

## Growth and prosperity learning and development equality policy

### Evidence based equality analysis

Main aims, purpose and outcomes and how does it fit in with the wider aims of the organisation:

The growth and prosperity directorate learning and development equality policy enables the organisation to ensure that all service users have the opportunity to access learning and development opportunities which are relevant and appropriate to their needs and individual learning styles and preferences.

Lead officer: Shan Wilkinson

Stakeholders: Libraries, Arts and Festivals, Archives, Museums, Green Spaces

Equality analysis is a valuable tool to help embed equality into everything we do

While process is important, equality analysis is essentially about outcomes.

Lack of evidence of discrimination is not evidence of a lack of discrimination.

It is not acceptable to say that a policy is applied uniformly to all groups and is therefore fair and equal. Applying a policy or procedure consistently may result in differential outcomes for different groups.

For each of the areas overleaf, an assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a **positive, negative or neutral impact**, and brief details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation should be included. Where the impact is negative, this needs to be given a **high, medium or low assessment**. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

**High impact** – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

**Medium impact** – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

**Low impact** – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

| Target group / area   | Neutral   | Positive   | Negative  |
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| <p><b>Race and ethnicity</b><br/>(including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers, asylum seekers etc.)</p> | <p>Chester Performs has programmed performance and music of a wide and diverse nature, eg Chester Literature Festival, Chester Music Festival. Arts and festivals' service development plan includes guiding principles of encouraging, evaluating and improving accessibility. (Applies to all points)</p> | <p>English conversation groups are held in libraries, according to demand. They are currently operating weekly in Chester and Northwich libraries.</p> <p>Libraries Summer Reading Challenge piloted work with Gypsy/Traveller Information Service and local schools in Elton and Helsby to encourage Gypsy/Traveller children to read.</p> <p>Libraries collect ethnicity data on joining forms for Summer Reading Challenge participant forms.</p> <p>Libraries collect data on 'language spoken at home' on joining forms, which is then used to check stock balance and event provision.</p> <p>Libraries no longer request a permanent address for new joiners.</p> <p>Festival support includes Chinese New Year and Diwali celebrations.</p> <p>Cheshire Rural Touring Arts analyses information around the companies they employ to support their race and equality action plan.</p> <p>Museums works with Blackburn House (Liverpool) to produce heritage mornings for women from overseas, to help them integrate in the North West.</p> <p>All green spaces across the borough are freely accessible to all communities for the purpose of learning and development. The green spaces team assesses learning and development opportunities across all elements of the service it provides and liaises with community groups and partners as appropriate.</p> <p>-Green Spaces a best practice service-specific manual to meet with the aspirations of the Customer First programme when providing services to the public either through learning and development interaction or in general.</p> | <p>The museums service is not currently able to offer 'A Brief History of Chester' (an audio-visual presentation with English subtitles, used in the Grosvenor Museum) in as many languages as wished. Due to the costs of developing this resource in additional languages, further development will have to be part of the planned wider redisplay and development of the Grosvenor Museum. However, a range of foreign language leaflets about the museum is available, and the translation service is used when required.</p> <p>Green spaces needs more data about who uses Council green spaces. (See Action 1)</p> |

