

Equality impact assessment

E619833118

Date assessment completed 03 Jun 2024

Title of equality impact assessment Disability Panel - Terms of Reference

Service Communities and Environment

Team Assistant Director

Focus / aim of equality impact assessment

Promoting equality of opportunity and promoting good relations between diverse groups. The Disability Panel will provide a comprehensive and effective way for the views and experience of disabled people to influence and shape policy development.

Names and roles of officers completing the assessment

Natasha Terrell - Assistant Director Governance, HR & Legal

Yvonne Rees (in capacity of) - Assistant Director Community Resilience

Contact telephone number of lead officer 01279446022

Policy / service / function details

This is a new policy/service/function

What is the purpose of the policy / service / function?

The Disability Panel will provide a comprehensive and effective way for the views and experience of disabled people to influence and shape policy development in Harlow.

The Panel is created by the council for the purpose of:

Providing strategic, expert and impartial advice to the Council on the development, implementation, monitoring and review of policy and policy development and associated action plan(s) or initiatives. Champion the needs of Harlow residents with a disability / carers of disabled residents and ensure their voices are considered in the shaping of policy or service provision in key areas of council policy.

Highlight specific issues across the town which disabled residents/ residents with a disability/ carers of disabled residents face across the town for consideration.

Support Harlow District Council to meet their Public Sector Equality Duty, by prioritising accessibility when the Council considers developing or changing a policy, project or service or to support responding to relevant documents and initiatives from other organisations that require consideration by the panel.

Who are the key stakeholders?

Disabled residents/ residents with a disability/ carers of disabled residents that live in Harlow, Essex.

Disabled people's organisations and other interested parties that are based or provide services in Harlow, Essex including disabled charities/ charities for the support of the Disabled, business in Harlow and visitors to Harlow

Harlow Council, Members & teams who work for Harlow Council.

Are there any other documents / strategies linked to this policy / service / function?

Disability Panel - Terms of Reference
Community Resilience Service

Who is affected by the policy / service / function?

Disabled residents/ residents with a disability/ carers of disabled residents that live in Harlow, Essex.

Disabled people's organisations and other interested parties that are based or provide services in Harlow, Essex including disabled charities/ charities for the support of the Disabled, business in Harlow and visitors to Harlow

Who has been involved in the development of the policy / service / function?

Harlow Council, Members & teams
Disability Panel appointees - representing particular groups or areas of disability
Disabled residents/ residents with a disability/ carers of disabled residents that live in Harlow, Essex.

Which staff carry out the policy / service / function?

The Disability panel aims to be as inclusive and non-discriminatory as possible. Consideration will continue to be given to the terms of the Equality Act in all research activities the panel engages with, and panel members will be required to sign up to a code of conduct which includes ensuring panel members do not act or talk in discriminatory ways. We will ensure that all reasonable requirements and reasonable adjustments are made where possible and will aim to provide alternative ways of engaging with the resident panel where possible.

Quantitative and qualitative data

Quantitative

Quantitative Research is used to quantify the problem by way of generating numerical data or data that can be transformed into usable statistics. It is used to quantify attitudes, opinions, behaviours, and other defined variables – and generalise results from a larger sample population.

What quantitative (numerical) data do you already have about those who use or will use the policy / service / function?

Census 2021 data has been used to inform the following:

Age – 21.6% of the population are aged 0-15, and 14.6% aged 65 and over. According to the 2021 census data Harlow is younger than the English average but the 65+age group is expected to rise faster than younger cohorts.

3 schools are currently used as polling stations but this will be reduced to 2 as a result of this

review.

Disability - 7.5% of Harlow residents were identified as disabled and limited a lot in the 2021 census. In the same census the proportion of Harlow residents who were not disabled increased from 80.5% to 82%.

Religion - Christianity at 44.7% of residents is the reported most common religion in the town, followed by 43.4% who reported as having no religion, 5.4% did not provide an answer, 4% Muslim, 1% Hindu, 0.7% other, 0.3% Jewish, 0.3% Sikh.

There are currently 7 out of 26 buildings in use which belong to a particular faith group. For the majority of these, the voting takes place in a function room / church hall.

Race - The top three ethnicity groups in Harlow are White (82.7%), Black/Black British/Black Welsh/Caribbean/African (6.2%), Asian/Asian British/Asian Welsh (6.0%).

The Harlow Local Plan EiP Localised information in respect of disability data considered 2011 Census Data, this drew the following conclusions in assessing the qualitative data:

- That local health indicators for the area are generally worse than the national average.
- The proportions of residents with limiting illnesses across Harlow are generally consistent with the equivalent national rates for market housing residents and marginally lower than the national rates for affordable housing residents; but within each age group, the proportion of residents living in affordable housing remains notably higher than the proportion who live in market housing.

-
<https://www.harlow.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/HEBH21%20-%20Localised%20information%20in%20respect%20of%20disability%20data%20February%202019>.

What gaps are there in the quantitative data?

The qualitative data only provides for information from those that were participants to the census at the time the data was collected.

Disabled residents/ residents with a disability/ carers of disabled residents that live in Harlow, Essex.

What other quantitative data do you need?

