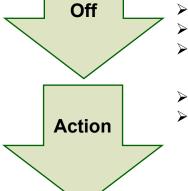
Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

The purpose of an EIA is to ensure WCC is as inclusive as possible, both as a service deliverer and as an employer. It also demonstrates our compliance with Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

This document is a planning tool, designed to help you improve programs of work by considering the implications for different groups of people. A guidance document is available <u>here</u>.

Please note that, once approved, this document will be made public, unless you have indicated that it contains sensitive information. Please ensure that the form is clear and easy to understand. If you would like any support or advice on completing this document, please contact the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team via <u>equalities@warwickshire.gov.uk</u>, or if it's relating to health inequalities, please contact Public Health via <u>phadmin@warwickshire.gov.uk</u>.

- Having identified an EIA is required, ensure that the EIA form is completed before any work is started. This includes gathering evidence and / or engaging the relevant stakeholders to inform your assessment.
- Brief the relevant Assistant Director for sign off and upload the completed form here: <u>Upload Completed</u> <u>Equality Impact Assessments.</u> Please name it "EIA [project] [service area] [year]"
- > Undertake further research / engagement to further understand impacts (if identified).
- Undertake engagement and / or consultation to understand if EIA has identified and considered impacts.
- Amend accordingly to engagement / consultation feedback and brief decision makers of any changes.



EIA

Sign

- Implement proposed activity.
- > Monitor impacts and mitigations as evidence of duty of care.

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Section One: Essential Information

Service / policy / strategy / practice / plan being assessed	The draft Warwickshire Food Strategy 2023-2026
Business Unit / Service Area	Business and Customer Services/ Communities & Partnerships
Is this a new or existing service / policy / strategy / practice / plan?	This is a new draft strategy.
If existing, please state date of last assessment.	
EIA Authors	Mike Slemensek (Communities & Partnerships)
N.B. It is best practice to have more than one person complete the EIA to bring different perspectives to the table.	
Do any other Business Units / Service Areas need to be included?	No
Does this EIA contain personal and / or sensitive information?	No
Are any of the outcomes from this assessment likely to result in complaints from existing services users, members of the public and / or employees?	No

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1. Please explain the background to your proposed activity and the reasons for it.

This is an initial EIA and further ones will be developed for each part of the strategy going forward.

Warwickshire County Council is formulating a draft Warwickshire Food Strategy, collaborating with partner agencies, community and voluntary sector groups and organizations, including the Warwickshire Food Forum partnership. The draft Strategy will address three main priorities 1) food affordability and access – aiming to make sure everyone can access affordable, healthy food 2) food education and choice – promoting awareness and education, how to cook and grow food and participate more in healthy lifestyle choices 3) food sustainability – doing more to support a reduction in food waste and food-related waste, encouraging more local sourcing and sharing of food to reduce greenhouse emissions. The need to have a cohesive approach around these areas is vital to meet the future aims of the Council Plan 2022-2027. The problems of food insecurity and diet-related ill health have been exacerbated by the rapid increases in the impact of Covid-19 and the rapid rises in cost of living. Food policy also has the potential to make positive contributions to the effort to tackle the Climate Emergency.

The food supply system in Warwickshire is not sufficiently sustainable for our future aims and there are recognized and significant inequalities in the supply of affordable healthy food. There are disparities by geography, socio-economic group and by protected characteristic. Warwickshire County Council through its core service delivery, provides support to vulnerable households, tackles financial exclusion, and provides services through its Public Health Team and the Director of Public Health in Warwickshire to promote healthy diet and the wider determinants of health. There are key strategies in place to do this, including:

- The Warwickshire Tackling Social Inequalities Strategy 2021-30
- The Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-26
- The Warwickshire Sustainable Futures Strategy
- The developing plans to address the cost-of-living challenges for Warwickshire residents, communities, and businesses.

The draft Warwickshire Food Strategy does not replace or duplicate this work but links with and supports these strategies and has its own clear focus on the food supply system – specifically in relation to access, affordability, education, choice, and sustainability. Therefore, the draft Strategy has great potential to provide positive benefits to the people of Warwickshire – and it is vital that the strategy is deployed in a way maximises benefits for people who are currently disproportionately affected by food insecurity and poor diet.

