Shropshire Council Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)

A. Summary Sheet on Accountability and Actions

Name of proposed service change
Please use this box for the full formal name of the proposed service change, whether it is a policy, a procedure, a function, a project, an update of a strategy, etc. The term "service change" is used in this form as shorthand for whatever form the changes may take.
Shropshire Local Plan Partial Review: Third Stage: Preferred Sites, November 2018

Name of lead officer carrying out the screening
Adrian Cooper, Planning Policy and Strategy Manager

Decision, review and monitoring

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

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 separate full report stage.

Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change
The Local Plan Partial Review is likely to have a positive effect on all groups in society and is intended to do so, given its aim of driving Shropshire's sustainable development, economic growth and proactive responses to clean growth, climate change and other environmental considerations, consistent with the Council's strategic vision and objectives.   The Plan is anticipated to generate a positive impact for the following groups in particular: • Hard to reach in rural areas such as families, children and young people, older people, rural businesses, gypsies and travellers, and low income households;   • Vulnerable households in market towns, including families, older people and people on low incomes.   It is not possible at this stage to say with certainty what the likely impacts of the service change will be upon the community and upon groupings within the community.   There will be ongoing efforts to engage with people in the Protected Characteristic groupings, particularly where low levels of responses to public consultation have been received to date.   Officers will also need to work with the intended audiences for the service change, on the basis that this is all who live, work in and visit Shropshire.

From a specific engagement angle, therefore, officers will need to work with elected Members in their community leadership role to communicate the rationale for the proposed policy, and to seek to mitigate or enhance potential impacts on groupings in Shropshire.

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change

The further development of the Plan, including this further revised ESIIA to complement the Preferred Sites stage, will be informed by consultation and engagement with stakeholders throughout the review process, and by further use of evidence sources about likely negative or positive impact upon groupings within the community. The implementation of the Local Plan is monitored annually and published through the annual 'Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)'.

From an ongoing engagement angle, the service area consults formally with local communities via town and parish councils on an annual basis as well as with regard to specific proposed developments. The service area also receives feedback via customer comments, liaison with Local Joint Committees (LJCs), meetings with developers, and use of other forums where opportunities for engagement may arise, such as via the Marches LEP.

From an outcomes angle for communities, engagement with all Members as community leaders, and through Cabinet and Portfolio Holder, will help the service area and therefore the Council to ensure that information, feedback and concerns are raised through a variety of channels and that actions may then be identified as necessary to seek to mitigate any negative impacts.

The partial review of the Local Plan is designed to ensure that local policies respond to and are in general conformity with current national policy. Shropshire Council will continue to carefully monitor the impact of changes in national policy on the Local Plan and is an active contributor to national policy consultations which may have a differential or adverse impact on the county.

Associated ESIIAs

- Local Plan Partial Review Stage One: Issues and Strategic Options; January 2017
- Local Plan Partial Review Stage Two: Preferred Scale and Distribution of Development; October 2017

Both the above screening assessments accompanied reports to Cabinet

Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
Lead officer carrying out the screening Adrian Cooper, Planning Policy & Strategy Manager	Signed	7th November 2018
*Any internal support**		
*Any external support*** Mrs Lois Dale Rurality and Equalities Specialist	Signed	26th October November 2018
Head of service Gemma Davies	Signed	7th November 2018

*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 Adrian Cooper	Signed	7th November 2018
Head of service's name Gemma Davies	Signed	7th November 2018

Update equality and social inclusion impact assessment (ESIIA) form October 2018

B. <u>Detailed Screening Assessment</u>

Name of service change
Shropshire Local Plan Partial Review: Third Stage: Preferred Sites, November 2018

