

Community Impact Assessment

Rural Economic Strategy

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This is the County Council's Community Impact Assessment (CIA) policy providing both guidance and templates to help you to carry out your assessment. It is split into three sections as follows:

Section 1 CIA Guidance

Section 2 The CIA Template

Section 3 Submitting your CIA

Section 1: The CIA Guide

What is a CIA?

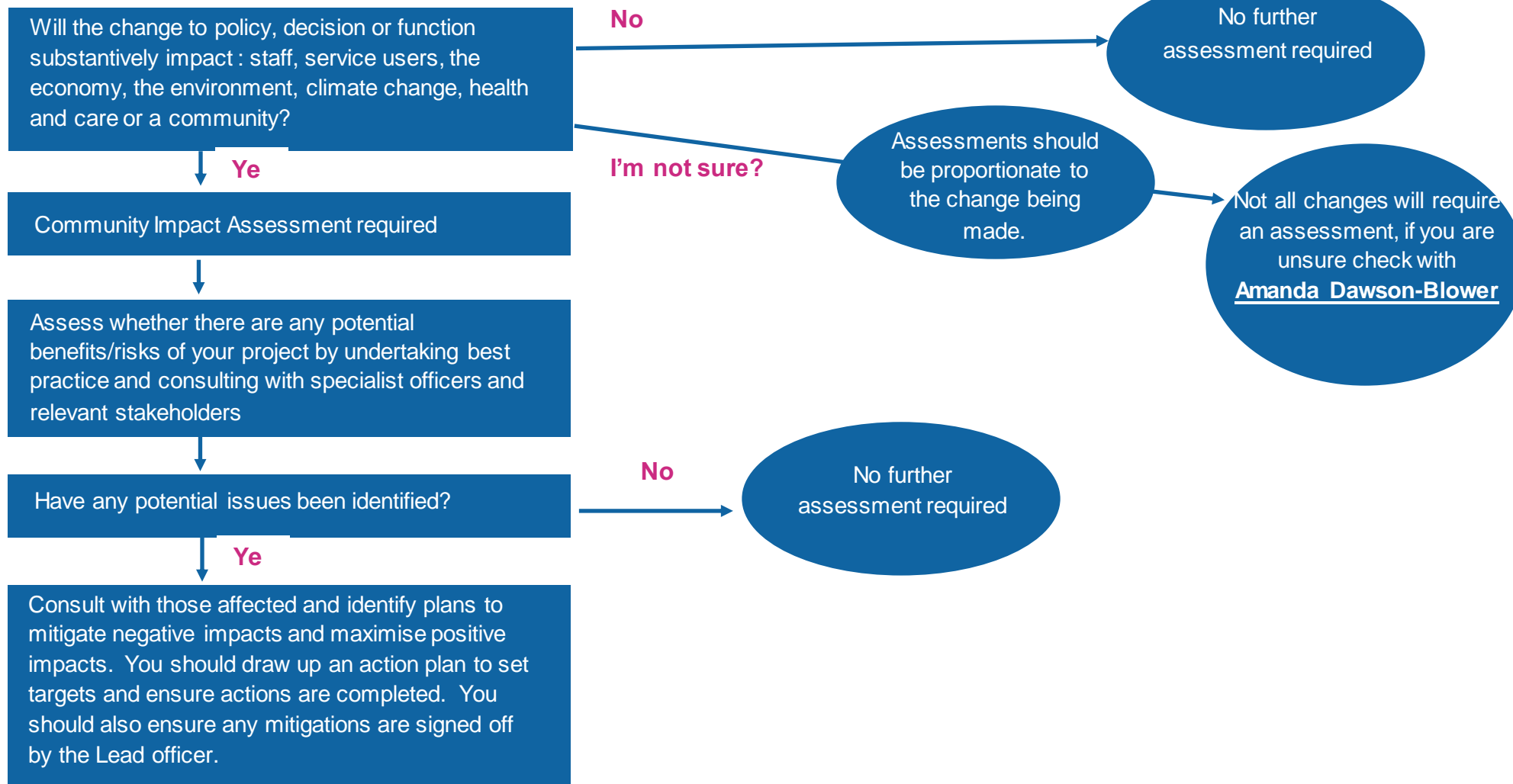
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is at the heart of everything we do as a Council. A CIA is a helpful tool that we use to assess the impact of our work on our communities, in line with our commitment to equality. By completing a thorough CIA we are able to ensure that we minimise potential negative consequences for everybody.