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2. Please outline your proposed activity including a summary of the main actions.

The draft Strategy is accompanied by a draft Delivery Plan which sets out the proposed actions, deliverables, and outcomes we wish to see because of the new draft strategy. The finalized Strategy will be launched in April 2023 and a delivery working group, known as the Warwickshire Food Strategy Delivery Group, made up of a wide range of partner organisations, will meet regularly to implement a three-year Delivery Plan. The draft Strategy and draft Delivery Plan seek to achieve nine core outcomes that will be beneficial to residents of Warwickshire in terms of food access and affordability, healthier local food availability and reduced waste and greenhouse gases emissions. The Warwickshire Food Strategy Delivery Group will report quarterly to the Food Forum Partnership in relation to the progress being made. This will include updates relating to actions within this assessment.

3. Who is this going to impact and how?

Customers	Members of the Public	Employees	Job Applicants
Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Other, please specify:	0, 1	tially have an impact on food sup anisations, to identify ways of po clear now.	•

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Section Two: Evidence

Please include any evidence or relevant information that has influenced the decisions contained in this EIA. This could include demographic profiles; audits; research; health needs assessments; national guidance or legislative requirements and how this relates to the protected characteristic groups and additional groups outlined in Section Four.

A – Quantitative Evidence

This is evidence which is numerical and should include the number people who use the service and the number of people from the protected characteristic groups who might be affected by changes to the service.

There is a huge amount of quantitative evidence and data relating to the impact of food insecurity and poor diet both at a national level in the UK and at a Warwickshire level. Some of this data is specifically cited in the Warwickshire draft Food Strategy and is reproduced below at Figures 1 and 2. This and other data has been used to target our future priorities in the draft Strategy and draft Delivery Plan.

Fig.1

In September 2022:

- > 16% of households without children and 25.8% of households with children had experienced food insecurity in the previous month, an increase from April 2022.
- ▶ Households with 3 or more children were more at risk of food insecurity (42.2%).
- > 54% of households on Universal Credit experienced food insecurity compared to 16% not in receipt.
- > Households with people with disabilities were more likely to experience food insecurity.
- Around half of households who were food insecure reported buying less fruit (58%) and less vegetables (48%) compared to those who were food secure (13% were buying less fruit and 8% were buying less vegetables).

In addition:

> Healthy foods are nearly three times more expensive than less healthy foods per calorie

Both reception and Year 6 age children in the most deprived households are twice as likely to be obese than children in the least deprived households.

Food Foundation website ¹²

Fig. 2

- From May 2020 to May 2022 there were 2,902 users of Edible Links Foodbanks
- > During the period 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022 there were 27,191 Trussell Trust food parcels distributed to adults and children.

From April 2021 – March 2022 Warwickshire Citizens Advice dealt with 62,806 enquiries mainly related to benefits, low income, and debt. The proportion of the population being helped with crisis support has increased since 2021 in most areas of Warwickshire.

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In the 6-week period from 1st October 2022 Warwickshire Local Welfare Service through the Household Support Fund provided 20,073 children and 11,770 households with food support.

In October 2022, 17,409 (19.7%) of school-aged children in Warwickshire were eligible and claiming a free school meal (Source: WCC, Business Intelligence). This proportion has steadily increased in recent years.

The number of Healthy Start vouchers to buy food and milk for babies under 4 has increased by at least 50% between March 2021 and April 2022 Poverty in Warwickshire Dashboard¹⁵

B – Qualitative Evidence

This is data which describes the effect or impact of a change on a group of people, e.g., some information provided as part of performance reporting.