Aims of the service change and description
The existing Shropshire Local Plan currently comprises the Core Strategy (adopted 2011) and the Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan (adopted 2015). These documents set out proposals for the use of land and policies to guide future development in order to help to deliver the sustainable growth in Shropshire for the period up to 2026. Local Planning Authorities are required to keep under review any matters that may affect the development of its area or the planning of its development. There is a requirement to objectively assess the development needs of the County and this also permits a longer term view to be taken for the period to 2036. In addition, there continue to be significant national policy and procedural changes along with opportunities and challenges at the national and regional level which will impact, to varying degrees, on Shropshire. These matters are being addressed through a partial review of the Local Plan to help to ensure the continuing conformity of the Local Plan with national policy. The Council is keen to maintain a robust and defensible Local Plan for Shropshire and the partial review will help to ensure that there is an up to date and deliverable Plan which will help to ensure that local, rather than national policies act as the principal benchmark for planning decisions. Maintaining an up to date Local Plan will support local growth by generating certainty for investment in local development and infrastructure through a policy framework that establishes an up to date and objective assessment of our development needs and supports. There are three stages completed to date in relation to the Local Plan Partial Review, the first two of which have previously been reported to Cabinet. Screening ESIIAs have been carried out in both cases. The Preferred Sites stage is due to be considered at Cabinet on 7th November 2018. The desired outcomes remain unchanged.

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change
- Communities across Shropshire and the organisations which represent them, including town and parish councils and the voluntary and community sector;   - Organisations with strategic and cross boundary economic and environmental interests, including neighbouring local authorities, and the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP);   - A range of stakeholders, including the development industry, local businesses, housing associations, utilities companies, and the land based sector;   - Government Departments and Agencies   - Local MPs and All Party Parliamentary Group on Rural Services

Evidence used for screening of the service change

Many of the existing policies in the Core Strategy & SAMDev do not need to be amended and are to be carried forward as part of the new Plan. The partial review therefore has a focus on key areas of change, including options for the level and distribution of new housing and strategies for employment growth during the period to 2036, together with any amended policies and new site allocations which are needed to demonstrate that these requirements can be delivered.

The partial review of the Local Plan is being informed by an extensive evidence base which will be made available through the Council's web pages here: http://shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-partial-review-2016-2036/ The Preferred Sites November 2018 stage is the third stage of the partial review process and takes into account feedback from consultation on the 'Preferred Scale and Distribution of Development' stage in October 2017. About 600 responses from a range of stakeholders including members of the local community were received to the consultation. Analysis of the responses indicates that, in most cases, a majority of respondents supported the preferred approach published at that time.

The wider policy context for the review includes the Council's Corporate Plan and other key corporate documents, including the Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021, together with existing Place Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.

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

The 'Preferred Sites' stage is the third stage of the partial review process. Subsequent stages will also be informed by the responses received. Consultation is being undertaken in line with the standards set out in the Council's published Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and national guidance, along with support from the in-house feedback and insight team.

This involves making consultation documents available on the Shropshire Council web-site, and paper copies available at libraries and council offices in the main towns. A significant number of organisations and individuals will continue to be notified directly of the publication of the consultation documents in accordance with the SCI. The Plan Review process provides for active and ongoing liaison and dialogue, such as with town and parish councils. Electronic responses are encouraged using an online survey form.

Shropshire Council held a press briefing concerning this stage of the Local Plan Review process on 30th October.

An Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA) was carried out ahead of the start of the Local Plan Partial Review, in order to seek to identify likely equality impacts of the service change on all communities in Shropshire and on people in Protected Characteristics groupings. This indicated that once the likely impact on particular geographical areas or communities was better understood, a separate communication and consultation exercise with a range of stakeholders and with the general public would be beneficial. It was also

anticipated that further Stage One screening equality impact assessments would need to be carried out, to support subsequent stages in the process and to accompany reports to Cabinet.

The next timely ESIIA has been undertaken and the likely equality impacts of the Local Plan Partial Review are set out below. The aspiration remains for a low to medium positive impact on all groupings within the community as a result of the intended service change, and a positive impact for groupings of Age, Disability, and Social Inclusion. Further consultation will enable more information to be collected in this regard, with consequent opportunity to take any necessary actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the intended service change.

Initial assessment for each group

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact *Part Two ESIIA required*	High positive impact *Part One ESIIA required*	Medium positive or negative impact *Part One ESIIA required*	Low positive or negative impact *Part One ESIIA required*
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)			✓+	
Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)			✓+	
Gender re-assignment (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓+
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓+
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓+
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, gypsy, traveller)				✓+
Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)				✓+
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				✓+

Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				✓+
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)			✓+	

C. **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 (ESIIAs) come in. Where you carry out an ESIIA 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 ESIIA, 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 ESIIA, 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.

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.