Shropshire Council
Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA)
Stage One Screening Record 2026

Please note that part A and part B of this document should be completed.

A. Summary Sheet on Accountability and Actions

Name of proposed service change
Charge council tax long term empty property premium in respect of substantially unfurnished dwellings that are unoccupied.

Name of the officer carrying out the screening
Philip Weir

Decision, review, and monitoring

Decision	**Yes**	**No**
Initial (Stage One) ESHIA Only?	Yes	
Proceed to Stage Two Full ESHIA or HIA (part two) Report?		No

If completion of a Stage One screening assessment is an appropriate and proportionate action at this stage, please use the boxes above, and complete both part A and part B of of this template. If a Full or Stage Two report is required, please move on to full report stage once you have completed this initial screening assessment as a record of the considerations which you have given to this matter.

Assessment of likely neutral, negative impact or positive impact of the service change in terms of equality and social inclusion considerations
This ESHIA is a stocktake update of previous ESHIA carried out in January 2026. Since 2013, billing authorities have had the discretion to levy a premium in respect of long-term empty property. Long term empty property is unoccupied property that is substantially unfurnished. Liability for the premium is determined by when the property first became vacant. A change in ownership does not impact when the premium commences. In November 2024 the Government published guidance on the implementation of council tax second homes premium and long-term empty property premium. The Government also announced a number of exceptions to the long-term empty and second home premium with effect from 1 April 2025.

Guidance on the implementation of the council tax premiums on long-term empty homes and second homes - GOV.UK

The guidance suggested the following should be taken into account.

- *numbers and proportion of long-term empty dwellings and/or second homes in the local area*
- *circumstances which may affect whether the dwelling can be used as a main residence*
- *potential impact on local economies and the tourism industry*
- *potential impact on the local community*
- *potential impact on local services*
- *other measures that are available to councils to help bring empty dwellings back into use*

Councils should consider the reasons why dwellings are unoccupied in deciding whether they want such dwellings to be included in their determination. Examples of issues councils may want to take account of in making their determination include:

- *on average, how long dwellings in their area are available for sale or rent before completion/occupation*
- *the average price/rent in the local area*
- *whether there are circumstances which make the dwelling unsuitable for use as main residence*
- *whether there are circumstances which make the dwelling difficult to sell/let*
- *whether the dwelling is empty so that improvements can be made between sale/let*

The Council can consider such matters as part of individual consideration for discretionary discounts under Section 13A(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (see below).

However, of pertinence here is that the Council no longer has an empty homes team.

The Council's Business Intelligence Team has advised that while the Council does have house price data and could calculate affordability ratios, as Shropshire is such a large rural county, and transaction numbers are small, the data would be easily skewed by outliers at either ends of the scale.

The current staffing levels also inhibit the preparation and provision of meaningful analysis of the impact on the economy or to local communities or services of the policy in such a sparse setting.

By way of illustration, Shropshire is one of the most sparsely populated local authorities in the country. Shropshire has a population density of just 1 person per

hectare (319,730 hectares), compared to 4.4 persons per hectare nationally (13,027,843 hectares).

The Council reaffirmed its determination to levy the long-term empty property premium at full Council on 11 December 2025 (page 28).

Full Council 11 December 2025 - Setting the Council Taxbase report

Given that owners of long-term empty property do not fall into any particular category or grouping of people, or into particular Protected Characteristic groupings as set out in the Equality Act 2010, any assessment of equality impacts can only be an overall assessment across these groupings. The only thing that these owners have in common is that they own long term empty property.

The overall impact may be regarded as neutral to low positive across groupings, given that the policy aim is to bring such property back into use. This is notwithstanding the negative financial impact for taxpayers paying the premium.

There is also potential for neutral to low positive impact for our additional local groupings of Social Inclusion, Carers, and of Young People Leaving Care, with better potential opportunity for social mobility if a wider pool of housing is available to them across the county. Young people including those leaving care are also less likely to be owners of long-term empty property.

From a social inclusion perspective, which is an additional local grouping of people in Shropshire for whom we seek to have ‘due regard’, the positive impact will be in returning long-term empty property as primary residences, and the increase in council tax income to the Council. Longer term residencies also lead to a potential increase in community cohesion by providing stability of individuals within an area.