We have used national and local quantitative data sources (including the above) but have also drawn on the wide local knowledge we have which is qualitative evidence, from the teams in WCC that work with families and communities and the agencies that work with us – such as Citizens Advice – bringing together a wide range of reports, local intelligence and information-gathering – which helps us to understand the areas of inequality that exist. The critical areas where there is inequality can be grouped under two cross-cutting areas of disadvantage – which are 1) food insecurity and 2) unhealthy diet and lifestyles.

a) Food insecurity correlates with poverty and access to affordable healthy food. Therefore, there is a strong socio-economic aspect to be considered and people in Warwickshire who are financially less well-off and on lower incomes are being negatively impacted and much more likely to face food insecurity. Geographically – people who live in specific areas of the county the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) which feature highly on the national Index of Multiple Deprivation – are in areas of relative deprivation and are likely to be impacted by the factors which underpin higher levels of poverty in these areas. Nuneaton and Bedworth are the Borough with the highest number of LSOA's which feature in the top 10% most deprived in the country. Data from England's National Food Strategy, the Food Foundation, and the UK government's Family Resource Survey shows that food insecurity is linked to inequalities based on sex, race, disability, health, age, and various combinations of these identities. Food insecurity is also a key concern for migrant groups, especially for people with 'No recourse to public funds' (NRPF). Single-adult households, often women with children, are more likely to be food insecure than households with two or more adults and children.

b) Unhealthy diets relate directly to health inequalities. The people most at risk of diet-related ill-health includes disabled people, people living on lower incomes, people living in deprived areas, people from minority ethnic backgrounds and vulnerable people – for example people who are homeless. Major impacts upon these identified groups are increased levels of ill health, lower healthy

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life expectancy and problems with dental health, increased risk of overweight and obesity, Type 2 Diabetes, Cardiovascular disease, and some cancers – within these identified groups.

Section Three: Engagement

Engagement with individuals or organisations affected by the proposed activity must take place. For further advice and support with engagement and consultations, click <u>here</u>.

Has the proposed activity been subject to engagement or consultation with those it is going to impact, taking into account their protected characteristics and socio-economic status?	Yes. There has been wide consultation on the draft Strategy through the membership of the Food Forum and through key WCC teams involved in Public Health and in supporting vulnerable people. The draft Strategy will undergo consultation through the WCC process and is scheduled to go to Corporate Board and Cabinet. Socio – economic status has been an important part of the consideration of this strategy – as well as the impacts by protected characteristic. The organisations and groups listed below have been consulted and engaged. Further consultation is planned with local communities in relation to how the draft strategy is implemented and the activities needed.
If YES, please state who with.	 Citizens Advice Warwickshire Edible Links FareShare Feed the Hungry Mid-Counties Co-operative North Warwickshire Borough Council Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council Rugby Borough Council

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	 South Warwickshire Foundation Trust Stratford-Upon-Avon District Council The Equality and Inclusion Partnership The National Allotment Society The National Farmers Union The Trussell Trust The University of Warwick Together for Change Warwick District Council Warwickshire Association of Local Councils Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action Warwickshire County Council Health Equity Group Warwickshire County Council – including specific teams: Public Health Team Communities & Partnerships Team Gommissioning Support Unit Business Intelligence Team Family Information Service 	
If NO engagement has been conducted, please state why.	N/A	
How was the engagement carried out?	Yes / No	What were the results from the engagement? Please list
Focus/Working Groups	Yes	Input from the working groups and Food Forum membership which has helped shape the strategy to develop the priorities to meet people who are most disadvantaged.
Surveys	N/A	
Public Event		
Displays / Exhibitions	N/A	

