

Title of proposed EIA	Neighbourhood Networks Scheme
Reference No	EQUA698
EA is in support of	Amended Function
Review Frequency	Six Months
Date of first review	23/11/2021
Directorate	Adults Social Care
Division	Commissioning
Service Area	Prevention and Communities
Responsible Officer(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lise A Smith
Quality Control Officer(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gordon Strachan
Accountable Officer(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Kalvinder Kohli
Purpose of proposal	Recommissioning of the Neighbourhood Networks Schemes
Data sources	Consultation Results; Interviews; relevant research
Please include any other sources of data	internal reviews and data analysis
ASSESS THE IMPACT AGAINST THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS	
Protected characteristic: Age	Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community; Not Applicable
Age details:	<p>Service user/stakeholders  The NNS supports people 50+ to live independently within communities. Recommissioning will ensure that the NNS model and the support provided for citizens 50+ is sustained. The proposal is to extend the NNS to younger disabled adults 18+ as well. The impact on younger disabled adults is set out in the section below.</p> <p>NNSs are constituency-based networks, set up to develop community-based preventative support and connect citizens and professionals to groups, organisations, activities, services and places in their local neighbourhoods.</p> <p>They support the delivery of the vision for Birmingham Adult Social Care (refresh 2020). They are an</p>

integral part of Birmingham City Council's strength-based community social work model and the Prevention First Strategy, which aims to keep people living happy, healthy lives in their own homes and neighbourhoods, and make communities better, more inclusive places to live.

Community activities promote mental, emotional and physical wellbeing, friendships and social connections, addressing loneliness and isolation.

The aim of community-based prevention is for individuals to be able to access the right support, at the right time, enabling an early response/intervention to older people who are at risk of isolation, poor health, financial exclusion, difficulties managing their home, losing their independence and going into statutory care.

The NNSs map assets local assets (groups, activities and services) and make these available online to help citizens and professionals connect locally and find support. Each NNS carries out a gap analysis, identifying gaps in support and needs amongst the over 50s. They provide capacity-building to help organisations develop and deliver activities and services that meet identified needs, and grant-funding via a locally-managed grant panel. Each NNS works to an Outcomes Framework and specification, which requires them to make positive changes to citizens in the locality and increase the numbers of people participating in local activities.

Birmingham contains the largest number of areas where there is a very high risk of loneliness amongst older adults. Despite increasing life expectancy, there remains a significant gap in healthy life expectancy for both men and women in Birmingham, compared to the national figures (JNSA 2018-9).

The benefits to individual older citizens and their carers of the current NNS model has been clearly demonstrated (BVSC Impact Assessment Nov 2020). Recommissioning will sustain this support for older adults. Impact will be assessed through equality monitoring of funded activities and review of performance against the NNS Outcomes Framework.

The NNS will encourage intergenerational activities, fostering good relations between young and old. NNS activities will be aligned to the Children's Partnership Early Help offer, promoting the whole life course approach.

The positive impact on older adults of sustaining the NNS, and on younger disabled adults from extending it, were the key messages from co-design meetings.

### **Wider communities**

Older adults will be supported to live independently within communities. Accessing local activities and groups will connect them to others in their community, creating greater levels of interdependence and community cohesion.

Older adults are active in running community activities, making a positive contribution to their communities. The NNS will enable more older people to run activities,

and increase their skills and confidence to develop wider provision. Although the target group for NNS funding has been 50+, many activities support the wider community as well, for example, activities improving green spaces or cultural activities.

### **Impact upon employees**

The services will be recommissioned externally in all constituencies where these services are already delivered via the third sector.

Recommissioning will provide continued employment opportunities; extension will create additional employment and volunteering opportunities.

Opportunities will be available through grant-funded organisations as well commissioned providers.

Organisations within this sector have a track record of providing opportunities for people with lived experience. Compliance with the Living Wage requirements is expected as part of the contract awards.

Protected characteristic: Disability

Service Users / Stakeholders;  
Employees; Wider Community

Disability details:

Recommissioning and extending NNS will have a positive impact on people with disabilities.

