

## Equality Impact Assessment Record Form

This form is to be used for recording the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of Council activities. It should be used in conjunction with the guidance on carrying out EIA in **Annex 3** of the Equality Policy. The activities that may be subject to EIA are set out in the guidance.

EIA is particularly important in supporting the Council to make fair decisions. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Using this form will help Council officers to carry out EIA in an effective and transparent way and provide decision-makers with full information on the potential impact of their decisions. EIAs are public documents, accompany reports going to Councillors for decisions and are published with committee papers on our website and are available in hard copy at the relevant meeting.

<b>Title of activity:</b>	Blue Badge Procedure	
<b>Name of Directorate and Service Area:</b>	People's Group - Adult Social Care	
<b>Lead Officer and contact details</b>	Joss.harbron@darlington.gov.uk	
<b>Assistant Director accountable for this EIA</b>	Joss Harbron	
<b>Who else will be involved in carrying out the EIA:</b>	Paul Neil	
<b>When did the EIA process start?</b>		August 2024

## Section 2 – The Activity and Supporting Information

<p><b>Details of the activity</b> (describe briefly - including the main purpose and aims) (e.g. are you starting a new service, changing how you do something, stopping doing something?)</p> <p>Redesign and update of the Adult Social Care Blue Badge procedures to align with national guidance and better promotes Strength Based Practice and Equalities under the Equality Act.</p> <p>This is a refresh of procedures, specifically an amendment of the eligible conditions.</p>
<p><b>Why is this being proposed? What are the aims? What does the Council hope to achieve by it?</b> (e.g. to save money, meet increased demand, do things more efficiently)</p> <p>To both reduce the current backlog of applications, and to have a more efficient application process moving forward.</p>
<p><b>What will change? What will be different for service users/ customers and/ or staff?</b></p> <p>The list of eligible conditions for which residents can apply for a blue badge. There will be a greater shift towards auto-approval against an increased number of conditions.</p> <p>This will ensure people with eligible requirements for blue badges will continue to travel with independence.</p>
<p><b>What data, research and other evidence or information is available which is relevant to the EIA?</b></p> <p>National data as of 31 March 2023 shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.57 million Blue Badges were held, an increase of 5.7% since March 2022</li> <li>• 4.6% of the population held a Blue Badge</li> <li>• Between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 1.14 million badges were issued, an increase of 101,000 badges (9.7%) on the previous year. This figures includes badges issued followed reapplications from existing badge holders</li> <li>○ this increase is likely to be in part due to recovery from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic</li> <li>○ 39% of these were issued without further assessment</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>This shows the continued need for badges and the need for a streamline process.</p>
<p><b>Engagement and consultation</b> (What engagement and consultation has been done regarding the proposal and what are the results? What consultation will be needed and how will it be done?)</p> <p>Discussions between members, customer services and ASC regarding feedback from application holders and an increase in complaints.</p>
<p><b>What impact will this activity have on the Council's budget?</b> (e.g. cost neutral, increased costs or reduced costs? If so, by how much? Explain briefly why this is the case)</p>

It is not anticipated these changes will see an increase in costs to the Council. There is adequate parking arrangements and disabled places within Darlington to accommodate the changes to the eligibility conditions.

### Section 3: Assessment

How will the activity affect people with protected characteristics?	No Impact	Positive impact	Negative impact	Why will it have this effect? (refer to evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information, etc.)
Age		x		Redesign and update of the Adult Social Care Blue Badge procedures to align with national guidance and better promotes Strength Based Practice and Equalities under the Equality Act.
Disability (Mobility Impairment, Visual impairment, Hearing impairment, Learning Disability, Mental Health, Long Term Limiting Illness, Multiple Impairments, Other – Specify)		x		Redesign and update of the Adult Social Care Blue Badge procedures to align with national guidance and better promotes Strength Based Practice and Equalities under the Equality Act.
Sex (Gender)		x		Redesign and update of the Adult Social Care Blue Badge procedures to align with national guidance and better promotes Strength Based Practice and Equalities under the Equality Act.
Race	x			
Gender Reassignment	x			
Sexual Orientation	x			

