



You will need to produce an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) if:

- You are developing a new policy, strategy, or service
- You are making changes that will affect front-line services
- You are reducing budgets, which may affect front-line services
- You are changing the way services are funded and this may impact the quality of the service and who can access it
- You are making a decision that could have a different impact on different groups of people
- You are making staff redundant or changing their roles

Guidance notes on how to complete an EqIA and sign off process are available on the Hub under Equality and Diversity. You must read the [guidance notes](#) and ensure you have followed all stages of the EqIA approval process (outlined in appendix 1). Section 2 of the template requires you to undertake an assessment of the impact of your proposals on groups with protected characteristics. Equalities and borough profile data, as well as other sources of statistical information can be found on the Harrow hub, within the section entitled: [Equality Impact Assessment](#) - sources of statistical information.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Type of Decision:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Cabinet <input type="radio"/> Portfolio holder <input type="radio"/> Other (state)	
Title of Proposal	General Information and Advice Service EQIA	Date EqIA created: June 2024
Name and job title of completing/lead Officer	Grace Summers, Assistant Policy Officer and Tahira Bakhtiari, Policy Officer	
Directorate/ Service responsible		
Organisational approval		
EqIA approved by the EDI Team:	Name: Jennifer Rock (Acting) Policy Officer EDI Team	Signature <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tick this box to indicate that you have approved this EqIA Date of approval: 5.7.24

1. Summary of proposal, impact on groups with protected characteristics and mitigating actions (to be completed after you have completed sections 2 - 5)

a) What is your proposal?

This contract is for an independent service to deliver general information and advice for the London Borough of Harrow. The service is for Harrow residents in need that supports them to access help seamlessly at the earliest possible opportunity. As well as addressing the changes in residents' need in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent cost of living crisis. The advice will be free and confidential for all Harrow residents to access on an equal basis and in a safe environment.

The service will include delivery of general information and advice through a multi-channelled approach focusing on digital channels, email, mobile friendly, website, and face-to-face. This includes:

- i. delivery of the general information and advice service.
- ii. delivery of general information and advice via Family Hubs Network.
- iii. delivery of general information and advice for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- iv. delivery of general information and advice integrated within Council led initiatives.

General information and advice services include:

- Housing
- Welfare benefits
- Financial services /debt management
- Employment
- Physical and mental wellbeing (outside of statutory services)
- Family & personal matters (counselling, bereavement, abuse, and relationships)
- Immigration and asylum

The provider(s) will be responsible for working directly with the London Borough of Harrow and the wider network of service providers within the borough. In working together and sharing best practice and expertise, the Council expects clear, easy to

navigate and established initial referral routes with referral pathways between service providers that are publicised throughout the borough.

The service provider(s) will access and seek to build and maintain positive links with wider local and national advice networks to keep abreast of key information and changes but also to join up and avoid duplication. The provider(s) will also work closely with London Borough of Harrow as the commissioning authority and provide representation at relevant and appropriate meetings.

b) Summarise the impact of your proposal on groups with protected characteristics

The service specification for the new general information and advice service aims to support groups from all protected characteristics and ensures a positive impact where possible, making it easier to access the right information at the right time.

c) Summarise any potential negative impact(s) identified and mitigating actions

The process has identified positive as well as minor adverse impact on groups under the age, disability and race/ethnicity protected characteristic. This is due to groups under these protected characteristic experiencing challenges with digital access or facing difficulties with the English language. These negative impacts are mitigated by ensuring the service provides digital support and resources as well as face to face engagement, including outreach and drop ins. Additionally, information and advice service will also be provided through translation/interpretation services, reducing the risk of misinterpretation and unclear communication.

2. Assessing impact					
You are required to undertake a detailed analysis of the impact of your proposals on groups with protected characteristics. You should refer to borough profile data , equalities data , service user information, consultation responses and any other relevant data/evidence to help you assess and explain what impact (if any) your proposal(s) will have on each group. Where there are gaps in data, you should state this in the boxes below and what action (if any), you will take to address this in the future.		What does the evidence tell you about the impact your proposal may have on groups with protected characteristics? Click the relevant box to indicate whether your proposal will have a positive impact, negative (minor, major), or no impact			
Protected characteristic	For each protected characteristic, explain in detail what the evidence is suggesting and the impact of your proposal (if any). Click the appropriate box on the right to indicate the outcome of your analysis.	Positive impact	Negative impact		No impact
			Minor	Major	
Age	<p>Harrow has a resident population of 261,205¹. It has an above average working age population aged 16-64 of just under 63% (158,000) and a growing younger population aged 0-15, which is higher than the London average, suggesting that the borough is a popular destination for families.²</p> <p>The borough has an ageing population with 51% of the population aged 45 and above, and 20% of the population aged 65 and over. It is expected that the number of residents aged 65 plus will increase by 38% and those aged 85 plus could increase by 60% by 2030³.</p> <p>Data available shows that the pandemic has adversely impacted young people aged 18-24, with 1 in 10 young people out of work⁴. Harrow has one of the lowest proportions of young people Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEETS). However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a significant increase in numbers, from 0.8% to 1.8%⁵.</p> <p>Impact: Given Harrow's ageing population there may be minor adverse impact on those who have limited digital access. Digital access is only one way that services can meet people's information, advice and advocacy needs. It is not appropriate in all cases,</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

