

Rother Local Plan 2025-2042

Regulation 19: Proposed Submission Version

Equalities Impact Assessment

An equality impact assessment must be undertaken at the outset of any proposal to ensure robust evidence is considered in decision making. This documentation will support the Council in making informed, effective and fair decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including the Equality Act 2010.	
In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, Councils are required in the exercise of their functions to have due regard for the need to:	
• Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. • Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic, and persons who do not share it. • Foster good relations between those who have a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't.	
Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:	
• Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; • Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of the persons who do not share it; • Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.	
Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding. “Relevant protected characteristics” are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. On Section 2, please provide as much detail as possible of how the proposal will impact on the people with protected characteristics and/or those who may be socially-disadvantaged. The impacts may not necessarily be negative but may impact on a group with a particular characteristic in a specific way. On Section 3, please input details of any <i>meetings and discussions</i> and/or <i>public engagement activities</i> with all parties that have been involved or you have consulted with in this proposal.	
Section 1	
Name of policy / initiative / Service to be impact assessed*	Proposed Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19)
Corporate objective being addressed*	Adopt a new Local Plan
Department / function carrying out the assessment*	Strategy and Planning

Who is responsible for the implementation of the policy / initiative / service? (function head /department manager)*	Head of Planning
Who is involved in the impact assessment?	Planning Policy Manager
What are the aims / objectives of the policy / initiative / service?	To submit the Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate so that it can be independently examined in line with Planning legislation. Once examined and found sound, the new Local Plan can be adopted by the Council so that it forms part of the Development Plan, to be used in planning decisions, including for planning applications. The Local Plan helps to give effect to the Council's key plans and strategies. Prior to submission, the Council must publish the "proposed submission" version of the Local Plan for a 6-week period to allow for public comments, this stage is called "Regulation 19". The proposed submission Local Plan (2026) includes the development strategy; strategic and non-strategic policies on a range of topics including housing, the economy, the historic and natural environment, climate change and living well locally; supporting area-specific policies; and site allocation policies.
Who is intended to benefit from the policy?	All Rother residents, businesses and visitors.
What are the main outcomes of the policy (this is key to being able to identify what monitoring is needed)?	The adoption of a new Local Plan which will contain a suite of planning policies and site allocations to guide decisions on managing growth and new development in the district and help to both secure and steer decisions on funding for new investment in supporting infrastructure.
Is the policy for external or internal purposes?	External and internal.
Are other organisations involved in the delivery?	Yes. The Local Plan will set the strategic planning framework to guide development decisions over the plan period, 2025-2042. The implementation of the plan will involve a wide variety of stakeholders from both the public and private sector.
If yes please state who:	Developers, landowners, infrastructure providers and public sector stakeholders, including Government bodies.
What information/ past experience do we have i.e. a similar initiative and what did this information tell us? (info can be demographic data i.e. census findings, research findings, comparisons between similar policies in our Service and other Services, survey data,	An EQIA was undertaken for the first Local Plan Consultation in April 2024, and then again in January 2026. Neither EQIA identified any negative impacts on protected groups.

equality monitoring data, ad hoc data gathering exercises)	
How will information be collected regarding the impact of the policy /initiative /service/ employment policy etc?	Comments received in response to the Regulation 19 publication of the Local Plan will be summarised in a Consultation Statement to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate with the Local Plan. A Sustainability Appraisal is also carried out alongside the preparation of the Local Plan, and this considers potential impacts of the plan proposals on social, economic and environmental objectives. Once adopted, the Council will review and monitor the delivery of the Local Plan and its intended outcomes through a statutory Authority Monitoring Report process.
Date of Policy Review*	On adoption of the Local Plan.
Section 2	Impacts Identified¹
Age	Positive. The plan's policies are expected to have a positive overall impact on the local population, including older and younger age groups. Policies in the housing chapter set requirements and targets for housing to meet identified local needs, including housing for older people (such as for specialised forms of accommodation, and adaptable and accessible homes) for those with mobility issues, through Policies HOU6, HOU7 and HOU8. Planning for mixed household sizes through Policy HOU1 will also promote housing for younger people, as well as the Plan's affordable housing policies. At the same time, the Green to the Core policies, notably GTC1 and GTC2, will require energy use standards that will reduce the costs of maintaining warm homes, including retrofit. Other significant actions include the overall aim of the development strategy to increase the accessibility of services and facilities for all modes of transport, together with policies on infrastructure required to support growth. Community facilities and services are themselves promoted through Policy HWB3: Healthcare and Other Community Facilities and Services, while some of the larger site allocations include the requirement for such facilities and services alongside their housing requirements.

¹ The impacts identified consider those anticipated from the proposed policies and site allocations set out in the Proposed Submission Local Plan (2026).