When do I need to undertake a CIA?

Generally, changes to services, policies and strategies we deliver, and commission, will require an assessment to measure their impact upon communities and their environment. Assessments should be proportionate to the change being made. Not all changes will require an assessment, if you are unsure you can check with [Amanda Dawson-Blower](#), who will also be able to provide you with support to undertake your CIA if required.

Most Cabinet reports will require a CIA and key information from your assessment should inform your recommendations within the report. For more information about the County Council's decision-making processes and to access the Cabinet report template, visit the [Committees and Decision Making](#) StaffSpace pages.

CIA Screening Process



- **Read the guidance** before you start! We also have a [CIA Learning Hub module](#) with tools and resources to support you too.
- If your project involves processing **personal data** in a different way, contact infogov@staffordshire.gov.uk.

- It is important to **undertake your CIA early**, during the planning stage of your project, it is a tool to help inform your decision and should not be undertaken after you have made your decision. It is therefore important to ensure adequate lead-in time to undertake necessary data gathering and analysis.
- Undertaking **research and engagement** will provide you with an evidence base to identify actions that will either lessen the risk or maximise the benefits. The assessment will also help you to identify mitigating factors whereby risks may be balanced out to an extent by the benefits. Again, you should take a proportionate approach to the amount of research and engagement you undertake.
- **Involve other people** - they may have some creative solutions for enhancing positive and reducing negative impacts! A project team will provide different expertise and if your project relates to a specific location involve the relevant [Strategic Delivery Manager](#).
- **Complete the CIA Template** - The templates below in section 2 set out what is required to complete the various key sections of your CIA. The template enables you to record which groups of people will potentially be most affected by your project (utilising the data gathering/analysis undertaken earlier), what the benefits and/or risks may be and how you will mitigate any potential risks.
- **Provisional assessments** – At the initial stages, you may not have all the evidence you need so you can conduct a provisional assessment. However, you must put in plans to gather the required information so that a full assessment can be completed.
- **Submit your CIA** – Section 4 sets out how to submit your CIA and also contains a checklist of actions that should be completed before submission – it will be useful to familiarise yourself with this checklist before beginning your assessment.

Section 2: The CIA Template

Important points to note when completing the template:

- The CIA is split into a number of different categories – you don't have to fill in all of them, just those that are relevant to your project
- When your assessment is complete, delete the sections not applicable

- Ensure you only include relevant information to keep the forms as succinct as possible

➤ Equality Assessment

The Public Sector Equality Duty is part of the Equality Act 2010 and this Duty requires us as a public body to have ‘due regard’ to eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act. It requires us to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a ‘relevant protected characteristic’ and people who don’t.

In this section you should consider whether your proposal will impact upon any of the following protected characteristics.

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Age - older and younger people	N/A		As below
Disability - people who are living with different conditions and disabilities, such as: mental illnesses, long term conditions, Autism and other neurodiverse conditions, learning disabilities, sensory impairment and physical disabilities.	N/A		However, inclusive growth and levelling-up is a ‘golden-thread’ throughout the RES and therefore the impact on specific groups will be considered as part of project development.
Gender reassignment - those people in the process of transitioning from one sex to another	N/A		However, inclusive growth and levelling-up is a ‘golden-thread’ throughout the RES and therefore the impact on specific groups will be considered as part of project development.
Marriage & Civil Partnership - people who are married or in a civil partnership should not be treated differently at work	N/A		As above
Pregnancy & Maternity - women who are pregnant or who have recently had a baby, including breast feeding mothers	N/A		As above

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Race - people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins	N/A		As above
Religion or Belief - people with any religious or philosophical belief, including a lack of belief. A belief should affect a person's life choices or the way they live for it to be considered	N/A		As above
Sex - men or women	N/A		As above
Sexual orientation - whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes	N/A		As above

➤ Workforce Assessment

****This section only needs to be undertaken if your proposal affects SCC staff****

Key considerations:

- Consider the impact of your proposal on staff with different **protected characteristics** – the staffing profile data can be a useful source of evidence and can be presented below in graph form to supplement your narrative.
- You should consider the impact of job losses (pre and post change), changes to terms and conditions, available support for staff and what the HR protocols are.
- For support to complete this section, please contact your People Operations Adviser.

