

HDC Due Regard (Equality Analysis)

Due Regard (Equality Analysis) is an on-going proactive process which requires us to consider the effect our decisions are likely to have on local communities, service users and employees, particularly those most vulnerable and at risk of disadvantage.

This template has been designed to assist in the collation of information and evidence required to support the 'Due Regard' process when introducing new policies/procedures/functions and services or reviewing existing ones.

For help with this template please view the guidance document, which contains advice to assist you when you are considering the impact (both positive and negative) of the proposed actions on each of the protected equality characteristics.

Name of policy/procedure/function/service being analysed: Climate Local Action Plan

Department and section: Strategic Planning

Name of lead officer: Helen Chadwick

Other people involved (assisting or reviewing - including any service users or stakeholder groups etc.):

Date assessment completed: 20th November 2014

Step 1: Defining the policy/procedure/function/service

Is this a new, amended or reviewed policy? What are the aims, objectives and purpose and how will they be achieved? What are the main activities and which communities are likely to be affected by these activities? What are the expected outcomes?

Climate Local is a new policy to identify actions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the district and ensuring that communities are more resilient to the changes in climate that are already occurring.

Those who will be affected by the policies include communities with high energy bills; those at risk of flooding; the elderly or less able with health issues; families with dependant children, or relatives who require care.

The expected outcomes are that the overall carbon footprint of the district will be reduced, but at the same time households in the district will be able to heat their homes more efficiently and more affordably, the health impacts of extreme weather will be

reduced, and that communities will be more resilient to extreme events like flooding.

Step 2: Data collection & evidence

What relevant evidence, research, data and other information do you have and is there any further research, data or evidence you need to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known affects of the policy on different communities? Include quantitative data as well as qualitative intelligence such as community input and advice.

The emissions from the council's own estate are monitored annually and data on the overall carbon emissions per capita are published by National Government, along with domestic energy consumption. These provide a baseline for data monitoring. Flood risk maps are published by the Environment Agency and will be used to identify communities at risk of river flooding, for example parts of Great Glen. Where possible further information on flooding due to surface run-off in heavy rainfall will be gathered.

Information on population collated in the district settlement profiles based on the Census 2011 will be used to identify areas of the district where populations could be vulnerable, for example there are villages, such as Billesdon with higher than district average populations of elderly people. Villages such as Husbands Bosworth have less access to mains gas, increasing the cost of energy for those who live there. Other Government data on energy consumption and fuel poverty will be included and going forward MOSAIC will be used as well.

Information from programmes and interventions by current projects such as the Parish Emergency Planning will be used to inform potential activity.

Step 3: Consultation and involvement

Have you consulted and if so outline what you did and who you consulted with and why.

The Climate Local Plan is cross cutting, so all other service areas have been consulted. In addition there are a variety of partners, such as the Environment Agency and local groups such as Sustainable Harborough, who will be important in supporting delivery. These partners have also been consulted. In the future, for specific projects, it will be important to consult with local

communities. This is particularly important for targeted work on rural fuel poverty.

Step 4: Potential impact

Considering the evidence from the data collection and feedback from consultation, which communities will be affected and what barriers may these individuals or groups face in relation to Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Other groups e.g. rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived or disadvantaged communities and also the potential impact on Community Cohesion. Remember people have multiple characteristics so the impact of a policy on a particular community may impact people within the community differently. Where possible include numbers likely to be affected.

All residents will be encouraged to reduce their carbon footprint.

Harborough District is generally an expensive place to live, ranking 83 out of 332 (1 being least affordable), with domestic fuel costs in the 2nd quartile and transport fuel costs in the upper quartile. Rural communities suffer high prices for heating and power, as homes often have no access to mains gas. Electric heating and oil heating are more expensive leading to local fuel poverty that is difficult to find and address. Targeted access to advice to reduce bills and funding/finance to improve efficiency will help reduce rural fuel poverty and reduce bills for rural families.

The elderly or those with health needs are often at risk of health impacts from cold comes. Access to advice on energy efficiency, together with improved access to funding, will help to reduce cold related illness and improve outcomes for people returning home after a hospital stay. There are high % of pensioner households and single pensioner households in Harborough District, for example Thurnby has 32% pensioner households (cf. 23% district wide).

Families that are finding themselves with high heating and power costs will find information, advice and funding on improving energy efficiency of their homes. Government fuel poverty data from 2012 suggests that 10.6% or 3794 households are suffering from fuel poverty in Harborough District; the majority of these are working families. In addition the District Housing Condition survey indicates that many houses are older and larger, which makes improving energy efficiency more difficult and costly.

The elderly and those with mobility issues will benefit from better resilience through parish plans for emergencies including flooding and extreme weather events.

Step 5: Mitigating and assessing the impact

If you consider there to be actual or potential adverse impact or discrimination, please outline this below. State whether it is justifiable or legitimate and give reasons. If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately. If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people. Consider what barriers you can remove, whether reasonable adjustments may be necessary and how any unmet needs have identified can be addressed.

There should be no potential for adverse impact or discrimination and targeted advice at parish level should support cohesion.

Step 6: Making a decision

Summarise your findings and give an overview of whether the policy will meet Harborough District Council's responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity and human rights. Does it contribute to the achievement of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations?

The Climate Local Plan will contribute to improving equality and diversity by helping residents reduce their energy costs and providing access to more equitably priced energy. Improving community resilience will support the more vulnerable, ensuring that they receive the correct support during emergency and extreme weather events.

Step 7: Monitoring, evaluation & review of your policy/procedure/service change

What monitoring systems will you put in place to promote equality of opportunity, monitor impact and effectiveness and make positive improvements? How frequently will monitoring take place and who will be responsible?

An annual report will be published on website and shared through the Climate Local forum. The report will be reviewed in 3 years.

Equality Improvement Plan

Equality Objective :

Action: Annual report published on website

Officer Responsible: Helen Chadwick - Environment Co-ordinator

By when: Summer 2015

Equality Objective :

Action: Monitor impacts of energy efficiency measures, with input from partner organisations. (for inclusion in report)

Officer Responsible: Helen Chadwick

By when: Summer 2015

Action: Monitor health impacts of energy efficiency measures, with input from partner organisations. (for inclusion in report)

Officer Responsible: Helen Chadwick/Hollie Hutchinson/ Elaine Bird

By when: Summer 2015

Action: Monitor uptake of resilience measures by parishes. (for inclusion in report)

Officer Responsible: Helen Chadwick/Hayley Cawthorne/ Elaine Bird

By when: Summer 2015

Signed off by:

Date:

Once signed off, please forward a copy for publication to Julie Clarke, Equality and Diversity Officer
e-mail: j.clarke@harborough.gov.uk, telephone: 01858 821070.