

## Bristol City Council Equality Impact Assessment Form

(Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance when completing this form)



Name of proposal	Transforming Neighbourhood Working
Directorate and Service Area	Neighbourhoods & Communities
Name of Lead Officer	Penny Germon

### Step 1: What is the proposal?

Please explain your proposal in Plain English, avoiding acronyms and jargon. This section should explain how the proposal will impact service users, staff and/or the wider community.

#### 1.1 What is the proposal?

These proposals are about finding more efficient ways to work with local communities to save a total revenue saving of £1.062m (£500k 17/18 and £562k 19/20) leaving £309k p. a. to support new arrangements. The proposals are to:

1. Change the way BCC works with place based communities from a council-led neighbourhood partnership structure to an approach which encourages local self-organisation and community-led action.
2. Establish new arrangements for making decisions about the local elements of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and devolved S106. These are payments made to Bristol City Council by developers when they put up new buildings. The money is there to help with the impact on the infrastructure of the city e.g. roads, parks and schools in the local area.

### Step 2: What information do we have?

Decisions must be evidence-based, and involve people with protected characteristics that could be affected. Please use this section to demonstrate understanding of who could be affected by the proposal.

#### 2.1 What data or evidence is there which tells us who is, or could be affected?

Across the city NP's actively engage with approximately 6% (27,000) of the population this would increase to about 10% taking account of all aspects of social media and online engagement. We carried out a comprehensive equalities monitoring of all NP activity during April, May and June 2016. 24% of the people we worked with completed equalities monitoring questionnaires. We appreciate this is a low number and so it is difficult to draw conclusions from this however they do paint a picture of the people active in neighbourhood partnership work and reflect experience.

This information tells us our active membership is:

Age

5% under 24, 32% 25-49, 60% are over 50  
 53% Women, 45% Men  
 2% Transgender, 1% Lesbian, 2% Gay, 1% Bisexual  
 84% White British  
 6% White 'other' (non British), 2% Asian/Asian British  
 3% Black / African / Caribbean / Black British  
 1% 'Other'  
 13% Disabled people  
 44% have a religion of belief, 40% do not  
 This is city wide data. The number of returns varied from area to area.

The Neighbourhood Partnerships provide a vehicle to help people influence decisions. Lot of things impact on whether people feel able to influence to influence decisions. The NP's are just one small part of this picture but the results give useful insight. The results can be found here:

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/33896/Results+of+quality+of+life+in+Bristol+survey+2015+to+2016/2a83bda4-fed5-400d-b638-2d2c72f67507>

**Extract from Quality of Life Survey**

*'Just one in five people (20%) felt they could influence decisions that affected their local area. Residents felt the least influential in Hengrove & Whitchurch Park (11%), Stockwood (12%), Filwood (14%), Hillfields (14%) and St George Central (15%). The highest proportion of people who thought they could influence decisions lived in Westbury-on-Trym & Henleaze, but this was still only two out of five (40%) residents. Equalities analysis didn't show any differences between groups.'*

In addition the Neighbourhood Partnerships are supported by a diverse staff team (specific data is not appropriate to share).

**2.2 Who is missing? Are there any gaps in the data?**

These figures do not include the significant numbers of people who take part in NP consultations about the neighbourhood where there are street level conversations with a wide range of people.

Due to reasons beyond anyone's control there was a gap in the data from Easton and Lawrence Hill which we would expect to show an increased number from Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic people. The returns were not even across the city and so some areas there were more returns than others.

The data tells us and we know from experience Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender communities and young people are all under-represented in Neighbourhood Partnerships. One of the reasons for changing the existing structures is to seek to make it more accessible and relevant to a wide range of people whilst taking account of the significant reduction in funding and support.

**2.3 How have we involved, or will we involve, communities and groups that could be affected?**

1. Through the [Your Neighbourhoods consultation report](#) which included three dedicated meetings with equalities communities:
  - With young people from all backgrounds including Black, Asian and Minority

- Ethnic, Disabled young people and young women.
- A meeting organised by the Bristol Older People’s forum with BME Voice, LGBT Forum, Bristol Multi Faith Forum, Bristol Women’s Voice, Bristol Disability Equality Forum.
  - A meeting of the equalities voice and influence groups in Bristol which make up ‘BEING’ (Older People’s Forum, BME Voice, LGBT Forum, Multi Faith Forum, Women’s Voice, Disability Equality Forum). BEING\* is the network of self-organised equality voice and influence groups funded by Bristol City Council.
2. We have worked with existing Neighbourhood Partnership members (where there is a high level of participation of women, Disabled people and older people), young people’s organisations such as the youth council, Black South West Network, SARI , VOSCUR, Bristol Disability Equality Forum.
  3. We have spoken to BEING\* about the proposed changes and to highlight our commitment to involving equalities communities in a city conversation about neighbourhoods. We talked about how we can work together ensure Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, Disabled people, young people, older people, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people, Women, people of faith and none, are part of the conversation and agreed in principle to organise a joint event.
  4. We have attended the Bristol Disability Equality Forum open forum to talk about the changes and find out what interests people and the barriers to participation locally.
  5. City-wide ‘Community Connections, Community Action and People Power’ event at City Hall brought together over 120 residents/activists from different backgrounds, ages, neighbourhoods and with different interests doing great stuff in their neighbourhoods to make new connections and learn from each other.