The Council has discretion under Section 13A (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to award discretionary council tax discounts to any residents as it sees fit and this discretion is delegated to the Councils Chief Finance Officer, with any appeals to an appeal panel of members.

This discretion has been commonly used to give consideration for requests for discount to counter the impact of the long-term empty premium in exceptional circumstances, including financial hardship. This again brings in people in our grouping of Social Inclusion, in regard to the household circumstances in which people may find themselves.

Assessment of likely neutral, negative or positive impact of the service change in terms of health and wellbeing considerations
Owners of long-term empty property do not share any particular characteristic. Many may be resident outside Shropshire Council area. The positive impact will be in returning long-term empty property as primary residences, and the increase in council tax income to the Council. Longer term residencies also lead to a potential increase in community cohesion by providing stability of individuals within an area. The Council has discretion under Section 13A (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to award discretionary council tax discounts to any residents as it sees fit and this discretion is delegated to the Councils Chief Finance Officer, with any appeals to an appeal panel of members. This discretion has been commonly used to give consideration for requests for discount to counter the impact of the long-term empty premium in exceptional circumstances, including financial hardship. This discretionary council tax discount may then involve consideration in particular for people affected in regard to Disability and in regard to the circumstances in which they may find themselves, including veterans and serving members of the armed forces and their families. Considerations around health and well being are likely to be significant factors in such cases.

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change in terms of equality, social inclusion, and health considerations
The policy is not popular with impacted taxpayers, many of whom are resident outside of Shropshire. The vast majority of other billing authorities charge the long-term empty property premium, so this is a national position as much as a local one. The Council must review the impact of the policy change in view of the fact that any increase in tax will be unpopular. The Council does have the means to consider individual circumstances via the discretionary discount procedure detailed above. Clear information on when and what circumstances this charge/levy will be liable will be included on council webpages. The Council will additionally need to have regard to implementation of the latest Government spending settlement for local authorities, and to comparator work with

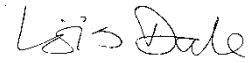
other rural unitaries in terms of likely and actual impacts for local authorities and their residents

Associated ESHIAs
This ESHIA incorporates minor updates from the stocktake ESHIA produced 16th January 2026, and is a companion document to an ESHIA on second homes premiums. The following is also of relevance, together with the ESHIA carried out for the Council's Corporate Plan, approved at Cabinet in May 2026: mtfs-empty-homes-function-eshia.pdf

Assessment of likely neutral, negative or positive impact, and actions to review and monitor overall impacts, with regard to climate change impacts and with regard to economic and societal impacts
Climate change N/A ***Economic and societal/wider community*** • Increase in housing supply for local residents, supporting individuals to move both to, and within the county, and contribute to the local economy. Housing affordability and security is a key social determinant of health, particularly mental wellbeing. • Reduction in the number of short-term visitors/speculators, potentially improving community cohesion with more long-term residents. • Additional social mobility opportunities for younger people, potentially encouraging them to remain in Shropshire and make their residency here. • The policy also increases council tax income to the Council by over £1 million in 2025-26.

Scrutiny at Stage One screening stage

People involved	**Signatures**	**Date**
Lead officer for the proposed service change	P M Weir	04 November 2026
Officer carrying out the screening	P M Weir	04 November 2026

*External support** **Phil Northfield** *Public Health Integration & Inequalities Officer*		04.11.2026
Lois Dale *Senior Insights and Research EDI Specialist*		04.11.2026

This refers to support external to the service and within the Council, e.g., the Senior Insights and Research EDI specialist, the Integration & Inequalities Officer – Public Health, other Insights and Research or Public Health colleagues, the Feedback and Insight Team, Climate Change specialists, etc.

Sign off at Stage One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
Lead officer's name		04 November 2026
Service manager's name		04 November 2026

This may either be the Head of Service or the lead officer

B. Detailed Screening Assessment

Aims of the service change and description
Background Since 2013 billing authorities have had the discretion to levy a premium in respect of long-term empty property. Long term empty property is unoccupied property that is substantially unfurnished. The regulations have changed several times since 2013. The latest position is that local authorities can levy the long-term empty property premium as follows. Unoccupied and substantially unfurnished 1-5 years 100% premium Unoccupied and substantially unfurnished 5-10 years 200% premium Unoccupied and substantially unfurnished over 10 yrs 300% premium Shropshire Council did not levy the long-term empty property premium until 2014. Since then, the premium has been levied at the maximum rate available. Liability for the premium is determined by when the property first became vacant. A change in ownership does not impact when the premium commences.

