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**Equality Impact  
Assessment**

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**Document type:  
Guidance**

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**Improvement and HR**

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Jane Fowler  
01546 604466  
[jane.fowler@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:jane.fowler@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

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## **Introduction**

We need to make sure that the way we deliver services does not have an adverse impact on people from different equality groups, both customers and employees.

The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a process that helps you to undertake a full assessment of the council's functions and policies.

The EqIA will help you to assess whether we are likely to have an adverse impact on the diverse groups of people within Argyll and Bute. The EqIA will also help the council to make the most of opportunities to promote good relations between different groups. The EqIA will help to ensure that the council meets the commitments set out in its Equality and Diversity Policy.

The HR &OD team hope you find the EqIA process easy to use. If you have any suggestions for improvement please send them to:

**David Clements**  
**HR&OD Team**  
**Customer Services**  
**Kilmory**  
**Lochgilphead PA31 8RT**

Email: [david.clements@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:david.clements@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

## **Summary**

An Equality Impact Assessment involves assessing the likely or actual effects of policies or services on people in respect of their race, gender, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment and pregnancy and maternity.

### **Stage 1 - Rapid Impact Assessment (RIA)**

This is a short exercise that involves considering the overall policy or service and deciding if it is relevant to equality. The basic rule is that if people are affected by what we do then we need to carry out an equality impact assessment.

### **Stage 2 – carrying out a full equality impact assessment**

Stage 2 examines in detail the proposal to find out what kind of equality impact there might be and which groups of people it will affect most. There are 8 steps in the process:

- Step 1 – identify the purpose of your policy or service
- Step 2 – assess the impact using information and evidence
- Step 3 – remove or reduce a negative impact
- Step 4 – make sure the policy or service promotes equality
- Step 5 – arrange to monitor and evaluate the policy or service
- Step 6 – sign off the equality impact assessment
- Step 7 – arrange to publish the equality impact assessment
- Step 8 – review the policy or service and update the equality impact assessment

## **What is an equality impact assessment and why do we need to do this?**

The equality impact assessment (EqIA) is a process to ensure that the council does not discriminate and where possible the council uses opportunities to promote equality and good relations between groups.

An EqIA involves anticipating the consequences of the council's functions and policies on different people, making sure that, as far as possible, any negative impacts are minimised or removed and that we make the most of any opportunities for promoting equality.

Carrying out an EqIA involves assessing the likely (or actual) effects of policies on people in respect of what are known as protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010). The protected characteristics are: race, gender, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment and pregnancy and maternity.

To help with the assessment process, 2 models have been developed for EqIA's. There is a Rapid Impact Assessment (RIA) which should be completed for all new and revised policies or changes to service delivery models. The second model is the full impact assessment which should be completed if it becomes apparent through completing a RIA that a protected characteristic or groups are likely to be negatively impacted upon.

Under the Equality Act 2010 the council, as a public body, is required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Having "due regard" means giving appropriate weight to equality in proportion to how relevant it is to a particular policy. A robust and detailed EqIA provides the necessary evidence that the council has given due regard to equality issues before taking a decision.

The word policy is used throughout the assessment to include the full range of policies, functions, procedures, strategies, projects, applications for funding and financial decisions.

Assessing the potential impact on people with protected characteristics helps us to consider relevant evidence and decide whether particular groups may be

disproportionately affected by decisions; or whether more could be done to foster good relations.

The evidence gathered is important, given the potential for people with protected characteristics to be negatively affected by budget decisions and service changes.

Impact assessment is an effective way of improving policy development and service delivery, ensuring that you consider the needs and experiences of customers and of employees.

Impact assessment enables you to:

- Take effective action on equality
- Develop better policies and practices, based on evidence
- Be more transparent and accountable

## **Which policies should be subject to impact assessment?**

All new and reviewed policies and service provision models should go through the EqIA process, particularly if people will be affected e.g. service users, employees.

