

EQUALITY SCREENING

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

POLICY/FUNCTION/ACTIVITY	LEAD OFFICER
Runnymede Economic Development Strategy	Paul Hadfield

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?

The 2022 to 2026 Runnymede Economic Development Strategy aim is that the Borough continues to be a leading economy in Surrey and the wider sub-region. Runnymede will be a place where businesses succeed, and residents prosper. An attractive place for investors and visitors. The Economic Development Strategy aims to build on the Borough's economic strengths to support a resilient, productive, low carbon and high-value economy.

The strategy is needed to:

- articulate a clear economic narrative for the Borough based on a review of economic performance and business and stakeholder priorities.
- ensure the support and continued endorsement of business and stakeholders.
- set the strategic direction for economic development for the next four years, with a focus on sustainable business and economic growth.
- Make clear links with internal and external strategies including those of the Enterprise M3 LEP, Surrey County Council and neighbouring authorities; and
- set out key priorities and clear deliverables, which define how economic development will be delivered.
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The strategy includes six priorities. The impact of the strategy will be measured against the following:

- Increase business engagement
- Promote strategic employment sites
- Establish Runnymede business awards
- Establish the need for additional employment land (through the Local Plan review process)
- Increase the membership of Business Runnymede
- Increase referrals to the Business Growth Hub
- Develop a growth framework for Createch
- Production of an audit and analysis of the tourism and leisure sector and action plan identifying next steps to support its development.
- Increase engagement with town centre businesses to support projects and programmes to increase footfall and spend within the town centres.
- Increase business take up of apprenticeships and employer-based skills
- Develop the Youth Hub
- Establish a Careers Fair

- Support the delivery of improvements to the A320
- Explore further opportunities for town centre regeneration
- Support delivery of the River Thames Scheme
- Work with partners to seek improvements to digital infrastructure

The strategy will impact on businesses, residents, and employees. It will improve employment for residents, raise skill levels and improve the alignment of the skills of residents with the skills needed by employers. It will ensure that residents have a better understanding of jobs and careers and are better prepared to access employment in high quality employment. It will help businesses to grow and create employment for residents.

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 for 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.

It is well documented that different groups face barriers to accessing employment and skills. These barriers and disadvantages have been accentuated by Covid 19. For example, Young people and people in low paid jobs have been impacted by a disrupted education and the loss of entry level jobs into the labour market. There are certain communities such as the travelling community who have very low attainment of education and lack literacy and numeracy skills. Low levels of attainment amongst the Travelling Community is due to prejudice and discrimination and the lack of positive promotion of travellers in an educational context and the fact that many traveller children have to leave school early to find employment. Often a traveller child's full time education ends at Primary level. Members of Black and Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities are more likely to be refused business loans or grants and face discrimination in accessing employment. Research by the [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#) has shown how the pandemic has disproportionately impacted on BAME communities, migrant workers, people on low incomes and people with disabilities, who are more likely to be unemployed, or in low paid in secure employment. Women are discouraged from entering certain careers and are consequently underrepresented in certain employment sectors such as tech and engineering. Women who want to return to work after taking career breaks due to having care responsibilities often face discrimination from employers.

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 of 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.

The Economic Development Strategy is relevant to equalities. As stated above there are residents who are disadvantaged in the labour market due to their gender, ethnicity or disability. The strategy will set out actions which the council will take to support equalities. For example the Youth Hub will target young people who face multiple barriers to employment and training. This will include a high number of people from disadvantaged groups. People with protected characteristics may be covered by more than one protected characteristic; e.g. age and disability.

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

Date completed: 01/03/22

Sign-off by senior manager: Rachel Raynaud

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SCOPING

1. What aspects of the policy function or activity are particularly relevant to equality? Other aspects should not necessarily be excluded from the assessment, but attention should be focused on the most important areas and include which of the equality strands the policy function or activity is relevant to. Diversity within the strands should also be considered. Please consider whether any comments made in Part B of the Screening form are relevant here.

