

Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment



Completing an Equality Impact Assessment will help you to think about what impact your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service may have on people that live in, work in or visit Cambridge, as well as on City Council staff.

The template is easy to use. You do not need to have specialist equalities knowledge to complete it. It asks you to make judgements based on evidence and experience. There are guidance notes on the intranet to help you. You can also get advice from Suzanne Goff, Strategy Officer on 01223 457174 or email suzanne.goff@cambridge.gov.uk or from any member of the Joint Equalities Group.

1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service:

Anti-Poverty Strategy

2. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

The City Council has developed a draft Anti-Poverty Strategy. The aim of the strategy is to improve the standard of living and daily lives of those residents in Cambridge who are currently experiencing poverty, but also to alleviate issues that can lead to households on low incomes to experience financial pressures.

The City Council carried out public consultation on the draft Anti-Poverty Strategy between 27 October 2014 and 30 January 2015. This consultation built on initial consultation carried out in July to September 2014 to inform the development of the draft Strategy. As part of these two phases of consultation, residents and stakeholders were engaged through:

- Publication of the draft strategy and a questionnaire survey on the City Council website, which received 59 responses. The survey was publicised via: the City Council's Twitter account, a media release and other corporate communications channels; direct messages to residents associations, members of Cambridge Community and Voluntary Services (CCVS), organisations funded by City Council grants, and other relevant partner organisations; and the Cambridge Network, which has a membership of more than 1500 businesses based in Cambridge.
- Focus groups with low income residents, delivered as part of regular service user meetings organised by the City Council and partner agencies. These included: Wintercomfort service users meeting, Sheltered Schemes Residents' Association, Tenants and Leaseholders Forum, Hanover Court Residents Association meetings, and Cherry Hinton Mingle Munch.
- A stakeholder workshop, which brought together key stakeholders to consider the key issues in Cambridge, and identify interventions which have been successful, both in Cambridge and in other towns and cities.
- 25 face-to-face meetings with representatives of local organisations that are working to address different aspects of poverty in the city. Officers also attended stakeholder groups to discuss the strategy with other local organisations, such as the Equalities Panel, Local Health Partnership, Guidance Employment and Training (GET) Group, and the Homelessness Service Information Group.

The strategy identifies 7 key objectives for City Council activity to address poverty, which are set out in the table below. It also shows some broad areas of activity that will be delivered, and some initial actions that City Council services plan to undertake from 2014/15 to 2016/17 to address the key issues. The objectives are:

1. Helping people on low incomes to maximise their income and minimise their costs
2. Increasing community pride, raising aspirations and making the move into work easier
3. Reducing the impact of poverty on children and helping low income families with the cost of raising a child
4. Reducing the link between poor health and poverty
5. Ensuring that vulnerable older people and people with disabilities get the services that they need and reducing the social isolation they can experience
6. Helping people with high housing costs, increasing numbers of affordable homes, and improving the condition of people's homes

2. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

7. Working in partnership to tackle wider barriers to employment and engagement

3. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick those that apply)

Residents

Visitors

Staff

A specific client group or groups (please state):

4. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this? (Please tick)

New

Revised

Existing

5. Responsible directorate and service

Directorate: Chief Executive's Department

Service: Corporate Strategy

6. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

No

Yes (please give details):

The Anti-Poverty Strategy will be a corporate strategy, so many of the City Council's services have contributed to the delivery of the Strategy, either through delivering particular actions or through refocussing existing services. However, the key services which are currently represented on the Project Board are City Homes, Community Development, Corporate Strategy, Refuse and Environment, Revenues and Benefits and Strategic Housing.

While the Council can have a direct impact on poverty through its own services and specific initiatives, much more can be achieved through working in partnership with other organisations. We will engage with a wide range of partners as part of the development of the Strategy to develop a shared understanding of the issues and identify opportunities for joint-working.

