

South Cambridgeshire District Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Introduction – Please read

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) allow the Council to:

- Show that the Council are meeting its legal duty, demonstrating due regard for the provisions of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) as below:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
 - Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Methodically consider and assess the impacts of proposals across the [nine protected characteristics](#)
- Allow the Council to develop and implement high quality proposals that maximise positive outcomes for all.

EqIAs should be completed during the development and review of all Council policies, strategies, procedures, projects or functions. Where there is any doubt, the completion of an EqIA is always recommended.

When the form is completed, please send an electronic copy to equality.schemes@scambs.gov.uk. Further support and guidance, [including a video on how to fill out EqIAs](#), is available on Insite or you can contact the Policy and Performance Team.

Equality Impact Assessment Complete Form

Section 1: Identifying Details

- 1.1 Officer completing EqIA:
Emma Dyer
- 1.2 Team and Service:
Communities Team, Transformation
- 1.3 Title of proposal:
Service Support Grants to the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector
- 1.4 EqIA start date:
16/07/2025
- 1.5 Proposal implementation date:
01/09/2025
- 1.6 Who will be responsible for implementing this proposal (Officer and/or Team):
Kathryn Hawkes, Communities Team

Section 2: Proposal to be Assessed

- 2.1 Type of proposal:
Other - Please specify
If other, please specify
Grant Scheme
- 2.2 Is the proposal:
New
- 2.3 State the date of any previous equality impact assessment completed in relation to this proposal (if applicable):
N/A

2.4 What are the headline aims of the proposal and the objectives that will help to accomplish these aims? (Max 250 words)

Service Support Grants (SSG) from South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) help to support voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector organisations in South Cambridgeshire that deliver services for residents of all ages. These were established in their current format in 2012 and the current three-year round of the SSG grant ends in March 2026. This proposal relates to the next 3 year round of the scheme which will launch in September 2025 and organisations will receive funding for the period between April 2026 and the end of March 2029

2.5 Which of the Council's equality objectives (as detailed in the Council's Equality Scheme) does this proposal link to or help to achieve?

- ☒ Identify, prioritise and deliver actions that will narrow the gap in outcomes between disadvantaged groups and the wider community
- ☐ SCDC is an employer that values difference and recognises the strength that a diverse workforce brings.
- ☐ Protected characteristic groups have a voice and are represented in forming the future shape of the district.
- ☐ None.

2.6 Which groups or individuals will the proposal affect:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service Users | <input type="checkbox"/> Councillors |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External Stakeholders | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employees | |

If other, please specify The SSG grant scheme is designed for community groups to apply directly. Funding decisions may affect the viability of these schemes and, consequently, impact their clients. Beneficiaries of the Mental Health and Wellbeing theme include children and young people, as well as vulnerable residents such as those facing mental health challenges or experiencing isolation. Under the Advice Services theme, the beneficiaries are members of the general public who

need guidance on issues like debt, benefits, employment, housing, legal matters, and family concerns. This also includes disabled individuals, carers, families with disabled children, people unable to live independently, and residents in rural or underserved areas. For Independent Living, the grant supports older adults, carers- particularly those experiencing burnout- individuals suffering from loneliness or isolation, people living with dementia, and those with physical, learning, or sensory disabilities. Ethnic minority groups facing systemic barriers and residents in rural areas who require community transport or neighbour support also benefit. The Voluntary and Community Sector theme supports local community groups and charities, as well as voluntary sector organisations that provide services to South Cambridgeshire residents. Lastly, the Cost-of-Living Support theme benefits low-income families, including those facing food insecurity, struggling with childcare access, or living in areas of high deprivation.

2.7 Broadly speaking, how will these groups or individuals be affected? (you will be asked to provide more detail on the specific impacts on different protected characteristic groups later in the form) (max 250 words)

This new SCDC grant scheme offers grants over three years to support a wide range of community needs across South Cambridgeshire, with a focus on improving wellbeing, access to services, and community resilience. Groups and individuals will be affected in several positive ways. Residents experiencing mental health challenges, particularly children, young people, and vulnerable individuals, will benefit from improved access to support services and wellbeing initiatives. Those in need of advice such as people facing financial hardship, legal issues, or housing problems will gain access to free, confidential, and impartial guidance, including specialist support for disabled individuals, carers, and families with complex needs. The scheme also aims to help people maintain their independence, especially older adults, carers, and those living in rural or isolated areas. This includes support for neighbour schemes, community transport, and services for people with disabilities or those experiencing loneliness. Ethnic minority groups facing systemic barriers will also be supported through inclusive and accessible services. Community groups

and voluntary organisations will benefit from funding that helps them operate more effectively and sustainably. This includes support with governance, training, fundraising, and strategic representation. Additionally, low-income families struggling with the cost of living will receive targeted support, particularly around food insecurity and childcare access. Finally, the PLACE-based funding will allow for tailored, locally driven projects that address specific community needs, ensuring services are accessible, culturally appropriate, and delivered in ways that reflect the unique characteristics of each area.