The following areas of work covered by the strategy are particularly relevant to equality:

Access to business support. Entrepreneurs from black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) communities are less likely to access business support and are more likely to be refused loans and grants. The strategy will work with the Business Growth Hub and other business support organisations to ensure that BAME communities are actively targeted and supported. Women are less likely to set up businesses in certain sectors such as the tech sector.

Employment and skills. Residents from BAME communities, residents with disabilities, on low incomes, from low socio economic backgrounds, residents who are ex offenders, and residents who are homeless face multiple and often complex barriers to accessing education, skills and employment. Women are discouraged from entering employment in sectors such as the tech sector which provide high quality employment opportunities. The strategy will encourage skills and education providers, careers advisors to target residents from these disadvantaged groups and to provide stronger pathways to employment and skills by promoting opportunities and addressing barriers.

2. Set out the available evidence that will help you assess the impact of this policy function or activity on equality. This could include service-level monitoring data, analysis of complaints/enquiry records, existing user feedback, data obtained from external sources and information about the local community. You may find it useful to compare your service-user statistics against the [Runnymede population profile](#).

The strategy is grounded on evidence provided by the Local Economic Assessment completed in March 2022. This includes social economic data relating to equalities and employment, businesses, education and skills. The Economic Assessment will be updated during the four year life time of the strategy. These updates will be used to assess the impact of the strategy.

3. What consultation and involvement has been undertaken in relation to this (or a similar) policy, function or activity and what are the results? If none have been carried out, what consultation will be needed? Data may be available from recent consultation activities on a related policy or Equality impact assessment.

A Business Survey was completed by over 50 local businesses in July 2021. This survey collected feedback on recruitment and employment and identified skills gaps. A consultation event with employers was held with 30 employers and Brooklands college in September to explore skills gaps and to support pathways for young people from disadvantaged groups into employment.

A Business Summit was held in September 2021 to consult on key issues identified from the development of the strategy. A workshop was held with local skills and carers advisers to identify issues and barriers to employment and skills experienced by local residents.

The feedback from these consultation events were included in the evidence base used in the Local Economic Assessment and Strategy and informed the priorities and deliverables.

4. Are there any gaps in the information established from the consultation and involvement undertaken and referred to in Part 3? If so, set out how these gaps will be filled?

The data gathered from the business survey was based on a small sample of businesses. The data is therefore not robust by itself. However the data was analysed alongside larger business surveys undertaken by the Federation of Small Business. Further local surveys will complement larger surveys.

The strategy is grounded on the latest economic data. However, this can be several years old. For example data on business formation rates is typically 18 months old, employment data 24 months old. Data on GVA (Gross Value Added) is 5 years old and data on travel to work patterns is based on 2011 census data.

The evidence will be updated during the four-year lifetime of the strategy. For example, the 2021 Census data will be available over the next 18 months.

We will gather data from organisations (such as Citizens Advice Runnymede and Spelthorne, Voluntary Sector, Citizens Panel, RALG, Surrey Action for Carers) that represent or engage with communities with protected characteristics who face barriers to employment and skills.

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Where it is not possible to fill information/data gaps in time to inform this assessment, specific action points will need to be included in the action plan section Part 10 below, with a focus on monitoring the actual impact of the policy function or activity.

ASSESSING IMPACT

It is essential to consider not just the intended consequences of the policy but also any unintended consequences and barriers that might prevent it being effective for people within any of the Protected Characteristic groups.

Please use the Grid included below to assess the impact of the Policy/function/action on each of the Protected Characteristics. When completing the assessment, please bear in mind the following questions;

- 1. What are the main findings of your consultation and involvement activities, and do they demonstrate problems that need to be addressed? For example, could the policy, function or activity outcomes differ according to people's ethnic group, disability, gender, religion/belief, sexual orientation, or age?** For instance, there might be evidence of higher or lower participation/uptake by different groups.
- 2. If there is a disproportionate impact on one group, is it appropriate and consistent with the objective?** For instance the policy may include lawful positive action or other methods to address particular needs or may be considered to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim

Protected Characteristic	Positive		Neutral	Negative		Comments
	High	Low		High	Low	
Age	√					Young people lack skills, experience, and knowledge of the world of work and of career opportunities. The strategy will develop the Youth Hub which will develop strong pathways to skills and employment for young people aged 18 to 24 years old, particularly those from disadvantaged groups who face multiple and often complex barriers to education and employment. Older people face barriers to employment. Employers can discriminate against older workers. Information about the advantages of employing skilled and experience older workers will be circulated to local businesses via the Business Runnymede Newsletter and Runnymede Talks and the Council's website.
Disability		√				People with disabilities face barriers to accessing employment and progressing into higher level jobs. Business Runnymede will encourage local employers to be Disability Confident . Local education and skills providers will be encouraged to target and support people with

						disabilities.
Race/Ethnicity	√					Members of Black and Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities are more likely to be refused business loans or grants and face discrimination in accessing employment. Information and advice will be disseminated to employers about equal opportunity and strategies for improving employment for BAME communities. The Youth Hub will target support at BAME young people. The Growth Hub will target support at BAME entrepreneurs and businesses.
Sex		√				The Youth Hub will promote careers and employment opportunities to women in sectors where female employment is underrepresented. This includes in tech and engineering.
Sexual Orientation			√			Information and advice will be disseminated to employers about equal opportunity and employment including issues relating to sexual orientation.
Marriage or civil partnership			√			Information and advice will be disseminated to employers about equal opportunity, rights and issues.
Religion and Belief		√				Information and advice will be disseminated to employers about equal opportunity, rights and issues regarding religious belief and employment rights.
Pregnancy and maternity		√				Information and advice will be disseminated to employers about equal opportunity, rights and issues affecting women returning to the labour market. This will include promoting family friendly policies that assist work life balance for carers.
Gender re-assignment?		√				Information and advice will be disseminated to employers about equal opportunity and employment including issues relating to gender re-alignment.

5. Does the policy, function or activity miss potential opportunities to promote equality or positive attitudes to (and between) different Protected Characteristics or communities?

The actions which will be delivered to support equality will be limited by the level of resource which the Council can provide. The approach will be to influence and work jointly with partners to promote equality and positive attitudes and to link this work to wider work being undertaken by the Council.

ADDRESSING THE IMPACT: ACTION PLANNING, MONITORING AND REVIEW

6. Does the policy, function or activity require reconsideration or amendment? If not, explain the reasons for this conclusion. If an adverse impact has been identified, you will need to set out the justification for continuing the policy, function or activity or outline measures to mitigate the impact.

The strategy has been developed with consideration of equality issues. It will be noted in the strategy that an equalities impact assessment has been completed and that impact on equalities will be measured during the lifetime of the strategy.

7. What actions have you identified as a result of this equality impact assessment? These might include improving data collection in order to give a clearer picture of your service-users, physical adjustments to a building, arranging for information to be sent out to individuals in alternative formats or languages, or consulting with a wider group of people to understand the impact of the policy.

Ongoing evaluation of the impact of the strategy in relation to equalities. Promoting equalities through communications to residents and businesses. Ensuring that services which are delivered target and support communities which are disadvantaged and face multiple and complete barriers to employment and skills.

The strategy's action plan could include specific initiatives to support equalities such as mentoring scheme for young black workers, apprenticeships, careers advice for women into science and technology.

8. Action Plan (where applicable): Who will be responsible for completing these actions and in what timescale? How will you review the actual impact of this policy function or activity?

Provide details of timescale and actions for review, and details of how the actions will be evaluated to measure if expected outcomes are achieved in practice. You may have identified 'triggers' that would indicate a problem with the policy, function or activity and suggest a revision is be needed.

The strategy includes priorities and deliverables. Once the strategy is approved an action plan will be developed which sets out details of what how and when projects will be delivered. The action plan will identify the lead officer responsible for each project. Each project will be evaluated against impact measures.

This assessment will need to be referred to the Equality Group for challenge.

Date completed: 14/04/22

Sign-off by an authorised Officer/Manager: Rachel Raynaud