

EQUALITY SCREENING

Appendix C

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

POLICY/FUNCTION/ACTIVITY	LEAD OFFICER
Expanding the Current Street Licences.	Azra Mukadam

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 impact of the recent pandemic has negatively impacted the town centre businesses across the borough. Businesses are seeing a rapid decline in footfall and residents are visiting less due to more online shopping options and easy access to supermarkets as a one-stop shopping offering.

The development of street markets across the borough gives opportunity for the town businesses to benefit from an increase in the number of visitors to the area, and having a local market close to a community could have the effect of reducing the impact of loneliness within certain groups within the local area.

Egham is currently the only place in the borough to hold a street licence, permitting street trading and commercial markets to run.

In order to expand street licencing in other Town Centres in the borough, members of the Environment and Sustainability Committee (ESC) agreed in September 2021 that the Council would first focus on developing markets in Egham.

Since the first report was presented to the ESC in 2021, Egham has developed two regular street markets:

- 1) A vegan market that occurs on the third Saturday of each month.
- 2) A local artisan market that provides fresh produce sourced from the local area that's occurs the first Saturday of the month.

Having developed Egham as a location that hosts regular markets, Officers are committed to developing Chertsey Town Centre as the next location for regular markets and events.

Chertsey is a priority area for the wider economic development strategy to level up Runnymede residents' pride in their local area. The objectives are to deliver improvements to Chertsey Town Centre. Chertsey will therefore be the focus for the investment in '*Community and Place*'. Part of this proposal is to develop outdoor markets to build vibrancy and increase footfall.

The impact of having more roads with street licence will affect the wider community only during periods of the market day. Road closures and diversion of road traffic will be required but has no direct impact to council services or council employees.

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.

Any impact from the street licencing on the wider borough community, including those groups with protected characteristics is likely to be positive by encouraging people from all ages, women who come within the protected characteristic of pregnant & maternity, and anyone with a disability to attend the markets. Opening the road to pedestrianisation will allow pushchairs and wheelchair users to easily access the market stalls. This may also help address loneliness and isolation and reduces the need to travel to neighbouring towns.

The table below highlights points that have been considered as positives and negatives of the expansion, that may directly impact those protected characteristics of age, pregnant & maternity, and disability the following points:

Positive of expansion	Negatives of expansion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider choice of products to suit all ages and abilities. • Reducing travel to bigger towns for shopping, saving those with disabilities and age having to get transport • Road closure for markets allows easier access for pushchairs, wheelchair users and those with physical disabilities. • Opening hours will align with general trading for high street businesses which suits all ages and disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road closures will impact traffic diversion of road users, so those with disability car licence may have to park outside of the location identified for road closure. • Noise and footfall traffic in the town could impact residents that live directly in the area • Consideration on promotion to those that have hearing and visual impairment. • Consideration is needed for advertising/promotion to those with hearing and visual impairment

The table shows that both the younger and older people of the protected characteristic of age would positively benefit from attending an open-air event with pollution from exhaust fumes reduced by the absence from cars in the area.

This would also have a positive impact of the anyone within the protected characteristic of disability due to breathing related issues.

However, given that the traffic would be prevented from streets would be pedestrianised and closed off for anyone with a car modified for use by someone with mobility issues. In contrast, closing off the street would assist those who have mobility scooter.

The Markets may encourage parents with very young children to attend which may have a positive impact on women and older people who otherwise may not venture out into the local community as much.

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.

By widening the opportunity for street trading licencing to be granted to other parts of the borough, more residents of the wider community will be able to attend the markets and have an opportunity to meet the other members of the community and purchase a wider range of products in their local area. Support for the independent shops and smaller businesses on the high street is needed.

In 2020, Officers carried out engagement directly with 100 town businesses about their views on regular street markets. Feedback was positive as businesses felt that the increase in footfall would benefit their business. There were few concerns about street parking and how often a market would run.

Considering the engagement carried out, officers believe this work demonstrates that there is little negative impact to the protected characteristics considered in Part B thus completing a equalities screening assessment is adequate at this stage.

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

Date completed: 24th November 2023

Sign-off by senior manager: Azra Mukadam