A Green Paper had been presented to Performance Management Scrutiny Committee on 30 November 2022 detailed the options for charging second homes premium and the long-term empty property premium after one year vacant, subject to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act becoming law.

Review of Charging Policy for Second Homes and Empty Properties

On 14 December 2022 the Scrutiny chair reported back to Cabinet that there was '*widespread agreement of those present at the meeting on the contents of the paper'* (page 2)

In November 2024 the Government published guidance on the implementation of council tax second homes premium and long-term empty property premium. The Government also announced a number of exceptions to the long-term empty and second home premium with effect from 1 April 2025.

Guidance on the implementation of the council tax premiums on long-term empty homes and second homes - GOV.UK

The guidance suggested the following should be taken into account.

- *numbers and proportion of long-term empty dwellings and/or second homes in the local area*
- *circumstances which may affect whether the dwelling can be used as a main residence*
- *potential impact on local economies and the tourism industry*
- *potential impact on the local community*
- *potential impact on local services*
- *other measures that are available to councils to help bring empty dwellings back into use*

Councils should consider the reasons why dwellings are unoccupied in deciding whether they want such dwellings to be included in their determination. Examples of issues councils may want to take account of in making their determination include:

- *on average, how long dwellings in their area are available for sale or rent before completion/occupation*
- *the average price/rent in the local area*
- *whether there are circumstances which make the dwelling unsuitable for use as main residence*
- *whether there are circumstances which make the dwelling difficult to sell/let*
- *whether the dwelling is empty so that improvements can be made between sale/let*

The Council can consider such matters as part of individual consideration for discretionary discounts under Section 13A (1) (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (see below).

However, of pertinence here is that the Council no longer has an empty homes team.

The Council's Business Intelligence Team has advised that while the Council does have house price data and could calculate affordability ratios, as Shropshire is such a large rural county, and transaction numbers are small, the data would be easily skewed by outliers at either ends of the scale.

The current staffing levels also inhibit the preparation and provision of meaningful analysis of the impact on the economy or to local communities or services of the policy in such a sparse setting.

By way of illustration, Shropshire is one of the most sparsely populated local authorities in the country. Shropshire has a population density of just 1 person per hectare (319,730 hectares), compared to 4.4 persons per hectare nationally (13,027,843 hectares).

The Council reaffirmed its determination to levy the long-term empty property premium at full Council on 11 December 2025 (page 28).

Full Council 11 December 2025 - Setting the Council Taxbase report

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

Owners of long-term empty property.

Some are residents of Shropshire while others are resident in other parts of the country.

Residents in Shropshire, for whom the intention is that there will be positive outcomes in terms of additional revenue to be spent in Shropshire for the benefit of the wider community, as well as in terms of a wider pool of potential housing stock.

Not all taxpayers are impacted by this policy change, only those who own a long-term empty property that meet the definition above are impacted.

Additionally, local councillors are key stakeholders in terms of communicating changes and acting as community leaders.

Evidence used for screening of the service change
Local Government Finance Act 1992 Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 Guidance on the implementation of the council tax premiums on long-term empty homes and second homes - GOV.UK Council and Cabinet papers, accessible via the Council website www.shropshire.gov.uk

Specific consultation and engagement with intended audiences and target groups for the service change
The Council publish a notice each year in the local press detailing its empty property council tax policy  Press Notice 22 December 2023.pdf The Council reaffirms its decision to levy the premium each year when it sets its council taxbase. Full Council 11 December 2025 - Setting the Council Taxbase report The Council does have the means to consider individual circumstances via the discretionary discount procedure detailed above. Clear information on when and what circumstances this charge/levy will be liable is included on council webpages There are a number of exception to the premium and details of these is included on the council tax webpages Council tax on empty property | Shropshire Council

Initial equality impact assessment by grouping (Initial health impact assessment is included below this table)

Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have for a grouping, through stating this in the relevant column, including if it is anticipated to be neutral (no impact).