e.g. for the financially/digitally excluded, the IT illiterate, vulnerable people who find digital access challenging and are better suited to face-to-face contact. This is mitigated by creating a multi-channelled service which in addition to providing digital engagement, services will also be delivered face to face including outreach and drop in provision established through Family Hubs and the Flagship action of Conversation Cafes.

In addition, the service will support families, as it will provide information and advice on Benefits and financial support for families, such as Maternity/Paternity allowance and Child Benefits. Although the data available doesn't breakdown to assess exactly where parental age will be, it is more than likely that the majority of parents would be aged 25-60. Therefore, the service will have a positive impact on parents and subsequently, their children.

Also, the service will have a positive impact on pensioners, as it will provide information and advice on benefits for pensioners. This means that the service will have a positive impact on those who of the State Pension age, which is currently 66 for men and women.

Moreover, the service will have a positive impact on those who are in Rent Arrears, as the service will provide information and advice regarding Housing Benefits. For those households with rent arrears due to the pandemic, the Council's Housing Benefit data shows the breakdown against age as follows:

Age Groups	Council tenants	Temporary accommodation tenants	Total
21 – 24	(2%)	(1%)	(2%)
25 – 34	(8%)	(10%)	(8%)
35 – 44	(23%)	(34%)	(26%)
45 – 54	(29%)	(29%)	(29%)

	55 – 64	(24%)	(9%)	(20%)				
	65+	(10%)	(1%)	(8%)				
	Data not available	(3%)	(16%)	(7%)				
	This data suggests that the service would be likely to have a large positive impact on residents aged 35-64.							
Disability	<p>Current data shows that 31,255 of Harrow’s residents have a disability which limits their day-to-day activities as defined by the Equality Act. This equates to 13.2% of the population. There is a strong correlation between disability, in particular the extent of the disability, and economic inactivity and therefore experiencing potential financial hardship.</p> <p>Impact: The service will provide information and advice to those with disabilities who need support with claiming disability benefits, such as Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for children.</p> <p>The service will provide support to all residents, including those with disabilities. In addition to a positive impact on disabled individuals, there may also be minor adverse impact on accessing the service in person which is mitigated by ensuring digital access is a key part of a multi-channelled approach to providing information and advice.</p>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<p>In 2018 it was estimated there are 200,000-500,000 transgender people in the UK.⁶ For the 2021 census, people were asked: ‘Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?’, 262,000 (0.5%) of people answered ‘No’, indicating that their gender identity was different from their sex registered at birth⁷. 90.12% of Harrow residents described themselves as having the same gender identity as sex registered at birth (188,901 respondents). 0.53% of Harrow residents described themselves as having a gender identity which differs to the sex registered at birth but gave no specific identity (1,108 respondents). 0.15% of Harrow residents described themselves as a</p>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>Trans woman (318 respondents). 0.16% of Harrow residents described themselves as a trans man (342 respondents). 0.03% of Harrow residents described themselves as non-binary (57 respondents). 0.03% of Harrow residents described themselves as 'All other gender identities' (59 respondents). 8.98% of Harrow residents did not respond (18,832 respondents)⁸.</p> <p>Impact: The service is designed to positively impact all individuals seeking information and advice, regardless of their gender reassignment, making it easier to access the right information at the right time.</p>				
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership</p>	<p>At the time of the 2011 Census, 54% of Harrow's residents were married, which was the highest level in London. 21% of households were married, or in same-sex civil partnerships, with dependent children, the highest level in London. In October 2020 there have been 144 Same Gender Civil Partnerships in Harrow, 25 of which has been converted to a Marriage. There have been 8 Opposite Gender Civil Partnerships. There have been 57 Same Sex marriages.</p> <p>Impact: The service is designed to positively impact all individuals seeking information and advice, regardless of their partnership status, making it easier to access the right information at the right time.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>	<p>The most recent figures for birth rates in Harrow from ONS show Harrow as having 3,526 live births in 2019. 14 live births per 1000 population is higher than the England & Wales average of 10.8. The borough has the worst infant mortality rate in London, at a rate of 5.1 deaths per 1000 live births, which is a strong indicator of poverty and inequality in the borough.</p> <p>Impact: is https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/genderidentity/bulletins/genderidentityenglandandwales/census2021</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>The service will support mothers and single mothers via Family Hubs. Below is summary for reach at Childrens Centers across Year 23/24:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Year 23/24</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Number of Families reached</td> <td>6,856</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Volume of families seen (no. of times reached)</td> <td>41,273</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of Pregnant Mothers reached</td> <td>1,671</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of Lone Parents reached</td> <td>173</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Volume of Lone Parents reached</td> <td>638</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of Teenage Parents reached</td> <td>67</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Volume of Teenage Parents reached</td> <td>135</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of Children aged 0-5 reached</td> <td>6,813</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This evidence suggests that the service will have a positive impact on pregnant women and mothers.</p>	Year 23/24		Number of Families reached	6,856	Volume of families seen (no. of times reached)	41,273	Number of Pregnant Mothers reached	1,671	Number of Lone Parents reached	173	Volume of Lone Parents reached	638	Number of Teenage Parents reached	67	Volume of Teenage Parents reached	135	Number of Children aged 0-5 reached	6,813				
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<p>Race/ Ethnicity</p>	<p>Harrow is one of the most culturally diverse local authorities in the UK. Current census figures show that 64% of residents are from Black, Asian, and Multi-ethnic backgrounds. The largest single ethnic group in the borough is Indian with this group comprising 28.6% of Harrow's population.</p> <p>Impact:</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																		