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Other (please specify)		Consultation with the Warwickshire Health Equity Group who supported the strategy.	
Has the proposed activity changed as a result of the engagement?	Yes.	The draft Strategy has been developed to its current position taking on board comments and advice from engagement with Food Forum partners and others. This has also been the case with the draft Delivery Plan.	
Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees?	Yes.	Dialogue on the development of the draft Strategy has been regular – and has included updates at Food Forum meetings (now held quarterly and copies of the strategy have been circulated to all members.	
Is further engagement or consultation recommended or planned?	Yes.	Further consultation is considered vital as we begin to implement the draft Delivery Plan. Working with the Equality & Inclusion Partnership – we will seek feedback and views from under-represented communities, members of groups most at risk of food insecurity and poor diets. This will include minority ethnic groups, disabled persons groups and groups and organisations from our priority neighbourhoods. Further consultation events will be factored in as we progress with the delivery of the draft Strategy. Specific plans for consultation will be added. The first series of consultations will be 1) a webinar on 28 March 2023 to obtain views suggestions and feedback 2) two further community events about the strategy in May and June 2023.	
What process have you got in place to review and evaluate?	The equality impact assessment will be regularly reviewed by the Warwickshire Food Strategy Delivery Group – who are responsible for delivering the draft Strategy – as part of the delivery process. The EAI will also be updated and any need for new actions can be identified as part of that process. The actions in the EIA will be evaluated at least annually to assess its impact and the results will be reported to the Food Forum.		

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Protected Characteristics and other groups that experience greater inequalities

What will the impact of implementing this proposal be on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or are likely to be affected by the proposed activity? This section also allows you to consider other impacts, e.g., health inequalities such as deprivation, socio-economic status, vulnerable groups such as individuals who suffer socio-economic disadvantage, armed forces, carers, homelessness, people leaving prison, young people leaving care etc.

Based on evidence, has the potential impact of the proposed activity been judged to be positive (+), neutral (=), negative (-), or positive and negative (+&-), for each of the protected characteristic groups below and in what way?

N.B In our Guidance to EIAs we have provided you with potential questions to ask yourself when considering the impact of your proposed activity. Think about what actions you might take to mitigate / remove the negative impacts and maximize on the positive ones. This will form part of your action plan at Section Six.

	Impact type (+) (=) (-) or (+&-)	Nature of impact including health inequalities Will your proposal have negative or positive implications for each group, including on health inequalities?	Mitigating Actions for Negative Impacts What can you do to mitigate any identified negative impacts or health inequalities? Use this column to form the basis of Section 6.
Age	(+)	The draft Strategy and draft Delivery Plan will have a positive impact by age as it seeks to contribute to a reduction in the percentage of households with children experiencing food insecurity. The draft Delivery Plan contains an action to increase awareness of eligibility and take up of free school meals – with a particular focus of support in areas of deprivation. Please see local dashboard data on how many pupils are currently claiming	N/A

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		 FSM. Higher percentages are clearly represented in North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth – where higher numbers of families are impacted. Oct 2022 school census data - Pupils eligible and claiming a free school meal North Warwickshire - 2550 (23% of pupils on roll) N&B - 5163 (26.7% of pupils on roll) Rugby - 3638 (20.1% of pupils on roll) SoA - 3045 (14.7% of pupils on roll) Warwick - 3013 (15.9% of pupils on roll) Healthy food affordability impacts upon people over retirement age and this is accentuated in the 22 priority levelling up LSOAs which are mainly located in North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth. 	
Disability Consider: Physical disabilities Sensory impairments Neurodiverse conditions (e.g., dyslexia) Mental health conditions (e.g., depression) Medical conditions (e.g., diabetes)	(+)	 There will be a strong focus on ensuring the actions in the draft Delivery Plan reach and include as far as is people and families with physical and mental disabilities. Therefore, this is considered a positive impact. People with a disability under the Equality Act are represented as follows in Warwickshire (Census 2021). North Warwickshire 12,045 (18.5% of population) Nuneaton and Bedworth 25,694 (19.1% of population) Rugby 18,058 (15.8% of population) Stratford 21,701 (16% of population) Warwick 22,535 (15.1% of population) Total 100,033 	N/A