Please also record in here your headline rationale for the ratings you have given.

Protected Characteristic groupings and other groupings locally identified in Shropshire	**High negative impact** *Stage Two ESHIA required*	**High positive impact** *Stage One ESHIA required*	**Medium positive or negative impact** *Stage One ESHIA required*	**Low positive, negative, or neutral impact (please specify)** *Stage One ESHIA required*
Age (please include children, young people, young carers, young people leaving care, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group e.g., a child or young person for whom there are safeguarding concerns e.g., an older person with a disability)				X neutral to low positive for potential to widen housing pool; neutral to low negative in financial terms for long-term empty property home owners
Disability (please include cancer; HIV/AIDS; learning disabilities; mental health conditions and syndromes; multiple sclerosis; neurodiverse conditions such as autism; hidden disabilities such as Crohn's disease; physical and/or sensory disabilities or impairments)				X neutral to low positive for potential to widen housing pool; neutral to low negative in financial terms for long-term empty property home owners
Gender re-assignment (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X neutral to low positive for potential to widen housing pool; neutral to low negative in financial terms for long-term empty property home owners
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X neutral to low positive for potential to widen housing pool; neutral to low negative in financial terms for long-term

				empty property home owners
Pregnancy and Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X neutral to low positive for potential to widen housing pool; neutral to low negative in financial terms for long-term empty property home owners
Race (please include ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, Gypsy, Roma, Traveller)				X neutral to low positive for potential to widen housing pool; neutral to low negative in financial terms for long-term empty property home owners
Religion or Belief (please include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Nonconformists; Rastafarianism; Shinto, Sikhism, Taoism, Veganism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)				X neutral to low positive for potential to widen housing pool; neutral to low negative in financial terms for long-term empty property home owners
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X neutral to low positive for potential to widen housing pool; neutral to low negative in financial terms for long-term empty property home owners
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				X neutral to low positive for potential to widen housing pool; neutral to

				low negative in financial terms for long-term empty property home owners
Other: Social Inclusion (please include households in poverty or on low incomes; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable; people with health inequalities; refugees and asylum seekers; rough sleepers and those at risk of homelessness; and rural communities)				X neutral to low positive for potential to widen housing pool; neutral to low negative in financial terms for long-term empty property home owners
Other: Carers (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities)				X neutral to low positive for potential to widen housing pool; neutral to low negative in financial terms for long-term empty property home owners
Other: Veterans and serving members of the armed forces and their families (as per Armed Forces Act 2023)				X neutral to low positive for potential to widen housing pool; neutral to low negative in financial terms for long-term empty property home owners
Other: Young people leaving care				X neutral to low positive for potential to widen housing pool; neutral to low negative in financial terms for long-term empty property home owners

Initial health and wellbeing impact assessment by category

Please rate the impact that you perceive the service change is likely to have with regard to health and wellbeing, through stating this in the relevant column, including if it is anticipated to be neutral (no impact).
Please also record in here your headline rationale for the ratings you have given.

Health and wellbeing: individuals and communities in Shropshire	**High negative impact** *Part Two HIA required*	**High positive impact**	**Medium positive or negative impact**	**Low positive negative or neutral impact (please specify)**
Will the proposal have a *direct impact* on an individual's health, mental health and wellbeing? For example, would it cause ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation? .				X
Will the proposal *indirectly impact* an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing? For example, will it affect their ability to be physically active, choose healthy food, reduce drinking and smoking? .				X
Will the policy have a *direct impact* on the community - social, economic and environmental living conditions that would impact health? For example, would it affect housing, transport, child development, education, employment opportunities, availability of green space or climate change mitigation? .				X – increase in long term residents can promote greater community cohesion.
Will there be a likely change in *demand* for or access to health and social care services?				X

For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health, Local Authority services including Social Services? .				