Disability affects 40% of older people aged 60, and 75% of those aged 80 and above. 1 in 4 older adults live with a mental health problem (Age UK). It is estimated that around 40% of people with learning disabilities also have mental ill-health - more than double the number in the general population (skillsforcare.org.uk). People with visual impairment face barriers accessing support and opportunities (RNIB Research). People with hearing impairment and autism experience similar barriers. The proportion of disabled people who reported feeling lonely "often or always" is nearly four times that of non-disabled people (Disability, well-being and loneliness, UK: ONS 2019).

Recommissioning will ensure that older disabled adults can continue to access community-based support, and improved outcomes which the current NNS model has delivered (BVSC Impact Assessment April 2020).

Extending the NNS to younger disabled adults 18+ (with a learning disability, physical disability, autism, mental health issues, sensory loss or impairment) will enable them to access better community-based support and benefit from improved outcomes.

Asset mapping and gap analysis carried out by NNSs will identify support available from local organisations, and needs within local

communities. Grant-funding and capacity-building will develop activities and services to meet identified needs. Impact will be assessed through equality monitoring of funded activities and review of performance against the NNS Outcomes Framework.

Information-sharing and partnership working through the NNS will connect citizens and assets to support/care pathways, improving access to support and appropriate referrals. Access to the right support at the right time will enable an early response and successful intervention, preventing an escalation or deterioration in the situation and entry into statutory services. A whole life course approach is being adopted to ensure positive transitions for young people to adult based services.

The citywide structure will enable the NNS to address those issues affecting disabled people which need a citywide focus and solution, for example accessible transport

### **Wider community**

Vulnerable disabled adults will be supported to live independently within communities. Accessing community-based support locally will connect them to others in their community, creating greater levels of interdependence and community cohesion.

Co-production is a key principle of the NNS. Disabled adults will be involved in steering groups, grants panels, and gap analysis, developing local solutions and making a positive contribution to their communities.

Comments at co-design meetings were extremely positive about the benefits of extending NNS to younger disabled adults.

Impact upon employees -  
see above

Protected characteristic: Sex

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Gender details:

There will be a positive impact on gender equality.

Activities for men are an NNS priority as men are at high risk of loneliness and isolation. Gap analysis carried out by current commissioned providers has identified needs for women from particular ethnic communities in constituencies such as Yardley and Ladywood, and these have been addressed by NNS capacity-building and grant-funding.

This characteristic will continue to be addressed in the new Outcomes Framework and specification for NNSs. Asset mapping and gap analysis will identify organisations providing support, and needs within local communities. Capacity-building and grant-funding will develop activities and services to meet identified needs. Impact will be assessed through equality monitoring of funded activities and review of performance against the Outcomes Framework.

Codesign meetings did not receive any questions or comments related specifically to gender.

## Wider community

Older men will be more connected to others in their community through greater involvement in community activities , creating greater levels of interdependence. Women, particularly women from ethnic minority communities, will be more visible and active in their communities, making a positive contribution.

Protected characteristics: Gender Reassignment

Gender reassignment details:

Service Users / Stakeholders

There will be a positive impact on transgender people.

A citywide structure and grant-panel will be included in NNS April 2022+, to improve support and access to grant-funding for communities of interest who are spread geographically across the city, with less access to constituency-based grant-funding.

LGBTQ+ citizens will be a key target group for the citywide structure and grants panel. NNS capacity building and equality and diversity training will ensure that groups and activities are accessible and inclusive of their needs. This will be reviewed through equality monitoring of NNS activities.

Comments at co-design meetings were extremely positive about the benefit of the citywide structure and grant panel on LGBTQ+ groups.

Protected characteristics: Marriage and Civil Partnership

Marriage and civil partnership details:

Not Applicable

Protected characteristics: Pregnancy and Maternity

Service Users / Stakeholders;  
Employees; Wider Community

Pregnancy and maternity details:

Should the business case be approved for working age adults the assets will be accessible both in terms of access to resources.

