

TITLE: Review of Grant to Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 31 January 2024

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Report No: Y136

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1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To consider the outcome of a review of the grant awarded to Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire (VCAEC) for 2022 to 2024 and determine whether to award a new grant for 2024 to 2026.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i) Note the review findings.
- ii) Award a grant to VCAEC for a Service Level Agreement from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2026.

3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

3.1 The Council currently provides grant funding, through a Service Level Agreement (SLA), to VCAEC towards provision of a 'one stop shop' which delivers services (including the delivery of a social car scheme and volunteer gardening scheme) through volunteers to local people; and advice and information to voluntary and community groups and volunteers; and to act as an umbrella organisation providing generic infrastructure support to voluntary and community sector organisations within East Cambridgeshire.

3.2 ECDC awarded a grant of £39,530 to VCAEC for the period of 2022-24. This grant is not guaranteed to VCAEC beyond 31 March 2024.

3.3 A review of the grant awarded to VCAEC was carried out during 2020/21 and 2021/22 and was shared with this committee in November 2020 and November 2021. The reviews highlighted the performance of VCAEC over a period of time.

4.0 REVIEW

4.1 The Council is committed to ensuring that residents have access to services that meet their needs, particularly those that are most vulnerable. A review has been undertaken to establish whether a future grant to VCAEC will ensure that residents

have access to services that meet their needs, particularly those that are most vulnerable.

4.2 A full copy of the Review undertaken during 2023/24 is located at Appendix 1 of this report.

4.3 As part of the Review, the Council produced a Specification Compliance Checklist (Appendix 2) which was sent to VCAEC for them to complete. In VCAEC's response to the Specification Compliance Checklist, they stated that for £39,530, whilst they cannot meet all targets, they could meet or exceed most targets set in the previous SLA.

5.0 **ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS**

5.1 The Review at Appendix 1 includes an Options Appraisal which sets out two options available to the Council.

5.2 For the reasons set out in the 2023/24 Review (Appendix 1) and Option 1 of the Options Appraisal, Members are recommended to award a grant to VCAEC from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2026.

5.3 The SLA targets will be determined by officers and will be informed using VCAEC's response to the Specification Compliance Checklist (Appendix 2). Members are making a decision on the award of a grant to VCAEC, and not signing off the SLA.

6.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS / EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT / CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

6.1 The grant will cost £39,530 and will be funded from resources in the Communities & Partnerships budget.

6.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) completed. EIA can be found at Appendix 3.

6.3 Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) completed. In summary, the CIA concluded that there are no positive or negative carbon impacts or implications arising.

7.0 **APPENDICES**

7.1 Appendix 1 – Review of Grant Awarded to VCAEC

Appendix 2 – Template Specification Compliance Checklist

Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment

Background Documents:

None

REVIEW OF GRANT PROVIDED TO VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ACTION EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE (VCAEC)

AIM OF REVIEW

The Council is committed to ensuring that residents have access to services that meet their needs, in particular those that are most vulnerable. A review has been undertaken to establish whether a future grant to VCAEC will ensure that residents have access to services that meet their needs, in particular those that are most vulnerable.

BACKGROUND

The Council currently provides grant funding, through a Service Level Agreement (SLA), to VCAEC towards the provision of a 'one stop shop' which delivers quality services (including the delivery of a social car scheme and volunteer gardening scheme) through volunteers to local people; and advice and information to voluntary and community groups and volunteers; and to act as an umbrella organisation providing generic infrastructure support to voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations within East Cambridgeshire.

ECDC awarded a grant of £39,530 to VCAEC for the period of 2022-24. This grant is not guaranteed to VCAEC beyond 31 March 2024.

REVIEW SCOPE

This review will:

- Identify the services included in the 2022-24 SLA.
- Assess performance of VCAEC and demand for services.
- Develop an options appraisal to outline the advantages and disadvantages of the options available to the Council.
- Identify funding to support delivery of best possible service to residents.
- Review SLA targets and removal any targets that are no longer required.
- Review VCAEC's responses to the specification compliance checklist (which sets out the Council's requirements going forward).
- Identify the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the services provided other than those funded by the Council.

