

## Bristol City Council Equality Impact Assessment Form

This document is an update to the EqlA prepared for the original Parks savings plan and approved by Gemma Dando and Simon Nelson 5<sup>th</sup> Jan 2017.



Name of proposal	Parks and open spaces – New ways of delivering
Directorate and Service Area	Neighbourhoods. Parks.
Name of Lead Officer	Gemma Dando

### Step 1: What is the proposal?

Please explain your proposal in Plain English, avoiding acronyms and jargon. This section should explain how the proposal will impact service users, staff and/or the wider community.

#### 1.1 What is the proposal?

The Parks Service is required to consult on proposals to realise a savings target total of £1.61m in 2018/19 and 2019/20. The Council is consulting on these from Nov 6<sup>th</sup> 2017 for 12 weeks. Proposals to make the savings include:

- increasing income from cafes and concessions;
- advertising in parks and green spaces;
- introducing new, competitive fees and charges for any business operating from a park or green space;
- introducing new fee-paying activities into parks and allow private businesses to operate pay-to-use facilities from parks;
- increasing the number of pay and display parking spaces in parks, and increase the parking charges on sites that already have pay and display parking;
- raising more money from events in the city;
- ensuring that the operation of chargeable sports facilities and other facilities in public parks is at no cost to the Council
- reducing the number of days Hengrove Play Parks is open from six to five;
- reducing the level of grounds maintenance on parks or parts of parks across the city where it is appropriate to do so;
- no longer providing formal, floral displays including hanging baskets in

parts of the city centre and Clifton;

- having more flexible opening times for parks facilities in order to reduce out-of-hours staffing costs;
- removing some play areas and play equipment when they are at 'end of life' if the Council's minimum provision standard demonstrates that there is suitable provision nearby;
- looking for opportunities for sports clubs, community groups and organisations and businesses to manage, maintain or enhance local green spaces.

## Step 2: What information do we have?

Decisions must be evidence-based, and involve people with protected characteristics that could be affected. Please use this section to demonstrate understanding of who could be affected by the proposal.

### 2.1 What data or evidence is there which tells us who is, or could be affected?

Parks is a universal service that all citizens of Bristol have access to. We don't collect data on parks users but we do have good data about the citizens of Bristol and also about satisfaction with local parks through the Quality of Life (QoL) survey.

In addition, the Council did an extensive piece of work for an equalities impact assessment on its parks and green space strategy adopted in 2008. Although this is some years old the findings are still highly relevant to the service area as the motivations for using the service and its level of provision have not significantly changed. This work looked extensively at barriers to access.

The key message received from this assessment was that safety (and the perception of safety) and access to toilets were the overriding concerns for citizens with protected characteristics.

The most significant population change in relation to equalities communities has been an increase in the non-white British population from 11% to 22%. This would suggest the findings of 2008 would be as pertinent or more so and there would be a greater need for activities in parks for culturally diverse communities which the increase in event opportunities could support.

### 2.2 Who is missing? Are there any gaps in the data?

There is no data on the specific proposals and the consultation will need to engage with residents with protected characteristics.

There are gaps in the data in terms of understanding exactly who uses parks as we do not collect data about useage.

2.3 How have we involved, or will we involve, communities and groups that could be affected?

During the consultation period we will:

- Engage with Staff Led Groups;
- Engage with Equalities Forums as appropriate and as their resources allow.

As proposals are developed further they will be communicated with local communities. For example, if an income generating activity is proposed within a park and is using parks space, consultation will take place with the local community to ensure that any negative impacts on equalities communities are understood and mitigated.

### **Step 3: Who might the proposal impact?**

Analysis of impacts on people with protected characteristics must be rigorous. Please demonstrate your analysis of any impacts in this section, referring to all of the equalities groups as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

3.1 Does the proposal have any potentially adverse impacts on people with protected characteristics?

There are potential adverse impacts on disabled parks users if income generation activities conflict with accessibility within parks. The same issues may affect older parks users. There are potential adverse impacts on BME communities if income generation activities affect the way that people use the parks and make them less welcoming to BME communities (for example it is key to get a good cultural mix of events within parks that cater to all communities).

If parks are handed over to communities to manage, there are potentially adverse impacts on equalities communities such as disabled parks users, BME users, older users, parents/carers and children if the parks are not well managed or if the groups managing the parks do not cater properly for the

needs of all users. This is also an area where the perception of safety may be a concern.

There is a potential impact for users from low income households if more park space is taken by charged for activities which these households may not be able to afford.

### 3.2 Can these impacts be mitigated or justified? If so, how?

The mitigation for the above potential impacts is to consult on proposals with local residents of parks to ensure that any negative impacts of income generation proposals can be mitigated. In most cases, this consultation will be better carried out when any change is to be taken to delivery – with individual projects subject to a specific equalities assessment.

For alternative service delivery models - such as management of parks by local groups / communities - consultation and clear agreements about the duties related to managing green spaces will be key to ensuring that there are no negative impacts on equalities communities. Equalities communities may need to be given support to ensure that they are in a position to engage with any processes related to taking on local parks to ensure that all communities get the opportunities to manage local assets. Particular attention may need to be given to economically disadvantaged communities in relation to management of assets if finance or skills are a barrier.

Monitoring will be put in place to identify the demographics of citizens affected by incremental changes to parks services across the city. The monitoring will help identify whether changes are disproportionately impacting citizens with protected characteristics and economically disadvantaged groups. If this is the case then measures can be put in place to correct the balance.

### 3.3 Does the proposal create any benefits for people with protected characteristics?

In general the parks service will continue as normal – there may be some advantages to people with protected characteristics as the income generation activities may add to the cultural experience of using the parks.

### 3.4 Can they be maximised? If so, how?

Ensuring that a good cultural mix of activities is available and that activities are accessible to all.

## Step 4: So what?

The Equality Impact Assessment must be able to influence the proposal and decision. This section asks how your understanding of impacts on people with protected characteristics has influenced your proposal, and how the findings of your Equality Impact Assessment can be measured going forward.

4.1 How has the equality impact assessment informed or changed the proposal?

The equality impact assessment will continue to be developed as the proposals for income generation and alternative delivery models are developed, and will inform the design and consultation proposals for changes. Officers are working closely with the events team in the research work to identify new income opportunities in this area and cultural diversity and accessibility is being considered at all stages.

4.2 What actions have been identified going forward?

Review equalities impact assessment as proposals are developed. Ensure that as proposals are developed, consultation takes place with citywide equalities forums and local residents to ensure that feedback is considered in the development phase.

Further public consultation may take place when more developed plans are in place and equalities groups will be encouraged to engage with that.

4.3 How will the impact of your proposal and actions be measured moving forward?

We will ensure that any impact with regard to income generation in parks, a reduction in park accessibility for economically disadvantaged communities will not affect the council's eagerness to encourage social cohesion in communities where this is currently a problem, and highlighted by the Quality of Life Survey.

Where we have identified a reduction in park maintenance, we will ensure communities who may be most affected by this and have indicated it may increase social isolations for them (e.g disabled communities) have proper access to remedy any situation which may mean the park is inaccessible.

The equalities impact assessment will be updated and reviewed regularly

during development of the proposals. The impact of the proposals will be measured using Quality of Life indicators which can be assessed for each protected characteristic. Monitoring process ( as described in 3.2) will be put in place.

Service Director Sign-Off: Gemma Dando	Equalities Officer Sign Off: Cherene Whitfield
Date: 6 <sup>th</sup> November 2017	Date: 3 November 2017