

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) – screening template

This tool assists services in determining whether the decisions, proposals, or policies they are seeking to make will require a full Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA). EqIAs help the Council comply with its duty under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have “due regard” to specified equality matters. They are required in most cases but, in some cases, an EqIA is not necessary or is only necessary for certain aspects of a decision. Please email equalities@walthamforest.gov.uk for a copy of a full EqIA template.

The Council understands that whilst its equalities duty applies to all services, it is going to be more relevant to some decisions than others. We need to be pragmatic and ensure that the detail of the EqIA is proportionate to the impact of decisions on the equality

duty. In some cases, a full EqIA is not necessary and/or the equalities duties do not apply. In other cases, only part of a decision will require an EqIA to ensure the Council has due regard to its equality duties. The following examples are intended to assist:

Where will a full EqIA be required?	Where might an EqIA not be required?
<p>In short, wherever a decision has a more than minimal or theoretical adverse or negative impact on those with protected characteristics, for example, if the Council is considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ceasing a service. • Reducing a service or reducing it in particular areas, e.g., closing an office in Leyton but not Walthamstow. • Changes to the way a service is delivered, e.g., moving to personalisation or moving to online access only. • Changes to eligibility criteria, rules, or practices for a service. • Changes to discretionary fees and charges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where it can be proven that the decisions, proposals, or policies has no equalities impact—with particular focus on negative impacts on service users and residents. • Where it can be proven that the decisions, proposals, or policies has a minimal or theoretical equalities impact (and so does not need to be considered). • Where the decisions, proposals, or policies is mandatory and there is no element of discretion (e.g., to adopt a member’s code of conduct or similar). • In rare cases, where a previous EqIA exists and a review shows that it is still relevant at the time of the final decisions, proposals, or policies, i.e., the facts have not changed.

Important:

- The screening tool should not be used to mask any equality impacts or as a “get out”.
- There can be a negative equality impact even if you think that, overall, you are proposing changes that will make services better. If there is an adverse or negative impact, you must complete a full EqIA.
- **Negative** impacts are often indirect, i.e., a rule that is on its face of universal impact but has greater impact on some groups in practice e.g. due to the ethnic makeup of an area.
- In most cases, the screening process requires a degree of collation and analysis of evidence. If this requires a lot of work, consider whether it is simpler to omit the screening process and undertake a full EqIA.
- The equality duty **continues** up to and after the final decision. If proposals or facts change before the final decision, any screening tool will need to be reviewed and evidenced.
- Any consultation undertaken should also inform the screening process, e.g., issues raised by those affected. Monitoring should take place after a decision as part of service delivery.
- The completed template will be attached to Cabinet or other decision-making report and so it must include sufficient detail to justify the decision not to carry out a full EqIA.

What to do?

The screening process should be used on **ALL** new decisions, proposals, policies, projects, functions, saving proposals, major developments or planning applications, or when revising them, if there is no negative equality impact or there is uncertainty about whether there is a negative equality impact. **However**, if your proposal is of a significant nature and it is apparent from the outset that a full EqIA will be required, then you do not need to complete this screening template and can progress **directly to a full EqIA**. If a negative/adverse impact has been identified during completion of the screening tool, a full EqIA **MUST** be undertaken. If you have not identified any negative/ adverse impacts arising from your proposal, you do not need to undertake a full EqIA. However, make sure you have explained clearly why the

proposal does not have any negative/adverse impact. **If your proposal is going to Cabinet or Committee (e.g., Planning or Licensing) and you are not undertaking a full EqIA, you must:**

1. Share your report and completed screening tool with Equalities (equalities@walthamforest.gov.uk), who will check and challenge your findings and
2. Use the following wording under the Equality & Diversity paragraph in the Cabinet report: “An initial screening exercise of the equality impact of this decision was undertaken and determined there was no / minimal impact (delete as appropriate) on the Council’s equality duty.” Attach the completed template as an appendix to your report.