| Target group / area   | Neutral   | Positive   | Negative   |
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| <p><b>Disability</b><br/>(as defined by the Equality Act - a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)</p> | <p>Large print of promotional material, eg Cheshire Rural Touring Arts brochure is available on request</p> | <p>Consultations about new libraries always collect data on disabilities/conditions that might affect ability to use the library, and this is taken into account in design and planning. Chester library runs an audio reading group for people with visual impairment.</p> <p>A high number of events in libraries are accessible to people with non-traditional learning preferences, eg talks and hands-on demonstrations during Libraries 4 Wellbeing Week.</p> <p>The library service works in partnership with the Royal Voluntary Service to provide a delivery service ('Books on Wheels') to people who are housebound.</p> <p>Library stock includes talking books, e-audio books and large print materials, which are used by people with visual impairment.</p> <p>All DVDs stocked by the service have subtitle options and most have the facility for audio-description.</p> <p>Reading for Wellbeing groups operate in four libraries, using shared reading activities to improve mental health.</p> <p>Library service has signed up to '6 Steps' commitment for provision to people with visual impairment</p> <p>Disabled access guides are available for all libraries on their webpages</p> <p>Arts and festivals team in partnership with Cheshire Dance deliver disability dance classes in Chester and Winsford and specialist sensory movement in Dane Walk Disability Day Centre.</p> <p>All Cheshire Rural Touring Arts venues have had accessibility audits and there is an access guide in the brochure.</p> <p>Odeon Pop Up Retail Unit has had accessibility advice and as a result has been equipped with a wheelchair user ramp and 'touch for help' user bell. Other aids, eg hearing loops, will be considered where appropriate.</p> <p>Archives and museums have an ongoing relationship with Pine Lodge Young People's Centre, which provides specialist in-patient treatment services for young people with complex mental health problems.</p> <p>A range of magnification equipment is available at the Record</p> | <p>Library promotion of talking books, e-audio, large print and audio-described material is not currently targeted at appropriate groups. (See Action 2)</p> <p>The Grosvenor Museum is not currently able to offer lift access to upper floors. However, reasonable adjustments have been made, including electronic catalogues and exhibit pictures, and the facility to relocate school sessions to ground floor room if necessary.</p> <p>The Record Office has a wide range of material available online for those who cannot access it in hard copy.</p> |

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|  |  | <p>Office to allow people with visual impairment to read archival material.</p> <p>Weaver Hall and Stretton Watermill are fully accessible; access limitations of other Council museum buildings are noted on the webpages.</p> <p>All museums events and activities are offered in accessible galleries.</p> <p>Museums learning team offers education sessions in accessible galleries for whole classes where required to integrate children who are unable to access the education workroom.</p> <p>Grosvenor Museum is developing a screen display of objects for visitors with mobility issues.</p> <p>Museums' online exhibition panels and images are accessible on the webpages.</p> <p>All green spaces improvement projects assess disability impacts and consultation is undertaken with the community prior, during and after project implementation.</p> <p>Access to the countryside is assessed through an annual survey and there is a programme to replace stiles with gates as part of the implementation of the rights of way improvement plan.</p> <p>Green spaces works with partners to ensure events in green spaces are accessible to all.</p> <p>Libraries, museums and other cultural facilities have been audited by Disabled Go and access guides are available online.</p> |   |
| <p><b>Gender/gender reassignment</b></p> | <p>The library service does not collect statistics on this, as it does not impact on the level of service available to our customers.</p> <p>Arts and festivals do not do any specific target work currently in this area but the majority of projects are open access and suitable for all.</p> | <p>Library stock includes a small number of books on gender studies and gender reassignment.</p>   | <p>As yet there has been little or no training on gender/gender reassignment sensitivity and awareness for staff in Cultural Services. (See Action 3)</p> |

| Target group / area   | Neutral   | Positive  | Negative  |
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| <b>Religion and belief</b>  | <p>The standard Public Library Users Survey collects this information as a matter of course but the Council has not got the resources to undertake the survey at the present time. Libraries are currently reviewing policies on Christmas/Easter closed days, the outcome of which may or may not have an effect on members of faith communities.</p> <p>Cheshire Rural Touring Arts has an equality strand, and ensures programming of a diverse and high quality, eg Henna Hands</p> | <p>Library stock includes material on a wide range of religions and beliefs.</p> <p>Libraries participate in major festivals when invited, eg. Eid celebrations in Ellesmere Port.</p> <p>Local churches are among a wide range of partners with whom libraries work to deliver events such as Libraries 4 Health Week coffee mornings.</p> <p>Mobile library routes may be advertised through parish magazines where locally appropriate.</p> <p>Books donated by local Christian partnerships are made available in libraries as a result of a scheme with Churches Together. Contributions from other religions would be equally acceptable.</p> <p>Festival support includes Chinese New Year, Diwali and Songkran (Thai) celebrations.</p> <p>Community and faith groups undertake voluntary work in green spaces and there is a faith-donated garden in Grosvenor Park, Chester.</p> <p>Community and faith groups regularly hold events in green spaces.</p> | <p>While as many libraries as possible offer Saturday opening, none currently offer Sunday opening. This may reduce access available to members of some religious groups.</p> <p>Family events are often held on Saturdays, which again may act as a barrier to people from some religious groups. (See Action 4)</p> |
| <b>Sexual orientation</b><br>(including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual) | <p>The standard Public Library Users Survey collects this information as a matter of course but the Council does not have the resources to undertake the survey at the present time.</p>  | <p>Libraries participate in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) History Month and have a reading list of LGBT fiction.</p> <p>The library service is represented at LGBT events, eg Love Music, Hate Homophobia and Chester Pride.</p> <p>Arts and Festivals supports key groups with events in partnership with the Council equality and diversity team, eg investigations into the viability of a Chester Pride event.</p> <p>Arts and festivals has recognised LGBT as a key group within the audience development strategy for the new Chester theatre and library development.</p> <p>Cheshire Rural Touring Arts has an equality and diversity strand across some programming, recently through 'Cutting Edge' series on tackling homophobia.</p> <p>Green Spaces is represented at LGBT events.</p>  |   |

