

# Equality Impact Assessments – Informing Decisions in the city

## Resources and Equalities Scrutiny Panel 8/06/22

# Equality Impact Assessments – Importance

- Definition: An EIA is a process designed to ensure a project or initiative does not discriminate against any group and promotes equality where possible.
- Importance: It helps the council meet its legal obligation inline with the Equality Act 2010, considering different needs across all equality groups when making decisions to ensure that our services, policies and functions are fair and inclusive.
- Mitigation: EIAs ensure there are no adverse impacts across any equality groups
- Process: The EIA involves identifying potential impacts, gathering relevant data, consulting with stakeholders and identifying solutions to negative impacts

# Overview – Public Realm Phase 1 & 3

- Phases 1 and 3 (Victoria Street and Civic Halls) - Aims to improve pedestrian and cycling connectivity in Wolverhampton City Centre, thus creating a more inclusive and accessible environment.
- They address issues such as mobility and visual impairments and aim to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour.
- **Positives impacts:** improve pedestrian safety, lower air pollution for vulnerable people, more footfall and natural surveillance improve safety, additional relocated disabled parking spaces

# Consultation

- Consultation: Over 18 months, public and stakeholder engagement was conducted, yielding valuable insights from the community. Informing street layouts, current concerns around access.
- Impact Analysis: Potential negative impacts were identified for different equality groups, with particular focus on age, disability, gender, and religion.
- We engaged with the following partners
  - BID Board and their stakeholder groups including the Business and Retailers group and Pubwatch
  - The Grand Theatre
  - Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Taxi working groups
  - St Peter's Church
  - The Council's Staff Equality Forums
  - The Youth Council / Take Over Day participants
  - West Midlands Police
  - University of Wolverhampton
  - Local disability groups

# Mitigation and Future Plans

- Mitigation: Actions proposed include minimising bus stop relocation distances, designing effective signage, and re-providing disabled parking.
- Anticipated Results: These mitigation measures and future plans aim to eliminate or minimise potential adverse effects of equality groups, promoting a more inclusive city

# Conclusion and Next Steps

- **Recap:** EIAs are vital for promoting fairness and equality in council projects by meeting its legal obligation, as demonstrated in the Public Realm Phase 1 and 3 EIA.
- **Best practise:** With continued due diligence and routinely undertake EIAs, at development stage of future proposals, functions, policies.
- **Future Vision:** As a part of our ongoing commitment to improve our EIA process, we are planning to establish a new EIA forum. This forum, inspired by best practice seen in other councils and organisations, will comprise heads of service across the council, EDI team members, and community partners. The purpose of this forum will be to provide advice, guidance, and support, to evaluate EIAs, and to ensure no adverse impacts across all equality strands. Participants in the forum will be expected to assist managers throughout the EIA process, especially in the formative/planning stages, helping to identify potential concerns, minimise impacts, and consider improvements or new ways of working