Previous reviews have included the identification of similar or identical services to those listed within the SLA that are delivered by other organisations to East Cambridgeshire communities however this has not been included in this review for the following reasons:

1. A mapping exercise was conducted recently as part of the last review in 2021/22 and the Council is not aware of any significant changes that have occurred since.
2. The last review identified that volunteer support services offered locally by other organisations differed from that of VCAEC, therefore it was determined that there was added value to local groups and volunteers by having more than one organisation provide such services.
3. Following a mapping exercise of local transport providers including community car schemes undertaken as part of the Care Together programme in 2022, there is a desire to develop and grow transport schemes in East Cambs.

The Council conducted a procurement exercise for the SLA during 2021/22 to ensure that the approach taken by the Council is the most cost-effective and that best value is being achieved. Only one response was received, from VCAEC. As this exercise was done recently, officers determined that there was no benefit in repeating it.

In June 2023, Support Cambridgeshire, a partnership between Hunts Forum and Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service who provide a range of advice, training and support to community groups and organisations, advised the Council that they would not consider bidding if the Council was to go out to tender for the services. VCAEC is currently working with Support Cambridgeshire to explore opportunities to work together.

SERVICES PROVIDED BY VCAEC AS PART OF THE CURRENT SLA

The SLA includes the following services:

- Delivery of training events.
- Providing advice, guidance and support to voluntary and community groups (this may include assistance with matters such as governance and safeguarding); and through the sharing of relevant information.
- Assisting groups with funding queries, searches, and applications.
- Supporting new groups.
- Promotion of VCAEC services and the sector.
- Responding to consultations on behalf of the sector and having input into policies on behalf of the sector.
- Responding to volunteer enquiries and seeking to find suitable placements for prospective volunteers.
- Attending partnership meetings representing the voice of the sector.
- Conducting client surveys to inform service delivery and carry out research into unmet social needs.
- Providing volunteering opportunities for local people through the delivery of a social car scheme and gardening programme.

PERFORMANCE, VOLUME AND DEMAND FOR SERVICES

When comparing end of year performance monitoring data between the years of 2019/20 and 2022/23, there has been some decrease in some services provided by VCAEC, as illustrated in the table below:

Function	2019/20 Output	2020/21 Output	2022/23 Output
General enquiries dealt with	108	87	85
Training courses provided	3	1	3
Groups that were assisted with development work requiring longer term engagement	29	14	20+

Historic decreases in performance have been highlighted to ECDC Members in previous reviews. Members received a grounds of urgency memo from the ECDC Chief Executive in 2023 in relation to the performance of VCAEC due to a number of challenges following COVID-19, including fewer volunteers coming forward and rising costs. Without receipt of their funding, their services would not have been sustainable and therefore would have had to close. Therefore, the Council made the decision to make payment and VCAEC produced an action plan setting out how they will develop and grow their services and worked with ECDC to review the detail of the SLA targets.

During 2022/23, there were 123 voluntary and community groups that were members of VCAEC, which was a decrease of 17 compared to 2019/20.

In 2023, a survey was undertaken by VCAEC to assess the satisfaction of its member organisations, to identify which services they used and any improvements they would like to see. There were 21 responses to the survey, with 19 saying the membership offers good value for money. The most common challenge for member organisations was identified as volunteer recruitment, and first-aid was the most highly requested training course.

In 2022/23, VCAEC dealt with 85 volunteer enquiries. This is a decline from 172 in 2019/20 and 117 in 2020/21, which VCAEC stated is due to a national decline in volunteering since COVID-19. Despite this, VCAEC were able to successfully place 36 known volunteers into placements.

In 2022/23, VCAEC has received external funding through various streams, including from Soham Carnival, Thomas Parsons Charity, the Rotary, and the Co-op.

VCAEC can generate some income via their projects delivered by local volunteers (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority provide 15p for every mile driven by the social car scheme and end users of the Helping Hands gardening scheme are asked to contribute a suggested voluntary donation of £25 per hour). Although VCAEC suggest that users of the scheme pay a voluntary contribution, they assess gardening jobs on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the circumstances of the service user, leading to some not contributing any voluntary donation, some paying a proportion and others paying the full voluntary donation. It is also possible for VCAEC to carry out part jobs in cases where a larger job is not able to be carried out without any voluntary donation from the recipient.

