

South Cambridgeshire District Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Introduction – Please read

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) allow the Council to:

- Show that the Council are meeting its legal duty, demonstrating due regard for the provisions of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) as below:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
 - Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Methodically consider and assess the impacts of proposals across the [nine protected characteristics](#)
- Allow the Council to develop and implement high quality proposals that maximise positive outcomes for all.

EqIAs should be completed during the development and review of all Council policies, strategies, procedures, projects or functions. Where there is any doubt, the completion of an EqIA is always recommended.

When the form is completed, please send an electronic copy to equality.schemes@scambs.gov.uk. Further support and guidance, [including a video on how to fill out EqIAs](#), is available on Insite or you can contact the Policy and Performance Team.

Equality Impact Assessment Complete Form

Section 1: Identifying Details

- 1.1 Officer completing EqIA:
Chris Riches
- 1.2 Team and Service:
Communities Team
- 1.3 Title of proposal:
Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT)
- 1.4 EqIA start date:
01/08/2024
- 1.5 Proposal implementation date:
01/10/2024
- 1.6 Who will be responsible for implementing this proposal (Officer and/or Team):
Chris Riches

Section 2: Proposal to be Assessed

- 2.1 Type of proposal:
Project
If other, please specify
[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
- 2.2 Is the proposal:
New
- 2.3 State the date of any previous equality impact assessment completed in relation to this proposal (if applicable):
[Click or tap to enter a date.](#)

2.4 What are the headline aims of the proposal and the objectives that will help to accomplish these aims? (Max 250 words)

The Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT) is a platform that layers multiple datasets held within the Council, alongside some external datasets, and applies modelling to provide insights down to a household level.

There are two main ways to use LIFT: the first is to model a family's circumstances and filter them to implement targeted support measures; the second is to increase benefits take up across the district. The benefits data we hold will be able to tell us a family's income, and LIFT will be able to model their outgoings based on age, family size, and housing tenure etc. From this, it will be possible to model which families may be in a cash surplus or shortfall each month, and target support at those households which are in a cash shortfall but not necessarily presenting as in debt to the Council. For the benefits take-up side of LIFT, as we will know a household's income and what benefits they are claiming, we will be able to see which households are eligible for certain benefits but are not claiming this. We will then be able to contact these residents directly, let them know how much extra they could be claiming each month, and support them to apply for these unclaimed benefits.

2.5 Which of the Council's equality objectives (as detailed in the Council's Equality Scheme) does this proposal link to or help to achieve?

- Identify, prioritise and deliver actions that will narrow the gap in outcomes between disadvantaged groups and the wider community
- SCDC is an employer that values difference and recognises the strength that a diverse workforce brings.
- Protected characteristic groups have a voice and are represented in forming the future shape of the district.
- None.

2.6 Which groups or individuals will the proposal affect:



- Service Users Councillors
 External Stakeholders Other
 Employees

If other, please specify [Click or tap here to enter text](#).

- 2.7 Broadly speaking, how will these groups or individuals be affected? (you will be asked to provide more detail on the specific impacts on different protected characteristic groups later in the form) (max 250 words)

Some service users will be contacted proactively to be offered existing support. This could result in an increase in their income and have a positive impact on their circumstances. They could also avoid evictions and debt by being supported with early intervention methods from the Council. It will also allow us to see which residents should be claiming certain benefits but are, which could result in a material increase in their income once they start to claim this.

- 2.8 If any part of the proposal is being undertaken by external partners, please specify how the Council will ensure that they will meet equality standards? (Max 250 words)

None of this proposal will be undertaken by external partners.

Section 3: Evidence and Data

- 3.1 Describe any work you have done (this could include consultation) to understand any effects on groups of people, including those within [9 protected characteristic groups?](#) Please list any key sources (e.g. web-search, previous versions of document, customer feedback etc) that you used to reach your conclusions.

(Max 250 words)

The first phase of the cost of living support programme identified a clear need for a more coordinated and data driven approach to the support we give. Due to the rural nature of the district, targeting support was extremely difficult. As

we hold lots of data on residents already, it became clear that we needed to find a way to utilise this effectively, hence the investment in LIFT. Additionally, Policy in Practice recently released research outlining that there is over £23 billion worth of unclaimed benefits in the UK each year. That research is here: [Missing out 2024: £23 billion of support is unclaimed each year - Policy in Practice](#)

3.2 If you have not undertaken any consultation, please detail why not, or when consultation is planned to take place.

(Max 250)

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Section 4: Impact of proposal on those with protected characteristics

4.1 Please select all characteristics that may or will be impacted (positive or negative). When providing details of the impact please consider the following questions

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. (both the number of persons affected and the severity of the impact)
- you will be asked to set out actions to manage these impacts in the following question (4.2)

All - general to all protected Characteristics.