The general equality duty applies to a broader range of protected characteristics than before, so services should assess the impact of existing policies across all of the protected characteristics.

If you think that an existing policy may be potentially discriminatory then prioritise this to be assessed again.

## **Who should carry out EqIA's?**

The EqIA should be prepared by the lead officer responsible for developing or reviewing the policy, together with an officer who is familiar with the process (although they don't necessarily have to be familiar with the policy being assessed). Involving other officers is vital to ensure the process is carried out in a robust way. It may be that for some assessments a number of key stakeholders are also involved. Further support and information is available from the Improvement and Organisational Development team.

## **When should you assess impact?**

Assessing the impact is an important part of policy and service development and in decision-making as it should lead to improvements in policies and practices.

For this reason, assessing the impact should be carried out as part of the development and planning stage and afterwards as part of the review stage. Assessing impact should not be done at the end of the process.

Decision makers, such as elected members and senior officers, need to give due regard to equality and diversity. Decision-makers should ask for and take account of the results of completed assessments when considering whether to approve a new policy or service change. This will ensure that the impact assessment influences the decision.

The impact and relevance of a policy does not just depend on the number of people and groups who are affected but also the significance of the effect that may be experienced.

Introducing a level of scrutiny of equality impact assessments in decision making will help the council to demonstrate to communities that equality is important.

Assessing the impact does not end with the introduction of a new or revised policy. It is vital that the impact is monitored and that the assessment is repeated as part of any review. In conclusion, impact assessment is an ongoing process.

## **Consultation**

The Equality Impact Assessment process should be informed by consultation. Consultation or involvement with different equality groups will help you to understand the impact of proposals on these groups. By undertaking this approach, employees, service users, trade unions and others who may be affected will have an input to improve policy development and service delivery.

Use the council's Community Engagement guidance when you are contacting members of the public, community groups and staff.

## Stage one: Rapid Impact Assessment

### Part 1: Description/Consultation

Date of Assessment: 02/10/2017	
Title of document being assessed: Single Investment Plan (SIP) / Rural Growth Deal	
<p>1. This is a new policy, procedure, strategy or practice being assessed</p> <p>(If yes please check box) ✓</p>	<p>This is a new plan summarising key infrastructure projects and economic growth priorities from a range of existing Council and partner plans and strategies. The associated Rural Growth Deal is currently in negotiation with the Scottish and UK Governments to secure the additional funding required to accelerate the delivery of some of the projects set out in the SIP.</p>
<p>2. Please give a brief description of the policy, procedure, strategy or practice being assessed.</p>	<p>The SIP has been developed to align future infrastructure investment with strategic economic priorities to help drive economic growth. It will also be used as a document to support additional public and private sector funding being directed towards infrastructure projects in the region via a Rural Growth Deal.</p>
<p>3. What is the intended outcome of this policy, procedure, strategy or practice?</p>	<p>It is intended that the SIP will form the foundation for a potential Rural Growth funding deal with the UK/Scottish Governments to accelerate the delivery of critical infrastructure and drive economic growth in the region.</p>
<p>4. Please list any existing documents which have been used to inform this Equality Impact Assessment.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>5. Has any consultation, involvement or research with protected characteristic groups informed this assessment? If yes please give details.</p>	<p>Consultation has been undertaken with the Community Planning Partners which includes NHS Highland. At the request of the NHS we have included more details on community transport facilities which benefit elderly residents and those</p>

