

South Cambridgeshire District Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Introduction – Please read

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) allow the Council to:

- Show that the Council are meeting its legal duty, demonstrating due regard for the provisions of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) as below:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
 - Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Methodically consider and assess the impacts of proposals across the [nine protected characteristics](#)
- Allow the Council to develop and implement high quality proposals that maximise positive outcomes for all.

EqIAs should be completed during the development and review of all Council policies, strategies, procedures, projects or functions. Where there is any doubt, the completion of an EqIA is always recommended.

When the form is completed, please send an electronic copy to equality.schemes@scambs.gov.uk. Further support and guidance available on Insite or contact the Policy and Performance Team.

Equality Impact Assessment Complete Form

Section 1: Identifying Details

- 1.1 Officer completing EqIA:
Carly Freed
- 1.2 Team and Service:
Economic Development & Investments
- 1.3 Title of proposal:
Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)
- 1.4 EqIA start date:
01/04/2024
- 1.5 Proposal implementation date:
01/04/2024
- 1.6 Who will be responsible for implementing this proposal (Officer and/or Team):
Carly Freed & Katherine Southwood – Economic Development & Investments

Section 2: Proposal to be Assessed

- 2.1 Type of proposal:
Other - Please specify
If other, please specify
Grant Scheme
- 2.2 Is the proposal:
New
- 2.3 State the date of any previous equality impact assessment completed in relation to this proposal (if applicable):
N/A



2.4 What are the headline aims of the proposal and the objectives that will help to accomplish these aims? (Max 250 words)

SCDC will be launching a grant scheme (REPF) from 1st April 24 which will be open for community groups, charities and small businesses to apply to. The scheme builds on and is complementary to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

This scheme, REPF sits under the [Governments Levelling Up White Paper](#), which by its very own nature is a moral, social and economic programme, which sets out how we will spread opportunity and more equality across the UK.

The aims of the fund are to support new and existing rural businesses with diversification projects for example, and new and improved community infrastructure, which will provide central services and assets for local people and businesses within the local community. The key investment priorities include; community and place and supporting local businesses.

In terms of EQIA there will be two elements for consideration. Delivering the grant scheme itself and the projects that arise from successful applications to the grant scheme.

2.5 Which of the Council's equality objectives (as detailed in the Council's Equality Scheme) does this proposal link to or help to achieve?

- Identify, prioritise and deliver actions that will narrow the gap in outcomes between disadvantaged groups and the wider community
- SCDC is an employer that values difference and recognises the strength that a diverse workforce brings.
- Protected characteristic groups have a voice and are represented in forming the future shape of the district.
- None.

2.6 Which groups or individuals will the proposal affect:

- Service Users
- External Stakeholders
- Employees
- Councillors
- Other



If other, please specify Existing Businesses, Charities & Community Groups within the district.

2.7 Broadly speaking, how will these groups or individuals be affected? (you will be asked to provide more detail on the specific impacts on different protected characteristic groups later in the form) (max 250 words)

Grant scheme; In relation to promoting the grant scheme, we will ensure that everyone has equal opportunity to accessing the necessary documents. E.g., such as having hard copy paper application requests on our website. Installing posters around district, as well as web-based communications, both which conform with accessibility rules, working with the Comms team to ensure we cover everything, including 'save and return' E-forms.

Projects arising from the scheme; Funding these capital projects will significantly improve productivity and strengthen the rural community. The enhancement of these facilities will not only be a benefit to the wider rural community and service users but also to those groups delivering the services. External stakeholders within those communities will assist in sharing the announcement of the scheme within its Parishes. Councillors will assist with the grant allocations process at SCDC Grants Advisory Committee. Councillors/Parishes may also assist applicants with supportive documentation as part of an application. At this stage we don't know what project applications will come in and what specific impacts on different characteristics groups will be, however we have asked the question in the application form- as follows;

'Equality and Diversity: SCDC is committed to equality of opportunity in our approach to our service delivery, employment and community leadership. This allows us to develop and implement high quality proposals that maximise positive outcomes for all. Please outline in your project plan how you will ensure that your project is as inclusive as possible. Please visit [here](#) to find out more'

- 2.8 If any part of the proposal is being undertaken by external partners, please specify how the Council will ensure that they will meet equality standards?
(Max 250 words)

Grant Scheme: External partners will be provided with the marketing material approved by SCDC, e.g, physical, posters & digital, online social media. These materials will be proofed read by the corporate communications team to ensure that accessibility has been complied with. Using several mediums of communication ensures that audiences who do not have access to the internet are not at a disadvantage. We can also look to provide copies in a different language where requested.

Section 3: Evidence and Data

- 3.1 Describe any work you have done (this could include consultation) to understand any effects on groups of people, including those within [9 protected characteristic groups](#)? Please list any key sources (e.g. web-search, previous versions of document, customer feedback etc) that you used to reach your conclusions.
(Max 250 words)

SCDC regularly delivers Grant Schemes such as Community Chest, Carbon Zero Communities Fund. From these schemes we know that community groups regularly consider the 9 protected characteristics and we also asking in the grant application form what considerations the project will take/implement. We acknowledge the implications of bias within the application form from the use and language of prescribed questions and what impact this may have on the applicant, we therefore have limited the data requested to essential information which is required for fraud checks as part

of the application process. We also need to understand the types of applicants applying to ensure that a balance is created.