Delivery of these services declined between the years 2019/20 and 2020/21, however delivery levels increased between the years 2020/21 and 2022/23, as the figures below illustrate:

Scheme	Measure	2019/20 Output	2020/21 Output	2022/23 Output
Social Car Scheme	Number of car scheme journeys	7,342	2,704	4,853
	No of volunteer driver hours	8,890	2,942	6,107
Helping Hands Gardening Scheme	No of volunteer hours worked	7,224	1,896	4,080
	No of referrals/customers	276	83	104
	No of tasks completed	327	133	246

There has been a substantial increase in output in 2022/23 compared to 2020/21, though these are not back at pre-pandemic levels. This came after the 2020/21 review detailed a reduction in output across both the transport and gardening services due to other work streams being prioritised in response to COVID-19, less volunteers being available and also due to there being a significant reduction in face-to-face medical appointments during this time. VCAEC stated that they would work on increasing output of these services which has led to an increase in output in 2022/23.

Additionally, VCAEC has proactively engaged with local groups, parish councils and the district council by attending meetings such as the Parish and Community Forum. As part of the action plan created in 2023, VCAEC has committed to working on volunteer recruitment, and has attended events held by the Council in order to work towards this.

VCAEC is now working with Support Cambridgeshire to identify opportunities in which they can support one another.

In 2022/23, VCAEC advised that 11,839 volunteer hours were provided through the delivery of their services (through office-based volunteers, volunteer drivers, volunteer gardeners and trustees)

equating to around £300,000 social return on investment. This has started to return to levels comparable to 2019/20 after decreasing in 2020/21. VCAEC stated that this decrease was due to the impacts of COVID-19, but that they would work on reigniting interest and building the volunteer levels back up.

The 2022/23 survey of the car scheme suggested that services remained in high demand and are valued by end users. The car scheme survey identified that almost all users thought the service was either 'vital' or 'important', that users appreciate the reliable and friendly service, and that users saw it as a cheaper alternative to other modes of transport. The car scheme is aimed at East Cambs residents that are elderly, frail, disabled, isolated or experiencing financial hardship.

Not only do the car scheme and gardening scheme benefit the end users, but there are also many benefits to the volunteers providing these services including enhancing confidence, employability skills, communication skills and giving volunteers a sense of purpose.

The 2021/22 review outlined that there are other organisations providing similar services in East Cambs, however, despite this, VCAEC's services provided by volunteers remain in high demand and are valued by users.

As of September 2023, performance reports provided by VCAEC showed that they are on track to reach or exceed most of the targets set out in the SLA. However, there are some output figures that are lower than expected at this stage, including the number of general community and voluntary sector enquiries dealt with, the number of new groups supported and the social return on investment. VCAEC are also currently below target for the number of website enquiries dealt with, however, they state that many of their interactions are now through social media.

In 2023, VCAEC has attended ECDC's Youth Fusion and Health and Well Fair events and sought to recruit volunteers for each of these. VCAEC currently sits on the Care Together Transport workstream which aims to improve transport options within East Cambridgeshire. VCAEC is looking into the possibility of obtaining an accessible vehicle after turning away 1-2 people a week due to accessibility issues.

Evaluation of Specification Compliance Checklist response

As part of the Review, the Council produced a Specification Compliance Checklist which was sent to VCAEC for them to complete.

The purpose of this exercise was to:

- To set out ECDC's requirements (many of the requirements are informed by performance data previously provided by VCAEC to the Council).
- To provide VCAEC with an opportunity to set out how they would meet ECDC's requirements if a future grant were to be awarded.
- To provide VCAEC with an opportunity to advise of any requirements that they could meet if a future grant were to be awarded.
- To provide VCAEC the opportunity to set out how they would provide social, economic, and environmental value, in addition to any services that may be funded by the Council and how VCAEC would align with ECDC strategies and Corporate Plan, if a future grant were to be awarded.
- To provide an opportunity for VCAEC to inform the Council of the amount of money that would be required for them to deliver the services set out in the Specification Compliance Checklist if a future grant were to be awarded.

