

# Equality Analysis Form / EqIA

By completing this form you will provide evidence of how your service is meeting Stroud District Council's General Equality duty:

The Equality Act 2010 states that:

*A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have **due regard** to the need to –*

*(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;*

*(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;*

*(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.*

The protected characteristics are listed in Question 9

Stroud District Equality data can be found at:

<https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/>

Please see Appendix 1 for a good example of a completed EIA.

[Guidance available on the HUB](#)

## 1. Persons responsible for this assessment:

<b>Name(s):</b> Rebecca Cleaver	<b>Telephone:</b>
	<b>E-Mail:</b> rebecca.cleaver@stroud.gov.uk
<b>Service:</b> Climate Change, Economy & Flood Risk	<b>Date of Assessment:</b> 22/05/2026

## 2. Name of the policy, service, strategy, procedure or function:

Economic Development Delivery Framework 2026-2028
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## Is this new or an existing one?

The document is a new delivery framework which supports the existing Economic Development Strategy 2022-2032
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## 3. Briefly describe its aims and objectives

The Economic Development Delivery Framework sets out the strategic work areas and opportunities for SDC's economic development function 2026-2028.
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Its objectives are to:
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- Support sustainable and inclusive economic growth
- Improve access to employment, skills, and enterprise opportunities
- Enable business resilience, innovation and investment
- Promote low-carbon transition and environmental sustainability
- Strengthen market towns, tourism, and local supply chains
- Ensure economic priorities inform planning, infrastructure, and regeneration

#### **4. Are there external considerations? (Legislation / government directive, etc)**

- English Devolution & Community Empowerment Act 2026
- UK's Modern Industrial Strategy
- Closure of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund & Rural England Prosperity Fund

#### **5. Who is intended to benefit from it and in what way?**

- Residents (including those facing barriers to employment) – through improved access to employment, skills development, and inclusive support services that enable participation in the local economy
- Local businesses (SMEs, rural enterprises, creative and green sectors) – through improved access to business support, funding opportunities and networks, alongside increased visibility, collaboration and support for sustainable growth and innovation
- Young people and those not in education, employment or training (NEET) – through enhanced pathways into employment, training, and apprenticeships, including better coordination with education providers
- Voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations – through improved recognition of their economic contribution, stronger links to skills and employment initiatives, and better access to support and partnership opportunities
- Visitors and local communities (through sustainable tourism) – through enhanced visitor experiences, increased local spend, and tourism activity that supports local businesses while minimising environmental impacts
- Market towns, high streets and rural areas – through initiatives that strengthen local economies, support high street vitality, improve access to services and opportunities, and promote sustainable transport and digital connectivity

#### **6. What outcomes are expected?**

The Climate, Economy & Flood Risk team do not directly control service delivery or employment practices. Therefore, the Framework will be delivered primarily through coordination with partners rather than direct delivery. The intended outcomes are below:

- Increased access to jobs, training and skills provision - through focused communications and engagement with delivery partners
- More inclusive participation in the local economy – through focused communications and engagement with delivery partners, ensuring alignment with our Community Wealth Building Action Plan
- Improved knowledge of and growth in sustainable business practices, green and creative sectors - through focused communications and engagement with business support forums / organisations, and

- specialised interventions for these sectors supported by desk-based research on our local economy
- Improved business support and connectivity - through focused communications and engagement with business support forums / organisations, and direct engagement with businesses. Increased connectivity through joined up working with GCC's Digital Inclusion team.
- Stronger high streets, market towns and visitor economy - through focused communications, marketing campaigns and engagement with our market towns (e.g. Market Town Forum)
- Reduced inequalities in access to economic opportunity - through focused communications and engagement with delivery partners, joined up working with the forthcoming Health & Wellbeing Strategy and Community Wealth Building Action Plan.

## 7. What evidence has been used for this assessment?: (eg Research, previous consultations, Inform (MAIDEN); Google assessments carried out by other Authorities)

1. Internal service knowledge and previous engagement
2. National research on inclusive growth and skills access:

Evidence shows that approximately 1 in 5 working-age adults in the UK lack basic digital skills, while around 7 million adults have low literacy or numeracy skills, limiting access to employment opportunities. In addition, young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) account for around 10–12% of 16–24 year olds nationally, with higher rates in disadvantaged communities. There is also strong evidence that improving skills access and inclusion can increase productivity and reduce inequalities, with skills gaps identified as a key constraint by over 70% of UK employers.

