# Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Screening Form – V2 Template – November 2024

A successful EQIA screening will look at 5 key areas:

1. **Identify the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option to be assessed.**

A clear definition of what is being screened and its aims.

1. **Gathering Evidence and Stakeholder Engagement**

Collect data to evidence the type of barriers people face to accessing services (research, consultations, complaints and/or consult with equality groups).

1. **Assessment and Differential Impacts**

Reaching an informed decision on whether or not there is a differential impact on equality groups, and at what level.

1. **Outcomes, Action and Public Reporting**

Develop an action plan to make changes where a negative impact has been assessed. Ensure that both the assessment outcomes and the actions taken to address negative impacts are publicly reported.

1. **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

Stating how you will monitor and evaluate the **Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option** to ensure that you are continuing to achieve the expected outcomes for all groups.

## Section 1: Identify the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option

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| **Name of the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option to be screened** | Traveller Site Management and Support Function including application and allocation and eviction procedures. |
| **Reason for change in Policy or Policy Development** | Service Review |
| **List main outcome focus and supporting activities of the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option** | To minimise the impact on local communities when a plot becomes available in Fenland. This helps ensure the process is fair and addresses the needs of the community.  Decision making needs to balance and take everyone’s Human Rights into consideration.  Before deciding whether to take eviction action against illegal encampments or a resident for breach of licence an assessment of community impact is completed, and this is used to make an informed decision of whether or not to proceed with the eviction. If toleration is agreed then the Travellers need to both know and understand what is required of them to enable the Council to “tolerate” an agreed stop over, and what would warrant this being terminated and them being evicted. |
| **Name of officer completing assessment (signed and date)** | Ash Godfrey |
| **Assessment verified by (signed and date)** |  |