Disability	Positive. The plan's policies are expected to have a positive overall impact on households that are affected by disability. Policies in the housing chapter set requirements for housing to meet the needs of those with mobility issues (such as adaptable and accessible homes as discussed above through policy HOU6). At the same time, the Green to the Core policies will require energy use standards that will reduce the costs of maintaining warm homes, including retrofit. Other significant actions include the overall aim of the development strategy to increase the accessibility of services and facilities for all modes of transport, together with policies on infrastructure required to support growth, including community facilities. Policies within the Live Well Locally chapter also support inclusive access, legibility and accessibility within streets, public spaces, community facilities and movement networks. Furthermore, and also applicable to many of the protected characteristic groups listed in this assessment, Policy HWB2 requires major developments located within wards that are within the 20% most deprived nationally to include a Health Impact Assessment screening to identify any potential health and wellbeing consequences of a development.
Gender	Neutral. While there are expected to be some positive impacts, the majority of the plan's policies on this protected characteristic are unlikely to be any different to the effects on the general population. There are no negative impacts.
Race	Positive. The plan's policies are expected to have a mixture of positive and neutral impacts racial and ethnic minorities, but positive overall. This is due to policies that will encourage community interaction and mixed communities. At the same time, housing policies include those directed to meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
Religion and Belief (including no belief)	Neutral. While there are expected to be some positive impacts, including the encouragement of community interaction and mixed communities, through housing policy, notably Policy HOU1, support for community facilities through HW4, and the creation of public open space within site allocations, the majority of the plan's policies on this protected characteristic are unlikely to be any different to the effects on the general population. The draft plan includes policies on infrastructure required to support growth, including community facilities, which includes religious facilities. There are no negative impacts.

Sexual Orientation	Neutral. While there are expected to be some positive impacts, including the encouragement of community interaction and mixed communities through housing policy, the majority of the plan's policies on this protected characteristic are unlikely to be any different to the effects on the general population. There are no negative impacts
Transgender	Neutral. While there are expected to be some positive impacts, including the encouragement of community interaction and mixed communities through housing policy, it is considered that the majority of the plan's policies on this protected characteristic are unlikely to be any different to the effects on the general population. There are no negative impacts.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Neutral. While there are expected to be some positive impacts, including the encouragement of community interaction and mixed communities through housing policy, it is considered that the majority of the plan's policies on this protected characteristic are unlikely to be any different to the effects on the general population. There are no negative impacts. The draft plan includes policies on infrastructure required to support growth, including community facilities, which includes health care. The draft plan also covers policies on development design, with requirements on high quality public realm to improve accessibility for the population.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral. While there are expected to be some positive impacts, including the encouragement of community interaction and mixed communities through housing policy, it is considered that the majority of the plan's policies on this protected characteristic are unlikely to be any different to the effects on the general population. There are no negative impacts.
People experiencing or at risk of socio-economic disadvantage (including those with lower income or carers, ex-offenders and armed forces veterans)	Positive. The plan's policies will establish a strategy and a range of provisions that are expected to deliver positive benefits to residents and visitors that are socio-economically disadvantaged, including by helping to address the underlying causes of deprivation. These include housing policies aiming to deliver the district's need for affordable housing. Housing site allocations are included, which will provide for significant growth in sustainable locations over the Plan Period. Additionally, specific policies are included to help ensure that housing is as affordable as it can be, and an appropriate mix of housing is provided to meet identified needs. These policies include HOU1, HOU2 and HOU3. Economic policies seek to improve the economy in all areas of the district, to achieve higher levels of

	employment and wages, including through Policy ECO3: Safeguarding Employment Land & Premises, as well site allocations for new employment development in urban and rural areas. The Plan also uses direct interventions to assign jobs to local people where appropriate which through requirements for Local Employment and Skills Plans as set out in Policy ECO12: Local Employment and Skills. Moreover, the overall development strategy of the plan aims to make services, facilities, and green infrastructure more accessible via public and active transport, benefitting those who are unable to drive or those for whom driving is financially burdensome. The Plan's site allocations for new housing include the creation of areas of public Green Infrastructure and internal infrastructure for active travel, as well as new opportunities for services and facilities. Such requirements are also reinforced through the topic policies within the plan, most notably those set out in the Live Well Locally chapter. As set out above, the Plan also includes Policy HW2, which is specifically required for applications for major developments that are in the most 20% deprived wards nationally, which would be screened and then assessed for any health and wellbeing impacts on the local community.
Section 3: Consultation & Engagement	
Meetings and discussions	Public engagement activities
The proposed submission Local Plan will be published in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to allow for public comment. This will involve: publication on the online consultation website, newspaper advertisement, and hard copy plans available to view at libraries and Bexhill town hall. Representations to be accepted online, by email and by post, and copies will be sent to the Secretary of State along with the submission of the Local Plan itself.	This will be the publication of the proposed submission version of the Local Plan for public comment, as required by Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations. This follows two rounds of statutory public consultation on the draft Local Plan held under Regulation 18. The first Regulation 18 consultation was held from April-June 2024, and the second between January-March 2026. Both of the Regulation 18 consultations informed the preparation of the proposed submission version of the Local Plan. A Consultation Statement will provide a summary of the consultation process to-date and feedback received on the first two consultations, together with the main issues identified and how the Council has considered this feedback. A further Consultation Statement will be prepared in due course when the Plan is submitted (Regulation 22) to the Secretary of State for independent examination, in relation to representations made at the Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 stages.