

EQUALITY SCREENING

Equality Impact Assessment guidance should be considered when completing this form.

POLICY/FUNCTION/ACTIVITY	LEAD OFFICER
Climate Change Communications Plan 2024/25	Dan Callaghan

A. What is the aim of this policy, function or activity? Why is it needed? What is it hoped to achieve and how will it be ensured it works as intended? Does it affect service users, employees or the wider community?

Implementation of the Climate Change Communications Plan 2024-25 is proposed to enable delivery of the Council's draft Climate Change Action Plan (Action ID 8.2) in support of the Climate Change Strategy. The Communications Plan aims to deliver a key objective of the Strategy, which is to positively engage with residents, businesses, community groups, national and local government, and universities to share information and encourage positive behavioural change to adapt to or mitigate climate change. Information sharing and communications campaigns form a critical element of environmental behavioural change approaches, raising awareness of the environmental impacts of unsustainable behaviours and highlighting the co-benefits of more sustainable actions.

The Climate Change Communications Plan 2024-25 focusses on two focus campaigns which have been developed based on resident feedback, internal discussion with relevant service areas, external discussion with relevant organisations, review of relevant literature, and feedback from Members following presentations at the Climate Change Working Party in November and January. The focus campaigns are anti-idling and food waste, both of which cause environmental harm in the form of greenhouse gas emissions, alongside public health issues from idling behaviour and financial costs from food waste. The planned objectives of each campaign set out in the Communications Plan are:

Anti-Idling in Schools:

- To engage junior schools in Runnymede on the issue of idling behaviour.
- To run interactive education assemblies on idling behaviour and its impacts on the environment and public health.
- To provide schools and students with educational and information resources related to idling which can then be promoted by schools and partners through their own channels (e.g., social media, newsletters, parent emails).
- To have anti-idling included in all school safer travel plans of engaged schools.
- To support schools in any further actions or monitoring they wish to undertake related to anti-idling behaviour.

Anti-Idling at Level Crossings:

- To develop anti-idling behavioural change messaging based on best practice examples.
- To identify new locations for anti-idling signage, working with relevant partners.
- To replace current signage with larger, striking, and eye-catching signage and implement signage into newly identified locations, working with relevant partners.
- To have the campaign promoted by Surrey County Council and Network Rail through their own channels as key campaign partners.
- To launch an anti-idling pledge platform for drivers pledging not to idle aiming for at least 100 sign-ups and providing pledged drivers with promotional materials e.g., car stickers.

Food Waste:

- Explore running a targeted residents survey to better understand current food waste behaviours and barriers to reducing/recycling food waste.
- Review SEP data, alongside any obtained survey data, to identify food waste behaviours in Runnymede which could inform food waste campaigns.
- Use learnings to create campaign resources which raise awareness of the importance of

reducing and recycling of food waste.

- Use learnings to create campaign resources which demonstrate to campaign recipients how to reduce and recycle food waste (e.g., recipes, instructional videos, where waste goes).
- In accordance with SEP campaigns which typically run for six-weeks, partner and work closely with SEP on food waste campaigns.

The proposed approach to the Communications Plan will engage with a wide range of groups across Runnymede community and be carried out, where required, with the support of partner organisations. The anti-idling campaign is proposed in two streams to achieve the planned objectives. These streams will focus on schools (school children/teachers/parents) and level crossings (borough drivers), with the engagement methods and messaging tailored to the audience in each case. The food waste campaign approach focusses primarily on the wider Runnymede community to support the work of Surrey Environment Partnership and seeking innovative and cost-effective approaches to furthering the messaging around reducing and recycling food waste. Across both campaigns, the Council's engagement will provide information and material resources that can enable more sustainable behaviours, which hold to potential to enable environmental, financial, and public health benefits.

B. Is this policy, function or activity relevant to equality? Does the policy, function or activity relate to an area in which there are known inequalities, or where different groups have different needs or experience? Remember, it may be relevant because there are opportunities to promote equality and greater access, not just potential on the basis of adverse impacts or unlawful discrimination.

The Protected Characteristics are; Sex, Age, Disability, Race, Religion and Beliefs, Sexual Orientation, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Gender Reassignment, Pregnancy and Maternity.

