parliament
- Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)
- Other public sector and business sector organisations
- Parish and town councils
- Schools, colleges and universities
- Shropshire Business Board
- Shropshire Council councillors
- Shropshire Council workforce
- Shropshire Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly
- Voluntary and community organisations, alliances and movements

This list is not intended to be exhaustive, but it is intended to demonstrate inclusive approaches alongside the need to engage with specific target groupings according to specific circumstances eg approaches to achieve digital connectivity across the county involve a range of sectors and organisations.

Evidence used for screening of the service change

- Equality and Human Rights Commission resources and guidance
- Equality Objectives Action Plans 2012 to 2016 and 2016 to 2020
- Local authority comparator data
- ONS Statistics
- Public Health England statistics and analyses with regard to the Covid-19 pandemic
- Rural Services Network resources on rural issues and needs
- Shropshire Council county level and area profiles, statistical analyses and reports
- Shropshire Council service area data

This list is not intended to be exhaustive, but it is intended to demonstrate the breadth of evidence not only collated to date but also required to be kept up to date, in order to facilitate timely and evidence based decision making processes.

In producing the draft action plan for 2020 to 2024, use has also been made of: evidence collected for annual service user and workforce diversity reports; learning points from actions completed for 2016 to 2020; feedback from communities, stakeholders and staff in development of approaches including place based approaches towards working with communities; Council and other contributions to national consultations and opportunities to submit evidence about needs; and good practice examples of approaches to equality and social inclusion, particularly in rural areas.

Specific consultation and engagement with intended audiences and target groups for the service change

Actions have been scoped out within the action plan 2020 to 2024 around specific groupings eg BAME groupings adversely affected by Covid-19, as well as around general approaches, eg joint efforts to tackle racism eg efforts to promote social inclusion across our rural county eg updates of staff and Member training and guidance resources around equality, diversity and social inclusion.

Consultation and engagement will therefore be adapted according to the actions to be carried out, and it may be that specific screening ESIAs will need to be undertaken, particularly if there is public consultation planned.

Initial assessment for each group

Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have on a group, through inserting a tick in the relevant column. Please add any extra notes that you think might be helpful for readers.

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>
Age (please include children, young people, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group eg child for whom there are safeguarding concerns eg older person with disability)			Medium positive impact	
Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)			Medium positive impact	
Gender re-assignment (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			Medium positive impact	
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			Medium positive impact	
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			Medium positive impact	
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, gypsy, traveller)			Medium positive impact	
Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)			Medium positive impact	
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			Medium positive impact	
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)			Medium positive impact	
Other: Social Inclusion (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; people with health inequalities; households in poverty; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable)			Medium positive impact	

Identification of likely impact of the service change in terms of other considerations including climate change and health and well being

Cabinet gave recent approval to the use of health impact assessments. This proposal provides an early opportunity for utilising the guidance that has been developed by Public Health colleagues with regard to impact upon health and well being, in order to more fully optimise evidence alongside it and capture health and well being benefits across groupings.

The 2020 to 2024 Action Plan as proposed is intended to have positive impacts in terms of the human rights of individuals and groups.

The 2020 to 2024 Action Plan as proposed is intended to have a positive or negative impact on fostering good relations and promoting social inclusion.

There are intended to be positive equality impacts in terms of economic benefits, which are focussed upon joint efforts to influence national policy around social inclusion, including through the Rural Services Network, and joint work through the Shropshire Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly and the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This has involved collating and submitting evidence to parliamentary select committee inquiries around digital and social inclusion issues, the rural economy, and regional disparities. We have also engaged directly with Government Departments on such issues. We will continue to do so.

The groupings likely to benefit in economic terms are younger people, people who do not have digital skills to enable them to make the most of online opportunities to access services and support, and people at risk of physical and digital isolation, whether they live in one of our more rural areas or within one of our market towns and villages.

Looking at environmental impacts, with regard to the planting of trees, there is a complementary action to carbon offsetting in that there is anticipated to be a low positive outcome in relation specifically to the growing of a Holocaust Memorial cherry tree orchard of remembrance across Shropshire, with a tree planted with a different primary school each year. Each time a tree is planted, the children at the school learn more about the natural environment and the need to care for the natural world that they see around them, as well as about the need to never forget the Holocaust and other genocides, and to care for the people around them. There are now twelve trees planted across Shropshire.

There is anticipated to continue to be a neutral to low positive outcome in relation to the following aspects of climate change mitigation, with efforts to introduce and maximise online resources matched by efforts to improve digital connectivity and reduce social isolation across the county. Any energy efficiency changes to the fabric of community assets and buildings that improves their energy and fuel outputs will be of benefit to the communities that make use of them, as well as to the wider environment, just as better use of local buildings that reduces or obviates the need to travel other than on foot or by bicycle will also be of benefit to the wider environment.