Who will be affected – consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
N/A			

➤ Health and Care Assessment

A key priority within our Strategic Plan is to ‘Encourage good health and well-being, resilience and independence’. This section should therefore be used to identify the impact of the proposal on delivery of this priority.

Key considerations:

- Determine how the proposal will impact on resident’s health and wellbeing (mental and physical), and whether the proposal will impact on the demands for, or access to health and care services for those eligible for care and support under the Care Act 2014.
- Also consider whether your proposal promotes healthy lifestyles, personal responsibility and independence (including independent living) with support from family, friends and/or the community.

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
The Covid crisis and negative impacts on the economy may have adversely affected mental	The Rural Economic Strategy aims to support the recovery of the economy and	A key concern is that residents become long-term unemployed with	The RES sets out how we will minimise such effects by supporting people to return to work as soon as possible and be

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
health due to concerns related to jobs and money.	return to growth as quickly as possible, thereby reducing the impacts on mental health.	associated emotional and well-being adverse effects.	able to find good quality employment.

➤ Communities Assessment

Use this section to identify the impact of the proposal on communities.

Key considerations:

- Determine whether your proposal will provide opportunities to strengthen community capacity to create safer and stronger communities and provide opportunities for volunteering.
- Consider the different localities and communities your proposal may impact, identifying any communities that could be more adversely impacted than others, for example, rural communities.
- Engage with [Strategic Delivery Managers](#) (SDMs) – they have a great deal of knowledge about their relevant localities and will be key to providing insight and expertise.

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Inclusive growth and levelling up cuts across all priorities within the Rural Economic	The Rural Economic Strategy sets out how	Not delivering the RES has the potential	Whilst setting our overall priorities, the RES allows us to

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Strategy, with the aim being that growth will benefit all residents.	we will create a more prosperous Staffordshire to the benefit of all our residents in rural communities.	to adversely affect our resident's economic wellbeing, including for specific groups.	remain agile and respond accordingly to changing conditions to ensure we are continuing to have a positive impact on the development of the local rural economy.



➤ Economic Assessment

A key priority within our Strategic Plan is to **'Support Staffordshire's economy to grow, generating more and better paid jobs'**. This section should therefore be used to identify the impact of the proposal on delivery of this priority.

Key considerations:

- Determine whether the proposal will impact economic growth and whether it will promote Staffordshire as a 'go to' location for new businesses to invest and start up and existing businesses to grow.
- Consider whether the proposal will impact upon resident's income and access to good quality jobs.
- Also consider how the proposal will allow residents to improve, diversify and adapt their skills and qualifications.

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
The Rural Economic Strategy sets out our priorities to support the creation of more, good quality jobs in the county through the	Enabling the creation of more, better jobs and supporting people to take advantage of	Doing nothing risks the creation of poor-quality jobs that negatively impact the	Delivery of the Rural Economic Strategy will support the creation of more, good quality jobs within the county especially focusing on

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
delivery of support programmes to rural businesses.	these opportunities has significant benefits including, including for the wealth, health, and wellbeing of residents.	health and wellbeing of residents.	jobs created in the rural hub towns and sectors prevalent across the county's rural areas.

➤ Climate Change Assessment

A key priority within our Strategic Plan is to '**Tackle climate change, enhance our environment, and make Staffordshire more sustainable**'. This section should therefore be used to identify the impact of the proposal on delivery of this priority.