7. Potential impact

(a) Age (any group of people of a particular age, including younger and older people – in particular, please consider any safeguarding issues for children and vulnerable adults)

As part of the development of the Anti-Poverty Strategy, we have reviewed available evidence on the nature of poverty. This suggests that some age groups of people in Cambridge may be more likely to experience poverty. For example:

- In 2013, 17% of children in Cambridge were living in a household that was claiming housing benefit.
- Pensioners make up a third of all households claiming Housing Benefit in Cambridge. Nearly one pensioner household in five (18%) in the City is claiming Housing Benefit, while more than one in three (38%) of single pensioner households (74%) in the City are claiming Housing Benefit.
- Children and young people - 15.3% child poverty in Cambridge, 12.6% in Cambridge. Highest in Abbey (26.7%), King's Hedges (25.8%), East Chesterton (23.9%)

Two of the proposed objectives and associated actions for the Strategy would help address the impact of poverty on children and older people:

- Reducing the impact of poverty on children and helping low income families with the cost of raising a child
- Ensuring that vulnerable older people and people with disabilities get the services that they need and reducing the social isolation they can experience

There a number of actions that have been identified to achieve these objectives of the Strategy, which will have a positive impact on young people and older people. For example:

- The proposed apprenticeship programme is likely to increase the number of apprenticeships available in City Council services, which would have a positive impact on the skills and employability of those that benefit from the apprenticeships created, including young people.
- If actively promote volunteering and befriending schemes delivered by voluntary and community organisations such as AgeUK leads to an increase in the number of people volunteering, this could help reduce social isolation amongst older people.
- If the campaign to promote the living wage within Cambridge results in more businesses and other organisations within the city paying at least a Living Wage to their staff, this will have a positive impact on those residents who are currently not paid the Living Wage. There may be a disproportionate representation of some of the protected characteristics amongst those who are currently paid less than the Living Wage in the city. For example, recent national research by the Resolution Foundation (Low Pay Britain, 2012) found that people aged 16-20 (76%), 21-30 (27%) and 60+ (23%) are most likely to receive less than the living wage. However, further research would be needed to demonstrate the impact on particular groups within Cambridge, as trends may differ from those observed nationally.

(b) Disability (including people with a physical impairment, sensory impairment, learning disability, mental health problem or other condition which has an impact on their daily life)

Evidence identified in the Anti-Poverty Strategy shows that having a disability or long-term health condition can limit an individual's ability to work, reduce their income, and increase their dependence on benefits. Being on a low income can also mean that people with disabilities are less likely to be able to afford arts and cultural activities and events, and more likely to experience social isolation and increased mental health issues as a result. For example:

- Disabled people are four times more likely to be out of work than non-disabled people
- Since 2010 the pay gap between disabled and non-disabled people has widened by a third, and disabled people in work are currently paid 10% less on average than people without disabilitiesⁱ
- Disabled people pay on average an extra £550 per month on costs related to their disabilityⁱⁱ
- Children in families with at least one disabled person are almost twice as likely to live in povertyⁱⁱⁱ

The following objective for the Strategy would help address the impact of poverty on people with disabilities: 'Ensuring that vulnerable older people and people with disabilities get the services that they need and reducing the social isolation they can experience'. Associated actions which will have a positive impact on people with disabilities include:

- funding outreach advice work for people with mental health issues associated with low income and debt;
- Continuing to fund the Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency (HIA), which provides people living in Cambridge who are elderly or vulnerable, who have disability needs, or who are on a low income, to repair, maintain or adapt their homes
- Continuing to ensure that at least 2% of new social housing is fully wheelchair accessible, with a further 8% to meet other specialist needs provided there is an identified need and appropriate support for the residents is available
- Continuing to provide move on accommodation for adults recovering from mental ill health, in conjunction with the Cambridgeshire County Council and Metropolitan Housing Group

(c) Gender

Available quantitative evidence and feedback from stakeholders suggests that women are more likely to experience low income and poverty than men. This is for a variety of reasons, including:

- Employment rates are lower for women (72.9%) in Cambridge than for men (90.4%)^{iv}.
- On average, women in Cambridge also earn less than men. The average weekly earnings for women working full-time in Cambridge is £560.5 per week, compared with £582.2 per week for men in the city^v.
- Women are more likely to be in part time, low paid, and less secure work than men. The percentage of female employees in the lowest 4 occupational categories (32.4%) is higher than the percentage of male employees (26.1%) in Cambridge^{vi}.