| Target group / area  | Neutral  | Positive   | Negative   |
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| <p><b>Age</b> (children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults aged 25 – 50, younger older people aged 51 – 75/80; older older people 81+. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs).</p> | <p>Library joining forms ask for information about date of birth. The library service has three dual-use libraries based in local schools.</p> | <p>Libraries offer many learning and development opportunities for children of different ages, including rhymetimes and storytimes for pre-schoolers, activity and homework clubs for school age children, and the summer reading challenge. Libraries have undertaken a survey of the library needs of over 50s, the results of which are used to inform service planning and development.</p> <p>Arts and festivals offer many learning and development opportunities for children of different ages via arts partners, eg Cheshire Dance classes, Action Transport Theatre workshops, Development of the Arts in Northwich workshops. Cheshire Rural Touring Arts has a youth strand, with venue partners who will include work specifically for children and young people in their programming.</p> <p>Chester Performs has a child strand of the annual Chester Literature Festival: Gobble-Dee-Book.</p> <p>Arts and festivals also works closely with schools, especially through the festivals programme to provide opportunities eg Midsummer/Winter Watch and St. George’s Day.</p> <p>Archives are engaging with young people by making pictures from the Cheshire Image Bank available on Flickr.</p> <p>Museums’ learning teams work with over 25,000 children and young people every year.</p> <p>Grosvenor Museum has devised ‘explorer backpacks’ to engage younger audiences.</p> <p>School groups regularly access green spaces and Green Spaces has worked in partnership with university students on work placement to produce accessibility guidance for schools.</p> <p>A number of green spaces provide sports facilities for youth teams and Green Spaces is working in partnership with community sports clubs and partners to improve and provide further sports facilities.</p> <p>Green Spaces has a commitment to offering learning and development opportunities through work placements and by facilitating apprenticeships across all service areas, including a variety of projects and events.</p> <p>The library service has a dedicated mobile library for visits to</p> | <p>Survey responses show that some older library users may be discouraged from using the library while children’s events are on because of levels of noise.</p> <p>Opening hours of most libraries are based on the working day, with a few additional hours in the evening. This may present a barrier to people in full time work, if they are unable to access the service on a Saturday. However, many of our facilities are now available online at any time.</p> |