	with limited mobility. We have also undertaken consultation with key public, private and third sector partners in the region and have developed a stakeholder feedback report detailing comments received.
<p><b>6. Please give details of council officer involvement in this assessment.</b></p> <p>(e.g. names of officers consulted, dates of meetings etc)</p>	<p>Assessment undertaken by Jonathan Welch who is the officer responsible for drafting the SIP. Consultation also undertaken with the Strategic Transportation and Infrastructure Manager.</p>
<p><b>7. Is there a need to collect further evidence or to involve or consult protected characteristic groups on the impact of the proposed policy?</b></p> <p>(Example: if the impact on an individual or group is not known what will you do to gather the information needed and when will you do this?)</p>	<p>We are liaising with the Scottish Government to ensure that this document and associated Rural Growth Deal are consistent with their Inclusive Growth Priorities. We are particularly focusing on addressing barriers to economic growth including barriers to accessing the employment market such as transport and digital connectivity and improving skills and training for young people. We will continue to consult with the Scottish Government and key stakeholders such as the CPP as this progresses.</p>

## Stage one: Rapid Impact Assessment

### Part 2: Protected Characteristics

Which protected characteristics will be positively or negatively affected by this policy, procedure or strategy?

NB Please place an X in the box which best describes the "overall" impact. It is possible for an assessment to identify that a positive policy can have some negative impacts and visa versa. When this is the case please identify both positive and negative impacts in Part 3 of this form.

If the impact on a protected characteristic group is not known please state how you will gather evidence of any potential negative impacts in box Part 1 section 7 above.

If there is a negative impact against a protected characteristic then a full EqIA (Stage 2) should be completed.

Protected Characteristic	Positively	Negatively	No Impact	Not Known
Age	X			
Disability	X			
Ethnicity	X			
Gender	X			
Gender reassignment			X	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	X			
Pregnancy & Maternity	X			
Religion			X	
Sexual Orientation			x	

## Stage one: Rapid Impact Assessment

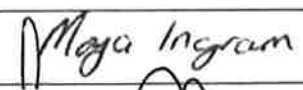
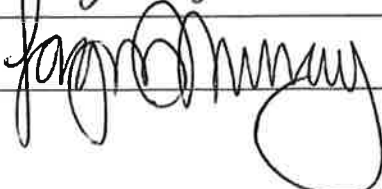
### Part 3: Impacts/Monitoring

<p>1. Have any positive impacts been identified?</p> <p>(We must ensure at this stage that we are not achieving equality for one strand of equality at the expense of another)</p>	<p>It is anticipated that the SIP and associated funding deals will impact positively on the whole region and local residents. It is hoped that this document will lead to increased funding for critical infrastructure which will assist economic growth. This should improve employment opportunities, result in more reliable transport and digital connections and increase knowledge and skills. We have been working with the Scottish Government to ensure the SIP and funding deal are consistent with their inclusive growth priorities.</p>
<p>2. Have any negative impacts been identified?</p> <p>(Based on direct knowledge, published research, community involvement, customer feedback etc.)</p>	<p>No direct negative impacts have been identified. Some projects might have challenges which will require to be managed such as increased levels of tourism or vehicular traffic however, the key reason for developing the SIP is to address barriers to economic growth that are currently constraining the local economy.</p>
<p>3. What action is proposed to overcome any negative impacts?</p> <p>(e.g. involving community groups in the development or delivery of the policy or practice, providing information in community languages etc.)</p>	<p>The SIP and proposed Rural Growth Deal will be taken forward in partnership with key public, private and third sector stakeholders. Consultation events might be arranged as part of specific projects if which are successful if securing a funding commitment from the UK and/or Scottish Governments. The SIP / Rural Growth Deal are also consistent with the Scottish Governments policies on inclusive growth which is an integral part of this process to ensure that this provides economic growth that is resilient, sustainable and inclusive.</p>
<p>4. Is there a justification for continuing with this policy even if it cannot be amended or changed to end or reduce inequality without</p>	<p>It is considered that the SIP / Rural Growth Deal will help to reduce inequality in the region by addressing key barriers to economic growth and providing</p>

compromising its intended outcome?  (If the policy that shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination you must stop and seek legal advice)	improved opportunities for residents to participate in the local employment market.
5. Has a 'Full' Equality Impact Assessment been recommended?  (If the policy is a major one or is likely to have a major impact on protected characteristics communities a Full Equality Impact Assessment may be required.)	No
6. How will the policy be monitored?  (How will you know it is doing what it is intended to do? e.g. data collection, customer survey etc.)	Specific outcomes will require to be agreed with the Scottish and UK Governments as part of any future funding deal and this will require all projects will be monitored closely to assess impacts, demonstrate value for money and the economic return on any investment.