The maximum budget available, based on existing financial resources, to deliver the services set out in the Specification Compliance Checklist is £39,530.

In VCAEC's response to the Specification Compliance Checklist, they stated that for £39,530, whilst they cannot meet all targets, they could meet or exceed most targets set in the previous SLA.

VCAEC stated that in order to deliver all of the targets set out in the Specification Compliance Checklist, some of which are higher than the current targets, they would need £52,574, which is above the budget available.

VCAEC state that their work aligns with and contributes to ECDC's Corporate Plan and strategies. For instance, they align with the aims of the Vulnerable Community Strategy and Community Engagement Strategy by promoting a healthy, safe community; providing support to people in need and empower individuals and communities to become more resilient; build a connected community and support effective stakeholder and partnership engagement.

VCAEC state that their work aligns with the ECDC Corporate Plan in the following ways:

- *'Support our residents to live healthy and happy lives'* by providing signposting to relevant support through its access to the elderly and vulnerable through the Social Car and Helping Hands schemes,
- *'Work with partners to protect more people in their homes'* by working alongside other stakeholders to develop the local community transport office providing transport to medical appointments and social activities, and providing a better environment for those who cannot manage their own gardens. The recruitment and support of volunteers also provides opportunities to improve wellbeing and reduce loneliness.
- *'Improve our roads and local transport'* by working with partners to develop strategies to improve travel by providing community transport across the district.

OPTIONS APPRAISAL

This review has enabled officers to develop an options appraisal which outlines the advantages and disadvantages of options available to the Council.

Option 1: Award a grant to VCAEC and enter into a two-year SLA	
<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides VCAEC with security of funding which enables continuity of service and ensures that there are voluntary support services in place to support communities including the most vulnerable. • A two-year grant provides VCAEC the stability to explore other income streams. • Minimal disruption to services, especially services provided by volunteers that are already impacted by the national and local volunteer draught. • No reputational damage to ECDC. • Fixed cost of £39,530. • No impacts on VCAEC's member groups, volunteers, and end users reliant on VCAEC services. • Although other organisations may offer similar services, it is beneficial to voluntary organisations in East Cambridgeshire to have access to more 	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some duplication of services as other organisations are delivering similar services. • Rigid performance targets may limit opportunities for flexible and innovative ways of working. • Reduces any potential future opportunities to align funding with other organisations in the short term.

<p>than one organisation where they can access the support that they require, especially those groups that are providing services to vulnerable residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding supports VCAEC to recruit and support volunteers, which is very important as there is currently a national and local shortage of volunteers. • The provision of services included in the SLA remains very important as local voluntary groups may require additional support as they continue to recover from the impacts of COVID whilst supporting vulnerable residents. • VCAEC's work contributes to the aims of the Council's strategies and Corporate Plan. 	
<p>Option 2: Do not award a grant to VCAEC</p>	
<p>Advantages:</p>	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no guarantee that other providers can match the services currently provided by VCAEC. • Reputational damage to ECDC. • May impact VCAEC member groups, local community and voluntary sector, volunteers, and end users reliant on VCAEC services.

Template Specification Compliance Checklist

1 April 2024 – 31 March 2026

Function	Area of Focus		Target (per annum)	Provider response	
				Could this target be achieved (Y/N)	Please outline how you would achieve this target and how you would record and report progress
Support voluntary and community groups		Deliver training courses or networking/themed events to member organisations Provide details of the event, attendees, and evaluation feedback	4		
		Respond to general community and voluntary sector enquiries Provide details regarding the nature of the enquiry and the support provided	100 enquiries		
		Provide advice and support to voluntary and community groups on a range of subjects including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding • Recruitment of 	30 groups		