<b>Religion or belief</b>	X			
<b>Pregnancy or maternity</b>	X			
<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>	X			
<b>How will the activity affect people who:</b>	<b>No impact</b>	<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>Why will it have this effect?</b> (Refer to evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information, etc.)
<b>Live in a rural location?</b>	x			
<b>Are carers?</b>		x		Redesign and update of the Adult Social Care Blue Badge procedures to align with national guidance and better promotes Strength Based Practice and Equalities under the Equality Act including recognition of need to support unpaid carers when supporting individuals with mobility issues.
<b>Are on a low income?</b>	x			
<b>Are a Care Leaver?</b>	x			

## Section 4: Cumulative Impacts

**Cumulative Impacts – will the activity affect anyone more because of a combination of protected characteristics?** (E.g. older women or young gay men – state what you think the effect might be and why, providing evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information, etc.)

**Are there any other activities of which you are aware which might also impact on the same protected characteristics?**

**People with visible and non visible disabilities will benefit from the revision to conditions and a streamline application process.**

## Section 5: Analysis

### **A. How will the activity help to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation?**

Procedures ensure the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and the Equality Act 2010 is embedded throughout the application process.

### **B. How will the activity help to advance equality of opportunity?**

Through continued access and independence for blue badge holders.

### **C. How will the activity help to foster good relations?**

There will be a significant reduction in the backlog of applications resulting in fewer complaints for the Council from current and prospective badge holders.

**During the engagement/ consultation process were there any suggestions on how to avoid, minimise or mitigate any negative impacts? If so, please give details.**

**During the transition period, an amnesty will be in place for expired badge holders, meaning fines will not be issued.**

## Section 6 - Sign-off when assessment is completed

Officer Completing the Form:		
Signed	Name:	Paul Neil
	Date:	2/8/2024
	Job Title:	Programme Manager
Assistant Director:		
Signed	Name:	Jocelyn Harbron
	Date:	02/08/2024
	Service:	Adult Services

## Section 7 – Reporting of Findings and Recommendations to Decision Makers

<p><b>Next Steps to address the anticipated impact</b> (Select one of the following options and explain why this has been chosen – remember we have a duty to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people can access services and work for us)</p>
<p>A. <b>No negative impact on people because of their Protected Characteristics and therefore no major change is needed to the activity</b></p>
<p>B. <b>Negative impact identified – recommend continuing with the activity</b></p>
<p>C. <b>Negative impact identified - adjust the activity in light of the identified impact to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impact</b> (The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. The Council will change the proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, or it will achieve the aim in another way which will not make things worse for people)</p>
<p>D. <b>Actual or potential unlawful discrimination – stop and remove the activity</b> (The EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination. It should be stopped.)</p>
<p><b>Explanation of why the option above has been chosen</b> (Including any advice given by legal services)</p>
<p><b>No negative impact on people because of their Protected Characteristics and therefore no major change is needed to the activity</b> (There is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact identified)</p> <p><b>The revisions to the eligibility conditions and the introduction of a more streamline process will have benefits for all current and future badge holders, allowing for continued independence.</b></p>
<p><b>If the activity is to be implemented how will you find out how it is affecting people once it is in place?</b> (How will you monitor and review the changes?)</p>
<p>Activity will be monitored through the Lagan Case Management system, identifying any potential backlog allowing action to be taken. Numbers of complaints will also be monitored against the benchmark prior to changes to procedures.</p>

## Section 8 – Action Plan and Performance Management

List any actions you need to take which have been identified in this EIA, including post implementation reviews to find out how the outcomes have been achieved in practice and what impacts there have actually been on people with protected characteristics.

What is the negative impact?	Actions required to reduce/eliminate the negative impact (if applicable)	Who will lead on action	Target completion date
N/A			

Performance Management	
Date of the next review of the EIA	September 2025
How often will the EIA action plan be reviewed?	Annual
Who will carry out this review?	AD ASC