Equality Impact Assessment Template

A. Information about the policy

Policy title	Proposed modification to the 'Ridgeway' Local Government Reorganisation proposal for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire
Lead officer (name and role)	Alex Wylde, Policy and Performance Manager
Date of assessment (dd/mm/yyyy)	05/11/2025
Summary of the policy	This proposal seeks a modification to Oxfordshire's Local Government proposal for the creation of a new Ridgeway Council which includes West Berkshire, such that three wards (Tilehurst Birch Copse, Tilehurst & Purley, and Tilehurst South & Holybrook) should transfer from West Berkshire to Reading Borough Council.

B. Initial assessment

	Assessment
PSED Aim 1 (unlawful behaviour): • Could your policy lead to direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010?	No – The proposal does not introduce any new policies or practices that could result in unlawful behaviour.
PSED Aim 2 (equal opportunities): • Could your policy affect how service users or employees access services or participate in activities relevant to your policy area? • Could it impact people with particular protected characteristics who have a disproportionately low level of access to services, participation in public life, or other activities? • Could it create or worsen disadvantages and inequalities in your community? • Could it remove or minimise disadvantages and inequalities in your community?	Yes – The proposal is likely to have a small positive impact by giving West Berkshire residents in the three Wards access to Reading Borough Council's inclusive and accessible services, which in many cases will be closer to where residents live.
PSED Aim 3 (good relations): • Could your policy affect how people perceive or interact with others? • Could it help tackle prejudice and promote understanding between	No – The proposal does not directly affect relations between groups with different protected characteristics. There is no evidence that the boundary change would lead to increased

people with different protected characteristics? • Could it lead to prejudice, community tensions, conflicts, isolation, or segregation?	prejudice or improved understanding between such groups.

C. Full assessment

i. Impact on protected characteristics

Protected characteristic	Expected impact	Evidence
Age	Positive (potential)	Unified administration of the urban area has the potential to support further improvements in public transport infrastructure, such as Reading's bus network, which will benefit younger residents who are more likely to use public transport, and older residents who have free bus passes.
Disability	Positive	Disabled residents would benefit from access to resident discounts when using Reading's extensive and accessible leisure facilities at Rivermead and Meadway. Children would benefit from RBC's comprehensive Educational Psychology support offer to schools and SEND provision.
Gender reassignment	None	No specific impact identified.
Pregnancy and maternity	Positive	Residents with children will benefit from access to children's centres like Ranikhet and Southcote, which for many residents will be closer to where they live.
Race	None	No specific impact identified.
Religion or belief	None	No specific impact identified.
Sex	None	No specific impact identified.
Sexual orientation	None	No specific impact identified.
Marriage and civil partnership	None	No specific impact identified.
Membership of the armed forces community*	None	No specific impact identified. Both Reading and West Berkshire are signatories to the Armed Forces Covenant.
Socio-economic disadvantage*	Positive	We demonstrate best practice in tackling homelessness by ensuring that no children are placed in bed and breakfast accommodation. Accessing temporary accommodation services may also be easier for some residents as, for example, central Tilehurst is approximately 4 miles from the RBC offices, compared with around 25 miles to West Berkshire Council's offices in Newbury.

Experience of care*	None	No specific impact identified. Both Reading and West Berkshire Council treat experience of care as a protected characteristic.

*Additional characteristics identified by the Council to be considered in Equality Impact Assessments.

ii. Mitigating Actions

Negative impact	Mitigating action
N/A – no negative impacts identified	

iii. Monitoring and Review

Given the number of unknowns regarding the specifics of how changes will be implemented and the impact this will have on services, it is very difficult to confidently predict the full impact of this proposal on individuals at this stage. Impacts are likely to be small. Impacts will be monitored as part of the Transition Management Project which will be set up if the Secretary of State agrees our proposed modification.

D. Approval

Approving officer (name and role)	Date (dd/mm/yyyy)
Gavin Handford	06/11/2025