(c) Gender

- Women rely more on benefits and tax credits than men, in particular due to their caring responsibilities. Nationally on average, one-fifth of women's income is made up of welfare payments and tax credits compared to one-tenth for men^{vii}.
- The majority of lone parents are women, and it is more difficult for single parents to cover basic costs, and luxuries such as family holidays, as they tend to have lower incomes than couples.
- Women in controlling relationships may experience poverty if they do not have access to their own income or child benefit payments.
- Family breakdown can lead women to fall into poverty, particularly in situations where domestic violence forces them to flee their homes and begin new lives in different locations where they do not have access to financial resources or support from family or friends.

If the promotion of the living wage within the City results in more businesses and other organisations within the City paying a Living Wage to their staff, this will have a positive impact on those residents who are currently not paid the Living Wage. Recent national research by the Resolution Foundation (Low Pay Britain, 2012) found that a higher proportion of women (25%) receive less than the living wage than men (15%). However, further research would be needed to demonstrate the impact on particular groups within Cambridge, as trends may differ from those observed nationally.

(d) Pregnancy and maternity

No differential impact on those who are pregnant or on maternity leave has been identified through this assessment, particularly as a result of the objectives for the strategy and the projects that are currently proposed to be funded.

(e) Transgender (including gender re-assignment)

No differential impact on transgender people has been identified through this assessment, particularly as a result of the objectives for the strategy and the projects that are currently proposed to be funded.

(f) Marriage and Civil Partnership

No differential impact on people due to their marriage or civil partnership status has been identified through this assessment, particularly as a result of the objectives for the strategy and the projects that are currently proposed to be funded.

However, the evidence base for the Strategy highlights the particular of poverty on single parents and their dependents:

- Four out of five lone parent households receive Housing Benefit
- 41% of lone parents with dependent children not in employment

(g) Race or Ethnicity

Recent research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation suggests that poverty is higher among all ethnic minority groups than among white British people in the UK, but there is variation within and between ethnic groups. Ethnicity interacts with gender, class, education, disability and geography to affect poverty^{viii}.

Cambridge continues to be one of the most diverse places in the country outside of London, with an increasing proportion of its population made up of ethnic groups that are not white. In 2011, 17.5% (or 21,700 people)^{ix} identified themselves as belonging to other ethnic groups, compared to 10.0% in 2001^x. The largest of these groups in 2011 were Bangladeshi, Chinese and Indian, representing an aggregated proportion of the population of 7.9% (or 9,716 people).

While ethnic minority residents in Cambridge have a range of income levels, stakeholders consulted as part of the development of this strategy and consultation carried out as part of the review of the council's Community, Arts and Recreation Development Grants identified some ethnic groups which are more likely to be on low incomes or find it hard to access work due to language or skills barriers. For example, Bangladeshi women are more likely to experience a range of barriers, including lack of English language skills, limited access to IT equipment, and cultural barriers associated with engaging with men.

However, further work is needed as part of the development of the strategy to identify whether incidence or experience of poverty differs across ethnic group in the City. As part of this work, we intend to use a forthcoming product from the Office for National Statistics (ONS), which will map demographic data from the 2011 Census by Output Area.

No differential impact on particular ethnic groups has been identified through this assessment, either from the proposed objectives for the strategy or the activities currently proposed for funding through the Sharing Prosperity Fund. However, it may be that as the strategy develops, actions or projects are identified which have an impact on particular ethnic groups. Any such impacts will be highlighted in a revised EqIA to accompany the initial draft strategy.

(h) Religion or Belief

No differential impact on people due to their religion or belief has been identified through this assessment, particularly as a result of the objectives for the strategy and the projects that are currently proposed to be funded.

(i) Sexual Orientation

No differential impact on people due to their sexual orientation has been identified through this assessment, particularly as a result of the objectives for the strategy and the projects that are currently proposed to be funded.