Initial health equity assessment	
For the following categories, please complete with the expected impacts of this service change on wider inequalities, not just those that are health-related (whether positive, negative, or neutral) – include any additional information you feel is pertinent or useful. **Consider and record which you can control, which you can influence, and which may be out of your control**.	
Which population groups/demographics will face health impacts as a result of this change (if any)? • Socio-Economically Deprived • Geographic Deprivation (inc. Rurality) – *if so, where?* • Inclusion Health & Vulnerable Groups[1] • Other	*Please add information regarding relevant affected groups here, and how/to what extent they are likely to be impacted by this proposal., or refer back to data already provided under previous sections in this impact assessment, e.g. the Evidence section* *In here, please also include any specific geographical locations if not picked up elsewhere*
What mitigations/enhancements are already in place, or what mitigations/enhancements do you plan to include for the foreseeable consequences of these changes?	*Please add information in here about what steps you propose to take to either mitigate/enhance the positive/negative effects of this proposal, on all affected groups, not just inclusion groups. These can either be already in place or planned for delivery.* *If alternatives are available, e.g. if residents or groups could access this service via digital means or access it via travel to another amenity, please add this in here.*

1- *Inclusion health is an umbrella term used to describe people who are socially excluded, who typically experience multiple overlapping risk factors for poor health, such as poverty, violence, and complex trauma. This includes people who experience homelessness, drug and alcohol dependence, vulnerable migrants, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, sex workers, people in contact with the justice system and victims of modern slavery. Health impacts for this wide grouping will therefore potentially be the same as those recorded under the Social Inclusion category in the equality impact table.*

Guidance Notes

1. Legal Context

It is a legal requirement for local authorities to assess the equality and human rights impact of changes proposed or made to services. It is up to us as an authority to decide what form our equality impact assessment may take. By way of illustration, some local authorities focus more overtly upon human rights; some include safeguarding. It is about what is considered to be needed in a local authority's area,

in line with local factors such as demography and strategic objectives as well as with the national legislative imperatives.

Carrying out these impact assessments helps us as a public authority to ensure that, as far as possible, we are taking actions to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010, and to thus demonstrate that the three equality aims are integral to our decision-making processes. These are: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations.

These screening assessments for any proposed service change go to Cabinet as part of the committee report, or occasionally direct to Full Council, unless they are ones to do with Licensing, in which case they go to Strategic Licensing Committee.

Service areas would ordinarily carry out a screening assessment, or Stage One equality impact assessment. This enables energies to be focussed on review and monitoring and ongoing evidence collection about the positive or negative impacts of a service change upon groupings in the community, and for any adjustments to be considered and made accordingly.

These screening assessments are recommended to be undertaken at timely points in the development and implementation of the proposed service change.

For example, a Stage One ESHIA would be a recommended course of action before a consultation. This would draw upon the evidence available at that time, and identify the target audiences, and assess at that initial stage what the likely impact of the service change could be across the national Protected Characteristic groupings and our additional local categories. This ESHIA would set out intended actions to engage with the groupings, particularly those who are historically less likely to engage in public consultation eg young people, as otherwise we would not know their specific needs.

A second Stage One ESHIA would then be carried out after the consultation, to say what the feedback was, to set out changes proposed as a result of the feedback, and to say where responses were low and what the plans are to engage with groupings who did not really respond. This ESHIA would also draw more upon actions to review impacts in order to mitigate the negative and accentuate the positive.

Meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty through carrying out these ESHIAs is very much about using them as an opportunity to demonstrate ongoing engagement across groupings and to thus visibly show we are taking what is called ‘due regard’ of the needs of people in Protected Characteristic groupings.

If the screening indicates that there are likely to be high negative impacts for groupings within the community, the service area would need to take advice on whether or not to carry out a full report, or Stage Two assessment. This is resource intensive but will enable more evidence to be collected that will help the service area to reach an informed opinion.

In practice, Stage Two or Full Screening Assessments have only been recommended twice since 2014, as the ongoing mitigation of negative equality impacts should serve to keep them below the threshold for triggering a Full Screening Assessment. The expectation is that Full Screening Assessments in regard to Health Impacts may occasionally need to be undertaken, but this would be very much the exception rather than the rule.

2. Council Wide and Service Area Policy and Practice on Equality, Social Inclusion and Health

This involves taking an equality and social inclusion approach in planning changes to services, policies, or procedures, including those that may be required by Government. The decisions that you make when you are planning a service change need to be recorded, to demonstrate that you have thought about the possible equality impacts on communities and to show openness and transparency in your decision-making processes.