#### Part 4: Contact Information

<b>Name of Department : Economic Development</b>
<b>Manager Responsible</b>
<b>Name:</b> Moya Ingram
<b>Designation:</b> Strategic Transportation and Infrastructure Manager
<b>Telephone:</b> 01546604190
<b>Email:</b> moya.ingram@argyll-bute.gov.uk

<b>Signature Lead Officer:</b>		<b>Date:</b> 02/10/2017
<b>Signature of Director/Head of Service:</b>		<b>Date:</b> 04/10/2017

<b>Name of Director/Head of Service:</b>	<i>Fergus Murray</i>
<b>Date of Next Policy Review:</b>	

## Stage two: form for carrying out a full equality impact assessment

### 1: Policy or function details

<b>Name of policy or function</b>  <i>(Insert the name of the policy, strategy, project, funding application, initiative or financial decision)</i>	<b>Single Investment Plan / Rural Growth Deal (SIP)</b>
<b>Lead officer/person</b>  <i>(The name of the officer who is responsible for developing the policy)</i>	<b>Moya Ingram – Strategic Transportation and Infrastructure Manager</b>

<p><b>Supporting team</b> (names/job titles)</p> <p><i>(This should list all members of the team who are providing support to the lead officer in carrying out the EqIA.</i></p> <p><i>This should include at least:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>one person involved in developing the new policy</i></li> <li>• <i>one person from another service who has not been involved in developing the policy</i></li> </ul> <p><i>If wider expertise is required then it may be helpful to consider inviting one or two others to join the assessment process including representatives from outwith the council if appropriate</i></p>	<p><b>Jonathan Welch – Strategic Transportation Policy Officer</b></p> <p><b>Audrey Martin – Projects and Regeneration Manager</b></p>
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<p>What are the main aims of the policy?</p> <p><i>(bullet points describing the aims of the policy).</i></p> <p><i>(Should also include reference to other relevant council documents such as the Corporate Plan and Service Plans)</i></p>	<p>The SIP has been developed to align future infrastructure investment with strategic economic priorities to help drive economic growth. A number of priority infrastructure projects have been identified and it is intended that the SIP will form the foundation for a potential funding deal with the UK/Scottish Governments (Rural Growth Deal) to accelerate the delivery of critical infrastructure and drive economic growth in the region. In preparing the SIP a number of Council plans and documents have been reviewed to identify and provide renewed focus on the essential infrastructure required to help deliver a step change in economic activity in the area. These include;-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Economic Development Action Plan 2016 – 2021;</li> <li>• Area-based Economic Development Action Plans 2016-2021;</li> <li>• Community Plan and Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2013-2023;</li> <li>• Local Housing Strategy 2011-2016;</li> <li>• Local Development Plan 2015;</li> <li>• Historic Environment Strategy 2015 – 2020;</li> <li>• Woodland and Forestry Strategy;</li> <li>• EKOS compelling Argyll and Bute and its Administrative Areas 2015.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Who will benefit?</b></p> <p><i>(A summary of the equality groups that are likely to benefit from the policy)</i></p>	<p>It is hoped that the SIP will benefit all residents of Argyll and Bute by encouraging increased levels of investment in critical infrastructure which will in turn result in economic growth. This will lead to increased job, skills and training opportunities which will be available to all residents. Some of the proposals might also benefit equality groups such as the disabled and elderly. For example by investing in digital connectivity there will be increased opportunities for undertaking appointments on-line or via skype reducing the requirement to travel. This could potentially benefit elderly and disabled people with impaired mobility. By providing improved training and education opportunities the SIP and Rural Growth Deal will also benefit young people and help provide the skills required to take advantage of local employment opportunities.</p>
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<p>Is the policy intended to increase equality of opportunity by permitting positive action or action to redress disadvantage?</p> <p><i>(You should outline if your policy or function has been <b>specifically</b> developed to increase equality of opportunity by having a positive differential impact on people with any of the protected characteristics)</i></p>	<p>The SIP is targeted predominantly at infrastructure investment which will address existing barriers to economic growth. This will in turn ensure that Argyll and Bute remains an attractive place to live, work, invest and visit and will help address issues such as population decline and isolation. Improving mobile connectivity, housing supply, transport links, and learning and training opportunities are key aims of this SIP and if successful this should increase opportunities for residents and reduce existing disadvantages. The SIP is not aimed at any group specifically but it is hoped that it will result in improved opportunities for all residents of the region. The Scottish Government have also been consulted to ensure these proposals are consistent with their Inclusive Growth Priorities and ensure the economic benefits are spread widely across the region providing economic growth that is resilient, sustainable and inclusive.</p>
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## 2: What are the likely impacts of the policy?

