

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: Guide for Busking and Street Performance in Reading
Directorate: DEGNS
Service: Public Protection

Name: Rob Abell
Job Title: Consumer Protection Group Manager
Date of assessment: 17 June 2026

Version History

Version	Reason	Author	Date	Approved By
1.0		Rob Abell	17/06/2026	

Scope your proposal

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

The “Guide for Busking and Street Performance in Reading” (The Guide) has been in place for 18 months, and the effectiveness of The Guide is being reviewed following a period of complaint monitoring. The Guide is designed to balance the needs of performers with those of residents, workers, shoppers, visitors and other people using the town centre through adopting guidelines which are intended to encourage good community practice. It is anticipated the guidance will help manage complaints and provides a tool to resolve disputes amicably.

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

Residents, businesses, buskers, street performers, visitors, faith groups.

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

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- improved safety for both buskers and street entertainers as well as the public
 - reduced noise nuisance for residents and businesses
 - a reduction in complaints
 - support a culture and community of considerate performers and to enable the council to keep regulation light-touch
 - improved complaint mechanisms to enable officers to take a proportionate and targeted approach
 - improved communication, updates and engagement through the BID and council websites

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- **Who are the main stakeholders and what do they want?**
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Business in the town centre who want to reduce the negative impacts of buskers, street entertainers through a voluntary code.

Buskers and entertainers who wish to perform in the town centre.

The guide is primarily directed to performers but on occasion, religious preachers and faith groups also operate in the town centre along areas of Broad Street. The council recognises the right to freedom of religious belief and freedom of expression but considers that this activity should also follow the principles of the code to foster good community relations, especially with regards to noise levels and the use of amplification.

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.

No

- 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 with reference to faith groups/preaching, if perceived to breach the right to freedom of religious belief and freedom of expression.

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
Buskers and Performers Musicians Union Keep Streets Live Town Centre Businesses Reading Interfaith Group Church Groups Access and Disability Working Group	A public consultation has previously been conducted following Licensing Committee on 11 July 2024 The consultation responses were taken into account when developing the final version of The Gude which has now been in place since Licensing Committee agreed the adoption of it in November 2024. The content remains unchanged.	15 July 2024 - 9 September 2024

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? Not sure

Some faith groups could be made up of particular racial or ethnic groups.

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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? No

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- Describe how this proposal could impact on Disability
 - Is there a negative impact? No
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- Describe how this proposal could impact on Sexual orientation (cover civil partnership)
 - Is there a negative impact? No
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- Describe how this proposal could impact on age
 - Is there a negative impact? No
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- Describe how this proposal could impact on Religious belief
 - Is there a negative impact? Yes
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The code of conduct will apply to faith groups who use amplification to preach in the Town Centre. These groups may raise concerns they are being prevented from their right to freedom of religious belief and freedom of expression.

The code of conduct is aimed at reducing the impact through a collaborative and engaging approach. This does not prevent the activity taking place but looks for those taking part to be considerate of others and to keep noise to an acceptable level.

https://archive.christianconcern.com/sites/default/files/FreedomOfSpeech_booklet.pdf

- Describe how this proposal could impact on the Armed Forces community (including reservists and veterans and their families)
 - Is there a negative impact? No
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- Describe how this proposal could impact on care experienced young people and adults.
 - Is there a negative impact? No
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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.

(Delete numbers below which don't apply)

1. Negative impact identified but there is a justifiable reason

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

There will be a public consultation conducted on the draft code before adoption and following implementation the impact will be monitored and a review conducted after one year.

X

X

Completing Officer

Lead Officer