For those households with rent arrears due to the pandemic, the Councils Housing Benefit data (year) shows the breakdown against ethnicity as follows:

	Council tenants	Temporary accommodation tenants	Total
Asian / Asian British	(12%)	(17%)	(14%)
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	(32%)	(20%)	(29%)
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	(6%)	(3%)	(5%)
White	(25%)	(17%)	(22%)
Another ethnic group	(2%)	(3%)	(3%)
Prefer not to say	(22%)	(40%)	(27%)

This data suggests that housing advice services will have the greatest impact on residents of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British decent.

The service is designed to have a positive impact on all individuals accessing information and advice but it is understood that those for whom English is not the first language or the use of technical and complex language may experience language barriers to access. This will be mitigated by ensuring the service for information and advice adequately reflects the need for translation into community languages (including new communities coming into Harrow), the provision of interpreters and demonstration of cultural sensitivity.

<p>Religion or belief</p>	<p>At the 2021 Census, the most predominant religion in the borough is Christianity (37%), with 28% Hindus, 12% Muslims and 3% are Jewish. 13% stated they were atheist or had 'no religion'. As the population's ethnic composition changes, rates of participation in various religions are also likely to change⁹. There is limited data on employment/unemployment rates for Harrow by religion. Data for London suggests that educational attainment and employment among the capital's Muslim community is lower than those from other faith groups located in the borough¹⁰.</p> <p>Impact: The service is designed to positively impact all individuals seeking information and advice, regardless of their religion or belief, making it easier to access the right information at the right time.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Sex</p>	<p>The latest census figures show that Harrow has a population of 132,406 females (50.69%) and 128,797 males (49.31%). Economic activity among Harrow's male population is higher than the London average at 86%, compared with 83%¹¹. However, economic activity among females in the borough is lower than the London average at 72%.</p> <p>Harrow is a low wage borough, with both men and women that are employed in the borough earning less than the London average of £760¹² earning less compared to men. Women earn less than men in the borough. Average gross weekly earnings among women working in Harrow is £500, 38% lower than the London average of £688¹³.</p> <p>In the 2021 Census, 90.12% of Harrow residents described themselves as having the same gender identity as sex registered at birth (188,901 respondents). 0.53% of Harrow residents described themselves as having a gender identity which differs to the sex registered at birth</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

⁹ Harrow Economic Assessment: 2019-2020: population

¹⁰ Annual Population Survey 2018.

¹¹ NOMIS: Labour supply, December 2020

¹² NOMIS: earnings by place of work 2020

¹³ NOMIS: earnings by place of work: 2020

but gave no specific identity (1,108 respondents). 0.15% of Harrow residents described themselves as a Trans woman (318 respondents). 0.16 of Harrow residents described themselves as a trans man (342 respondents). 0.03% of Harrow residents described themselves as nonbinary (57 respondents). 0.03% of Harrow residents described themselves as 'All other gender identities' (59 respondents). 8.98% of Harrow residents did not respond (18,832 respondents)¹⁴.