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		 The highest proportions are in Nuneaton and Bedworth and North Warwickshire. These figures do not include people with health conditions outside of the definition of disability within the Equality Act. All events will be chosen or adapted to ensure they are accessible for disabled people. People with disabilities sometimes have reduced access to sources of healthy food and this will be fully considered as part of the mapping of local healthy food supply – to determine to what extent disabled people face barriers and how these barriers can be resolved. The communications plan will incorporate due consideration for accessible formats for disabled people. Specific consultation events will be held with disability organisations. 	
Gender Reassignment	(=)	There is no evidence of either a positive or negative impact caused by this draft Strategy.	N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnership	(=)	There is no evidence of either a positive or negative impact caused by this draft Strategy.	N/A
Pregnancy and Maternity	(+)	The priorities of access and affordability, education, and choice will help provide an enhanced focus on supporting healthy food and good dietary education/information support to women and families during pregnancy and maternity.	N/A
Race Including: Colour Nationality Citizenship Ethnic or national origins	(+)	Data shows that people from minority ethnic communities have suffered a severe impact because of Covid-19 upon their health and there is evidence of poor diet in some communities leading to higher risk of cardio-vascular disease and other health problems. Many people from minority communities may also be low-income families and	N/A

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		therefore also impacted in terms of food insecurity. Asylum seekers and refugees, especially those with no recourse to public funds such as newly arrived people from Hong Kong – are also at higher risk of food insecurity and poor diet. This draft Strategy is intended to reach and include such groups and therefore offers a positive impact upon this protected characteristic. Please see the below data from the 2021 census on numbers and percentages of people from minority ethnic groups in Warwickshire. North Warwickshire 2,522 (3.9%) Nuneaton and Bedworth 17,259 (13%) Rugby 16,350 (14.3%) Warwick 22,920 (15.6%) Stratford 6,052 (4.5%)	
Religion or Belief	(=)	There is no evidence of either a significant positive nor negative impact caused by this draft Strategy upon religion or belief. The needs of people who have diets such as Kosher, Halal, Vegan and others will be specifically considered as part of the work to promote healthy diets and during community events and activities.	N/A
Sex	(+)	The draft Strategy provides a positive impact for women, particularly single parents – who are adversely affected by food insecurity and poor dietary intake. It also impacts positively for men – who feature more highly than women in onset of cardiovascular disease which is significantly determined by poor diet.	N/A
Sexual Orientation	(=)	There is no evidence of either a significant positive or negative impact caused by this draft Strategy upon sexual orientation.	N/A

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Groups who may require support: • Individuals who suffer socio- economic disadvantage • Armed Forces (WCC signed the <u>Armed Forces</u> <u>Covenant</u> in June 2012) • Carers • Homelessness • People leaving Prison • People leaving Care	(+)	There are many socio-economic groups that require support which is already been delivered through key strategies, commissioning, and cost of living support measures. It is vital that this draft Strategy lends its weight to this and a Levelling Up approach to the implementation of the draft Strategy and Draft Delivery Plan is being applied to ensure communities that are most at risk of disadvantage are prioritized. Communications plans are being devised for each priority area of the strategy and these will include a detailed measures for ensuring information about the draft Strategy and services reaches the diverse range of communities requiring support – and that steps are taken to achieve maximum ongoing engagement. By working closely with Borough and District Councils we can reach vulnerable groups. We have an Armed Forces Covenant Officer who will be responsible for reaching out to Armed Forces families and Veterans and providing key information to them.	N/A
Other Identified Health Inequalities (HI) Many issues can have an impact on health is it an area of deprivation, does every population group have equal access, unemployment, work conditions, education, skills, our living situation, rural, urban, rates of crime etc.		What health inequalities already exist? Will your proposal have a negative or positive implications on health inequalities? What can you do to mitigate any identified health inequalities? The issues relating to health inequalities have been outlined above.	N/A

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Other Groups If there are any other	N/A	N/A
groups		

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

Public Authorities must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. Please evidence how your proposed activity meets our obligations under the PSED.

	Evidence of Due Regard
Eliminate unlawful discrimination (Harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct):	By promoting information and increased services to people and communities who are at risk of food insecurity and poor diet this draft Strategy and delivery plan will help eliminate disadvantage.
 Advance equality of opportunity: This involves removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics. taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people, for example, taking steps to take account of people with disabilities. encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low. 	The draft Strategy helps advance equality of opportunity by minimizing disadvantage experienced by people due to protected characteristics. Disabled people are at higher risk of food insecurity and this draft strategy and delivery plan will focus on involving disabled people and relevant organisations and ensuring information reaches them. In the same way a communications plan will ensure we have enhanced dialogue with other groups adversely affected due to the protected characteristics of Race and Sex.