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| **If applicable, please provide further details about the name and description of policy being analysed**  *Briefly summarise the policy including any key information such as aims, context etc; note timescales and milestones for new policies; use plain language – NO JARGON; refer to other documents if required*  Application and Allocation Procedure – Gypsy Traveller Sites. The procedure (which is attached as appendix one) sets out how Fenland District Council allocates available pitches on the following Gypsy Traveller sites currently under its management;   * Fenland Way, Chatteris (14 pitches) * Newbridge Lane, Wisbech (24 pitches) * Sandbank, Wisbech St Mary (10 pitches) * Seadyke Bank, Murrow (12 pitches) * Turf Fen Bridge (4 pitches)   The main aim of the procedure is to ensure that the Gypsy Traveller families are allocated pitches in a fair, consistent, open and transparent approach.  The service is also responsible for support and day to day management including repairs, maintenance, rent collection and management of arrears, tenant participation and pitch allocation.  Support can include but not limited to reading letters, assistance with benefits and liaison with the support worker.  FDC are responsible for ensuring that sites are maintained fairly and equitably across all sites, this includes but is not limited to; amenity blocks, externals, grounds maintenance and fencing. FDC attempt to plan and schedule works in a proactive manner to ensure consistency across the sites and these will be based upon conditions survey and prioritised based upon need first.  However, FDC also recognises that there is a need for responsive repairs and we are committed to ensuring these are conducted in a fair and timely manner across all sites.  Repairs can be made via the phone, email or direct to the Traveller Site Officer when on site.  The main elements of the Application and Allocation Procedure are;   * The process of joining the pitch register. * Completing an application form online or hard copy (including consent and declaration). * Allocation criteria (different factors and scoring) including: * Local connections * Family circumstances * Compatibility * Medical * Employment * Current housing circumstances * References provided by existing landlords/character references. * Any exclusions/rejections to the register (and how they are notified) including applicants who have carried out malicious damage to property or those who own property within the District that they could reasonably be expected to occupy, previous unauthorised occupation of a Fenland District council managed site and/or failure to provide any references or poor references relating to anti-social behaviour and/or licence fee arrears. * Change in circumstances * The appeals process * Regular register review * Statement regarding Data Protection   **Eviction**  The procedure sets out how FDC enters into eviction proceedings on the following sites currently under management;   * Fenland Way, Chatteris (14 pitches) * Newbridge Lane, Wisbech (24 pitches) * Sandbank, Wisbech St Mary (10 pitches) * Seadyke Bank, Murrow (12 pitches) * Turf Fen Bridge (4 pitches)     The main aim of the procedure is to ensure that any eviction process is entered into in a fair, consistent, open and transparent manner.  The main elements of the Eviction Procedure are;   * Identifying reasons for eviction, for example significant or increasing arrears, breach of licence, criminal offences committed on the site or unauthorised occupation that has not been offered through the Application and Allocation procedure. * Individual support given to residents to sustain their pitch agreement including explaining the terms and conditions of the pitch licence and completing a support plan identifying any additional support needs or vulnerability. * Identification of vulnerability which is conducted so we can understand resident’s individual needs and act accordingly. Where action is being taken against a resident who holds a licence agreement, the support plan will form an assessment on vulnerability, where action is being taken against an unauthorised occupier, a Health and Welfare Assessment will be completed to identify vulnerabilities and support needs. * Decision Making process and necessary approval - Any cases referred for legal action will be approved by the Housing and Communities Manager. * Instigating legal action and carrying out the eviction - Evictions will not be carried out without a Possession Order and subsequent Warrant of Eviction issued by Court. * Statement regarding Data Protection   FDC are responsible for 64 pitches across 5 Traveller sites in Fenland; four in Wisbech and surrounding areas and one in Chatteris.  There is a demand for pitches above what we provide and FDC therefore has to allocate pitches in a fair and appropriate manner. FDC accepts applications based upon receipt of a completed application which can be downloaded or sent via hardcopy or completed over the phone with MyFenland team or a Community Support Officer.    Upon receipt of a fully completed application officers will score on the basis of priority taking into account factors including family composition, housing situation, health and medical issues, local connection and compatibility with other residents already on site. Applicants are informed that it is their responsibility to keep FDC made aware of change of circumstances which may affect their application. Successful candidates will be notified via preferred contact method and backed up in writing.  This operational procedure is due for a review and FDC recognises that could be some clarifying needed around how allocations work to ensure that it is seen as fair and up-to-date.  The management function aims to:   * Minimise the impacts of Traveller communities * Ensures a joined up approach with other agencies * Support residents to live a happy and healthy life * To ensure Travellers and the local settled communities enjoy equality of services and are part of a cohesive community – as practically as possible * To ensure people from different backgrounds respect one another’s cultures and understand all the rights and responsibilities of residents and illegal encampments.   The team provide this service to:   * Provide a consistent approach across the Council, and through partnerships to work with the Travelling community * Improve access to services and responsiveness of mainstream services and ensure that Travellers rights and needs are integrated into our approach * Seek to manage Traveller sites in an efficient and effective way, having regard to the welfare requirements, rights and responsibilities of statutory authorities, Travellers, the environment and the potential level of nuisance for local residents and the impact on the environment * Ensure that residents and illegal encampments understand their responsibilities, as well as their rights, to other residents, the environment and any behaviour that could impact on others. * Foster good community relationships, eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and positively promote mutual understanding, and seek to build mutual respect between Travellers. * Work with partners, including health, police, voluntary agencies, and other local authorities to address issues on social exclusion amongst/ towards Traveller communities. * Act in a balanced way taking everyone’s Human Rights into consideration before taking eviction action.   All the above contributes to the effective management of the Traveller Sites providing a clear framework for the guidance of other agencies, staff and elected members, Travellers and the wider community. |

## Section 2: Gathering Evidence and Stakeholder Engagement

The best approach to find out if a policy, etc. is likely to impact positively or negatively on equality groups is to look at existing research, previous consultation recommendations, studies or consult with representatives of those groups. You should list below any data, consultations (previous relevant or future planned), or any relevant research or analysis that supports the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option being undertaken.

