

EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)

POLICY/PROPOSAL:	Brent's Affordable Workspace Strategy and Action Plan (2020)
DEPARTMENT:	Regeneration & Environment
TEAM:	Regeneration
LEAD OFFICER:	Gabriela Spangenthal
DATE:	15/06/2020

NB: Please ensure you have read the accompanying EA guidance and instructions

SECTION A – INITIAL SCREENING

1. Please provide a description of the policy, proposal, change or initiative, and a summary its objectives and the intended results.

Following adoption of the Inclusive Growth Strategy 2019-2040 (IGS) last year, a draft Brent Affordable Workspace Strategy and Action Plan (AWS) has been drawn up. The AWS aligns with IGS policies to develop and support businesses, curate a strategic vision for workspace, diversify our town centres (by introducing new uses to areas where others might be lost, particularly after the coronavirus pandemic), and specifically create such an affordable workspace strategy. The main focus of the report is an 8-point Action Plan that sets out tangible initiatives to be implemented immediately to influence predominantly supply side factors. These initiatives, if properly implemented, can drive an increase in the quantity and quality of affordable workspace across the borough, providing vital space and resources for local start-ups, small businesses and enterprise for recovery after the coronavirus pandemic.

2. Who may be affected by this policy or proposal?

In theory, were the AWS to be implemented, then individuals working in the borough may be affected.

AWS recommendations and initiatives could positively benefit various groups that may be affected by forecast change in the borough. Specifically, the AWS Action Plan identifies responses that could improve access to workspaces for disadvantaged groups, and in particular economically disadvantaged groups. Women are also likely to be positively impacted by the implementation of the AWS as affordable workplaces are often more accessible, flexible places of work that are more accommodating to working pregnant women (particularly self-employed women).

3. Is there relevance to equality and the council's public sector equality duty?
If your answer is no, you must provide an explanation.

Yes, there is relevance to the council’s public sector equality duty, and due regard to such is paid in drawing up this equality analysis.

The underlying principle of the AWS is the provision of inclusive, affordable workspace in the borough, for economically vulnerable individuals.

The effects of Brexit and the coronavirus are predicted to put these individuals at risk, and many of vital sectors in Brent’s economy are seen as least resilient to a recession (retail, hospitality and construction).

The “Who Needs Affordable Workspace?” chapter (p.58-81) identifies 9 priority sectors for affordable workspace (ICT, media & creative; life sciences, digital, knowledge economy; circular economy; financial & professional; food preparation & consumption; manufacturing; creative & artists), business space requirements and guidance on affordable rent levels. Data and analysis covers turnover, location, sectors across the borough; with the clear message that start-up and small businesses are under most pressure from high rents and the impacts of COVID-19. The “Where Do We Need Affordable Workspace?” chapter (p.100-127) examines high priority locations for affordable workspace in the borough (which include Wembley, Kilburn and Alperton (where rents are beyond the range of affordable benchmarks for the majority of businesses).

The AWS identifies disadvantaged sectors and areas to enable economically vulnerable groups’ access to affordable workspace, helping the council meet its Public Sector Equality Duty by ensuring growth through equal access to workspace for people living and working in the borough.

4. Please indicate with an “X” the potential impact of the policy or proposal on groups with each protected characteristic. Carefully consider if the proposal will impact on people in different ways as a result of their characteristics.

Characteristic	IMPACT		
	Positive	Neutral/None	Negative
Age		X	
Sex		X	
Race		X	
Disability		X	
Sexual orientation		X	
Gender reassignment		X	
Religion or belief		X	
Pregnancy or maternity	X		
Marriage		X	

5. Please complete **each row** of the checklist with an “X”.

SCREENING CHECKLIST		
	YES	NO
Have you established that the policy or proposal <i>is</i> relevant to the council’s public sector equality duty?	X	
Does the policy or proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?	X	
Would the policy or proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?		X
Has the potential for negative equality impacts been identified with this policy or proposal?		X
If you have answered YES to ANY of the above, then proceed to section B. If you have answered NO to ALL of the above, then proceed straight to section D.		

SECTION B – IMPACTS ANALYSIS

1. Outline what information and evidence have you gathered and considered for this analysis. If there is little, then explain your judgements in detail and your plans to validate them with evidence. If you have monitoring information available, include it here.

The AWS has built on research and policy development carried out by Hatch Regeneris, We Made That, PRD and Brent Council. The report aims to better define 'affordable workspace' based on supply and demand and market evidence; and analyse its significance in adding local social and economic value.

A consultation with affordable workspace providers, the GLA and the WLA was carried out to review the draft report and feedback was also incorporated.

In drawing up the AWS and Action Plan, we have consulted with Lead Member, Council Management Team and departments across the Council. Consideration has been given to the potential impacts the coronavirus and Brexit may have upon the borough.