This is where Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessments (ESHIAs) come in. Where you carry out an ESHIA in your service area~~,~~ this provides an opportunity to show:

- What evidence you have drawn upon to help you to recommend a strategy or policy or a course of action to Cabinet or to Strategic Licensing Committee.
- What target groups and audiences you have worked with to date.
- What actions will you take in order to mitigate any likely negative impact upon a group or groupings, and enhance any likely positive effects for a group or groupings; and
- What actions you are planning to monitor and review the impact of your planned service change.

The formal template is there not only to help the service area but also to act as a stand-alone for a member of the public to read. The approach helps to identify whether or not any new or significant changes to services, including policies, procedures, functions, or projects, may have an adverse impact on a particular group of people, and whether the human rights of individuals may be affected.

There are nine Protected Characteristic groupings defined in the Equality Act 2010. The full list of groupings is: Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion or Belief; Sex; and Sexual Orientation.

There is also intersectionality between these. Eg a young person with a disability would be in the groupings of Age and Disability, and if they described themselves as having a faith they would then also be in the grouping of Religion or Belief. We demonstrate equal treatment to people who are in these groups and to people who are not, through having what is termed 'due regard' to their needs and views when developing and implementing policy and strategy and when commissioning, procuring, arranging, or delivering services.

For the individuals and groupings who may be affected, ask yourself what impact do you think is likely and what actions will you currently anticipate taking, to mitigate or enhance likely impact of the service change? If you are reducing a service, for example, there may be further use you could make of awareness raising through social media and other channels to reach more people who may be affected.

Social inclusion is then a wider additional local category we use in Shropshire, in order to help us to go beyond the equality legislation in also considering impacts for individuals and households with regard to the circumstances in which they may find themselves across their life stages. This could be households on low incomes, or households facing challenges in accessing services, such as households in rural areas, or people that we might consider to be vulnerable, such as refugee families or rough sleepers.

Please note that veterans and serving members of the armed forces and their families are a grouping to whom we are required to give due regard under Armed Forces legislation, although in practice we have been doing so for a number of years now.

We also identify two further distinct separate local groupings due to their circumstances: care leavers, as vulnerable individuals, and carers, due to the support they give and the support they need.

When you are not carrying out an ESHIA, you still need to demonstrate and record that you have considered equality in your decision-making processes. It is up to you what format you choose.-You could use a checklist, an explanatory note, or a document setting out our expectations of standards of behaviour, for contractors to read and sign. It may well not be something that is in the public domain like an ESHIA, but you should still be ready for it to be made available.

Both the approaches sit with a manager, and the manager has to make the call, and record the decision made on behalf of the Council.

Carry out an ESHIA:

- If you are building or reconfiguring a building.
- If you are planning to reduce or remove or reconfigure a service.
- If you are consulting on a policy or a strategy.
- If you are bringing in a change to a process or procedure that involves other stakeholders and the wider community as well as particular groupings

Carry out and record your equality and social inclusion approach:

- If you are setting out how you expect a contractor to behave with regard to equality, where you are commissioning a service or product from them.
- If you are setting out the standards of behaviour that we expect from people who work with vulnerable groupings, such as taxi drivers that we license.

- If you are planning consultation and engagement activity, where we need to collect equality data in ways that will be proportionate and non-intrusive as well as meaningful for the purposes of the consultation itself.
- If you are looking at services provided by others that help the community, we need to demonstrate a community leadership approach

3. Council wide and service area policy and practice on health and wellbeing

This is an area to record within our overall assessments of impacts, for which we ask service area leads to consider health and wellbeing impacts, and to look at these in the context of direct and indirect impacts for individuals and for communities.

A better understanding across the Council of these impacts will also better enable the Public Health colleagues to prioritise activities to reduce health inequalities in ways that are evidence based and that link effectively with equality impact considerations and climate change mitigation.