(j) Other factors that may lead to inequality – in particular – please consider the impact of any changes on low income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty (please state):

The overall aim of the Anti-Poverty Strategy is to improve the standard of living and daily lives of those residents in Cambridge who are currently experiencing the impacts of poverty. The strategy will bring greater focus and coordination to the Council's existing efforts to address poverty, while identifying areas where the Council can have even greater impact.

The action plan sets out 60 initial actions which aim to have a positive impact on people on low incomes. Some of these actions involve new areas of activity, while others involve an active decision to continue funding existing activity which has a positive impact on residents with low incomes. Some of the new initiatives identified in the strategy which could have the following impacts on low income groups include:

- Securing accreditation from the Living Wage Foundation as a Living Wage employer will have a positive impact on staff, agency workers and contractors. Insofar as the Living Wage is calculated to provide for a basic cost of living and to enable employees to provide for themselves and their families, it will contribute in a tangible way to ameliorating the financial disadvantage and difficulties of those in the lowest paid jobs.
- If the Living Wage campaign succeeds in increasing the number of businesses and other organisations within the City paying at least the Living Wage to their staff, this will have a positive financial impact on those residents who are currently not paid the Living Wage.
- Providing additional support to credit unions in the city will help residents on low incomes to access banking services and affordable credit and avoid loan sharks.
- The Water and Energy Costs Anti-Poverty Scheme would provide officer capacity to assist residents to review their water usage and assess whether they would achieve savings through having a water meter installed. If additional support and promotion in lower income areas resulted in greater awareness and take-up of water meters, this could potentially have a positive impact on some residents living on low incomes if it led to a reduction in their water bills.
- The increased budget for promotion of energy efficiency and insulation schemes could have a positive impact on those living on low incomes if the proposed targeting of low income areas of the City results in greater take-up in these areas. Similarly extra Cambridge promotion of the Cambridgeshire Collective Energy Switching Scheme could have a positive impact on those on low incomes and those suffering from fuel poverty if it leads to greater awareness and take-up of the County-wide collective energy-switching scheme amongst Cambridge residents
- The apprenticeship programme aims to create more apprenticeships than are currently available in City Council services, which would have a positive impact on the skills and employability of those people that benefit from the apprenticeships created. If these people are from low income households, this could have a positive impact on poverty.

8. If you have any additional comments please add them here

9. Conclusions and Next Steps

- If you have not identified any negative impacts, please sign off this form.
- If you have identified potential negative actions, you must complete the action plan at the end of this document to set out how you propose to mitigate the impact. If you do not feel that the potential negative impact can be mitigated, you must complete question 8 to explain why that is the case.
- If there is insufficient evidence to say whether or not there is likely to be a negative impact, please complete the action plan setting out what additional information you need to gather to complete the assessment.

All completed Equality Impact Assessments must be emailed to Suzanne Goff, Strategy Officer, who will arrange for it to be published on the City Council's website.
Email suzanne.goff@cambridge.gov.uk

10. Sign off

Name and job title of assessment lead officer: David Kidston, Strategy and Partnerships Manager

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted:
Suzanne Goff, Strategy Officer

Date of completion: 3 October 2014

Date of next review of the assessment: March 2015, to coincide with the presentation of the initial draft Strategy to the Council's Strategy and Resources Committee.

ⁱ Scope, 2014, Disability Facts and Figures

ⁱⁱ Scope, 2014, Priced Out; Ending the Financial Penalty of Disability by 2020

ⁱⁱⁱ Department for Work and Pensions, 2014, Households Below Average Income

^{iv} ONS, 2014, Annual Population Survey 2013-14

^v ONS, 2014, Annual Population Survey 2013-14

^{vi} Nomis, 2015, Official labour market statistics, report DC6601EW – Residents in Cambridge Occupation by sex.

^{vii} Fawcett Society, 2015, Where's The Benefit? An Independent Inquiry into women and JSA

^{viii} Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2014, Tackling Poverty Across All Ethnicities in the UK
<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/tackling-poverty-across-all-ethnicities-uk>

^{ix} Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2011, Census

^x Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2011, Census