**Step 3: Who might the proposal impact?**

Analysis of impacts on people with protected characteristics must be rigorous. Please demonstrate your analysis of any impacts in this section, referring to all of the equalities groups as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

**3.1 Does the proposal have any potentially adverse impacts on people with protected characteristics?**

This proposal is about the transition process from existing arrangements to community-led arrangements and a new process for making decisions about local CIL. Broadly the adverse impacts are as follows:

1. These proposals will mean communities establishing and leading community arrangements to influence decisions and involve a wide range of people with no City Council officer support or funding. The Neighbourhoods Team has been able to reach well beyond the circle of people who attended meetings through street meets, door knocking and outreach. With this resource no longer available people who face barriers to participation and/or not part of online networks are likely experience the

greatest impact.

2. The transition arrangements will need to ensure resources are targeted at areas where there is little infrastructure and social capital to support a successful transition. If we are unsuccessful the most marginalised communities are likely to become further excluded with loss of good will, key relationships with communities and loss of social capital.
3. It is the city council's policy to use buildings which are broadly accessible to Disabled people with wheelchair access being a minimum standard. These buildings often charge more and there are fewer of them. With no resource, people are more likely to need to use free venues which are often not accessible. This will exclude people. There is no data on access to buildings. The involvement of the city council has required use of accessible buildings. It is possible that those leading community-led space do not a) understand b) consider or c) prioritise access.
4. Reliance on community-led solutions could lead to participation by equalities communities becoming more difficult particularly those who are already excluded. Some people are reassured by council involvement. For example, Disabled and LGBTQ people may have a higher expectation that council involvement will require an accessible and 'safe' environment (this is not a given and is not true for everyone).
5. Closing the team will mean a diverse staff group will be at risk of redundancy.

### 3.2 Can these impacts be mitigated or justified? If so, how?

Where possible community-led arrangements will build on what already exists in an area and make better links with community groups which are not already involved. Community groups will have an existing network of people and connections with people the local authority finds it hard to reach. Councillors will also have a key role in supporting the local communities to work together.

A risk analyses will be carried out which we will use to identify and where possible mitigate risks by working with partners.

BCC will make available some financial support to help communities organise and cover the cost of accessible venues. Voscur ([www.voscur.org](http://www.voscur.org)) has a list of accessible community venues available on their website which will help community groups make informed decisions about where to hold meetings which are broadly accessible.

Where BCC makes a financial contribution to the community space/network or where a community space/network is looking to influence City Council decisions there will be a proportionate requirement to give due regard to the equality duty and the participation of Disabled people

Where possible staff will be supported to take up other jobs in the council. An EQIA will be produced as part of the managing change process.

We will continue to work with Bristol's equalities voice and influence groups to make better links with neighbourhoods.

3.3 Does the proposal create any benefits for people with protected characteristics?

Yes

3.4 Can they be maximised? If so, how?

We know from experience some people from equality communities do not want to engage with council-led arrangements and will be more inclined to get involved with community-led solutions.

Where there is a commitment from the local community there is the potential to create a much more engaging, inviting and accessible space where people of all ages, backgrounds and life experience can come together. The formality of NPs and narrow focus of some of the meetings was off-putting to many people.

Changes to the way decisions are made about the local element of CIL and devolved S106 will create a more transparent and fairer process by establishing a citywide process.

#### Step 4: So what?

The Equality Impact Assessment must be able to influence the proposal and decision. This section asks how your understanding of impacts on people with protected characteristics has influenced your proposal, and how the findings of your Equality Impact Assessment can be measured going forward.

4.1 How has the equality impact assessment informed or changed the proposal?

EQIA has been updated following the 'Your Neighbourhoods' public consultation. Funding will be available to enable place based/neighbourhood communities to meet in accessible venues.

A small amount of funding will be available to encourage open and welcoming community spaces or networks where people from diverse backgrounds and ages come together and make new connections. Voscur has made a list of accessible venues available on its website.

4.2 What actions have been identified going forward?

The Neighbourhoods Team will create opportunities to share learning about how to create a welcoming space.

4.3 How will the impact of your proposal and actions be measured moving forward?

Ultimately the impact will be participation of local people in community-led networks or partnerships across the city with active participation of equality groups. As they are community-led there will be no formal governance or requirement on these community spaces. The 'community' is diverse – with looser arrangements there is a strong risk of the better organised communities taking over, this could work against the intention of this proposal to hear more community voices, and could disenfranchise the most excluded equalities communities. Where the council makes a small financial contribution or where community networks are looking to influence the decisions of the council there will be a proportionate requirement to give due regard to the equality duty including the use of venues accessible to wheelchair users.

Service Director Sign-Off: Gemma Dando	Equalities Officer Sign Off: Jean Candler
Date: 8 <sup>th</sup> November 2017	Date: 8 November 2017