For each protected characteristic you should identify any particular impact that the policy may have for the group. Impacts could be positive or negative and both should be described.

If there are no impacts on a particular protected characteristic then state your reasons for this within the response box. This demonstrates that you have considered the impact on each characteristic.

<p>Will the policy impact on the whole population of Argyll and Bute?</p> <p>Will the policy impact on particular groups within the population of Argyll and Bute?</p> <p><i>(Specify whether the policy will impact upon the whole community or will there be particular emphasis on one or more groups)</i></p>	<p>Improving mobile connectivity, housing supply, transport links, and learning and training opportunities are key aims of the SIP and if successful this should increase opportunities for all residents and reduce some existing disadvantages. The SIP is not aimed at any group specifically but it is hoped that it will result in improved opportunities for all residents of the region. There could be positive impacts for disabled and mobility impaired individuals if transport services and connectivity are improved and investment in digital infrastructure reduces the requirement to travel by enabling some activities such as NHS appointments, banking and shopping to be undertaken on-line. Improved training and education which is tailored to local employment requirements will also help to upskill local people and enable them to take advantage of local job opportunities. This will benefit young people and those who are unemployed or in low wage jobs due to a lack of suitable skills.</p>
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Consider the following protected characteristics. What are the likely impacts for the group or community?

List any positive and/or negative impacts.

<b>Protected characteristic</b>	<b>Positive and/or negative impacts</b>
Race: relating to people from different racial groups, ethnic or national origins, ethnic minorities, including gypsy travellers and migrant workers	A key aim of the SIP is to accelerate investment in critical infrastructure that will drive economic growth in the region. This should result in increased opportunities for all residents and improved local services. It is also hoped to create increased employment and training opportunities to encourage people to live, work and study in the region. The SIP/Rural Growth Deal also intends to build on the regions rich culture including Gaelic language.
Gender: specific to women and/or men	The opportunities created will benefit both male and female residents.
Disability: relating to people with either mental or physical disability	Improved services could benefit disabled residents. For example improved transport links will make it easier to travel in the region and there are opportunities linked to improved digital services which could potentially benefit mobility impaired individuals. For example the ability to shop and bank online and the potential to attend some appointments via skype reducing the requirement to travel. New and improved infrastructure will also be designed to be DDA compliant.
Age: relating to different age groups e.g. older people or children and young people	It is hoped that the SIP will lead to improved training and employment opportunities in the region which will benefit young residents keen to study and/or work in the area. These opportunities will also be available to older residents and it is considered that improved infrastructure such as transport and digital will benefit all residents irrespective of age. Improved transport and digital infrastructure will hopefully reduce isolation among certain communities / age groups.
Religion or Belief: relating to a person's religion or belief (including non-belief)	The opportunities created by the SIP will seek to be as inclusive as possible and religion will not be a barrier to engagement. We are liaising with the Scottish Government to ensure their inclusive growth priorities are an integral part of this process.