Further resident or qualitative data may be identified by the panel for further review/ consideration

Qualitative

Qualitative research is a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting. It focuses on the "why" rather than the "what" of social phenomena and relies on the direct experiences of human beings as meaning-making agents in their everyday lives.

What qualitative data do you already have about those who use or will use the policy / service / function?

Resident's survey 2023 - Demographic profile of participants - Longstanding physical or mental condition or disability Yes 20% No 76% Prefer not to say 5%

The resident's survey took views from a greater proportionate number of disabled residents than the census 2021.

Sense of belonging is highest among those aged 65+ (82%) and consistent across gender and disability.

Harlow residents are significantly less likely than the general population to feel safe in their local area after dark (49% compared to 71%) and are significantly more likely to feel unsafe (32% compared to 17%). They also have lower levels of safety during the day (84% compared to 90% nationally). Men are significantly more likely than women to feel safe both at night (59% compared to 37%) and during the day (87% compared to 81%), while women are more likely to feel unsafe at night (44% compared to 21%) and during the day (11% compared to 6%). Those with a disability are also more likely to feel unsafe after dark (43%).

52% of local residents agree that Harlow Council keeps residents informed about the services and benefits it provides, which is in line with national perceptions (55%). A third feel not very well informed (34%), while a further 13% feel that residents are not well informed at all. Perceptions are consistent across gender, age, internet access and disability.

Around a third of residents speak positively about Harlow Council (35%), while significantly fewer speak negatively (22%). Residents generally speak positively or negatively about the Council after being asked about their views, rather than sharing their views to others unprompted. Likelihood to recommend is stable across gender, age and disability.

What gaps are there in the qualitative data?

None identified, but could consider future residents survey results/ feed in, where possible on matters affecting people with a disability/ carers of people with a disability.

What other qualitative data do you need?

None, but could consider future residents survey results/ feed in, where possible on matters affecting people with a disability/ carers of people with a disability.

Consultation

Number of formal or informal consultation that have taken place or that you are planning to hold to inform your Equality impact assessment 1

Title of consultation	Date	Who did you consult with?	What were the main issues raised?	Gaps in data	If further consultations are needed to fill these gaps – state with whom, by whom, when and how is this going to be done?

Title of consultation	Date	Who did you consult with?	What were the main issues raised?	Gaps in data	If further consultations are needed to fill these gaps – state with whom, by whom, when and how is this going to be done?
Discussion Disability Panel	February 2024	Person's with or living with a disability, interested residents, Members in attendance, Carers of person's with or living with a disability.	The support for a new Disability Panel to support working closely and collaboratively with disabled people and disability stakeholders was welcomed by attendees. Accessibility challenges extend beyond the home, to public buildings and spaces - e.g signs outside of shops and their placement. Accessibility barriers faced by disabled people in Harlow included the challenges driven by waiting times of getting a new / updated disabled badge from Essex CC were discussed.	Data was only supplied by participants at the meeting.	The panel will be assessing data that has been gathered for any strategic policy change and will be particularly interested in disability data/ impacts/ considerations.

Protected characteristic groups from the Equality Act 2010

Assessment of Impact – Based on the data you have analysed and provided, and the results of the consultation or research you have undertaken, list below how the policy or function will or does work for each of the following equalities groups.

Protected characteristic groups from the Equality Act 2010 - Age, Disability, Pregnancy and maternity, All of the above

What do you know?

The proposal considers the needs of disabled people, people living with a disability and relevant stakeholders including carers. families.

The panel was welcomed to support working collaboratively with disabled people, / people living with a disability and carers amplifying their voices in consideration of policy changes.

What do people tell you?

The panel will be assessing data that has been gathered for any strategic policy change and will be particularly interested in disability data/ impacts/ considerations.

What does this mean?

Harlow Council have made it a priority to learn directly from disabled people/ people living with a

disability and carers. Disabled people/ people living with a disability and carers know better than anyone else what matters most to them.

This has shaped the development of this panel, and is central to how we will take actions forward – by working collaboratively with disabled people, / people living with a disability and carers amplifying their voices, and taking action to embed disability-inclusive approaches on the issues that disabled people care about most.

What can you do?

By having representation on the panel from a wide cohort we hope that policy, service design and solutions to issues are informed and appropriate for a wide range of needs, and by being representative of differing needs, services will in turn help to advance equality of access to the support people need.

Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations

This approach should actively encourage good relations with all parties. By breaking down barriers to engagement and encouraging positive two-way communication.

Action plan

Number of action plans 1

Impact identified and group(s) affected	Action planned	Expected outcome	Measure of success	Time frame
Disabled persons/ persons with a disability	Introduce Disability Action Panel	Disabled people/ people living with a disability face barriers across many areas of their lives. The Disability Panel is a key component in the effective development and delivery of Harlow Council's support to give disabled residents / residents living with a disability a voice and enable them to directly influence the way the Council responds to issues of concern to them.	Panel that is bringing forward positive change for disabled people/ people living with a disability in Harlow	June 2024 - agree terms of reference. Agree a plan of action at next Disability Panel - for recruitment of any outstanding panel member places.

Project Manager

Project Manager Natasha Terrell

Date 03 Jun 2024

Assistant Director Janet Jackson

Date 03/06/2024