

Equality Impact Assessment [version 2.12]



Title: Fees & Charges – Cemeteries & Crematoria	
<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: Management of Place	Lead Officer name: Jonathan James
Service Area: Parks & Green Spaces	Lead Officer role: Head of Natural & Marine Environment

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 \(EqIA\) \(sharepoint.com\)](https://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.

The budget for Bristol City Council as agreed in February 2023, which included a cross-cutting saving item to deliver £500,000 through a review of fees and charges increases above the base level of inflationary approval within the budget.

During 2022/23 an initial opportunity review was undertaken by consultants to establish the potential scope to the council of assessing fees and charges in context of the budget gap presented in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy at that time.

The review undertaken was a high-level benchmarking exercise based on comparison to publicly available national data relating to fees and charges to identify where there was potential for income generation and focused on a number of themes:

- Identifying where charges are not currently made.
- Identifying where cost recovery is not currently achieved.
- Review of existing charges against comparator charges

A total of eight areas were shortlisted as opportunities for further due diligence and validation. Cemeteries and Crematoria are one of the eight areas selected.

The council has subsequently worked with its Strategic Finance Partner to develop these into deliverable fee and charge changes, which has resulted in the recommended fee and charge increases for cemeteries and crematoria from April 2024 which will allow us to increase prices to and above inflation and in line with competitors, which includes neighbouring local authorities and private sector Cremation and Burial providers in North & East Bristol, in the market.

The increase in core fees (for Cremation and Burial) could potential be above the rate of inflation – in January 2023 the rate was 10.1%, however the service only increased its fees by 5%. This below inflation fee increase in

early 2023 has impacted on cost recovery. The increase above inflation for 2024 may be undertaken to mitigate and not compound the impact on cost recovery due to the considerably below inflation increase taken in early 2023. Any increase of fee will need to be benchmarked with the neighbouring private and local authority providers as well as the Core Cities providers.

1.2 Who will the proposal have the potential to affect?

<input type="checkbox"/> Bristol City Council workforce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service users	<input type="checkbox"/> The wider community
<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioned services	<input type="checkbox"/> City partners / Stakeholder organisations	
Additional comments:		

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 one of the fastest growing cities in the UK with an increasing population, and as the population grows so does the death rate for the city. Whilst cremation is the preferred choice for most people, around 20% of deaths still opt for burial for personal and religious reasons. As a Council responsible for a growing, diverse community it is essential that it provides the necessary service to accommodate all citizens who will encounter bereavement at some point.

At present, the Council operates two Crematories (South Bristol & Canford) and eight burial sites of which only South Bristol Cemetery providing new graves.

The provision for new burials is not viable at Canford, Avonview, Greenbank, Brislington, Ridgeway, Henbury and Shirehampton due to both no further suitable space and/or the cemetery is full.

Population:

Taking population figures from mid-2006 to mid-2016 the population has increased by 45,800, which is an increase of 11.2%. For England and Wales there was an increase of 8.2% from mid-2005 to mid-2015.

Whilst there have been increases in population across most wards in Bristol between 2005 and 2015, there have been exceptional increases in the central area of Bristol. The greatest increases have been in Central ward (49%), Lawrence Hill ward (46%) and Hotwells and Harbourside ward (38%). Over the decade, a quarter (25%) of the total increase in population in Bristol took place in Central and Lawrence Hill wards alone.

Other wards which have experienced an increase in population of 20% or more since 2005 are Bedminster (25%), St George West (23%) and Southville (22%). At the same time there has been a small decrease in the population of Stoke Bishop (-3%) and very little change in the population of Westbury-on-Trym and Henleaze, Clifton and Hengrove and Whitchurch Park.

The increase in the population, notably in the central areas of Bristol, appears to be due to large increases in net-migration caused to a great extent by the large number of students that attend the two large universities.

Population projections:

If recent trends continue, the total population of Bristol is projected to increase by 103,100 people over the 25-year period (2014-2039) to reach a total population of 545,600 by 2039. This is a projected increase of 23.3% which is higher than the projection for England of 16.5%.