Impact:

Statistics suggest that there are more female headed households facing rent arrears than male headed households. For those households with rent arrears due to the pandemic, the Councils Housing Benefit data shows the breakdown against female and male headed households as follows:

	Council tenants	Temporary accommodation tenants	Total
Female headed household	(67%)	(71%)	(68%)
Male headed household	(30%)	(25%)	(28%)
Data not available	(3%)	(4%)	(4%)

Additionally, more households in council housing or temporary accommodation are occupied by women. This data suggests that the service may provide more housing support to women than men. Moreover, as economic activity and earnings are lower in women than in men, there is a higher likelihood that the service will provide more financial support to women than men.

Furthermore, data from the service provider suggests that 58% of their clients between Oct-Dec 2023 were female.

Taken altogether, data suggests that the various elements of support provided by the service will have a greater positive impact on women than men. However, the service will

¹⁴ 2021 Government Census, Office for National Statistics

	support all groups who face financial hardship, which will have a positive impact on residents, regardless of their gender.				
Sexual Orientation	<p>2021 Census data from 2018 87.2% of Harrow residents described themselves as ‘Straight or Heterosexual’ (182702 respondents). 0.6% of Harrow residents described themselves as ‘Gay or Lesbian’ (1361 respondents). 0.9% of Harrow residents described themselves as ‘Bisexual’ (1873 respondents). 0.5% of Harrow residents described themselves as ‘All other sexual orientations’ (1005 respondents) 10.8% of Harrow residents did not answer (22680 respondents)¹⁵.</p> <p>Impact: The Council does not hold any data on the sexual orientation of residents. However, the service will aim to support residents regardless of their sexual orientation.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.1 Cumulative impact – considering what else is happening within the Council and Harrow as a whole, could your proposals have a cumulative impact on groups with protected characteristics?

Yes No

If you clicked the Yes box, which groups with protected characteristics could be affected and what is the potential impact? Include details in the space below

2.2 Any other impact - considering what else is happening nationally/locally (national/local/regional policies, socio-economic factors etc.), could your proposals have an impact on individuals/service users, or other groups?

Yes No

¹⁵ 2021 Government Census, Office for National Statistics

If you clicked the Yes box, Include details in the space below

3. Actions to mitigate/remove negative impact

Only complete this section if your assessment (in section 2) suggests that your proposals may have a negative impact on groups with protected characteristics. If you have not identified any negative impacts, please complete sections 4 and 5.

In the table below, please state what these potential negative impact (s) are, mitigating actions and steps taken to ensure that these measures will address and remove any negative impacts identified and by when. Please also state how you will monitor the impact of your proposal once implemented.

State what the negative impact(s) are for each group, identified in section 2. In addition, you should also consider, and state potential risks associated with your proposal.	Measures to mitigate negative impact (provide details, including details of and additional consultation undertaken/to be carried out in the future). If you are unable to identify measures to mitigate impact, please state so and provide a brief explanation.	What action (s) will you take to assess whether these measures have addressed and removed any negative impacts identified in your analysis? Please provide details. If you have previously stated that you are unable to identify measures to mitigate impact please state below.	Deadline date	Lead Officer
Age	By creating a multi-channelled service which in addition to providing digital access, will also be delivered face to face, including outreach and drop in provisions established through Family Hubs and the Flagship action of Conversation Cafes.	Quarterly performance meetings	1 st April 2025	Tahira Bakhtiari
Disability	By ensuring digital access is a key part of a multi-channelled approach in providing information and advice.	Quarterly performance meetings	1 st April 2025	Tahira Bakhtiari
Race/ethnicity	Include the provision of translation/interpretation support as part of the service specification.	Quarterly performance meetings	1 st April 2025	Tahira Bakhtiari

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4. Public Sector Equality Duty

How does your proposal meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
3. Foster good relations between people from different groups

Include details in the space below

1. The service provider will ensure there are no discriminatory elements in the service when supporting individuals with general information and advice by ensuring the service is compliant with the Equality Act 2010.
2. The service will help to advance equality of opportunity by addressing the disparity of people not having access to information and advice.
3. The service will help foster good relations between communities through addressing wider negative impact due to people's socio-economic status.

5. Outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) click the box that applies

Outcome 1

No change required: the EQIA has not identified any potential for unlawful conduct or disproportionate impact and all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity are being addressed

Outcome 2

Adjustments to remove/mitigate negative impacts identified by the assessment, or to better advance equality, as stated in section 3&4

Outcome 3

This EqIA has identified discrimination and/ or missed opportunities to advance equality and/or foster good relations. However, it is still reasonable to continue with the activity. Outline the reasons for this and the information used to reach this decision in the space below.

Include details here

DRAFT