

Equality Impact Assessment: Conversation Screening Tool

The Council is legally required by the Equality Act 2010 to evidence how it has considered its equality duties in its decision-making process.

The Council must have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to -

- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

A link to the full text of [s149 of the Equality Act 2010](#) which must be considered when making decisions.

1	What is being reviewed?	The level of concurrent Overview and Scrutiny topic inquiries
2	What changes are being made?	Potential reduction of topics from one per Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) committee concurrently (across four committees) to one at a time across all committees. Topic priority order to be determined by O&S Chairs rather than O&S committees. Greater scoping controls to be applied by Overview and Scrutiny chairs.
3	Service Unit:	Democratic Services
4	Participants in the conversation:	Lindsay Marshall, Overview and Scrutiny Specialist Richard Jones, Head of Democratic Services
5	Conversation date/s:	September 2025
6	Do you know your current or potential client base? Who are the key stakeholders?	Anyone submitting a topic for overview and scrutiny work, primarily councillors but also including officers, other council bodies (eg. Cabinet/ Council), and residents.
7	Do different groups have different needs or experiences? age (young/old), disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, members of the armed forces community, any other factors/groups e.g. socio-economic status, carers, human rights.	The impact on all protected groups is neutral and there is no difference in needs or experiences for any protected group. Under the BCP Constitution all councillors and residents have the right to submit a topic for scrutiny work and this will not change.
8	Will this change affect any service users?	No - There will be no impact on any protected group as a result of the proposed changes to O&S topic prioritisation.

9	Not applicable	
10	What are the benefits or positive equality impacts of the change on current or potential users?	The proposed changes to topic prioritisation may positively benefit the council and residents as prioritisation will by necessity become more robust and those topics of the highest importance and tangible impact to residents may be more likely to be selected for scrutiny. The impact on all protected groups will be equal.
11	What are the negative impacts of the change on current or potential users?	As a result of more robust topic prioritisation some topics may not be selected for scrutiny which may otherwise have been progressed. This may include topics suggested by residents. However it is likely that topics that are less impactful are not progressed and this is in line with existing arrangements in place to guide O&S councillors when making judgements on scrutiny topic selection. The impact of this on all protected groups will be equal.
12	Will the change affect employees?	No.
13	Will the change affect the wider community?	No further than is outlined in the paragraphs above.
14	What mitigating actions are planned or already in place for those negatively affected by this change?	There are no significant negative impacts of proposed changes to O&S topic prioritisation and so no mitigating actions are planned.
15	Summary of Equality Implications:	There are no direct equality implications arising from proposed changes to O&S topic prioritisation. Benefits to communities may be seen in the selection of topics that have a greater positive impact on communities but this will not affect any protected group more than others. Overall, the outcome of proposals will have a neutral impact on equality.