Details: There will be a positive impact on those affected by the project. This is because they will be offered further support in a more proactive manner. The project could also identify that they should be claiming certain benefits but aren't which they might not be aware of. Further support will be offered to apply for these.

Age



Details: There will be a positive impact on people of all ages. Older people will likely be one of the main target groups for additional support, particular with the pension credits benefits take up campaign. It is estimated that around 10% of people aged over 66 experience frailty (Turner, 2014), meaning that they are more at risk of negative health outcomes due to poor health. It is therefore essential to target support at these individuals to save money across the system and provide a more compassionate response.

Disability

Details: There will be a positive impact on people with disabilities, as they will be offered further support. They will likely be one of the main target groups to support, and supported to access existing services, as they are more disproportionately affected by cost of living pressures. Research has previously shown that disabled people spend on average £583 a month in extra costs associated with their disabilities (Scope, 2024). As inflation has increased, the absolute cost increase they experience has been much higher than those without disabilities as a result of this.

Gender reassignment

Details: These will not be targeted directly but could feel the effect of any additional support.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Details: These will not be targeted directly but could feel the effect of any additional support.

Pregnancy and maternity

Details: These will not be targeted directly but could feel the effect of any additional support. Similarly, there is various additional support aimed at pregnant people and new parents, such as Healthy Start vouchers, that would be able to be promoted using LIFT.

Race

Details: These will not be targeted directly but could feel the effect of any additional support. For example, people from Bangladeshi and Pakistani ethnic groups are around twice as likely to be in the bottom fifth of incomes than average, and have the



lowest median household incomes, closely followed by people from a Black ethnic group ([Francis-Devine, 2020](#)). These groups will likely benefit more from the LIFT project.

Religion and belief

Details: These will not be targeted directly but could feel the effect of any additional support.

Sex

Details: These will not be targeted directly but could feel the effect of any additional support. For example, single women are at highest risk of poverty (Women's Budget Group, 2020), and so will likely benefit from this project.

Sexual orientation

Details These will not be targeted directly but could feel the effect of any additional support.

None of the above

4.2 Other characteristics

Some characteristics are not yet protected in law, but the Council has made declarations it will consider them in policy making.

Digital inclusion ([what is this?](#))

Details: Digital inclusion schemes could be promoted using LIFT as it is possible to target those most at risk of digital exclusion. Digital exclusion can often lead to hardship as individuals are unable to find out about support available and unable to apply for this support online.

Care experience ([what is this?](#))

Details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Rurality

Details Click or tap here to enter text.

Socio-economic



Details This project specifically target households on the lowest incomes in South Cambridgeshire. The impact will be positive, and could generate £1000s of additional income for each family affected.

4.3 Considering the above impacts you have identified above, please detail any actions (specific or general) which may help to enhance or mitigate impacts.

Please include the timescale for completing the action.

Action and timescale	Officer
Create a steering group of responsible officers to ensure projects continue to have a positive impact.	Chris Riches
Undertake a thorough review of projects one year in – October 2025	Chris Riches
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

4.4 How will you monitor that the above actions have been completed and that this proposal, once implemented, is impacting fairly on everyone it affects? In answering this question, please include information about feedback you will seek and/or data you will collect and analyse, and how often you will do this

The project will be overseen by the LIFT Development Officer and constantly evaluated. Different families will be affected in different ways, as not every family will be eligible for every scheme. There will however be no negative impact on any family, with the worst outcome from this project being that a family continues as they are. Data for each project will be analysed throughout, with a full analysis taken following the conclusion of each project.

Section 5: Summary

5.1 Briefly summarise the key findings of the EqIA and any significant equality considerations that should be taken into account when deciding how to proceed with the proposal (this section can be included within the 'equality implications' section of any committee reports). (Max. 250 words)

This EqIA has identified many of the impacts of this project on the different protected characteristic groups. This work is seen to be having a significant positive impact to a number of protected characteristic groups. The cost of living crisis has been proven to disproportionately affect protected characteristic groups and so any project that can ease the cost of living crisis will have positive impacts on this.

5.2 Confirm the recommendation of the officer completing the EqIA:

Proceed with the proposal (with any actions identified as required within Section 4 of the EqIA). Analysis demonstrates that the proposal is robust, we have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.

Reject the proposal: Analysis demonstrates that the proposal will cause unlawful discrimination and it must be removed or changed

Section 6: Sign Off

6.1 Signature of individual completing EqIA:

Chris Riches

6.2 Date of completion:

24/09/2024

6.3 When will this proposal next be reviewed and who will this be? (when in doubt 3 years minimum)



If renewed in July 2026

6.4 Approving officer signature *, this should be your Head of Service, Service Area Manager, or Project Sponsor:

Jay Clarke

6.5 Date of approval:

10/10/2024

Please send the completed document to Equality.Schemes@scambs.gov.uk for publishing on the website.

**in the event that this EqIA is completed by Head of Service, then no additional approving signature is required.*