Sexual orientation: relating to whether a person is lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, heterosexual	The Council seek to be as inclusive as possible and opportunities created by the SIP will benefit residents in the area and will not exclude based on sexual orientation.
Marriage and civil partnership: relating to people who are married or are in a civil partnership	Through investing in essential infrastructure the Council seek to create new opportunities and improved services that will benefit all residents.
Gender reassignment: relating to people who have proposed, started or completed a process to change his or her sex	The Council seek to be as inclusive as possible and opportunities created by the SIP will be accessible to residents irrespective of gender.
Pregnancy and maternity: relating to the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby and the period after the birth	Improved services in particular transport, housing and digital could benefit pregnant woman, mothers and fathers by making it easier to access essential services and improving the availability of suitable housing and employment opportunities. Factors such as access to child care and improved training opportunities have also be considered in developing the SIP.

### 3: Evidence used in developing the policy

Set out the evidence on impacts that you have collected in the development of the policy.

<p><b>Involvement and consultation</b> In assessing the impact(s) set out above what evidence has been collected from involvement, engagement or consultation? Who was involved, when and how?</p> <p><i>Both equalities legislation and the duty to achieve best value demand effective consultation and engagement.</i></p> <p><i>Therefore, we need evidence of engagement with those groups that are targeted by the introduction of a new policy.</i></p>	<p>In developing the SIP the Council have consulted the Community Planning Partnership which includes a wide range of partners who represent residents and individuals from some or all of the groups listed. We seek to be as inclusive as possible and it is considered that investing in essential infrastructure will benefit all residents in the area by providing improved services and opportunities for training, skills development and employment. In developing the SIP / proposed Rural Growth Deal the Council have undertaken consultation with key public, private and third sector stakeholders and comments received have been summarised in a feedback report. This included organisations such as the NHS and local housing associations. Successful projects will be delivered in partnership with key stakeholders and it is intended to set up a Management Committee which will include representation from senior Council officers and key delivery partners. As such, there will be the requirement for on-going consultation as the SIP and proposed Rural Growth Deal are developed. In developing the SIP / Rural Growth Deal the Council have been consulting with the Scottish Government to ensure our proposals are consistent with their inclusive growth priorities. This should ensure that outcomes maximise opportunities for all and address barriers to labour market access, fair work and wealth distribution.</p>
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<p><b>Data and research</b></p> <p>Please specify what research was carried out or data collected, when and how this was done, and what other available research or data did you use?</p> <p><i>Set out any local or national data that has been used, in the impact assessment including any relevant guidance that has influenced the development of the policy.</i></p>	<p>Argyll and Bute Council and our Community Planning Partners have developed a series of strategic plans which set out the vision, priorities and objectives for Argyll and Bute over the next ten years. In developing the SIP these documents have been reviewed in order to provide renewed focus on the essential infrastructure required to help deliver a step change in economic activity in the area. The SIP has not developed any new policies but is instead a distillation of existing proposals into a single, succinct document. Previous documents such as the Argyll and Bute Compelling report collected a significant amount of socio-economic data which has been used to inform this work.</p>
<p><b>Partners' data and research</b></p> <p>What evidence has been provided by partners?</p> <p>Please specify partners.</p> <p><i>Data and information from partner organisations can help to evidence impacts rather than duplicate efforts to consult and involve relevant groups.</i></p>	<p>Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership were consulted with feedback received from NHS Highland regarding the significance of community transport services in the region. Following this the draft SIP was amended to include more details on community transport. We have also undertaken a consultation exercise with key public, private and third sector partners and a feedback report has been drafted summarising all comments received.</p>
<p><b>Gaps and uncertainties</b></p> <p>Have any gaps or uncertainties been identified in your understanding of the issues or impacts that need to be further explored?</p> <p><i>Few policies are developed in the context of perfect information and understanding of all the issues. This part of the assessment is an opportunity to highlight these gaps and uncertainties.</i></p>	<p>Further research will be required for all SIP / Rural Growth Deal projects as detailed business cases will require to be developed prior to any funding being committed by the Scottish and UK Governments. Gaps and uncertainties will be addressed further via this process.</p>