The proposed Climate Change Communications Plan 2024-25 is considered to be relevant to equality. Impacts of the Council's engagement activities associated with the Communications Plan on the wider Runnymede community, including those groups with protected characteristics, are expected to have positive outcomes. The Communications Plan seeks to engage multiple groups across the borough on the topics of anti-idling and food waste, including those with protected characteristics.

The anti-idling campaign has a specific stream to address idling at or near schools where large numbers of young people are present. Research has shown that air pollution can have a disproportionate effect on young people by limiting lung development and lung capacity, alongside other health impacts. Those with respiratory conditions are also likely to be more significantly impacted by localized air pollution. Objectives which aim to reduce idling behaviour are expected to have positive impacts on young people. Anti-idling sessions will be delivered in-person to schools during school hours, which will maximise their reach with students from a diversity of backgrounds and resources accompanying this will be provided by the Council. However, whilst the Council will use multiple contact channels to promote the campaign to schools and encourage their involvement, schools may choose not to engage in the initiative, either due to their own resource constraints or as they do not perceive an idling concern at or near their premises. Campaign materials and resources will remain available via the Council's digital channels for schools throughout the campaign.

The anti-idling campaign at level crossings is expected to be relevant to equality. The objectives related to the place-based signage and messaging on the lead up to level crossings are not believed to be relevant to equality, however the pledges platform which will be delivered principally in a digital format on the Council website or pledge platform are believed to be relevant. As some groups with protected characteristics may not be willing or able to access digital platforms, combining digital and physical communication methods can ensure a more inclusive campaign approach.

The food waste campaign has a planned objective to explore running a targeted survey to better understand food waste behaviours and barriers to reducing/recycling food waste. If, on further exploration, it is to be decided that a survey is run, there could be implications for protected characteristics as this would be largely delivered using digital channels. As some groups with protected characteristics may not be willing or able to access digital platforms, combining digital and physical communication methods can ensure a more inclusive campaign approach.

If the policy, function or activity is considered to be relevant to equality then a full Equality Impact Assessment may need to be carried out. If the policy function or activity does not engage any protected characteristics then you should complete Part C below. Where Protected Characteristics are engaged, but Full Impact Assessment is not required because measures are in place or are proposed to be implemented that would mitigate the impact on those affected or would provide an opportunity to promote equalities please complete Part C.

C. If the policy, function or activity is not considered to be relevant to equality, what are the reasons for this conclusion? Alternatively, if there it is considered that there is an impact on any Protected Characteristics but that measures are in place or are proposed to be implemented, please state those measures and how it/they are expected to have the desired result. What evidence has been used to make this decision? A simple statement of 'no relevance' or 'no data' is not sufficient.

For the objective within the anti-idling level crossings campaign to develop a pledge initiative aiming for at least 100 sign-ups, officers will address the potential impacts of protected characteristics by providing opportunities for engagement that are not delivered digitally. While a digital platform and the use of digital distribution channels for messaging will be used, officers will find alternative means to communicate the campaign and encourage sign-ups offline. These could include attendance at community group sessions in close proximity to level crossing locations, pop-up and in-person events in close proximity to level crossing locations, and the production and distribution of printed resources for handouts and in locations around the borough. However, as precise details of the pledge approach and campaign are to be established at a later date by the Communications and Climate Change team, further guidance will be sought from the Equalities Group as the specifics of this approach are agreed.

For the food waste campaign, a current objective is to explore the option of running a food waste survey with local residents that informs a food waste communications campaign. In the delivery of any survey, digital platforms and digital channels would be the principal means for distribution, however officers would also seek forms of engagement that encourage the involvement of individuals with protected characteristics. This could include engagement at local community groups, the production of printed survey materials and in-person surveys, and the distribution of surveys to Council employees in service areas that liaise directly with groups with protected characteristics. As the current wording is to explore running a survey, further guidance from the Equalities team on implications for groups with protected characteristics would be sought at a later date if required.

This screening assessment will need to be referred to the Equality Group for challenge before sign-off.

Date completed:

Sign-off by senior manager: