

Equality Impact Assessment [version 2.9]



Recommissioning of services for Local Healthwatch commencing October 2024	
<input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Other [please state]	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Already exists / review <input type="checkbox"/> Changing
Directorate: Adults and Communities	Lead Officer name: Penny Germon
Service Area: Communities	Lead Officer role: Communities

Step 1: What do we want to do?

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment is to assist decision makers in understanding the impact of proposals as part of their duties under the Equality Act 2010. Detailed guidance to support completion can be found here [Equality Impact Assessments \(EqIA\) \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

This assessment should be started at the beginning of the process by someone with a good knowledge of the proposal and service area, and sufficient influence over the proposal. It is good practice to take a team approach to completing the equality impact assessment. Please contact the [Equality and Inclusion Team](#) early for advice and feedback.

1.1 What are the aims and objectives/purpose of this proposal?

Briefly explain the purpose of the proposal and why it is needed. Describe who it is aimed at and the intended aims / outcomes. Where known also summarise the key actions you plan to undertake. Please use plain English, avoiding jargon and acronyms. Equality Impact Assessments are viewed by a wide range of people including decision-makers and the wider public.

Healthwatch is the consumer champion for public and patient involvement in health and care in every English Local Authority. Collectively they form a network of 151 organisations reporting to Healthwatch England (formed by committee from the Care Quality Commission). The function of Healthwatch is to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services and to speak out on their behalf.

This Equalities Impact Assessment is required to accompany a Cabinet paper for March 7th, 2023, seeking authorisation for recommissioning of Healthwatch services from Oct 2024 – 2027. The Cabinet paper recommends no variation in investment or type of service provision and will be subject to full procurement.

A BNSSG Healthwatch service was previously jointly commissioned and procured through competitive tender and the contract was let by South Glos in October 2019. A collaborative commissioning agreement sets out each LA role in contract management. A service delivered by one organisation over a larger footprint offers economies of scale while demonstrating that each LA service can still maintain its own identity and local priorities.

Healthwatch has been delivered within the income available to the Council on this model throughout the current contract period. It is therefore recommended to continue with this approach for services from 2024-2029. This recommendation is shared by South Gloucestershire and North Somerset officers, and they are seeking similar authorisation at this time. We will repeat a collaborative commissioning and procurement process which includes rotating the lead commissioner and contract manager role to Bristol.

Healthwatch provides feedback on service experiences of the health and care system based on views given by the public. Although we procure this service on a BNSSG (Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire) basis, each Local Authority maintains a separate service. Current funding levels are

proposed to continue so that the contract price is linked to the HealthWatch Component of the LRCV (Local Reform and Community Voices) grant that authorities receive each year as income, and partner authorities are seeking similar approvals.

The proposal seeks to continue the current level of investment based on actual income received. The contract allows for Healthwatch to be able to receive additional income by any Authority or external organisation for additional work above the level of the current service specification.

1.2 Who will the proposal have the potential to affect?

<input type="checkbox"/> Bristol City Council workforce	<input type="checkbox"/> Service users	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The wider community
<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioned services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City partners / Stakeholder organisations	
Additional comments: HealthWatch has a role in capturing the health and care services experiences of adults and children in the Bristol population. The proposal seeks to continue the current level of investment based on actual income received.		

1.3 Will the proposal have an equality impact?

Could the proposal affect access levels of representation or participation in a service, or does it have the potential to change e.g. quality of life: health, education, or standard of living etc.?

If 'No' explain why you are sure there will be no equality impact, then skip steps 2-4 and request review by Equality and Inclusion Team.

If 'Yes' complete the rest of this assessment, or if you plan to complete the assessment at a later stage please state this clearly here and request review by the Equality and Inclusion Team.

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	[please select]
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Bristol is required to contract with a social enterprise to provide Healthwatch and is committed to doing that on a BNSSG footprint. The only alternative option would be to re-establish a standalone service for Bristol. This is not recommended because of the proportion of funding that would be required for overheads and management costs leading to a significantly reduced support service to citizens.


We will continue to look at ways we can support the sustainability of BNSSG Healthwatch. Healthwatch England have indicated that we may assist the service but without compromising its independence. For example, we may offer support with communicating Healthwatch volunteer opportunities and in accessing training, but we cannot conduct selection and recruitment or management of volunteers on their behalf. Information about Healthwatch and the services they offer can be found on their website: www.healthwatchbristol.co.uk

The procurement tender requirements make it mandatory that equalities standards are met, including a requirement to adhere to the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Step 5: Review

The Equality and Inclusion Team need at least five working days to comment and feedback on your EqIA. EqIAs should only be marked as reviewed when they provide sufficient information for decision-makers on the equalities

impact of the proposal. Please seek feedback and review from the Equality and Inclusion Team before requesting sign off from your Director¹.

Equality and Inclusion Team Review: <i>Reviewed by Equality and Inclusion Team</i>	Director Sign-Off: 
Date: 13/02/2023	Date: 16/02/2023

¹ Review by the Equality and Inclusion Team confirms there is sufficient analysis for decision makers to consider the likely equality impacts at this stage. This is not an endorsement or approval of the proposal.