Data shows the change from 2008 to 2018 with the following wards having seen the largest increase in population (by percentage): Central (89.3%), Howells & Harbourside (51.9%), Lawrence Hill (37.5%), Bedminster (19.9%).

Population by age:

Bristol has a relatively young age profile. The median age of people living in Bristol in 2016 was 32.9 years old, this compares to the England and Wales median of 39.9 years. However, the Bristol population continues to age gradually, this refers to both the increase in the average (median) age of the population and the increase in the number and proportion of older people in the population.

By 2039 there is projected to be 84,300 people aged 65 and over living in Bristol. In total there is projected to be an additional 25,600 older people between 2014 and 2039, an increase of 44%. Older people as a proportion of the total population is likely to increase from 13% to 15% of all people living in the city.

The age profile within each ward also varies significantly. The highest proportions of older people (aged 65 and over) are in Westbury-on-Trym & Henleaze (23%), Stockwood (22%) and Hengrove & Whitchurch Park (21%). More than a fifth of the total population in these wards is aged 65 and over.

Deaths:

The number of deaths is expected to remain steady between 3,100 and 3,500 per annum up to 2039. From statistics of registered deaths and the number of cremations and burials, the numbers are roughly the same. This most likely points to the fact that those that are registered dead in Bristol are buried or cremated in Bristol.

Financial Impact:

The fees in relation to cremation/burial may affect older residents more, however the impact would be low.

The fee increase would impact on those already under financial pressure, especially those on benefits, to fund funeral arrangements, however the council has a statutory duty under the Public Health Act 1984 to provide a funeral for those where there is no one able or willing to make the necessary arrangements.

An additional impact may be that people are not able to afford the service and likely to look for alternative/less costly providers – Such as Direct Cremation providers – which would have a financial impact upon the Council. It is unlikely that those people requiring/wanting a burial would seek an alternative provider – however we have seen a move - both locally and nationally - by families towards Direct Cremations, with remembrance events being marked as families wish, rather than in the traditional Crematoria Chapels. As a service provider we are looking at how we can increase our provision in our existing less costly cremation options available i.e., early morning cremations or unattended cremations.

Increasing fees and charges to the higher end of what is being recommended within this report would affect lower income groups, however the service would need to benchmark the fees and charges with neighbouring local authorities and private bereavement services, to ensure the rates which we increase our charges by are fair and reasonable. The Department of Works and Pensions does provide financial assistance to clients who are eligible for support (Funeral Expenses Payment), plus the provision of up to £1,000 towards fees and charged by funeral directors, however it is likely that only a small percentage of people in Bristol would be eligible for this grant.

Step 2: What information do we have?

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

Please use this section to demonstrate an understanding of who could be affected by the proposal. Include general population data where appropriate, and information about people who will be affected with particular reference to protected and other relevant characteristics: [How we measure equality and diversity \(bristol.gov.uk\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/equality-diversity)

Use one row for each evidence source and say which characteristic(s) it relates to. You can include a mix of qualitative and quantitative data e.g. from national or local research, available data or previous consultations and engagement activities.

Outline whether there is any over or under representation of equality groups within relevant services - don't forget to benchmark to the local population where appropriate. Links to available data and reports are here [Data, statistics and intelligence \(sharepoint.com\)](#). See also: [Bristol Open Data \(Quality of Life, Census etc.\)](#); [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#); [Ward Statistical Profiles](#).

For workforce / management of change proposals you will need to look at the diversity of the affected teams using available evidence such as [HR Analytics: Power BI Reports \(sharepoint.com\)](#) which shows the diversity profile of council teams and service areas. Identify any over or under-representation compared with Bristol economically active citizens for different characteristics. Additional sources of useful workforce evidence include the [Employee Staff Survey Report](#) and [Stress Risk Assessment](#)

Data / Evidence Source [Include a reference where known]	Summary of what this tells us
Additional comments:	

2.2 Do you currently monitor relevant activity by the following protected characteristics?

<input type="checkbox"/> Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender Reassignment
<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage and Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy/Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/> Race
<input type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation

2.3 Are there any gaps in the evidence base?

Where there are gaps in the evidence, or you don't have enough information about some equality groups, include an equality action to find out in section 4.2 below. This doesn't mean that you can't complete the assessment without the information, but you need to follow up the action and if necessary, review the assessment later. If you are unable to fill in the gaps, then state this clearly with a justification.