Health in All Policies – Health Impact Assessment

Health in All Policies is an upstream approach for health and wellbeing promotion and prevention, and to reduce health inequalities. The Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is the supporting mechanism

- Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is the technical name for a process that considers the wider effects of local policies, strategies and initiatives and how they, in turn, may affect people's health and wellbeing.
- Health Impact Assessment is a means of assessing both the positive and negative health impacts of a policy. It is also a means of developing good evidence-based policy and strategy using a structured process to review the impact.
- A Health Impact Assessment seeks to determine how to maximise health benefits and reduce health inequalities. It identifies any unintended health consequences. These consequences may support policy and strategy or may lead to suggestions for improvements.
- An agreed framework will set out a clear pathway through which a policy or strategy can be assessed and impacts with outcomes identified. It also sets out the support mechanisms for maximising health benefits.

The embedding of a Health in All Policies approach will support Shropshire Council through evidence-based practice and a whole systems approach, in achieving our corporate and partnership strategic priorities. This will assist the Council and partners in promoting, enabling and sustaining the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities whilst reducing health inequalities.

<u>Individuals</u>

Will the proposal have a *direct impact* on health, mental health and wellbeing?

For example, would it cause ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?

Will the proposal directly affect an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?

This could include the following: their ability to be physically active e.g., being able to use a cycle route; to access food more easily; to change lifestyle in ways that are of positive impact for their health.

Provision or change to a service that allows greater reach to those most in need, this can involve relocation, pooling of resource/efficiency changes, or digitisation of some provision. It may also involve greater opportunities for employment, decreasing socio-economic inequality. Physical alternatives to be made available (where practical) to be offered wherever possible to avoid digital exclusion and reduce social isolation. These changes can be either positive or negative depending on the proposal.

An example of this could be that you may be involved in proposals for the establishment of safer walking and cycling routes (e.g., green highways), and changes to public transport that could encourage people away from car usage. and increase the number of journeys that they make on public transport, by foot or on bicycle or scooter. This could improve lives. It could also involve virtual support sessions/appointments to avoid unnecessary travel and provide greater flexibility with individuals work schedules. It may involve greater internet connectivity, to improve remote working opportunities and air pollution concerns, or improved communications coverage through closer partnership working – targeting those most in need of specific information.

Will the proposal *indirectly impact* an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?

This could include the following: their ability to access local facilities e.g., to access food more easily, or to access a means of mobility to local services and amenities? (e.g. change to bus route)

Similarly to the above, an example of this could be that you may be involved in proposals for the establishment of safer walking and cycling routes (e.g. pedestrianisation of town centres), and changes to public transport that could encourage people away from car usage, and increase the number of journeys that they make on public transport, by foot or on bicycle or scooter. This could improve their health and wellbeing.

Communities

Will the proposal directly or indirectly affect the physical health, mental health, and wellbeing of the wider community**?**

A *direct impact* could include either the causing of ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation, or the promotion of better health.

An example of this could be that safer walking and cycling routes could help the wider community, as more people across groupings may be encouraged to walk or engage in active travel. Increasing physical activity and minimising the time spent sitting down helps to maintain a healthy weight and reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, cancer, and depression. The UK Chief Medical Officers recommend that adults should do at least 150 minutes of moderate activity, or 75 minutes of vigorous activity, each week. At a wider level, reductions in vehicular emission lead to better air quality, and a reduction in NO_2 in the atmosphere.

An *indirect impact* could mean that a service change could indirectly affect living and working conditions and therefore the health and wellbeing of the wider community.

An example of this could be: an increase in the availability of warm homes would improve the quality of the housing offer in Shropshire and reduce the costs for households of having a warm home in Shropshire. This can reduce the risks of cold related health effects, as well as reduce the financial burden on the population, whose ability to shoulder these costs can vary. Often a health promoting approach also supports our agenda to reduce the level of Carbon Dioxide emissions and to reduce the impact of climate change.

Please record whether at this stage you consider the proposed service change to have a direct or an indirect impact upon communities.

Demand

Will there be a change in demand for or access to health, local authority and social care services?

For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health and Social Services?

An example of this could be: a new housing development in an area would affect demand for primary care and local authority facilities and services in that location and surrounding areas. If the housing development does not factor in consideration of availability of green space and safety within the public realm, further down the line there could be an increased demand upon health and social care services as a result of the lack of opportunities for physical recreation, and reluctance of some groupings to venture outside if they do not perceive it to be safe.

For further advice: please contact
Lois Dale via email Lois.Dale@shropshire.gov.uk
or
Phil Northfield via email Phillip.Northfield@shropshire.gov.uk