- 2.8 If any part of the proposal is being undertaken by external partners, please specify how the Council will ensure that they will meet equality standards?
(Max 250 words)

N/A - the scheme is wholly the responsibility of SCDC and uses SCDC funding.

Section 3: Evidence and Data

- 3.1 Describe any work you have done (this could include consultation) to understand any effects on groups of people, including those within [9 protected characteristic groups](#)? Please list any key sources (e.g. web-search, previous versions of document, customer feedback etc) that you used to reach your conclusions.
(Max 250 words)

SSG grant funding has been running for a number of years and is intended to support residents in South Cambridgeshire. The communities team publicises the grant heavily to the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector and members of the public. The grant scheme already has support from the Leadership Team, the Lead Cabinet Members, and the Chair of the

Grants Advisory Committee who have, along with officers from the Communities team, inputted into the design of the grant scheme.

3.2 If you have not undertaken any consultation, please detail why not, or when consultation is planned to take place.

(Max 250)

N/A

Section 4: Impact of proposal on those with protected characteristics

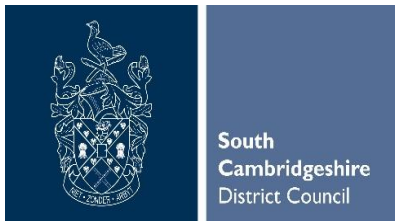
4.1 Please select all characteristics that may or will be impacted (positive or negative). When providing details of the impact please consider the following questions

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. (both the number of persons affected and the severity of the impact)
- you will be asked to set out actions to manage these impacts in the following question (4.2)

☒ All - general to all protected Characteristics.

Details: We will not monitor applicants (or clients receiving support) by protected characteristics and this will not affect any decision-making. However, the services are targeted at specific cohorts of people:

In terms of age, both children and young people will benefit from mental health and wellbeing services, while older adults will be supported through independent living initiatives and community transport schemes. People with disabilities, including those with physical, learning, or sensory impairments, as well as individuals with mental health conditions will receive targeted support through advice services, accessible community initiatives, and inclusive service design. Families with disabled children and individuals unable to live independently are also key beneficiaries. Ethnic



minority groups, particularly those facing systemic inequalities, racism, or barriers to accessing services, will benefit from culturally competent and inclusive support across multiple grant themes. While not explicitly stated, women, who are often overrepresented among unpaid carers and low-income families, are likely to benefit from services aimed at carers and cost-of-living support. Pregnant women and new mothers may also be supported indirectly through initiatives focused on childcare access and family wellbeing. Unpaid carers, who often support disabled or elderly family members, are a significant focus of the scheme, with dedicated support for respite, emotional wellbeing, and advocacy. Overall, the grant scheme is designed to address the needs of diverse and often marginalised groups, ensuring services are accessible, inclusive, and responsive to the challenges faced by those with protected characteristics.

☒ Age

Details: Support is offered to all schemes to make their application. This is the case with all SCDC grants. Anyone having difficulty completing the form can contact us for assistance via email or phone. The phone number will be in a format so it can be read by a screen reader. There are also charities that can offer support to people with disabilities with making applications.

☒ Disability

Details: Support is offered to all schemes to make their application. This is the case with all SCDC grants. Anyone having difficulty completing the form can contact us for assistance via email or phone. The phone number will be in a format so it can be read by a screen reader. There are also charities that can offer support to people with disabilities with making applications.

☐ Gender reassignment

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

☐ Marriage and Civil Partnership

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

☐ Pregnancy and maternity

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)



☐ Race

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

☐ Religion and belief

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

☐ Sex

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

☐ Sexual orientation

Details [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

☐ None of the above

4.2 Other characteristics

Some characteristics are not yet protected in law, but the Council has made declarations it will consider them in policy making.