**Reminder** – protected characteristics include age, disability, race and/or ethnicity, religion or belief (including lack of belief), gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

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| **Name any research, data, consultation or studies referred to for this assessment** | **State if this reference refers to one or more of the protected characteristics** | **Do you intend to set up your own consultation? If so, please list the main issues that you wish to address if the consultation is planned; or if consultation has been completed, please note the outcome(s) of consultation.** |
| Community feedback when undertaking research with the Gypsy Traveller community regarding accommodation needs assessments locally  Undertaken by independent consultants when undertaking community engagement with the Gypsy Traveller community regarding the Councils Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment | Race Relations | States the current and future Gypsy Traveller Accommodation needs in the district |
| Informal consultation with existing residents on our Traveller Sites to inform decisions and prevent tensions within the community. | Race Relations | Informs allocation of pitches depending on current tensions within the community. |
|  |  | On going resident feedback. |

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| **If applicable, please provide further Information about stakeholder engagement or detail used for customer analysis**  *Note relevant consultation; who took part and key findings; refer to, or attach other documents if needed; include dates where possible*  The Gypsy and Traveller communities are recognised as a Race/ Ethnicity under the Race Relations Act 1976, Equality Act 2010 and various pieces of case law. These protected characteristics underpin the management and support of our Traveller Sites within Fenland and in the Council complying with its Public Sector Equality Duty.  There is ongoing consultation with residents and any issues/good practice lessons and learned and used to amend the way we work as a team. |

## Section 3: Assessment and Differential Impacts

Use the table below to provide some narrative where you think the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Optionhas either a positive impact (contributes to promoting equality or improving relations within an equality group) or a negative impact (could disadvantage them) and note the reason for the change in policy or the reason for policy development, based on the evidence you have collated.

Please note that:

* a Positive Impact could benefit an equality group, and a negative impact could disadvantage an equality group
* for reasons of brevity race is not an exhaustive list – please edit the list if appropriate to reflect the complexity of other racial identities
* a definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 is available on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010)
* there are too many faith groups to provide a list, therefore, please input the faith group e.g., Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Hindus, etc. Consider the different faith groups individually when considering positive or negative impacts

| **Protected Characteristic** | **Specific Characteristics** | **Positive Impact** | **Neutral** | **Negative Impact** | **Socio Economic/Human Rights Impacts** |
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| Sex or Gender | Women | Any person who is pregnant or has a health issue is put in touch with health services if they aren’t already |  |  | Any health issue that hasn’t been addressed due to constantly being evicted and unable to see the health services is referred for professional assistance |
|  | Men | Any person who has a health concern is put in touch with health services if they aren’t already for any new/ ongoing health issue |  |  | As above |
|  | Transgender | Any person who has a health concern is put in touch with health services if they aren’t already for any new/ ongoing health issue |  |  | As above |
| Race | White | Most Travelling communities can be identified as protected ethnic groups in accordance with the Race Relations Act 1976, Equality Act 2020, and subsequent case law.  We therefore are able to identify any issues or concerns that people may have so that we can either signpost people to services or assist directly. |  |  | Nomadic lifestyle is an important way of life for some of the community.  The Council has 5 permanent sites and 1 transit site available to accommodate people.  Welfare checks are completed for illegal encampments and support plans are regularly completed with residents which determines if any individuals residing has needs which can be supported by local services. |
|  | Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups |  | **X** |  |  |
|  | Asian |  | **X** |  |  |
|  | African |  | **X** |  |  |
|  | Caribbean or Black |  | **X** |  |  |
|  | Other Ethnic Group |  | **X** |  |  |
| Disability | Physical disability | If an individual residing on a site illegally or otherwise is disabled, they may need additional support in relocating from the site. |  |  | Additional support will be provided, where necessary and on a case-by-case basis, this will be identified in the welfare check and support plans. |
|  | Sensory Impairment (e.g. sight, heading) | Referrals for professional help if requested are referred to the appropriate people |  |  | As above |
|  | Mental health |  | **X** |  |  |
|  | Learning disability |  | **X** |  |  |
| LGBT | Lesbians |  | **X** | No identified negative impacts |  |
|  | Gay Men |  | **X** | No identified negative impacts |  |
|  | Bisexual |  | **X** | No identified negative impacts |  |
| Age | Older people (60+) | The welfare check (illegal encampments) and support plans (existing residents) will determine if any individuals has additional needs which can be supported by local services. |  | No identified negative impacts | Referrals made to support agencies if people have any needs. |
|  | Younger people (18-25) |  | **X** |  | Referrals made to support agencies if people have any needs. |
|  | Children (0-16) | The welfare check (illegal encampments) and support plans (existing residents) will determine if any individuals have needs which can be supported by local services e.g. education |  |  | The welfare check and support plans will determine if any individuals have needs which can be supported by local services  Children can also be referred to the County Council’s Education team |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership | Women |  | **X** | No identified negative impacts |  |
|  | Men |  | **X** | No identified negative impacts |  |
|  | Lesbians |  | **X** | No identified negative impacts |  |
| Pregnancy and Maternity | Women | If there is a female on site who is pregnant then it could have a negative impact if she is evicted and unable to maintain a stable living situation and access healthcare services.  Health and Welfare assessments ensure that this is taken into account on any decision to evict or not. |  |  | Anyone needing benefit assistance is signposted to people in the Rural CAB or third sector agency who can help them |
| Religion and belief |  | There is a Gypsy Traveller Evangelical Church (Light & Life Movement) in the district and people go to this several times a week | **X**  But support is available at a local Gypsy Traveller Church |  |  |

