

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

For advice on this document please contact Clare Muir on 72119 or email Clare.Muir@reading.gov.uk.

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

Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed: Street Pavement Cafe Policy 2024-2029

Directorate: DEGNS

Service: Public Protection Service, Licensing Team

Name: Rob Abell

Job Title: Consumer Protection Group Manager

Date of assessment: 1/10/24

Version History

Version	Reason	Author	Date	Approved By
1	Created	Rob Abell	1/10/24	

Scope your proposal

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

The Policy for Pavement Cafe Licences regime exists already, but does require some updating in line with recent legislative changes, and to slightly increase fees for some applicants.

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

RBC will achieve slightly higher income and be legally compliant with the new legislation, and the Licensing Team will have clearer enforcement powers. Applicants will benefit from greater certainty, a level playing field for business, and clear licence conditions to operate within.

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

Better management by businesses of their outdoor seating areas will improve the customer experience, as well as for visitors to the town and local residents.

Better opportunity for enforcement by the Licensing Team will lead to those same outcomes.

Increasing income through better fee setting will benefit the RBC financial position.

Applicant businesses will benefit from a clear policy, a clearly laid out fee structure and unambiguous conditions.

The wider public will benefit from being protected from unscrupulous unlicensed businesses, or licensed business who do not comply with conditions.

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

The resident and transient community to the town centre are stakeholders who want a pleasant outdoor cafe experience.

Businesses seeking to apply or renew their licence want a clear policy, clear fee structure and unambiguous licence conditions.

Assess whether an EqlA is Relevant

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

- **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~~

People with mobility aids such as wheelchairs, frames or sticks would be impacted if not enough room is left on pavements for them to navigate safely and with ease. The Access and Disabilities Working Group have raised this over the years.

It is likely that blind or sight impaired visitors could be negatively impacted by the presence of tables and chairs in walkways. Reference source: [How you can make our streets accessible for everyone | RNIB](#)

Relevant Extract from the RNIB Survey report “Who put that there!” The barriers to blind and partially sighted people getting out and about - Feb 2015:

What we know

To help inform and shape this RNIB report we carried out freedom of information requests of all English local authorities, and conducted a survey of blind and partially sighted people [2]. Over 500 people responded and this is what they told us:

Street obstacles and the problems

- 95 per cent of blind and partially sighted people have collided with an obstacle in their local neighbourhood over a three month period.
 - Nearly a third of those were injured, yet less than one percent claimed compensation for injuries.
 - The most common obstacles collided with are:
 - cars parked on pavements (70 per cent)
 - bins of all kinds (64 per cent)
 - permanent and temporary street furniture (59 per cent and 55 per cent)
 - advertising boards (49 per cent).
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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~~ (as outlined above)

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:

X

Completing Officer

X

Lead Officer

Assess the Impact of the Proposal

Your assessment must include:

- **Consultation**
- **Collection and Assessment of Data**
- **Judgement about whether the impact is negative or positive**

Think about who does and doesn't use the service? Is the take up representative of the community? What do different minority groups think? (You might think your policy, project or service is accessible and addressing the needs of these groups, but asking them might give you a totally different view). Does it really meet their varied needs? Are some groups less likely to get a good service?

How do your proposals relate to other services - will your proposals have knock on effects on other services elsewhere? Are there proposals being made for other services that relate to yours and could lead to a cumulative impact?

Example: A local authority takes separate decisions to limit the eligibility criteria for community care services; increase charges for respite services; scale back its accessible housing programme; and cut concessionary travel.

Each separate decision may have a significant effect on the lives of disabled residents, and the cumulative impact of these decisions may be considerable.

This combined impact would not be apparent if decisions are considered in isolation.

Consultation

How have you consulted with or do you plan to consult with relevant groups and experts. If you haven't already completed a Consultation form do it now. The checklist helps you make sure you follow good consultation practice.

[Consultation manager form - Reading Borough Council Dash](#)

Relevant groups/experts	How were/will the views of these groups be obtained	Date when contacted

	<p>This has been shared with Helen Bryant, Access Officer and she has been invited to give her feedback. No other consultation has been undertaken.</p>	<p>1/10/24</p>
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Collect and Assess your Data

Using information from Census, residents survey data, service monitoring data, satisfaction or complaints, feedback, consultation, research, your knowledge and the knowledge of people in your team, staff groups etc. describe how the proposal could impact on each group. Include both positive and negative impacts.

(Please delete relevant ticks)

- Describe how this proposal could impact on racial groups
 - Is there a negative impact? Yes / No / Not sure
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- Describe how this proposal could impact on Sex and Gender identity (include pregnancy and maternity, marriage, gender re-assignment)
 - Is there a negative impact? Yes / No / Not sure
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- Describe how this proposal could impact on Disability
 - Is there a negative impact? Yes / No / Not sure
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It seems likely based on the RNIB survey. In order to mitigate it we are ensuring tables and chairs will be confined to specific areas outside of main walkways/pavement areas, and surrounded by physical barriers. Sufficient pedestrian space will be kept available.

In addition, it is possible to have an impact for mobility aided individuals, and similarly the mitigation is that we specify a minimum space for access to be kept free and there will be clearly demarked areas. The applicant must supply a map/plan so that officers can check sufficient space is left available for users of mobility aids.

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- Describe how this proposal could impact on Sexual orientation (cover civil partnership)
 - Is there a negative impact? Yes / No / Not sure
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- Describe how this proposal could impact on age
 - Is there a negative impact? Yes / No / Not sure
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- Describe how this proposal could impact on Religious belief
 - Is there a negative impact? Yes / No / Not sure
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- Describe how this proposal could impact on the Armed Forces community (including reservists and veterans and their families)
 - Is there a negative impact? Yes / No / Not sure
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Describe how this proposal could impact on care experienced young people and adults.

- Is there a negative impact? Yes / No / Not sure
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Make a Decision

If the impact is negative then you must consider whether you can legally justify it. If not you must set out how you will reduce or eliminate the impact. If you are not sure what the impact will be you MUST assume that there could be a negative impact. You may have to do further consultation or test out your proposal and monitor the impact before full implementation.

1. Negative impact identified or uncertain

What action will you take to eliminate or reduce the impact? Set out your actions and timescale

As long as correctly mitigated there will be no negative impact on blind or sight impaired visitors, or mobility aided visitors, to shopping areas where we seek to issue pavement cafe licences. This is because locations of tables and chairs will be carefully considered, pavement areas will be measured, and physical barriers will be put in place to prevent trips, falls and obstructions. Sufficient space will be left for passage past furniture.

- **How will you monitor for adverse impact in the future?**

We are requiring licence holders to display their licence, and publishing a public register of licence holders in order to provide sufficient information to the public for them to log concerns and complaints with us. We will monitor feedback to make sure necessary adjustments are made if required.

X

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Bell".

X

Completing Officer

Lead Officer