*Source: ONS / DfE / Lloyds Digital Index / Good Things Foundation*

- Stakeholder insight (GCC, Chamber of Trade, Business Support Forum)
- Consultation with Members, Officers, and Town / Parish Councils of our Market towns
- Gloucestershire's Local Growth Plan (GCC)
- Gloucestershire Green Skills Strategy (GCC)
- Stroud Economic Summary April 2026 (GCC)

### 3. Local Insight Summary Report Stroud District April 2026 (Inform Gloucestershire):

- Stroud District has a population of approximately 125,680, with a relatively older population profile (23.87% aged 65+).
- Overall levels of deprivation are lower than the national average, although this can mask localised inequalities.
- Unemployment is relatively low (2.18% of working-age residents), but youth unemployment remains higher (4.23%), indicating barriers for some groups.
- Around 13.49% of residents have no qualifications, suggesting a cohort that may face barriers to employment.
- Disability and health data indicates potential barriers to economic participation:
  - 7.03% of working-age residents receive Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
  - 6.27% of residents have day-to-day activities limited a lot, with a further 10.67% limited a little
  - 6.44% of households include someone with limited capability for work
- There are around 33,000 full-time and 17,000 part-time jobs locally, but job density is lower than county and national levels.
- Transport and accessibility are key issues:
  - 11.87% of households do not have access to a car
  - Overall connectivity is lower than the county and national averages
- High average house prices (£381,591) may impact affordability and access to employment.

This evidence highlights key themes around access to employment, skills, disability, and rural connectivity, which have informed the assessment of potential impacts.

4. Existing Council plans and strategies, including:
  - The Council Plan

- Economic Development Strategy 2022-2032
- Community Wealth Building Action Plan
- Climate & Nature Strategy
- Cultural Strategy & Action Plan

## 8. Has any consultation been carried out? See list of possible consultees

Consultation and engagement:

Climate Change, Economy & Flood Risk officers developed a method of consultation which included a powerpoint presentation on the context and reason for creating a new Economic Development Delivery Framework. 5 themes were developed, consultees were invited to discuss these and provide comments. Then consultees were invited to move around the room and provide written notes on A3 sheets containing draft objectives for each theme. A discussion was held at the end and notes taken to capture feedback and comments.

Consultees invited to contribute by email were provided with the documents electronically.

The following groups and individuals were invited to contribute:

- SDC Members (in-person workshop held 29/04/2026). 12 Members attended. All Members were subsequently invited to contribute by email. No email responses were received.
- SDC & GCC Officers (in-person workshop held 30/04/2026). 18 Officers from across SDC were invited, along with 2 officers from GCC's Economy and Inward Investment teams. The SDC Officers were selected on the basis of a relationship to the economic work, including officers from Community Wealth Building / Procurement, Planning Strategy, Property Services, Climate, Communities / Health & Wellbeing. 7 SDC Officers attended, along with 1 GCC Officer.
- Gloucestershire County Council – online meeting with Chloe Warden (Senior Economy Officer, GCC)
- Town / Parish Councils of our Market towns, and Stroud District Chamber of Trade. The consultation on the ED Delivery Framework was discussed during the recent Market Town Forum meeting. This group comprises Clerks from each of our 7 market towns. Clerks were subsequently invited to contribute by email. 1 email response was received.

Further consultation will continue through delivery, particularly for:

- Targeted skills initiatives
- Business support and engagement
- Tourism and town centre initiatives

## 9. Could a particular group be affected differently in either a negative or positive way?

*(Negative – it could disadvantage and therefore potentially not meet the General Equality duty;*

*Positive – it could benefit and help meet the General Equality duty;*

*Neutral – neither positive nor negative impact / Not sure)*

Protected Group	Type of impact, reason and any evidence (from Q7 & 8)
<b>Age</b>	Somewhat Positive. The plan includes targeted support for young people, NEETs, career changers, and mature workers, improving access to employment and skills. The Council's influence is primarily through coordination with partners rather than direct delivery.
<b>Disability</b>	Somewhat Positive (with risk of neutral or negative if unmitigated). There is a risk of barriers relating to transport (lower public transport connectivity and