1 Proposal / Project Title: BUDGET REVIEW – FEES & CHARGES 2026/27				
2 Brief summary of the above: (include main aims, proposed outcomes, recommendations / decisions sought) Approval to revise Fees & Charges for all services excluding Street Trading which operates as a ring-fenced account. The aim is to maximize income for the Council whilst taking into account market forces. An increase in line with inflation is advised but benchmarking is undertaken to establish whether an alternative increase is appropriate				
3 Considering the equality aims (eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; foster good relations) indicate for each protected group whether there may be a positive impact, negative (adverse) impact, or no impact arising from the proposal. *Please note in addition to our statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010, Waltham Forest Council include care leavers as having a protected characteristic and to this extent passed a motion in April 2023 to recognise this action. Therefore, Waltham Forest Council's EqIA process also includes a requirement to explore the impact of a proposal on that group.				
4 Protected Characteristic (Equality Group) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	No Impact	Briefly explain your answer. Consider evidence, data, and any consultation. https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/statistics-about-borough
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due to the diversity of the various Fees & Charges there is no impact.
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above.
Pregnancy and Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above.
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above.
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above.
Sex (Including Gender Re-assignment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above.
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above.
Care Leavers*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As above.
5 There are no negative/adverse impact(s) If you have not identified any negative/adverse impacts please briefly explain your answer, providing evidence to support decision.		It is impossible to analyse the customer profiles for each individual fee & charge so there is no evidence to support any inequality with regard to these increases. The fees and charges have been reviewed by respective Portfolio Holders and Service Areas. Where fees and charges have increased by more than the 5% (see table below), this will be due to a few reasons, including, based on benchmarking, increasing increments of 5p or 10p at a time as the minimum etc. Having accessed each area that gone above 5% increase, no equalities impacts were identified for the majority of services due to the increases either being so small as to make no impact or being optional / non-essential services, that residents can choose not to use if they are unhappy with the price increase. Where the service was essential or non-optional e.g. enforcement fines etc, the price increases are unavoidable due to external factors such as increased operating costs.		

Service	Budget 2025/26	Budget 2026/27	Increase	Equality Impact
	£	£	£	
Adults Social Care	1,655,900	1,768,300	112,400	In house residential care home fees increased by 7% from £1240.20 to £1327
Music Service	247,000	259,350	12,350	Fees have been increased by an average of 5%. This increase is mirroring the previous year's increases and will contribute to covering the increased staffing costs, taking effect from the same date.
Waste Replacement Bins	627,800	638,000	10,200	The 3% increase in fee is to cover the increase in cost. The income relates to replacement of damage bins or bin hiring, which is unpredictable to forecast, which is why the budget has only increased by 2%.
Housing - Homelessness removal charge	22,100	22,100	0	The fee is based on the amount charged by the Removals contractor. No increase in budget as more households make their own arrangements.
Enforcement	461,300	461,300	0	Includes statutory fees & those increased are benchmarked to cover operational costs. Expectation is that volume of FPN are likely to reduce.
Leyton Sports Ground	119,800	124,600	4,800	Fees remain competitive taking account of benchmarking.
Parking	31,661,400	32,797,900	1,136,500	Average increase of 6%. Includes statutory fees. Fees increased are benchmarked to cover operational costs.
Highways	2,485,900	2,595,900	110,000	Mostly statutory fees.
Development (Planning)	2,199,500	2,199,500	0	Increase based on benchmarking to still remain competitive with neighbouring boroughs. The 7% increase only applies to discretionary charges which is about £300k and the income covers it's cost. The majority of the income relates to Statutory fees, which is fixed by the government.
Building Control	552,900	552,900	0	Average increase of 10%. Ring-Fenced Account. The unit price has increased and the intention is for the budget to grow. Any surplus is ring fenced and can only be used for building control.
Citizenship Ceremonies	110,000	120,000	10,000	Income budget has been reviewed and increased by 9%. Non statutory fees have a proposed increase between 14% and 30%.
Libraries Service	308,000	308,000	0	Average increase over 5%
Adult Learning Service	77,800	82,800	5,000	Average increase is 8%. Fee increases closer align with competitors, whilst remaining cost effective for our learners/residents.
Registrars	639,400	654,400	15,000	Non statutory fees have an increase between 1 and 25%

6 Describe how opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations for any of the protected characteristics has been taken up (where relevant).

n/a

7 As a result of this screening is a full EA necessary (Please check ☒ appropriate box)

Yes

No

Briefly explain your answer.

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The review of Fees & charges is not specific to any particular group.

8 Name of Lead Officer: Linda Murray

Job title: Head of Financial Strategy

Date EqIA screener completed: 13 October 2025

Signed off by Head of Service:



Name:

Ursula Gamble

Date:

12th November 2025