- Energy and fuel consumption
- Renewable energy generation
- Climate Change adaptation

Guidance Notes

1. Corporate and Service Area Policy and Practice on Equality and Social inclusion

This involves taking an equality and social inclusion approach in planning changes to services, policies or procedures, including those that may be required by Government.

The decisions that you make when you are planning a service change need to be recorded, to demonstrate that you have thought about the possible equality impacts on communities and to show openness and transparency in your decision making processes.

This is where Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessments (ESIAs) come in. Where you carry out an ESIA in your service area, this provides an opportunity to show:

- What evidence you have drawn upon to help you to recommend a strategy or policy or a course of action to Cabinet;
- What target groups and audiences you have worked with to date;
- What actions you will take in order to mitigate any likely negative impact upon a group or groupings, and enhance any positive effects for a group or groupings; and
- What actions you are planning to review the impact of your planned service change.

The formal template is there not only to help the service area but also to act as a stand alone for a member of the public to read.

The approach helps to identify whether or not any new or significant changes to services, including policies, procedures, functions or projects, may have an adverse impact on a particular group of people, and whether the human rights of individuals may be affected.

This assessment encompasses consideration of social inclusion. This is so that we are thinking as carefully and completely as possible about all Shropshire groups and communities, including people in rural areas and people we may describe as vulnerable, for example due to low income or to safeguarding concerns, as well as people in what are described as the nine 'protected characteristics' of groups of people in our population, eg Age. We demonstrate equal treatment to people who are in these groups and to people who are not, through having what is termed 'due regard' to their needs and views when developing and implementing policy and strategy and when commissioning, procuring, arranging or delivering services.

When you are not carrying out an ESIA, you still need to demonstrate that you have considered equality in your decision-making processes. It is up to you what format you choose.-You could use a checklist, an explanatory note, or a document setting out our expectations of standards of behaviour, for contractors to read and sign. It may well not be something that is in the public domain like an ESIA, but you should still be ready for it to be made available.

Both the approaches sit with a manager, and the manager has to make the call, and record the decision made on behalf of the Council. Help and guidance is also available via the Commissioning Support Team, either for data, or for policy advice from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist. Here are some examples to get you thinking.

Carry out an ESIIA:

- If you are building or reconfiguring a building;
- If you are planning to reduce or remove a service;
- If you are consulting on a policy or a strategy;
- If you are bringing in a change to a process or procedure that involves other stakeholders and the wider community as well as particular groupings

For example, there may be a planned change to a leisure facility. This gives you the chance to look at things like flexible changing room provision, which will maximise positive impacts for everyone. A specific grouping that would benefit would be people undergoing gender reassignment

Carry out an equality and social inclusion approach:

- If you are setting out how you expect a contractor to behave with regard to equality, where you are commissioning a service or product from them;
- If you are setting out the standards of behaviour we expect from people who work with vulnerable groupings, such as taxi drivers that we license;
- If you are planning consultation and engagement activity, where we need to collect equality data in ways that will be proportionate and non-intrusive as well as meaningful for the purposes of the consultation itself;
- If you are looking at services provided by others that help the community, where we need to demonstrate a community leadership approach

For example, you may be involved in commissioning a production to tour schools or appear at a local venue, whether a community hall or somewhere like Theatre Severn. The production company should be made aware of our equality policies and our expectation that they will seek to avoid promotion of potentially negative stereotypes. Specific groupings that could be affected include: Disability, Race, Religion and Belief, and Sexual Orientation. There is positive impact to be gained from positive portrayals and use of appropriate and respectful language in regard to these groupings in particular.

2. Legal Context

It is a legal requirement for local authorities to assess the equality and human rights impact of changes proposed or made to services. It is up to us as an authority to decide what form our equality impact assessment may take. Carrying out ESIIAs helps us as a public authority to ensure that, as far as possible, we are taking actions to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010, and to thus demonstrate that the three equality aims are integral to our decision making processes. These are: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations.

Service areas would ordinarily carry out a screening assessment, or Part One equality impact assessment. This enables energies to be focussed on review and monitoring and ongoing evidence collection about the positive or negative impacts of a service change upon groupings in the community, and for any adjustments to be considered and made accordingly.

If the screening indicates that there are likely to be significant negative impacts for groupings within the community, the service area would need to carry out a full report, or Part Two assessment. This will enable more evidence to be collected that will help the service area to reach an informed opinion. Please contact the equality policy lead within the Council for more advice and guidance in this regard, as per details below.

For further information on the use of ESIIAs: please contact your head of service or contact Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist and Council policy support on equality, via telephone 01743 258528, or email lois.dale@shropshire.gov.uk.