Protected characteristics: Race

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Race details:

The recommissioning and future model of NNS will have a positive impact on race equality, for individual citizens and within the wider community.

The NNS Outcomes Framework has a specific outcome of increasing the numbers of people from ethnic minority groups participating in local groups and activities, and this will be included in the new specification.

The disproportionate impact that Covid-19 has had on ethnic minority groups will also be included.

Asset-mapping by NNSs identifies organisations providing support for different ethnic minorities, and gap analysis identifies local needs. Grant-funding and capacity-building develops activities and services to meet these needs. Impact will be assessed through equality monitoring of funded activities and review of performance against the Outcomes Framework.

NNS make links with hard-to-reach communities and bring ethnic minority groups into partnership arrangements, raising awareness of their needs and their contribution to their local communities. NNSs strengthen small and emerging organisations supporting these communities by capacity-building. They provide training on equality and diversity, ensuring that partnerships and organisations work in a way that is inclusive of diversity.

Case studies and interviews shows how the NNS supports assets to provide much needed, tailored

support for communities who have felt isolated or overlooked; and how the inclusive strategy of NNS ensures that all funded assets are designed to be inclusive and welcoming to all older people regardless of ethnicity, ethnicity and other protected characteristics (Ethnic Minority Groups Supported by NNS and P&C, BVSC April 2021).

The citywide structure and grant-panel will give the recommissioned NNS the mechanism to respond to the needs of ethnic minority groups who are spread geographically across the city, supported by a city-wide organisation, and travel to where the city-wide organisation is based. Communities served by city-wide organisations have less access to a constituency-based funding model.

Figures from the Institute of Superdiversity at Birmingham University show that people of 187 different nationalities have settled in Birmingham. It is anticipated that new and emerging groups, such as the Eritrean community, would benefit, although further evidence of their needs is required.

Comments received through codesign meeting were very positive about the benefits of the NNS to ethnic minority groups.

Protected characteristics: Religion or Beliefs

Religion or beliefs details:

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

There will be a positive impact on religion and belief, for individual citizens and the wider community.

Faith-based organisations are key partners in the NNS. NNSs raise awareness of their contribution. They

bring organisations representing different faiths and beliefs into local partnership arrangements. NNS capacity-building and equality and diversity training ensure that partnerships and organisations work in a way which is inclusive and respectful of different faiths and beliefs, and that local activities are inclusive of the needs of faith-based communities.

Gap analysis will identify the needs of faith-based communities who are under-represented in community activities so that action can be taken to address barriers in accessing support.

The NNS was key to the city's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, co-ordinating, grant-funding and directly delivering the Third Sector emergency response. Feedback from citizens suggests that the role played by faith organisations is likely to have long term positive impacts on community cohesion (Ethnic Minority Groups Supported by NNS and P&C, BVSC April 2021).

Impact will be assessed through equality monitoring of funded activities and review of performance against the Outcomes Framework.

Protected characteristics: Sexual Orientation

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Sexual orientation details:

There will be a positive impact on sexual orientation equality.

The NNS has a specific outcome of increasing the numbers of people from communities of interest participating in local groups and activities, and this will be included in the new model. The needs of LGBTQ+ citizens will be identified through local gap analysis. Equality and diversity training and capacity-building provided by NNS will ensure that local assets and activities

will be accessible to LGBTQ+ citizens and inclusive of their needs. It is intended that LGBTQ+ citizens will be more active and visible in their communities, that there will be greater awareness of their needs and the positive contribution they make.

LGBTQ+ citizens will be a key target group for the citywide structure and grants panel.

All support and activities of the NNS will be required to be respectful and sensitive to specific needs related to this characteristic in line with The Equality Act. The number of LGBTQ citizens benefiting from NNS funded activities will be reviewed through equality monitoring.

Comments at co-design meetings were extremely positive about the benefit of the citywide structure and grant panel on LGBTQ+ groups.