Key considerations:

- Our mission is to 'Make Staffordshire Sustainable', and we have made a commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 across every aspect of our service provision and estate. Our [Climate Change StaffSpace page](#) sets out our plans to achieve this which will help you to consider the impact of your proposal on Climate Change and how it helps us to achieve our vision of "net zero".
- If the project has some negative aspects with this strategic goal in mind, then you should demonstrate how this is to be mitigated.
- It would also be useful if there could be a carbon impact (tonnes of CO₂e), attributed to the completion of the entire project.
- Any carbon saving that can be attributed to the proposal, should also be explained and quantified.

- It is essential that you complete the [Climate Change Learning Hub module](#) before completing this assessment.
- If there are no climate change implications arising as a result of the project, you can provide background to show this has been considered.
- Please contact the Sustainability and Climate Change Team at sustainability@staffordshire.gov.uk for further advice and guidance.

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
All residents.	Climate change and the need to support the transition to a low carbon economy is a key priority that cuts across all strategic priorities within the Rural Economic Strategy.	Not supporting clean growth has the potential to lead to unsustainable future development.	Climate change is a key strand throughout the Rural Economic Strategy and will need to be considered as part of project / programme development. All intervention activity through the RES should seek to support Staffordshire's economy becoming net zero by 2050 in line with both local and national climate change policies and strategies.
Specific projects are already being developed and delivered as part of delivery plans for the Rural Economic Strategy. However, inclusive growth and levelling-up is a 'golden-thread' throughout the RES and therefore the impact on specific groups will be considered as part of project development.	Supporting growth is a key part of the Rural Economic Strategy, i.e., providing residents with good employment and all the benefits this brings.	Development needs to be delivered sustainably to ensure any adverse impact on the environment is mitigated.	Any impact of the delivery of the Rural Economic Strategy on the environment will be considered as part of the development of specific projects / programmes and delivery plans.

➤ **Environment Assessment**

Use this section to identify the impact of the proposal on the physical environment. How does the proposal support the utilisation and maintenance of Staffordshire's built and natural environments, thereby improving health and wellbeing and strengthening community assets?

Key considerations:

- You should consider whether your proposal will affect: the built environment; the rural environment including agriculture; air, water and land quality; waste and recycling; and ability to travel/access to transport, particularly sustainable methods.

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Creating bespoke projects and programmes for the agricultural and food/drink sectors.	The Rural Economic Strategy seeks to support agricultural and food/drink businesses.	Lack of available resources to support growth and investment in these sectors.	The RES contains a specific priority theme to support sustainable intensification in agriculture to enhance productivity and reduce waste.
The delivery of projects that both support economic growth and sustainable travel.	Projects can help to enable businesses and people to make positive healthy lifestyle choices and benefit of improved air quality.	Without consideration of air quality, future investment in economic projects could have a negative impact on the environment.	A key aspect of the Rural Economic Strategy is the delivery of infrastructure to support growth. We have successfully delivered sustainable transport projects in recent years, and this will continue to support improved air quality.

Section 3: Submitting your CIA

Prior to submitting your Community Impact Assessment (CIA), please ensure that the below actions have been completed, to reassure yourself / SLT / Cabinet that the CIA process has been undertaken appropriately.

- The project supports the Council's [Strategic Plan](#) and [Medium Term Financial Strategy](#)
- The aims, objectives and outcomes of the project have been clearly identified and it is clear what the decision is or what decision is being requested
- For decisions going to Cabinet, the CIA findings are reflected in the Cabinet Report and potential impacts are clearly identified and mitigated for (where possible)
- The appropriate evidence has been used to inform the CIA and decision – engagement / consultation, data, research, local knowledge
- The appropriate people have been involved to provide knowledge and expertise to inform the CIA / decision
- The CIA evidences how the Council has considered its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and how it has considered the impacts of any change on people with protected characteristics

Next Steps:

- When you are satisfied you have completed the above actions, the CIA needs to be approved as appropriate – depending on the size of your project, this could be your manager, project lead or SLT
- If your CIA is going to Cabinet, it should be submitted as part of the Cabinet papers
- You should also submit your CIA to amanda.dawson-blower@staffordshire.gov.uk