

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

Draft Equality Impact Assessment

Title of Policy/Service/Contract: Potential disposal of land at Courtmead Road, Cuckfield

Division: Property and Asset Maintenance

Lead Officer: Tom Clark

Date Assessment completed: 28 October 2013

1. SCOPING

1.1 What are the aims of the policy, service/service change or contract?

The Council owns a parcel of land at the end of Courtmead Road. Subject to the results of further consultation, it wishes to sell this land to raise capital to meet the Council's strategic objectives but in particular to secure the future of all the Council's assets, especially community facilities, and to support local economic development for the benefit of all Mid Sussex residents.

1.2 Who does the service/policy/contract affect? Who are the main customers (internal or external)?

Although the Council has not formally made this space available to the local community, the Council is aware that some groups are making some informal use of the land. Therefore disposal of the land may potentially affect anyone who has to date used this land.

1.3 What equality information is available, including any evidence from engagement and analysis of use of services?

Cuckfield Parish Council opposes the loss of this land as open space as it contends that it is used by young people, especially a pre-school nursery and a youth club group. Some Cabinet members have met with the parish council to consider the availability and suitability of other land in the parish council's ownership that could be made available for the nursery or other users, and feels this could easily be made suitable for such a use.

The Council has also advertised its intention to appropriate this open space for planning purposes and will consider any responses it receives as a result of its advertisement. To date a number of individuals and the local church have objected on similar grounds to that of the parish council.

1.4 What does this information tell us about the equality issues associated with the service and implications for the protected groups?

Although the land was not intended or designed to be used as open space, responses suggest that it has in practice been used in this way in a limited fashion. If no alternative was found there would be some impact on anyone who does use the land currently, especially pre-school children and a youth club group. However, the impact is not regarded as severe as there is sufficient other open space in Cuckfield, and alternative parish council land close by has been identified that could be used as open space following a limited amount of work.

1.5 Are contractors or partnerships used to deliver the service? Y/N No

If No go to section 2.

If yes, please refer to the guidance notes, particularly Appendix One of the MSDC Guidance "Integrating Equality and Diversity into Procurement", and complete the next three questions.

Identify the contractors/partnerships used to deliver the service.

What is their contribution to equality in service delivery and the promotion of equality?

How are equality issues addressed through contractual arrangements and service level agreements?

2. Assessment of Impact; Analysis and Action Planning

Any gaps in information or provision, opportunities to promote equalities and good relations identified above need to be translated into SMART actions and recorded here. These actions need to be delivered and monitored through the service planning process.

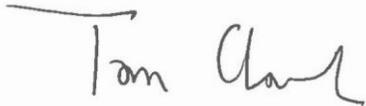
Opportunity to promote equality, good relations and/or address barriers to service/differential impact	Current action taken to address these	Further actions required and timescales	Lead Officer	How will impact be measured
The needs of different ethnic groups including white minorities, but also established white communities				
None identified				
The needs of men and women. Including taking account of pregnancy and maternity.				
None identified				
The needs of disabled people				
There is a tarmac road leading to the land at Courtmead Road, but the land itself is not designed or suitable for use as open space by disabled people.	There is no proposal to improve access to Courtmead Road as the Council proposes to dispose of this land.	Subject to the parish council agreeing to the use of its land as open space for the nursery or other users, the access lane would be improved. This would not in itself make the land suitable for use by disabled people, but would make the land more accessible to all users.	Mark Fisher	Completion of works to the access lane to the alternative field.
The needs of people with a religion or belief				
None identified				

Opportunity to promote equality and/or barriers to service/differential impact	Current action taken to address these	Further actions required and timescales	Lead Officer	How will impact be measured
The needs of gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and straight people				
None identified				
Issues from marriage and civil partnership				
None identified				
The needs of different age groups, for example older and younger people				
Pre-school children and youth club could be disadvantaged by the loss of this land unless alternative open space was available.	There is already sufficient alternative open space in Cuckfield. In addition, discussions have taken place with the parish council about the use of their land nearby.	Discussions will continue to identify what needs to be done to make the parish council's land suitable for use by the nursery and youth club group, and any adaptations will need to be implemented.	Mark Fisher	Suitable alternative open space made available.
The needs of transgender communities				
None identified				
The needs of people who are disadvantaged by socio-economic factors such as low incomes, skill or living in a deprived area				
None identified				
The needs of people who live in a rural area				
The proposal affects Cuckfield, which is a rural parish, and it is possible that other individuals use this land as open space from time to time.	There is already alternative open space in Cuckfield. In addition, discussions have taken place with the parish council about the use of their land nearby.	Discussions will continue to identify what needs to be done to make the parish council's land suitable for use, and any adaptations will need to be implemented.	Mark Fisher	Suitable alternative open space made available.

3. Mid Sussex District Council Equality Impact Assessment Summary

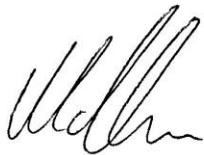
Key Findings	Future Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although this land was not intended for or designed as open space, some residents, especially pre-school children and a youth club group, have informed the Council that they have used it for this purpose. If it were lost and not replaced there would be some loss of amenity to those children. This has to be balanced against the Council's financial pressures and the continuing need to invest in its capital assets, including parks and leisure centres, which are enjoyed by the whole community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue discussions with Cuckfield Parish Council about the use and, if need be, the adaptation of their land for use as open space. Consider any further representations arising in response to the Council's advertisement of its intention to appropriate this land for planning purposes and review this equality impact assessment before asking Cabinet to make a final decision on disposal.

4. Signing off this assessment and action plan



Signature
 Person undertaking the assessment

Date ...29/10/13.....



Signature
 Head of Service

Date ...29/10/13.....

Please send your completed impact assessment to Neal Barton for publication on the website.