

# Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

For advice on this document please contact Clare Muir on 72119 or email [Clare.Muir@reading.gov.uk](mailto:Clare.Muir@reading.gov.uk).

Please contact the Project Management Office at [pmo@reading.gov.uk](mailto:pmo@reading.gov.uk) for advice and/or support to complete this form from a project perspective.

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Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed: Food Service Plan 2024-2025  
Directorate: DEGNS  
Service: Food & Safety, Public Protection

Name: Katie Heath  
Job Title: Principal Environmental Health Officer  
Date of assessment: 28 May 2024

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## Version History

Version	Reason	Author	Date	Approved By
1	Screening	Katie Heath	28 May 2024	Rob Abell

## Scope your proposal

- **What is the aim of your policy or new service/what changes are you proposing?**

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This is an updated Food Service Plan to cover the period 2024-2025. It is a document produced by the team annually to meet our statutory requirement for all Local Authorities who undertake official food controls, as detailed within the Food Law Code of Practice set by the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

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- **Who will benefit from this proposal and how?**

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By adopting the plan, all stakeholders will benefit from some certainty as to the work being conducted for the year, and Reading Borough Council will be meeting its legal duty as well as contributing to strategic aims. It also allows the team to have detailed dialogue with the FSA on expectations and improvement areas identified.

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- **What outcomes does the change aim to achieve and for whom?**

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The outcome aimed for is stakeholder agreement on the proposed service levels and outputs as detailed in the plan. This includes numerical targets for inspections of food hygiene premises broken down by risk rated level, the same for food standards inspections, prioritisation of newly registered/unrated premises, and sampling activities.

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- **Who are the main stakeholders and what do they want?**

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Members - To see the level of activity and rationale for priorities set.

Senior Managers - To ensure the statutory requirement is fulfilled. To assess/manage organisational risk in relation to failure points and FSA performance management.

Team members - A clear agreed plan of operation to provide certainty relating to their inspection targets.

Food businesses in the Borough - Context as to the regulatory environment they are subject to.

Residents & visitors - Consumer confidence they can safely eat in the Borough.

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## Assess whether an EqlA is Relevant

How does your proposal relate to eliminating discrimination; advancing equality of opportunity; promoting good community relations?

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- **Do you have evidence or reason to believe that some groups may be affected differently than others (due to race, disability, sex, gender, sexuality, age, religious belief or due to belonging to the Armed Forces community or care experience)? Make reference to the known demographic profile of the service user group, your monitoring information, research, national data/reports etc.**

Yes / No (delete as appropriate)

Members are being given the opportunity to review the plan and make comment on it, and it is going through the normal scrutiny attached to the Committee process.

The plan references food hygiene/standards inspections to be carried out by the team on premises based on their risk rating. This is an objective tool which does not contain any information relating to protected characteristics. Food businesses are inspected not based on any other groupings, or with reference to demographic profile. Decisions on which premises to inspect are not based in any way on the profile of the business owner, their race, sex, age, or any other protected characteristic.

It is recognised that we have a diverse customer base as we regularly interact with business owners representing a wide spectrum of the community. This service plan does not have a bearing on that. The legislation we advise on and enforce applies across the board equally. Considerations we have in order to meet the customer needs from different sections of the community are taken outside of this food service plan which is focussed solely on quantitative numbers of inspections, rather than the qualitative way that we interact with those businesses.

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- **Is there already public concern about potentially discriminatory practices/impact or could there be? Make reference to your complaints, consultation, feedback, media reports locally/nationally.**

Yes / No (delete as appropriate)

There are no known public concerns, complaints, consultation responses, feedback or media reports to flag any potentially discriminatory practices or impact.

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If the answer is **Yes** to any of the above, you need to do an Equality Impact Assessment.

If **No** you **MUST** complete this statement.

**An Equality Impact Assessment is not relevant because:**

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The Food Service Plan is completely neutral in terms of potential impact. It details the inspections to be conducted in relation to food businesses without any categorisation, prioritisation or difference in effect based on protected characteristics. It is impartially based on the standardised template under the FSA Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities. No groups are thought to be affected differently to others by way of adopting and implementing this plan. There are no known flags to give any cause to trigger a full EIA.

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X

*WJH*

Completing Officer

X

*Hubbell*

Lead Officer