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|                                 |  | <p>older people's homes.</p> <p>Arts and festivals works in conjunction with Wear Purple and Age UK to provide arts activities and training for older people.</p> <p>Arts and festivals works with Cheshire Dance to provide dance for 50+ in Winsford, Ellesmere Port and Neston. We are also delivering a joint project funded by the Baring Foundation to work with older people and primary school children.</p> <p>Museums offer family events and activities during all school holidays, attracting parents and grandparents as well as children.</p> <p>Museums' learning team works with Oakfield Nursing Home to enhance the temporary exhibition programme.</p> <p>Libraries, archives and museums all offer opportunities for volunteering, and a wide range of volunteers contributes many hours working on various projects in green spaces all year round.</p>   |                       |
| <p><b>Rural communities</b></p> | <p>Arts and festivals' service development plan includes a strategic objective about engaging rural and diverse communities.</p> | <p>The library service operates two mobile libraries, each of which has a fortnightly rota of visits to rural areas where there is no static library provision.</p> <p>Library reference, book order, book renewal and joining services are available online at any time</p> <p>Cheshire Rural Touring Arts' key purpose is to bring high quality professional arts performances to rural locations across the borough.</p> <p>Arts and festivals supports and promotes the Cheshire Open Studios programme.</p> <p>Arts and festivals runs Rural Film Scheme and is supporting its expansion to ensure more equitable provision across the whole of the borough.</p> <p>Archives make family history resources, maps and databases available remotely through the local studies service's website.</p> <p>The archives and local studies service enables remote payments for a range of services through the website.</p> <p>Museums is developing online collection catalogues</p> <p>Museums aims to work with a range of community groups to enhance the temporary exhibition programme.</p> <p>Green space development projects are planned for the rural areas and Green Spaces assess learning and development needs for all projects through consultation.</p> | <p>(See Action 5)</p> |

| Target group / area         | Neutral  | Positive  | Negative |
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| <b>Areas of deprivation</b> |  | <p>Libraries offer free computer access for one hour/day.</p> <p>Libraries are currently undertaking surveys to enable them to prepare to support the new demand for information that will result from the welfare rights reform.</p> <p>Artists in Neston, Northwich, Ellesmere Port and Chester are linked to regeneration teams.</p> <p>Action Transport Theatre company resides in the park at Ellesmere Port.</p> <p>Work with Cheshire Dance includes linking to the Blacon School Partnership.</p> <p>Museums works with family learning to encourage museum use/participation in the activities programme by families in areas of deprivation.</p> <p>Green spaces offer free access for all and provide a range of recreational facilities, eg children’s play areas, multi use games areas, tennis courts and natural and wildlife areas.</p> <p>Green spaces provide access to the outdoors in urban areas of high density population where access to garden space is limited. Improvement projects are prioritised to ensure areas of deprivation are catered for.</p> <p>Green spaces supports allotment gardening, which provides opportunities for food growing and learning about how to grow food for a healthy diet in areas that are economically less well off.</p> |          |
| <b>Human rights</b>         | <p>All activity by arts and festivals and partner organisation is risk assessed.</p> <p>Arts and festivals undertakes liaison with child welfare and licensing where required.</p> | <p>The library service’s current stock policy adopts the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals Code of Professional Conduct for book selection, which forbids the knowing promotion of ‘material the prime purpose of which is to encourage discrimination on the grounds of race, creed, gender or sexual orientations’.</p> <p>The stock policy supports the purchase and making available of all material except that which contravenes the law of the land.</p> <p>Information contained in archives collections is processed in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information Act.</p> <p>The preservation and conservation of green spaces contributes to sustainable development and offers a natural environment for all. Green spaces works with partners to</p>   |          |