3.2 If you have not undertaken any consultation, please detail why not, or when consultation is planned to take place.

(Max 250)

No formal consultation has been undertaken or requested to be undertaken as part of central government prospectus on the delivery of the scheme.

Section 4: Impact of proposal on those with protected characteristics

4.1 Please select all characteristics that may or will be impacted (positive or negative). When providing details of the impact please consider the following questions

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. (both the number of persons affected and the severity of the impact)
- you will be asked to set out actions to manage these impacts in the following question (4.2)

All - general to all protected Characteristics.

Details: .

Age

Details: Older age groups might struggle with digital-only application forms, so we will ensure there are other methods of applications.

Disability

Details: Persons with disabilities might struggle with accessibility of the documents, so we will ensure that there are other methods of applications.

Gender reassignment



Details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Pregnancy and maternity

Details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Race

Details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Religion and belief

Details: Communications may not reach all areas and aspects of minority group demographics within the community, so there needs to be a consideration around not only the content but the ways in which the message is communicated within the community, particularly considering any hard-to-reach groups.

Sex

Details: If the grant fund primarily supports projects traditionally associated with particular male/female dominated industries it may inadvertently disadvantage applicants of a female/male and/or those of whom identify as another preferred gender.

Sexual orientation

Details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Other (socio economic, rural isolation, covid)

Details Positive impact for businesses and communities who are impacted by the rural demographic of the South Cambridgeshire area, that will benefit from improved resources, assets and infrastructure.

None of the above

4.2 Considering the above impacts you have identified above, please detail any actions (specific or general) which may help to enhance or mitigate impacts.

Please include the timescale for completing the action.

Action and timescale	Officer
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Age - SCDC staff will be on hand to assist with questions related to the application.	CF/KS
Disability – As above. Ensuring that SCDC staff are on hand to assist with any questions relating to the application and that assistance is provided with explaining anything in a clear and appropriate way, depending on the individual's needs. This may also extend to interpreters and assisted technologies where required. Where a request for grant funding is for a project relating to a building where there is access for members of the public, disabled facilities will demonstrate within the application form by the applicant.	CF/KS
Religion/Belief - To ensure that communications about the grant fund are shared with community champions as the extensions and inclusions to these groups ensures that we are not limiting information to a particular demographic and that outreach to minority communities is reached to ensure that there is no unintentionality to exclude any minority applicants.	CF/KS
Sex – Careful consideration needs to be given to ensure that there is a balance of funding allocated to all genders and that any projects funded by SCDC are not in any way detrimental to any other genders and groups and provide a safe and inclusive environment for everyone.	CF/KS

4.3 How will you monitor that the above actions have been completed and that this proposal, once implemented, is impacting fairly on everyone it affects? In answering this question, please include information about feedback you will seek and/or data you will collect and analyse, and how often you will do this.

The monitoring of the above can be undertaken in several ways including.

Data Collection - Ensuring that a data capture of all applicant's demographics relating to the protected characteristics is taken.

Stakeholder Engagement – Regular collaborative engagement with stakeholders to ensure that ongoing sharing of best practices relating to organisational learning.

Feedback & Evaluation – Surveys can be undertaken with applications to form part of feedback and monitoring, and information provided evaluated to look at the impact of equality and diversity on the project.

SCDC E&D link – To ensure that a link to equality and diversity is integrated with the application and grant criteria policy to assist the applicant with evidencing this question.

Section 5: Summary

- 5.1 Briefly summarise the key findings of the EqIA and any significant equality considerations that should be taken into account when deciding how to proceed with the proposal (this section can be included within the 'equality implications' section of any committee reports). (Max. 250 words)

The key findings relating to monitoring the impact of REPF on protected characteristics include, Applicant Analysis - assessing this composition reveals patterns relating to the protected characteristics. This will give us an early indication of the demographic of the applicants, where we can assess equality and inclusion by ensuring that grant allocations are allocated proportionately. Continuous stakeholder engagement, evaluation of feedback surveys and quarterly applicant reporting outcomes will allow us to identify any disparities or barriers faced by any marginalized or underrepresented groups. Ensuring that we provide the most recent updated links relating to Equality and Diversity to assist the applicant to evidence this question and enable us to score against this evidence appropriately.

- 5.2 Confirm the recommendation of the officer completing the EqIA:

Proceed with the proposal (with any actions identified as required within Section 4 of the EqIA). Analysis demonstrates that the proposal is robust, we have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.

Reject the proposal: Analysis demonstrates that the proposal will cause unlawful discrimination and it must be removed or changed

Section 6: Sign Off

6.1 Signature of individual completing EqIA:

C.Freed

6.2 Date of completion:

05/03/2024

6.3 When will this proposal next be reviewed and who will this be? (when in doubt 3 years minimum)

05/03/2027

6.4 Approving officer signature *, this should be your Head of Service, Service Area Manager, or Project Sponsor:

Katherine Southwood

6.5 Date of approval:

18/03/2024

Please send the completed document to Equality.Schemes@scambs.gov.uk for publishing on the website.

**in the event that this EqIA is completed by Head of Service, then no additional approving signature is required.*