

# Equality Impact Assessment Template

Please complete this template using the [Equality Impact Assessment Guidance document](#)

**Version 4: January 2019**

Title of proposal (include forward plan reference if available)	Changes to Polling Places in the Tividale ward
Directorate and Service Area	Directorate of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Name and title of Lead Officer completing this EIA	Electoral Services Manager, Tracey Hurst
Contact Details	<a href="mailto:tracey_hurst@sandwell.gov.uk">tracey_hurst@sandwell.gov.uk</a>
Names and titles of other officers involved in completing this EIA	Zoe Armstrong, Deputy Electoral Services Manager <a href="mailto:Zoe_armstrong@sandwell.gov.uk">Zoe_armstrong@sandwell.gov.uk</a>
Partners involved with the EIA where jointly completed	None
Date EIA completed	May 2021
Date EIA signed off or agreed by Director or Executive Director	May 2021
Name of Director or Executive Director signing off EIA	Surjit Tour
Date EIA considered by Cabinet Member	May 2021

**1. The purpose of the proposal or decision required**

See [Equality Impact Assessment Guidance](#) for key prompts that must be addressed for all questions

**(Please provide as much information as possible)**

Following the recent, sad and untimely death of Councillor Hevican, a councillor in the Tividale ward, the Council will now be holding a by-election to fill her vacant seat on Thursday 15 July 2021

The proposed course of action relocates the sites of three existing Polling stations away from schools and means that no headteacher based in the Tividale ward will be forced to close their school because of the need to hold this by-election.

Against a background of a disrupted year for pupils, the recommendations contained in the report, are consistent with a request made to Returning Officers, by the Department for Education and the Cabinet Office in February 2021, to minimise any further disruption to pupils' education by avoiding using schools as Polling stations, where it is practically possible to do so.

The report deals with this information and recommends suitable alternative places in which electors in relevant districts in the Borough can exercise their right to vote, in person.

**2. Evidence used/considered**

Guidance has been taken from various documents, i.e.

Reviews of polling districts, polling places and polling stations – published by the Electoral Commission.

Do I need to undertake a Polling District review to change polling places for local elections in 2021? – published by the Association of Electoral Administrators

Key Considerations for planning for the delivery of the May 2021 polls – published by the Electoral Commission.

Letter from the Department for Education and the Cabinet office dated 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 entitled "Use of school buildings for polls."

**3. Consultation**

Consultation has taken place with relevant Ward members, internal officers and Disability Organisations in Sandwell, through the Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO).

**4. Assess likely impact** - Please give an outline of the overall impact if possible.

As a result of the recommendations contained in the report, any risk to the education of primary school pupils attending schools in the Tividale ward will be reduced.

**Please complete the table below at 4a to identify the likely impact on specific protected characteristics**

**4a. Use the table to show:**

- Where you think that the strategy, project or policy could have a negative impact on any of the equality strands (protected characteristics), that is it could disadvantage them or if there is no impact, please note the evidence and/or reasons for this.
- Where you think that the strategy, project or policy could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relationships within equality characteristics.

<b>Protected Characteristic</b>	<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Reason and evidence (Provide details of specific groups affected even for no impact and where negative impact has been identified what mitigating actions can we take?)</b>
	✓	✓	✓	
<b>Age</b>			✓	The recommendations contained in the report apply to all persons on the electoral register in the Tividale ward, irrespective of their age. See also section on “disability” below.
<b>Disability</b>			✓	The proposals detailed in this report continue to enable electors to go, in person, should they so wish, to their designated Polling Station to vote, albeit a different one to one they would have used previously. For electors who choose to vote in this way, their new Station will be accessible for people with mobility problems.

				Electors who do not wish to travel, in person, to a Polling Station to vote, will be able to vote either by registering for a postal vote or a proxy vote. The option to vote in this way will be highlighted on Poll Cards distributed to household prior to the by-election.
<b>Gender reassignment</b>			✓	The recommendations contained in the report apply to all persons on the electoral register in the Tividale ward, irrespective of whether or not they have a re-assigned gender. See also section on “disability” above.
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>			✓	The recommendations contained in the report apply to all persons on the electoral register in the Tividale ward, irrespective of their martial or civil partnership-status. See also section on “disability” above.
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>			✓	The recommendations contained in the report apply to all persons on the electoral register in the Tividale ward, irrespective of whether or not they are pregnant or on maternity leave. See also section on “disability” above.
<b>Race</b>			✓	The recommendations contained in the report apply to all persons on the electoral register in the Tividale ward, irrespective of their race. See also section on “disability” above.

<b>Religion or belief</b>			✓	The recommendations contained in the report apply to all persons on the electoral register in the Tividale ward, irrespective of their religion or belief. See also section on “disability” above.
<b>Sex</b>			✓	The recommendations contained in the report apply to all persons on the electoral register in the Tividale ward, irrespective of their gender. See also section on “disability” above.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>			✓	The recommendations contained in the report apply to all persons on the electoral register in the Tividale ward, irrespective of their sexual orientation. See also section on “disability” above.
<b>Other</b>				

Does this EIA require a full impact assessment? Yes  No

If there are no adverse impacts or any issues of concern or you can adequately explain or justify them, then you do not need to go any further. You have completed the screening stage. You must, however, complete sections 7 and 9 and publish the EIA as it stands.

If you have answered yes to the above, please complete the questions below referring to the guidance document.

**5. What actions can be taken to mitigate any adverse impacts?**

Not applicable

**6. As a result of the EIA what decision or actions are being proposed in relation to the original proposals?**

Not applicable

**7. Monitoring arrangements**

Information received from electors, from Polling station staff, electoral services staff and elected members before, during and after election day will help ensure that, going forward, Polling stations continue to be accessible for all voters, including for those either mobility difficulties.

**8. Action planning - You may wish to use the action plan template below**





## 9. Publish the EIA

### Where can I get additional information, advice and guidance?

In the first instance, please consult the accompanying guide “Equality Impact Assessment Guidance”

#### **Practical advice, guidance and support**

Help and advice on undertaking an EIA or receiving training related to equalities legislation and EIAs is available to **all managers** across the council from officers within Service Improvement. The officers within Service Improvement will also provide overview quality assurance checks on completed EIA documents.

**Please contact:**

Kashmir Singh - 0121 569 3828