#### 4: Detailed Action Plan to address gaps in evidence and to reduce negative impacts

No	Action	Responsible Officer(s)	Timescale
1			
2			
3			
4			

Note: Please add extra rows as required.

#### 5: Performance monitoring and reporting

Please describe how the policy will be taken forward. This will act as a record for future reviews and the monitoring of the policy.

<p>When is the policy intended to come into effect?</p> <p><i>Insert the date and name of the Committee meeting that will approve the policy.</i></p>	<p>SIP – January 2018</p> <p>Rural Growth Deal – Heads of Terms 2018 (subject to Scottish and UK Government approval)</p>
<p>When will the policy be reviewed?</p> <p><i>Insert the dates for the planned review of the policy.</i></p>	<p>TBC – There will require to be review periods agreed as part of any future funding deal with the Scottish and UK Governments to monitor progress against outcomes and targets.</p>
<p>Who is responsible for reviewing the policy?</p> <p><i>Insert the job title of the person responsible for reviewing.</i></p>	<p>Strategic Transportation and Infrastructure Manager</p>

## 6: Summary

### Name of policy:

This policy will help the council to meet the general equality duty to eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations by:

#### **Eliminate discrimination**

A key aim of the SIP is to accelerate investment in critical infrastructure that will drive economic growth in the region. This should result in increased opportunities and improved services that will benefit all residents. The SIP and Rural Growth Deal will be consistent with the Scottish Governments inclusive growth priorities which should ensure that the outcomes help to reduce inequality and promote sustainable an inclusive economic growth across the region.

#### **Advance equality of opportunity**

The Scottish Governments inclusive growth priority is integral to the SIP and Rural Growth Deal and the Council are working to secure additional funding to address barriers to economic growth such as poor transport and digital connectivity, lack of skills and local training opportunities. By securing additional investment to help address such barriers it is hoped that the SIP and Rural Growth Deal will result in improved opportunities for local residents who will benefit from new and improved local employment and training opportunities and upgrades to critical infrastructure such as transport, digital, further education and housing.

#### **Foster good relations**

The proposed Rural Growth Deal will require to be taken forward in partnership with key public, private and third sector stakeholders and one of the key aims is to foster improved relations between local businesses, education establishments and public sector organisations to implement a range of projects which will encourage sustainable economic growth in the region. The SIP and Rural Growth Deal also include a number of marketing and branding projects aimed at establishing and growing the regions profile in new markets in particular relating to growth sectors such as tourism and food and drink production.

When completed, the assessment must be signed off by the lead officer and by the relevant Head of Service.

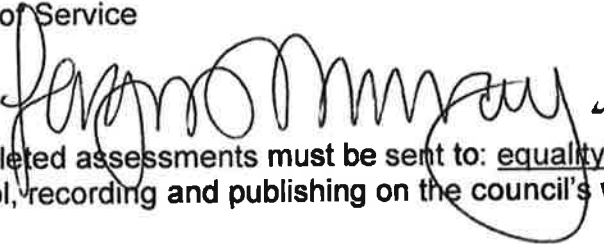
Signed: *Moya Ingram*  
Lead Officer

Date: *4/10/2017*

Signed: *Moya Ingram*

Head of Service

Date:

 04/10/2017

Completed assessments must be sent to: [equality@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:equality@argyll-bute.gov.uk) for quality control, recording and publishing on the council's website.