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| Summary of Protected Characteristics most impacted | In order to proactively meet the Councils Public Sector Equality Duties towards Travellers e.g. their protected characteristic of race and ethnicity, the council will carry out welfare checks and support plans on site. The welfare checks and support plans consider the following:   * The health, welfare and housing needs of any individual on site * The educational needs of any child on site * Whether any individuals on site are vulnerable or have a disability * What facilities are available to individuals * Whether there are any risks associated such as environmental and/or anti-social behaviour issues. |
| Summary of Socio-Economic impacts | Referrals are made to partner agencies who can address any health/welfare/educational/benefit access, for anyone who requires this/and are eligible |
| Summary of Human Rights impacts | All human rights issues are considered on an individual basis before considering what action is to be taken e.g. to further support or proceed with eviction. |
| Summary Explanation of the scoring against the protected characteristics | By carrying out welfare checks and support plans the council can proactively ensure that Travellers have the same rights to access services as the rest of the community.  This helps to improve Community Safety as the welfare checks and support plans will assess any risks to, or from, the encampment in relation to anti-social behaviours and therefore risk to the public and other residents. |

## Section 4: Outcomes, Actions and Public Reporting

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| **Screening Outcome** | **Yes, No or not at this stage** |
| Was a significant level of negative impact arising from the project, policy or strategy identified? | No |
| Does the project, policy or strategy require to be amended to have a positive impact? | No |
| Does a Full Impact Assessment need to be undertaken? | Completed |

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| **If applicable, please state the overall outcome of the assessment, impacts and customer analysis** |

## Section 5: Monitoring outcomes, evaluation and review

The Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) screening is not an end in itself but the start of a continuous monitoring and review process. The relevant Service responsible for the delivery of the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option, is also responsible for monitoring and reviewing the EQIA Screening and any actions that may have been taken to mitigate impacts.

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| Arrangements for Monitoring | A continual review of this service will take place annually or if there are any changes to legislation or good practice guidelines. |
| Timing of the current review | December 2024 |
| Next scheduled review | December 2025 |

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| **If applicable, please provide details of the arrangements for future monitoring:**  *Note when analysis will be reviewed; include any equality indicators and performance against those indicators*  Resident feedback on any/all future allocations and evictions within the district. |

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| **If applicable, please provide details of any supporting data/ research linked to monitoring arrangements** (both FDC & Partners)**:**  Feedback from Traveller Organisations, Police, NHS, Cambs County Council Traveller Education and Health team, FDC Officers and Members, local community. |

## Legislation

**Equality Act (2010) – the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties)**

The 2010 Act consolidated previous equalities legislation to protect people from discrimination on grounds of race, sex, being a transsexual person (transsexuality is where someone is changed, is changing or has proposed changing their sex – called ‘gender reassignment’ in law), sexual orientation (whether being lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual), disability (or because of something connected with their disability), religion or belief, having just had a baby or being pregnant, being married or in a civil partnership and age.