

APPENDIX B – Equalities Impact Assessment – screening form

Question	Response						
Q1) Name of the strategy, policy, programme or project being assessed.	Proposal for the creation of a single council at district level for the area currently covered by Forest Heath District Council (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC)						
Q2) In no more than five lines and using Plain English, summarise the purpose of the policy or proposal, and its desired outcomes.	A business case from the Leaders of FHDC and SEBC to test the proposal of a new, single council at district level for west Suffolk from May 2019. The business case tests whether this proposal is the best possible way to for the councils to continue to support residents, business and communities in the future.						
Q3) Who should benefit from the proposal and in what way?	<p>The following groups are likely to benefit from the creation of a single council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all residents living in the two districts (including all electors) • all staff employed by the two existing councils • all staff employed by organisations commissioned to carry out services/functions on their behalf by one (or more) of the two councils. • all Councillors in the two districts (27 – Forest Heath and 45 – St Edmundsbury) • partner organisations working with FHDC and SEBC (e.g. parish councils, VCSE organisations, community groups) • businesses operating in the two districts • businesses contracting with the councils 						
Q4) Is there any evidence or reason to believe that in relation to this proposal, there may be a difference in:	<table border="1" data-bbox="730 1137 2101 1209"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="730 1137 1003 1209">Protected characteristic</th> <th data-bbox="1003 1137 1552 1209">West Suffolk (%)</th> <th data-bbox="1552 1137 2101 1209">England and Wales* (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="3" data-bbox="730 1286 2101 1358">The demographic characteristics of residents of West Suffolk are broadly similar to those of the population of England, as follows:</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Protected characteristic	West Suffolk (%)	England and Wales* (%)	The demographic characteristics of residents of West Suffolk are broadly similar to those of the population of England, as follows:		
Protected characteristic	West Suffolk (%)	England and Wales* (%)					
The demographic characteristics of residents of West Suffolk are broadly similar to those of the population of England, as follows:							

- Levels of participation
- Uptake by different groups
- Needs or experiences of different groups
- Priorities
- Other areas?

Age	Under 18 20.9%	Aged 65+ 20.1%	Under 18 21.3%	Aged 65+ 17.9%
Disability (those living with a long-term illness or disability)	15.9%		17.9%	
Gender reassignment	Data not available		Prevalence estimates 0.1% to 0.6% of all adults.	
Marriage and civil partnership	Married: 51% Civil partnership: 0%		Married: 46.6% Civil partnership: 0.2%	
Pregnancy and maternity	Data not available		Data not available	
Race	White: 94.6% Mixed/multiple ethnic group: 2% Asian/Asian British: 1.8% Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: 1.1% Other ethnic group: 0.5%		White 86.0% Mixed/multiple ethnic group: 2.2% Asian/Asian British: 7.5% Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: 3.3% Other ethnic group: 1.0%	
Religion or belief	Has a religion: 64.5% No religion: 28.1%		Has a religion: 67.7% No religion: 25.1%	
Sex	Males 50.2%	Females 49.8%	Males 49.2%	Females 50.8%
Sexual orientation	Data not available for west Suffolk.		ONS 2015 data – 1.7% of UK population identified themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB)	

*local government is devolved to England, but data are mostly available for England and Wales.

	<p>We would therefore not expect the proposal to impact differently on any particular group when compared to the population of England as a whole. One exception to this is that a large number of residents of Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury are members or dependents of the US Armed Forces, based at RAF Lakenheath or Mildenhall. The proposals will have less impact on these people as they do not vote in local elections or pay council tax, but they do benefit from the services provided by the councils.</p>
<p>Q5) Using the evidence listed above, fill in the table below to highlight the groups you think this policy or proposal has the potential to impact upon:</p> <p>(i) Is there any potential for negative impact? Yes or No</p> <p>(ii) Are there opportunities for positive impact or to promote equality of opportunity?</p>	<p>i) No negative impacts have so far been identified. This will be reviewed following a period of public consultation and engagement. The proposals will not directly affect service delivery, or customer access.</p> <p>ii) A small beneficial impact on all groups is anticipated. Becoming a single council is estimated to generate a further £0.5 million of annual cashable savings, on top of the annual shared services savings of £4 million.</p> <p>Becoming a single council would also release some capacity as a result of a more simple and effective way of working, allowing the councils to focus on the delivery of key projects and invest in communities. There is also potential for all residents to benefit from a renewed democratic relationship with a new body, complementing the opportunity of forging new relationships with communities.</p> <p>A single west Suffolk council with a larger population, local economy and GVA would bring the councils from being 86th and 189th largest district/borough councils in England (out of 202) to around 7th largest district/borough council when combined. Having a larger council will mean having a bigger voice within the sector and with central Government.</p> <p>The creation of a new single council would also help develop new ways of working that the councils have been moving towards in recent years. This includes an emphasis on prevention, not crisis interventions, thus benefitting everyone who uses the councils' services, particularly the most vulnerable in society.</p>

Q6) Considering your answers to questions 1-5, do you believe a Full Equality Impact Assessment is needed?	Not at this time as no negative impacts have been identified.
Q7) Considering our duty to proactively tackle disadvantage and promote equality of opportunity, list the actions required.	No actions required as no adverse impact identified.

Impacts Table

	Is there potential for negative impact? YES or NO	Are there opportunities for positive impact? YES or NO	If YES, please provide details of the impact below	
			Positive Impact	Negative Impact
All groups or society generally	NO	YES	The opportunities for positive impact are listed above.	
Age - Older or younger people	NO	YES		
Disability - People with a disability	NO	YES		

Sex - Women or men	NO	YES		
Pregnancy or maternity - including expectant or new parents i.e. pregnancy and maternity	NO	YES		
Marriage and civil partnership – including same sex couples	NO	YES		
Race - People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME)	NO	YES		
Religion - People with a religion or belief (or who choose not to have a religion or belief)	NO	YES		
Sexual Orientation - People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) or in a Civil Partnership	NO	YES		
Gender Reassignment - People who are transitioning from one gender to another	NO	YES		
<i>Families and those with parenting or caring</i>	NO	YES		

<i>responsibilities (The Families Test)</i>				
<i>Individuals on low income</i>	NO	YES		
<i>Those suffering rural isolation</i>	NO	YES		
<i>Those who do not have English as a first language</i>	NO	YES		