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|  |   | ensure green space protection as a human right for this and future generations, by meeting the National Planning Policy Framework Guidance, thereby ensuring that ensure green spaces are protected from unscrupulous development.   |   |
| <b>Health and wellbeing</b> (consider both the wider determinants of health such as education, housing, employment, environment, crime and transport, as well as the possible impacts on lifestyles and the effect there may be on health and care services) | Arts and festivals has been responsive to other services' health and wellbeing agendas, eg through contributions to keep active campaigns, the teenage pregnancy strategy and the library service 'Libraries 4 Health' week.<br>Studies have shown that participating in an arts activity can have many social and health benefits.<br>Museums works with other departments and services to promote health and wellbeing, eg events during Libraries 4 Health Week, Volunteer Week etc. | Libraries support health and wellbeing in a wide range of ways, including provision of relevant stock and information, support for the Five Ways to Wellbeing initiative, a specific 'Libraries 4 Wellbeing Week' in 2012 (with over 70 events across all libraries) and a 'Year of Health and Wellbeing' planned for 2013-14.<br>Reading for Wellbeing groups operate in 4 libraries, using shared reading activities to improve mental health.<br>Libraries operate the 'Books on Prescription' scheme in association with local healthcare professionals, and 'mood boosting books' are also available.<br>Activities and services delivered by the archives and local studies service foster community, family and personal identity and wellbeing.<br>Museums' learning team works with Pine Lodge to improve access to collections.<br>The health and wellbeing benefits of green spaces are well documented and in the borough Green Spaces works to offer and maintain many of these benefits, eg. cultural and community events in parks and open spaces, accessible walking, cycling and bridle routes for physical and mental wellbeing, sports pitches for physical and sports skills development, volunteering opportunities which provide opportunities to develop practical and social skills (eg through hedge laying and garden design), food growing in allotments, passive recreation and contemplative respite in parks, community cohesion through project planning and development, etc. | Green Spaces does not currently provide guidance for hirers of green spaces for events. (See Actions 6 and 7) |
| <b>Procurement/ partnership</b> (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance)   | Arts and festivals follows corporate guidance on recruitment and procurement.   | All arts and festivals partnership agreements have an equalities clause which sets out expectations of partner organisations in this area.<br>Green spaces projects conform to the national, Council and partnership equality criteria at all stages.  |   |

**Evidence:**

Please note that where the evidence included embedded documents, these have been removed in order to comply with the requirements for publishing documents on our website. However, these are available on request by contacting [equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk) or telephone 01244 976008.

**Action plan:**

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Actions required</b>  | <b>Key activity</b>   | <b>Priority</b> | <b>Outcomes required</b>   | <b>Officer responsible</b> | <b>Review date</b> |
|------------|--|---|-----------------|--|----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1          | Gather user data to know who uses and who does not use Cheshire West and Chester green spaces.                                 | Research the green space user demographic to establish a profile.   | Medium          | Information will inform policies, strategies and service provision   | Jill Connolly              | November 2013      |
| 2          | Increase targeted promotion of libraries facilities for people with visual impairments   | Support for make a Noise in Libraries Week (June 2013) and individual library events during Festival of Wellbeing                       | Medium          | Demonstrable increase in awareness/takeup of these facilities/events by appropriate groups                             | Shan Wilkinson             | December 2013      |
| 3          | Train staff in gender/gender reassignment awareness and sensitivity  | Work with equalities officers to provide training when available  | Medium          | Majority of staff in public-facing cultural services receive training  | Shan Wilkinson             | June 2014          |
| 4          | Find low-cost ways to understand the library needs of religion/belief groups and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups | Investigate possibility of delivering staff training sessions and/or workshops/ consultations with appropriate local groups.            | Medium          | Action plan for any changes to provision identified in exercise  | Shan Wilkinson             | December 2013      |
| 5          | Investigate ways for museums to work with a wider range of community groups  | Identify obvious gaps in take-up, then make contact with members of these communities, giving range of existing services and provision. | Medium          | Improved access to and familiarity with museums and their collections  | Kate Harland               | September 2013     |
| 6          | Make information available for hirers of green spaces to improve the experience of event organisers and event goers.           | Produce best practice guidance for the hiring of green spaces in the borough.   | Medium          | Event organisers will be informed on the issues for consideration, including equality impacts when hiring green space. | Jill Connolly/Hazel Barber | September 2013     |
| 7          | Make information available for volunteers in green spaces to ensure an inclusive experience for everyone.                      | Produce volunteer best practice guidance for working in green spaces in the borough.  | Medium          | Event organisers will be informed on the issues for consideration when hiring green space.                             | Jill Connolly/David James  | September 2013     |

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| <b>Sign off</b>  |   |
| Lead Officer:  | Shan Wilkinson                                      |
| Approved by Head of Service:   |   |
| <b>Moderation and/or Scrutiny</b>  |   |
| Date:  | Moderated at directorate equality group 23 May 2013 |
| <b>Date analysis to be reviewed based on rating</b> (high impact – review in one year, medium impact - review in two years, low impact in three years) |   |

**Please forward the completed Equality Analysis to the Equality and Diversity Managers for publishing on the Council's website**