

KCC - Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate (GET).

Equality Analysis / Impact Assessment (EqIA) template

Name of decision, policy, procedure, project or service: Marsh Million

Brief description of policy, procedure, project or service

In 2013 the Marsh Million was established, it was a £1 million, three-year, economic growth fund for Romney Marsh. It is funded by the Magnox Socio-economic programme (£500,000), Kent County Council, (£400,000), Ashford Borough Council (£50,000) and Shepway District Council (£50,000). A separate agreement was entered into with Magnox to manage their £500,000.

KCC are the financially responsible authority for the scheme and received the partner contributions. The role of KCC has been marketing, managing the application process, appraising applications, providing the secretariat to the decision-making Board, enacting its recommendations, issuing/sealing contracts, making payments and ultimately collecting loan repayments, monitoring outcomes and debt recovery.

Funding was allocated equally (£500,000 grants and £500,000 loans) between two sub-programmes:-

- Marsh Million Economic Projects Scheme (EPS) which offered grants ranging between £10,000-£100,000 for projects seeking to help start-ups, small businesses, and social enterprises in the Romney Marsh area to grow and diversify. Examples of such projects included training provision, environmental improvements (with an economic benefit) and tourism.
- Marsh Business Boost which offered 0% interest loans of up to £50,000 to help start-ups, small businesses and social enterprises in the Romney Marsh area who were seeking to develop new or expand existing products or services, where these would lead to sustained employment.

In total over 6 years, 11 grants and 27 loans were approved. KCC is now winding-up this programme, no new investments are expected using the funds available.

Date Document Updated 09/02/2021

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Aims and Objectives

To manage the existing portfolio of projects funded in Ashford and Folkestone & Hythe area, These investments supported a wide variety of projects delivered by small & medium enterprises, charities, social enterprises and public bodies. Moving forward no new loans or grants are planned and KCC role is to monitor outcomes, collecting loan repayments debt recovery.

JUDGEMENT

The main target group for the project was small & medium enterprises, charities, social enterprises and public bodies rather than individuals. SMEs, charities and social enterprises themselves do not have protected characteristics but they are owned, managed, operate and employ individuals. KCC collect equalities data about the business owners, management teams, trustees and employees if they are willing to divulge this information. For businesses to receive investment support a number of selection criteria were utilised in an assessment: the quality of the business case/application, the financial viability of the business and its track record, its ability to meet eligibility requirements, the ability of the company to repay the investment and the ability to create or protect jobs. Support is provided to the Approval Board (including training if required) who make funding recommendations (the final decision lies with KCC) to ensure compliance with our equality duties.

Once the organisations were approved for funding, it was for these organisations, themselves to recruit staff but all funding recipients were required to have an equal opportunities policy and conform to equalities legislation in their funding agreements. Jobs created and protected are monitored on a quarterly basis. KCC considered any special requests from organisation related to protected characteristics e.g. ensuring accessible versions of project documentation can be provided for those with disabilities or dealing sensitively with participants identifying themselves as transgender.

The successful organisations are contractually obliged to inform KCC of any negative judgment taken against the applicant business, through employment tribunals or formal investigation by Commission for Racial Equality, Equal Opportunities Commission or Disability Rights Commission or other successor or similar body in place from time to time over the contract period, in respect of equality and diversity, and inform KCC what actions they have taken to address cases of unlawful discrimination. In summary, the judgement is to continue the policy (project).

I have found the Adverse Equality Impact Rating to be **Low**

GET Document Control



Revision History

Version	Date	Authors	Comment
V0.1	03/02/21	Martyn Riley	The scheme is winding up and no EQIA was prepared in 2013 when the scheme was established as this was not a requirement at this time.
V0.2	05/02/21	Susan Berdo & Andrew Sinclair	Reviewed by GET ED Equality & Diversity Representatives
V1	05/02/21	Martyn Riley	Final Version based on the advice from the GET ED Equality & Diversity Representatives

Document Sign-Off (this must be both the relevant Head of Service and the relevant Director)

Attestation

I have read and paid due regard to the Equality Analysis/Impact Assessment. I agree with the actions to mitigate any adverse impact(s) that has /have been identified.

Name	Signature	Title	Date of Issue
Steve Grimshaw		Head of Service	09/02/21
David Smith		Director	09/02/21

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Part 1 - Screening

Regarding the decision, policy, procedure, project or service under consideration,

Could this policy, procedure, project or service, or any proposed changes to it, affect any Protected Group (listed below) less favourably (negatively) than others in Kent?

Could this policy, procedure, project or service promote equal opportunities for this group?

Please note that there is no justification for direct discrimination; and indirect discrimination will need to be justified according to the legal requirements

Protected Group	You <i>MUST</i> provide a brief commentary as to your findings, or this EqlA will be returned to you unsigned			High/Medium/Low Favourable Impact
	High Negative Impact	Medium Negative Impact	Low Negative Impact	
Age	N/A	N/A	N/A	Loan funding decisions were based on the business case and financial viability only. To start a business legally in the UK you must be at least 16 years of age (and 18 years of age to sign some legal documents). There is no maximum age this is covered within our

				legal loan and grant agreements.
Disability	N/A	N/A	N/A	In the case of loans businesses were the target group for the project rather than individuals. In the case of grants charities, social enterprises, public bodies were the target group for the project rather than individuals. Applicants who may have had difficulty with online forms on the project website were offered an opportunity to engage with the project by telephone or a teleconference. We will also ensure that venues used for scheme events are accessible.
Sex	N/A	N/A	Loan funding decisions were based on the business case and financial viability only. In the case of grants the wider community	N/A

			<p>impact was taken into consideration. The original application process was open to all businesses based within the specific geographic location, and those who fell within the scheme's criteria.</p>	
<p>Gender identity/ Transgender</p>	N/A	N/A	<p>We do not anticipate that there would be any barriers in place for business owners or staff identifying themselves as transgender. Indeed, any gender identity issues would be managed sensitively (for example when handling personal data such as passport information as part of documentation checks) in addition, there is training available to KCC staff to know how to handle transgender issues respect which will be</p>	N/A

			accessed	
Race	N/A	N/A	It is anticipated that businesses owned by people of different races are likely to be involved in the project. Should any people representing businesses supported by the project require additional support due to their nationality e.g. language support, the project partners will assist where possible.	
Religion and Belief	N/A	N/A	Should any applicant highlight any specific religious beliefs during the application process such as special dietary requirements during an informational event, these were taken into account.	N/A
Sexual Orientation	N/A	N/A	In the case loan funding decisions were based on the business case and financial viability only. In the	N/A

			case of grants the wider community impact was taken into consideration. The original application process was open to all businesses based within the specific geographic location, and those who fell within the scheme's criteria.	
Pregnancy and Maternity	N/A	N/A	Businesses where the owner is a key or sole member of staff may be offered a flexible repayment period in the event of pregnancy and maternity leave provided all contractual requirements were met i.e. up-to-date with their repayments. The scheme is open to consider other cases where action may be required in order to assist this protected characteristic, when identified, such as a	N/A

			career break requiring a repayment holiday, e.g. paternity leave or infant mortality.	
Marriage and Civil Partnerships	N/A	N/A	Loan funding decisions were based on the business case and financial viability only. In the case of grants the wider community impact was taken into consideration.	N/A
Carer's Responsibilities	N/A	N/A	Businesses where the owner was a key member of staff may be offered a flexibility if they have caring responsibilities with regard repayments or monitoring provided all contractual requirements are met. The scheme is open to consider other cases where action may be required in order to assist this protected characteristic, when identified.	N/A