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Foster good relations:	The draft Delivery Plan contains actions to hold community events to bring people from diverse communities and under-
This means tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups and communities.	represented groups to come together for food conventions to share ideas, information and good practice about healthy affordable cooking and eating. This will help foster good relations.

Section Five: Partners / Stakeholders

Which sectors are likely to have an interest in or be affected by the proposed activity?	Yes / No	Describe the interest / affect
Businesses	Yes	Food producers/outlets may wish to become involved.
Councils	Yes	All councils are expected to contribute to the strategy and delivery plan.
Education Sector	Yes	Pilot initiatives in schools are likely to feature in projects.
Fire and Rescue	Yes	Can support with events and circulating information into communities.
Governance Structures	Yes	Corporate Board and Cabinet approval and oversight by the Food Forum.
NHS	Yes	A key partner in the delivery of the draft Strategy and represented on the Food Forum.
Police	No	Not specifically involved.

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Voluntary and Community Sector	Yes	A significant role to play in terms of CVS support to the draft Strategy and draft Delivery Plan – which adopts a community powered approach to the future sustainability of the draft Warwickshire Food Strategy.
Other(s): please list and describe the nature of the relationship / impact		N/A

Section Six: Action Planning

If you have identified impacts on protected characteristic groups in Section Four, please summarise these in the table below detailing the actions you are taking to mitigate or support this impact. It is also important to consider how often this E.I.A. will be reviewed, and who is responsible for doing this. If you are not taking any action to support or mitigate the impact, you should complete the No Mitigating Actions section below instead.

Mitigating Actions

Consider:

- Who else do you need to talk to? Do you need to engage or consult?
- How you will ensure your activity is clearly communicated
- Whether you could mitigate any negative impacts or build on positive impacts for protected groups or health inequalities
- Whether you could do more to fulfil the aims of the PSED
- How you will monitor and evaluate the effect of this work
- Anything else you can think of!

Identified Impact	Action(s)	Timescale incl. evaluation and review date	Name of person responsible
N/A			

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N/A		
N/A		
N/A		

No Mitigating Actions

Please explain why you do not need to take any action to mitigate or support the impact of your proposed activity.

The draft strategy and delivery plan is a positive development designed to support people in Warwickshire with access to affordable healthy and sustainable food supplies. No adverse impact has been discovered through this equality impact assessment and therefore no need for specific mitigating factors. It will be important to ensure the benefits of the strategy do reach all the identified groups that are vulnerable and most at risk – and this need is built into the approach of the strategy.

Section Seven: Assessment Outcome

Only one of following statements best matches your assessment of this proposed activity. Please select one and provide your reasons.		
No major change required	×	The draft Strategy itself exists to reduce health inequalities by improving access to healthy affordable food for everyone. A communications plan is in place to ensure information reaches all communities in Warwickshire. There will be ongoing assessment of impact as the draft Strategy is implemented – so any changes necessary for delivery can be identified.
The proposal must be adjusted to reduce impact on protected characteristic groups and/or health inequalities		

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Continue with the proposal but it is not possible to remove all the risk to protected characteristic groups and/or health inequalities	
Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation	

Section Eight: Sign Off N.B To be completed after the EIA is completed but before the area of work commences.

Name of person/s completing EIA	Mike Slemensek
Name and signature of Assistant Director	Kushal Birla
Date	6 February 2023
Date of next review and name of person/s responsible	10 August 2023 (six months)

Once signed off, please ensure the EIA is uploaded using the following form. Please name it "EIA [project] [service area] [year]": <u>Upload Completed Equality</u> <u>Impact Assessments</u>

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These will be stored on a <u>Sharepoint library</u> which Warwickshire County Council colleagues can access.

It is the responsibility of the individuals and teams who completed the EIA to review it regularly and to carry out any required activities in line with the action plan made.

For advice or support, please contact <u>equalities@warwickshire.gov.uk</u>.

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