		<p>volunteers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up a group • Constitutions • Performance management <p>Provide details about what support was provided</p> <p>Provide details of external funding brought into East Cambridgeshire as a result of assistance with funding bids</p>			
	To have an impact on the development of local and national volunteer and community group policies by development of research and campaigning work.	Undertake activities to inform or influence policy impacting the sector via responding to consultations, attending events etc.	6 activities		
		Conduct research into unmet or emerging social needs in the area and provide ECDC with a summary of current and developing issues for the sector its members, and	Provide 1 report to ECDC		

		the area which includes information on emerging trends and risks, unmet or emerging social needs in the area and the promotion of action to meet them			
	Promotion of services and the sector	Promote services available via website, social media, newsletter, attendance at local events and other means of communication	20 promotional activities		
Increasing Volunteering Opportunities		No of promotional activities undertaken to recruit new volunteers	10		
		No of volunteers interviewed or signposted to a placements/organisation	100		
		Provide details of the number of volunteers assisted to obtain a placements known	30		

Volunteering Projects	Social Car Scheme	Number of volunteer driver hours Number of unique customers Give details of number of journeys and the purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment • Medical • Shopping • Social • Other 	6,200		
	Volunteer Gardening Scheme	Volunteer hours worked	4,200		
		Number of unique customers			
	Number of volunteer hours worked to provide other VCAEC services	Number of volunteer hours worked including office administration, finance and trustees	1,750		
	Provide a minimum in kind volunteer contribution for the benefit of East Cambs residents	Minimum £340,000 Give breakdown across volunteer areas and details of how this is calculated			
Client	All member	Provide ECDC with results			

satisfaction	organisations to be surveyed annually	of annual client satisfaction survey			
	Number of complaints against the service	Provide the council with details of any formal complaints			
Reporting and Accounts	Invite ECDC to AGM				
	Provide annual report and accounts to ECDC Provide details of number of VCAEC member organisations				

In addition to the services listed above, please provide details of any other services that you will provide to East Cambs residents					
To contribute to the aims of ECDC strategies and corporate plan	Provide details of how you intend to align with the aims of the Vulnerable Community Strategy: https://www.eastcambs.gov				

	.uk/sites/default/files/Vulnerable%20Community%20Strategy%202018%202023.pdf			
	Provide details of how you intend to align with the aims of the Community Engagement Strategy: https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/communityengagementstrat110419AC.pdf			
	Provide details of how you intend to align with the aims of the ECDC Corporate Plan: https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/130723%20Corporate%20Plan%20accessible.pdf			

Best value:

Best value:	Details of how best value would be met beyond the requirements of the SLA:
Please provide details of what additional local community benefits your organisation could provide in order to support the Council's priorities from a Social, Economic and Environmental perspective within Cambridgeshire for this contract?	

The Council's maximum budget for the contract is £39,530.

Component description	Delivery between	Breakdown of costs (£)
Delivery of targets set out in SLA	1 April 2024 to 31 March 2026	
Total Costs (£):		

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) FORM

Name of Policy:	Review of Grant to Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire
Lead Officer (responsible for assessment):	Kerrie Wall (Project Coordinator)
Department:	Communities and Partnerships
Others Involved in the Assessment (i.e. peer review, external challenge):	Lewis Bage (Communities and Partnerships Manager)
Date EIA Completed:	11.12.2023

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

As part of any effective policy development process, it is important to consider any potential risks to those who will be affected by the policy's aims or by its implementation. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process helps us to assess the implications of our decisions on the whole community, to eliminate discrimination, tackle inequality, develop a better understanding of the community we serve, target resources efficiently, and adhere to the transparency and accountability element of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The word 'policy', in this context, includes the different things that the Council does. It includes any policy, procedure or practice - both in employment and service delivery. It also includes proposals for restructuring, redundancies and changes to service provision.

- (a) **What is the policy trying to achieve?** i.e. What is the aim/purpose of the policy? Is it affected by external drivers for change? What outcomes do we want to achieve from the policy? How will the policy be put into practice?

A review has been undertaken to establish whether a future grant to VCAEC will ensure that residents have access to services that meet their needs, in particular those that are most vulnerable.

- (b) **Who are its main beneficiaries?** i.e. who will be affected by the policy?