Focus for this equality analysis is upon the AWS's action plan, as it is its implementation which would potentially impact people with protected characteristics. Analysis is high level as the policy responses and actions have not yet been implemented. If the AWS is implemented, further monitoring will have to be done to assess particular action points' impact and amend if they are not achieving desired outcomes. .

2. For each "protected characteristic" provide details of all the potential or known impacts identified, both positive and negative, and explain how you have reached these conclusions based on the information and evidence listed above. Where appropriate state "not applicable".

AGE	
Details of impacts identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No obvious impact upon groups with the protected characteristics of Age is identified in this equality analysis. Were the AWS and Action Plan to be implemented, further equalities analysis is advised.
DISABILITY	

Details of impacts identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No obvious impact upon groups with the protected characteristics of Disability is identified in this equality analysis. Were the AWS and Action Plan to be implemented, further equalities analysis is advised.
RACE	
Details of impacts identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No obvious impact upon groups with the protected characteristics of Race is identified in this equality analysis. Were the AWS and Action Plan to be implemented, further equalities analysis is advised.
SEX	
Details of impacts identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No obvious impact upon groups with the protected characteristics of Sex is identified in this equality analysis. Were the AWS and Action Plan to be implemented, further equalities analysis is advised.
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	
Details of impacts identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No obvious impact upon groups with the protected characteristics of Sexual orientation is identified in this equality analysis. Were the AWS and Action Plan to be implemented, further equalities analysis is advised.
PREGANCY AND MATERNITY	
Details of impacts identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AWS and Action Plan seeks to encourage the provision of affordable, accessible, flexible workspaces in the borough that would accommodate pregnant women and mothers in Brent, particularly self-employed mothers and pregnant women. POSITIVE.
RELIGION OR BELIEF	
Details of impacts identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No obvious impact upon groups with the protected characteristics of Religion or belief is identified in this equality analysis. Were the AWS and Action Plan to be implemented, further equalities analysis is advised.
GENDER REASSIGNMENT	

Details of impacts identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No obvious impact upon groups with the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment is identified in this equality analysis. Were the AWS and Action Plan to be implemented, further equalities analysis is advised.
MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	
Details of impacts identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No obvious impact upon groups with the protected characteristics of Marriage & Civil Partnership is identified in this equality analysis. Were the AWS and Action Plan to be implemented, further equalities analysis is advised.

3. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010?

No

4. Were the participants in any engagement initiatives representative of the people who will be affected by your proposal and is further engagement required?

We carried out a consultation with 3 affordable workspace providers who are based in the borough and are on Brent's Approved Workspace Provider List. We also asked the GLA and the WLA to review the report. Feedback was incorporated into the draft report.

5. Please detail any areas identified as requiring further data or detailed analysis.

N/A

6. If, following your action plan, negative impacts will or may remain, please explain how these can be justified?

N/A

7. Outline how you will monitor the actual, ongoing impact of the policy or proposal?

Were the AWS to be implemented, Actions 2 and 3 state the Regeneration team is to monitor affordable workspace and meanwhile operators' work. This is to ensure locals and economically disadvantaged individuals are utilising these offers and benefitting from the affordable workspace in the borough. Equally, Action 7, which would create a specific discretionary business rates relief for Affordable Workspace Operators, and successful relief applicants (against agreed criteria) would be monitored.

Further equalities analysis is advised, including whether a proportionate equalities monitoring regime to measure the scale of impacts on groups with protected characteristics is appropriate for each particular action or initiative to be implemented.

SECTION C - CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis above, please detail your overall conclusions. State if any mitigating actions are required to alleviate negative impacts, what these are and what the desired outcomes will be. If positive equality impacts have been identified, consider what actions you can take to enhance them. If you have decided to justify and continue with the policy despite negative equality impacts, provide your justification. If you are to stop the policy, explain why.

Implementation of the AWS Action Plan is assessed as likely to advance equality of opportunity in the borough, with a number of positive impacts identified for socioeconomically disadvantaged groups through access to affordable workspace and business support from affordable workspace providers, as well as discretionary business rate relief and finance and grant schemes.

SECTION D – RESULT

<i>Please select one of the following options. Mark with an "X".</i>		
A	CONTINUE WITH THE POLICY/PROPOSAL UNCHANGED	X
B	JUSTIFY AND CONTINUE THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
C	CHANGE / ADJUST THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
D	STOP OR ABANDON THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	

SECTION E - ACTION PLAN

This will help you monitor the steps you have identified to reduce the negative impacts (or increase the positive); monitor actual or ongoing impacts; plan reviews and any further engagement or analysis required.

Action	Expected outcome	Officer	Completion Date

SECTION F – SIGN OFF

Please ensure this section is signed and dated.

OFFICER:	Gabriela Spangenthal, Principal Regeneration Officer
REVIEWING OFFICER:	Richard Harrington, Senior Policy Officer
HEAD OF SERVICE:	Jonathan Kay, Head of Regeneration