## Socio-economic impacts

The recommissioning and future model of NNS will have positive socio-economic impacts.

There are economic benefits for local communities of commissioning voluntary and community organisations to deliver activities that meet Council priorities (Locality: Keep it Local March 2020).

Social value is a key part of the commissioning strategy and providers will be required to evidence their contribution.

The NNS outcomes framework and local gap analysis will include socio-economic needs, recognising and addressing the disproportionate impact of Covid-19. NNSs will align their priorities and activities to the Covid-19 Economic Recovery Strategy and will be key delivery partners across the 4 Themes.

The NNS will support the wider community as well as service users/stakeholders. NNS capacity-building will support local organisations to develop and become sustainable, creating volunteer and paid employment opportunities for local citizens. Grant-funding will increase the breadth, relevance and accessibility of the community offer, making neighbourhoods more vibrant places to live. Activities will improve the local infrastructure and environment, for example, through developing green spaces.

The funding formula for NNS takes into account the different profiles of Birmingham's constituencies, and levels of deprivation, recognising the greater needs of deprived communities. Over £2million of grant-funding has been distributed through the NNS to date. The proposed model will bring additional funding into constituencies, targeted toward Birmingham's most deprived communities. Information about the purpose and beneficiaries of all grant-funded activity is collated and reviewed. This will allow the impact of the NNS in this area to be assessed.

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Please indicate any actions arising from completing this screening exercise.

Not as a result of this screening. An EA impact log will be maintained

throughout the recommissioning process in order monitor and address any adverse impacts.

Please indicate whether a full impact assessment is recommended

NO

What data has been collected to facilitate the assessment of this policy/proposal?

Demographic data\_\_

Social care client data

Future demand modelling

Consultation responses

Analysis of data evidences the need of younger disabled adults and older adults, and the numbers affected by this proposal. Evidence shows the impact of the NNS on improved outcomes for older citizens and the likely impact on younger disabled adults.

Consultation analysis

over 300 stakeholders have been engaged through a co-design activity. Additional comments were received through BeHeard. These groups were engaged:

- Older adults and disabled citizens who currently access NNS services, and Prevention and Community programmes;
- Voluntary and community sector groups representing disabled adults and communities of interest;
- constituency-based and citywide groups
- wider voluntary and community sector;
- NNS assets and Steering Group partners for each constituency;
- Existing providers delivering the NNS contracts;
- Social work teams and aligned BCC services;
- Primary Care Networks, Senior Managers within both BSOL and Sandwell and West Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Comments and questions relating to equality and diversity related to key themes:

- There was an overwhelmingly positive response to extending the NNS to younger disabled citizens. Participants said it was important to respond to need, not age, and that as the needs of disabled adults are likely to increase with age, preventative support before 50 was crucial to reduce and delay the impact.
- The lack of support available for younger disabled adults with learning disabilities was highlighted, and the particular difficulties of navigating and accessing support at key transition times, eg. moving from Childrens to Adults services.
- The impact of covid-19 on mental health issues for all communities
- The disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on ethnic minority groups, particularly the mental health of young black men and communities where mental health issues are not openly discussed, and people find it difficult to recognise them and identify the need for support, or how to access it
- The lack of support services for people whose first language is not English was highlighted
- The need to involve younger disabled citizens, and groups supporting them, in NNS structures to ensure that their voices are heard and their needs met
- The importance of ensuring that sufficient resources are available to meet the requirements of an extended NNS, recognising that supporting younger disabled adults, particularly those with mental health issues and learning disabilities, may require more intensive and specialised support
- The importance of retaining the current NNS specialism in supporting older adults, and of bringing in the equivalent expertise in working with

younger disabled adults, particularly those with learning disabilities

- Concern that support for older citizens may be diluted if the extension is not matched with the required resources, both for Lead Facilitators staffing resources and for grant-funding activities

Adverse impact on any people with protected characteristics.

A potential adverse impact on older people has been identified if the NNS is extended to include younger disabled adults, without adequate resources to meet their needs.