☒ Digital inclusion [\(what is this?\)](#)

Details: The application process is online and support is offered to all applicants. There is a contact email address on the main SSG webpage and on the webform Terms and Conditions. The Terms and Conditions state that if in doubt, applicants should seek advice from the Development Officer before making their application. The Development Officer can help with technical queries and signpost to organisations such as digital buddies and Cambridge Online who can provide support and equipment for completing applications.

☐ Care experience [\(what is this?\)](#)

Details: Unpaid carers and those working in care roles often experience emotional strain, burnout, and limited support. The scheme helps by: Offering respite services, emotional support, and resources specifically for carers. Providing specialist advice and advocacy to help carers navigate benefits, housing, and legal matters. Supporting community organisations that deliver services to carers, helping them

operate sustainably and expand their reach. Encouraging peer support networks and inclusive service design that recognises the unique pressures carers face.

☒ **Rurality**

Details Residents in rural areas often face barriers such as limited access to services, transport, and social opportunities. The grant scheme addresses these challenges by: Supporting community transport schemes (e.g. Dial-a-Ride, Community Car schemes) to improve mobility and access to essential services. Funding outreach services that bring advice, mental health support, and wellbeing activities directly into villages and isolated communities. Encouraging the use of local assets like community halls and hubs to deliver services closer to where people live. Promoting neighbour support schemes to reduce isolation and strengthen local networks..

☒ **Socio-economic**

Details Low-income individuals and families, especially those facing food insecurity or childcare challenges, are directly supported through: Cost-of-living grants that fund services like food banks, community kitchens, and affordable childcare hubs. Advice services that help people manage debt, access benefits, and understand their rights. PLACE-based projects that target areas of high deprivation, ensuring services are tailored to local needs and accessible without stigma. Support for voluntary and community sector organisations that work with disadvantaged groups, helping them build capacity and deliver essential services.

4.3 Considering the above impacts you have identified above, please detail any actions (specific or general) which may help to enhance or mitigate impacts.

Please include the timescale for completing the action.

Action and timescale	Officer
Applications: Include a contact telephone number on the webpage so that applicants who require assistance with the online form can get in touch- will be completed by the end of August 2025	Emma Dyer

Applications: Signpost any applicants who need assistance to complete the online form to appropriate sources of support- there are no timescale for this, we will signpost as and when we speak to applicants who need assistance	Emma Dyer
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

4.4 How will you monitor that the above actions have been completed and that this proposal, once implemented, is impacting fairly on everyone it affects? In answering this question, please include information about feedback you will seek and/or data you will collect and analyse, and how often you will do this

Applications: A record will be made of anyone who makes contact via telephone for support with their application. A check will be made that the application was received and if not, the reason why and, to ascertain if any further support can be provided.

Section 5: Summary

5.1 Briefly summarise the key findings of the EqIA and any significant equality considerations that should be taken into account when deciding how to proceed with the proposal (this section can be included within the 'equality implications' section of any committee reports). (Max. 250 words)

The grant application eligibility criteria do not exclude anyone with a protected characteristic from applying. The grant application process is clear and easy to navigate for people with disabilities, those with limited literacy, or individuals whose first language is not English. The application will be assessed purely on the merits of the grant proposal. Applicants are asked to upload an Equality and Diversity Policy when making their grant application. Support will be provided to anyone who



requires assistance completing the online form through signposting as appropriate. Decisions will be made that are objective and free from bias.

5.2 Confirm the recommendation of the officer completing the EqIA:

☒ Proceed with the proposal (with any actions identified as required within Section 4 of the EqIA). Analysis demonstrates that the proposal is robust, we have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.

☐ Reject the proposal: Analysis demonstrates that the proposal will cause unlawful discrimination and it must be removed or changed

Section 6: Sign Off

6.1 Signature of individual completing EqIA:

Emma Dyer

6.2 Date of completion:

16/07/2025

6.3 When will this proposal next be reviewed and who will this be? (when in doubt 3 years minimum)

3 years

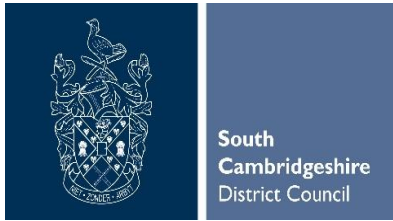
6.4 Approving officer signature *, this should be your Head of Service, Service Area Manager, or Project Sponsor:

Gareth Bell

6.5 Date of approval:

19/08/2025

Please send the completed document to Equality.Schemes@scambs.gov.uk for publishing on the website.



**in the event that this EqlA is completed by Head of Service, then no additional approving signature is required.*