	<p>reliance on private cars especially in rural areas), digital access (online services and information may not be fully accessible), and workplace adjustments (availability of adjustments, flexible roles, or inclusive recruitment practices), health-related (residents experiencing limiting and/or long-term health conditions or reduced capacity to work, which may affect their ability to engage with employment or training without appropriate support)</p> <p>The Framework does not directly control service delivery or employment practices, the Council's influence is primarily through coordination with partners rather than direct delivery. Positive impacts depend on partners ensuring accessibility in programme design. The Council will work with partners to ensure equality considerations are reflected in the design and delivery of projects and engagement activity.</p>
<b>Gender Re-assignment</b>	Neutral. No specific differential impacts identified. The plan promotes inclusive economic participation in general, but has no targeted interventions and limited direct influence over employer practices.
<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>	Neutral to somewhat positive (indirect). The Council has limited direct control over employment practices such as flexible working; therefore, impacts are largely indirect and dependent on employer behaviour.
<b>Race</b>	Neutral to somewhat positive (indirect). The Framework supports improved access to employment and enterprise opportunities. However, impacts are indirect and depend on the accessibility and inclusivity of partner-led programmes. There is a risk that some groups may experience barriers to participation if these are not considered. The Council will work with partners to ensure equality considerations are reflected in the design and delivery of projects and engagement activity.
<b>Religion – Belief</b>	Neutral. No direct impacts identified. The plan does not influence workplace policies or scheduling; impacts depend on employer practices and partner delivery.
<b>Sex</b>	Neutral to somewhat positive (indirect). The plan supports access to employment and skills which may benefit groups experiencing labour market inequality. However, the Council does not directly influence hiring, pay or workplace conditions.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	Neutral. No direct impacts identified. The plan has no specific targeted actions and limited influence over employer inclusivity beyond advocacy.
<b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnerships (part (a) of duty only)</b>	Neutral. No direct impacts identified. The plan does not influence employment terms or eligibility for services.
<b>Rural considerations:</b> le Access to services; transport; education; employment; broadband;	<p>Neutral to somewhat positive (indirect, with structural constraints). Rurality is a significant factor in Stroud District:</p> <p>Rurality / access in Stroud District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connectivity score: 48.94 (lower than Gloucestershire 54.74 and England 64.81). This indicates reduced access to jobs, services and opportunities</li> <li>• No car access: 11.87% of households. This limits ability to access employment, training and services, especially in rural areas</li> <li>• Jobs density: 71.34% (below county and national levels). This</li> </ul>

	<p>suggests fewer local job opportunities relative to the working-age population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Needs Index: Lower connectivity and access to services identified as key factors affecting communities. Rural isolation and access challenges remain.</li> </ul> <p><i>Source: GCC / Inform Gloucestershire</i></p> <p>Potential impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to jobs, training and services limited by transport and connectivity</li> <li>Digital exclusion in some rural areas</li> <li>Fewer local employment opportunities</li> <li>Increased barriers to growth and sustainable development for businesses located in rural areas</li> </ul> <p>The plan seeks to influence improvements through advocacy and partnership working but does not directly control infrastructure delivery.</p>
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**10. If you have identified a negative impact in question 9, what actions have you undertaken or do you plan to undertake to lessen or negate this impact?**

**Please transfer any actions to your Service Action plan on Excelsis.**

The Equality Impact Assessment has identified a potential risk of negative impact for disabled people, primarily relating to barriers in accessing employment, training, and business support opportunities. As the Council does not directly deliver most services within this plan, actions focus on influencing partners and improving accessibility of information and access routes.

<b>Action(s):</b>	<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Work with partners (e.g. GCC, DWP, education providers, Stroud Growth Hub) to encourage accessible design of employment, skills and business support programmes, accessible and inclusive design of projects and programmes	Economic Development Officer	Staff time / partnership working	Ongoing
Increase awareness among partners and employers of the need to reduce barriers to participation	Economic Development Officer	Existing partnerships	Ongoing
Ensure Council-led business communications and signposting to opportunities are clear, accessible and available through multiple channels	Economic Development Officer	Existing communications resources	Short term / ongoing

**Declaration**

**I/We are satisfied that an Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy, service, strategy, procedure or function \* (delete those which do not apply) and where a negative impact has been identified, actions have been developed to lessen or negate this impact.**

**We understand that the Equality Impact Assessment is required by the District Council and that we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment**

<b>Completed by:</b> Rebecca Cleaver	<b>Date:</b> 22/05/2026
<b>Role:</b> Green & Creative Economy Officer	
<b>Countersigned by Head of Service/Director:</b> <i>C Uttley</i> Climate, Economy and Flood Risk Manager	<b>Date:</b> 10/06/2026

**Date for Review:** Please forward an electronic copy to [policy@stroud.gov.uk](mailto:policy@stroud.gov.uk)