Could the policy/proposal be modified to reduce or eliminate any adverse impact?

The funding requirements of an expanded NNS will be rigorously costed and different models optioned and presented to Cabinet. This will ensure that the final model approved is adequately resourced to deliver all the building blocks of the NNS model.

How will the effect(s) of this policy/proposal on equality be monitored?

This will be done through the Outcomes Framework for NNS. Equality data and evidence of impact and positive changes for groups with protected characteristics will be monitored and reviewed at constituency level by individual NNSs. Data will be collated, aggregated at citywide level and reviewed by the Commissioning Team.

What data is required in the future?

Equality data for NNS grant-funding will be collected and reviewed. The NNS outcomes framework will specify positive improvements in the lives of

citizens with relevant protected characteristics and data (quantitative and qualitative) will be collected and reviewed.

Are there any adverse impacts on any particular group(s)

No

If yes, please explain your reasons for going ahead.

Initial equality impact assessment of your proposal

There will be a positive impact on impact on citizens with protected characteristics, including older citizens, younger disabled adults, men, women from underrepresented communities, ethnic minorities, faith communities and LGBTQ+. There will be positive impact on citizens and communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.

Consulted People or Groups

Informed People or Groups

Summary and evidence of findings from your EIA

The Neighbourhood Networks Scheme (NNS) was set up in 2018 to support the delivery of the vision for Birmingham Adult Social Care (refresh 2020). NNS are constituency-based networks responsible for developing preventative community-based support and activities for older adults 50+, enabling them to live independently in their communities.

Recommissioning the NNS will ensure the sustainability of the model for 5-7 years, ensuring that the benefits it has delivered for older adults (and older disabled adults) to date will be sustained and developed.

It is proposed to extend the NNS to working age disabled adults, pending approval of the business case by the corporate centre, so that they will

benefit from the improved outcomes that the NNS has delivered to older adults.

Research and analysis (both internal and external) reviewed demonstrates the level of need that the NNS is designed to address.

Evidence from the current NNS shows a significant positive impact for older citizens (including older disabled adults), on their health and wellbeing, improved social participation (reducing isolation and loneliness) and reduced financial exclusion. Evidence also shows a benefit for wider community.

Promoting equality and addressing exclusion are key to the model of NNS delivery. The NNS Outcomes Framework requires them to increase the numbers of people from under-represented group participating in local activities, particularly men, ethnic minority groups and communities of interest.

Evidence reviewed showed the positive impact that the current NNS has already had on men, women from particular ethnic groups, ethnic minority groups and faith communities.

The new NNS model will include a citywide structure specifically to address the needs of communities of interest and ethnic minority groups who are spread geographically across the city.

The Outcomes Framework for the new model will recognise the disproportionate effect that Covid-19 has had on particular communities, and existing inequalities. NNSs will be key delivery partners in the Covid-19 Recovery Strategy.

Codesign meetings were held with over 300 people from a wide range of stakeholder groups, including

citizens, and additional comments were received via BeHeard. Analysis of comments show a very high level of support from all stakeholder groups for the recommissioning and extension of NNS, and the new citywide structure.

QUALITY CONTROL SECTION

Submit to the Quality Control Officer for reviewing?

No

Quality Control Officer comments

Decision by Quality Control Officer

Proceed for final approval

Submit draft to Accountable Officer?

Yes

Decision by Accountable Officer

Date approved / rejected by the Accountable Officer

09/06/2021

Reasons for approval or rejection

The commissioning of NNS will have a positive impacts upon older people. Should the bussiness case for working age adults be approved this will provide further benefits to citizens and local communities. The NNS are locality based by design and therefore will maintain local employment opportunities and volunteering.

Please print and save a PDF copy for your records

Yes

Julie Bach

Lise A Smith

Person or Group

Content Type: Item

Version: 40.0

Created at 25/05/2021 01:40 PM by  Lise A Smith

Last modified at 09/06/2021 03:39 PM by Workflow on behalf of  Kalvinder Kohli

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