

**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) FORM**

<b>Name of Policy:</b>	Grants to Voluntary Organisations
<b>Lead Officer (responsible for assessment):</b>	Lewis Bage, Communities and Partnerships Manager
<b>Department:</b>	Communities and Partnerships
<b>Others Involved in the Assessment (i.e. peer review, external challenge):</b>	
<b>Date EIA Completed:</b>	25/01/2018

**What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?**

As part of any effective policy development process, it is important to consider any potential risks to those who will be affected by the policy's aims or by its implementation. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process helps us to assess the implications of our decisions on the whole community, to eliminate discrimination, tackle inequality, develop a better understanding of the community we serve, target resources efficiently, and adhere to the transparency and accountability element of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

**The word 'policy', in this context, includes the different things that the Council does. It includes any policy, procedure or practice - both in employment and service delivery. It also includes proposals for restructuring, redundancies and changes to service provision.**

(a) **What is the policy trying to achieve?** i.e. What is the aim/purpose of the policy? Is it affected by external drivers for change? What outcomes do we want to achieve from the policy? How will the policy be put into practice?

The paper seeks approval for an annual grant contribution as part of the 2018-19 Service Level Agreements with the Citizens Advice Rural Cambs, Rural Cambs Newmarket Advice and Voluntary and Community Action East Cambs (VCAEC).

The District Council recognises that the voluntary and community sector plays a crucial role in meeting a wide variety of community needs, including supporting the vulnerable and improving community cohesion. The Council has historically supported the VCS through the provision of funding linked to service level agreements with Voluntary and Community Action East Cambs, and to the Citizens Advice services that support clients living within East Cambridgeshire.

(b) **Who are its main beneficiaries?** i.e. who will be affected by the policy?

The main beneficiaries are the residents, community and voluntary groups who access the services provided by the three organisations. Typically those accessing the Citizens Advice service are some of the most vulnerable in the community – those in debt, often with mental health issues.

VCAEC provides support to voluntary groups and also runs two of its own discrete projects which support older people, those without their own transport, people with disabilities and with mental health issues.

**(c) Is the EIA informed by any information or background data (quantitative or qualitative)? i.e. consultations, complaints, applications received, allocations/take-up, satisfaction rates, performance indicators, access audits, census data, benchmarking, workforce profile etc.**

The Council has been working closely with Citizens Advice to consider emerging issues, such as the unknown impacts of when Universal Credit is extended to all claimants in September 2018.

The core funding provided to VCAEC is critical in helping to build capacity in communities. As public services retreat, communities are under increasing pressure to meet their own needs. The focus of this work is likely to be on supporting an aging population and reducing rural isolation through initiatives such as the Helping Hands and Social Car Schemes.

**(d) Does this policy have the potential to cause a positive or negative impact on different groups in the community, on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics? (please tick all that apply)**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	X	<b>Age</b>	X
<b>Gender</b>		<b>Religion and Belief</b>	
<b>Disability</b>	X	<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>		<b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</b>	
<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>		<b>Caring Responsibilities</b>	

**Please explain any impact identified:** i.e. What do you already know about equality impact or need? Is there any evidence that there is a higher or lower take-up by particular groups? Have there been any demographic changes or trends locally? Are there any barriers to accessing the policy or service?

The Citizens Advice services and VCAEC rely on core funding from the District Council (and other local authority partners) to continue to operate. If the grant was not awarded there is a high probability that some - if not all - of the services would cease to exist in East Cambs.

<b>(e) Does the policy have a differential impact on different groups?</b>	<b>YES/NO/Na</b>
<b>(f) Is the impact adverse (i.e. less favourable)?</b>	<b>YES/NO/Na</b>
<b>(g) Does it have the potential to disadvantage or discriminate unfairly against any of the groups in a way that is unlawful?</b>	<b>YES/NO/Na</b>

**(h) How have you engaged stakeholders in gathering evidence or testing the policy proposals?** Who was involved, how and when where they engaged? Does the evidence show potential for differential impact? How will you mitigate any negative impacts? Where there is the potential for an adverse impact that cannot be addressed immediately, these should be highlighted in your recommendations and objectives at the end of the EIA.

As part of the Service Level Agreements, the Citizens Advice services and VCAEC are required to highlight emerging areas of concern. In addition to providing a feel for the direction of travel for the organisation, the reports identify community issues that the Council could help address through partnership working or by changing the way we deliver council services.

The performance monitoring data supplied by the three organisations also provides evidence of the high level of demand for the services they provide.

\* The Consultation Register is available to assist staff in consulting with the Council's stakeholders.

**(i) Summarise the findings of your research and/or consultation (please use a separate sheet if necessary).**



**Head of Service:**

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**Date:**

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