Vulnerable residents, community and voluntary sector organisations, volunteers

- (c) **Is the EIA informed by any information or background data (quantitative or qualitative)?** i.e. consultations, complaints, applications received, allocations/take-up, satisfaction rates, performance indicators, access audits, census data, benchmarking, workforce profile etc.

SLA monitoring data, VCAEC survey findings, response to Specification Compliance Checklist

- (d) **Does this policy have the potential to cause a positive or negative impact on different groups in the community, on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics?** (please tick all that apply)

Ethnicity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Religion and Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Caring Responsibilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please explain any impact identified: i.e. What do you already know about equality impact or need? Is there any evidence that there is a higher or lower take-up by particular groups? Have there been any demographic changes or trends locally? Are there any barriers to accessing the policy or service?

Recommendation to support services potentially benefitting a wide range of communities. Users of the car and gardening schemes may include people with disabilities and the elderly.

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| (e) Does the policy have a differential impact on different groups? | YES/NO/Na |
| (f) Is the impact <i>adverse</i> (i.e. less favourable)? | YES/NO/Na |
| (g) Does it have the potential to disadvantage or discriminate unfairly against any of the groups in a way that is unlawful? | YES/NO/Na |
| (h) How have you engaged stakeholders in gathering evidence or testing the policy proposals? Who was involved, how and when where they engaged? Does the evidence show potential for differential impact? How will you mitigate any negative impacts? Where there is the potential for an adverse impact that cannot be addressed immediately, these should be highlighted in your recommendations and objectives at the end of the EIA. | |

SLA performance monitoring data supplied by VCAEC provides information on the uptake of VCAEC services. Review findings have been shared and VCAEC has had the opportunity to feedback and comment.

* The Consultation Register is available to assist staff in consulting with the Council's stakeholders.

- (i) Summarise the findings of your research and/or consultation (please use a separate sheet if necessary).**

Findings detailed at Appendix 1

- (j) What are the risks associated with the policy in relation to differential impact and unmet needs/requirements?** i.e. reputation, financial, breach of legislation, service exclusion, lack of resources, lack of cooperation, insufficient budget etc.

Details set out in Options Appraisal at Appendix 1

- (k) Use the information gathered in the earlier stages of your EIA to make a judgement on whether there is the potential for the policy to result in unlawful discrimination or a less favourable impact on any group in the community, and what changes (if any) need to be made to the policy.**

Option 1:	No major change - the evidence shows that the policy is robust and no potential for discrimination.	x
Option 2:	Adjust the policy - to remove barriers or to better promote equality.	
Option 3:	Continue the policy - despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunity to promote equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not unlawfully discriminate.	
Option 4:	Stop and remove the policy – if the policy shows adverse effects that cannot be justified.	

- (I) **Where you have identified the potential for adverse impact, what action can be taken to remove or mitigate against the potential for the policy to unlawfully discriminate or impact less favourably on one or more communities in a way that cannot be justified?** Include key activities that are likely to have the greatest impact (max. 6). Identified actions should be specified in detail for the first year but there may be further longer term actions which need to be considered. To ensure that your actions are more than just a list of good intentions, include for each: the person responsible for its completion, a timescale for completion, any cost implications and how these will be addressed. It is essential that you incorporate these actions into your service plans.

The recommended option ensures that the provision of services is in place as outlined at Option 1 of the Options Appraisal in Appendix 1.

This completed EIA will need to be countersigned by your Head of Service. **Please forward completed and signed forms to the Principal HR Officer.**

All completed EIAs will need to be scrutinised and verified by the Council’s Equal Opportunities Working Group (EOWG) and published on the Council’s Intranet to demonstrate to local people that the Council is actively engaged in tackling potential discrimination and improving its practices in relation to equalities. Please be aware that you may be asked to attend a half-an-hour session to summarise the findings of the EIA to the Scrutiny and Verification panel.

Signatures:

Completing Officer:	<u> Kerrie Wall </u>	Date: <u> 11.12.2023 </u>
Head of Service:	<u> Lewis Bage </u>	Date: <u> 11.12.2023 </u>