For workforce related proposals all relevant characteristics may not be included in HR diversity reporting (e.g. pregnancy/maternity). For smaller teams diversity data may be redacted. A high proportion of not known/not disclosed may require an action to address under-reporting.

2.4 How have you involved communities and groups that could be affected?

You will nearly always need to involve and consult with internal and external stakeholders during your assessment. The extent of the engagement will depend on the nature of the proposal or change. This should usually include individuals and groups representing different relevant protected characteristics. Please include details of any completed engagement and consultation and how representative this had been of Bristol's diverse communities.

Include the main findings of any engagement and consultation in Section 2.1 above.

If you are managing a workforce change process or restructure please refer to [Managing a change process or restructure \(sharepoint.com\)](#) for advice on consulting with employees etc. Relevant stakeholders for engagement about workforce changes may include e.g. staff-led groups and trades unions as well as affected staff.

2.5 How will engagement with stakeholders continue?

Explain how you will continue to engage with stakeholders throughout the course of planning and delivery. Please describe where more engagement and consultation is required and set out how you intend to undertake it. Include

any targeted work to seek the views of under-represented groups. If you do not intend to undertake it, please set out your justification. You can ask the Equality and Inclusion Team for help in targeting particular groups.

Step 3: Who might the proposal impact?

Analysis of impacts must be rigorous. Please demonstrate your analysis of any impacts of the proposal in this section, referring to evidence you have gathered above and the characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010. Also include details of existing issues for particular groups that you are aware of and are seeking to address or mitigate through this proposal. See detailed guidance documents for advice on identifying potential impacts etc.

[Equality Impact Assessments \(EqIA\) \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

3.1 Does the proposal have any potentially adverse impacts on people based on their protected or other relevant characteristics?

Consider sub-categories and how people with combined characteristics (e.g. young women) might have particular needs or experience particular kinds of disadvantage.

Where mitigations indicate a follow-on action, include this in the 'Action Plan' Section 4.2 below.

GENERAL COMMENTS (highlight any potential issues that might impact all or many groups)	
PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS	
Age: Young People	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Age: Older People	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Disability	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Sex	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Sexual orientation	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Pregnancy / Maternity	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Gender reassignment	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Race	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Religion or Belief	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Marriage & civil partnership	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	

OTHER RELEVANT CHARACTERISTICS	
Socio-Economic (deprivation)	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Carers	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Other groups [Please add additional rows below to detail the impact for any other relevant groups as appropriate e.g. asylum seekers and refugees; care experienced; homelessness; armed forces personnel and veterans]	
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	

3.2 Does the proposal create any benefits for people based on their protected or other relevant characteristics?

Outline any potential benefits of the proposal and how they can be maximised. Identify how the proposal will support our [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) to:

- ✓ Eliminate unlawful discrimination for a protected group
- ✓ Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't
- ✓ Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

Step 4: Impact

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

What are the main conclusions of this assessment? Use this section to provide an overview of your findings. This summary can be included in decision pathway reports etc.

If you have identified any significant negative impacts which cannot be mitigated, provide a justification showing how the proposal is proportionate, necessary, and appropriate despite this.

Summary of significant negative impacts and how they can be mitigated or justified:
Summary of positive impacts / opportunities to promote the Public Sector Equality Duty:

4.2 Action Plan

Use this section to set out any actions you have identified to improve data, mitigate issues, or maximise opportunities etc. If an action is to meet the needs of a particular protected group please specify this.


Improvement / action required	Responsible Officer	Timescale

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

How will you know if you have been successful? Once the activity has been implemented this equality impact assessment should be periodically reviewed to make sure your changes have been effective your approach is still appropriate.

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: 13/11/2023	Date: 13 Nov 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.