



Appendix 1 Leisure Contracts

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Template

Before completing the EQIA please have a look at the [Dorset Council style guide](#) and also use the [accessibility checker](#) to make sure your document is easy for people of all abilities to read.

Some key tips

- avoid tables and charts, if possible please provide raw data
- avoid pictures and maps if possible.
- avoid using bold, italics or colour to highlight or stress a point
- when using numbering or bullet points avoid using capitals at the beginning unless the name of something
- date format is dd month yyyy (1 June 2021)
- use clear and simple language
- where you need to use technical terms, abbreviations or acronyms, explain what they mean the first time you use them
- if using hyperlinks, make sure the link text describes where the link goes rather than 'click here' Please note equality impact assessments are published on the Dorset Council [website](#)

Before completing this form, please refer to the [supporting guidance](#). The aim of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to consider the equality implications of your policy, strategy, project or service on different groups of people including employees of Dorset Council, residents and users of our services and to consider if there are ways to proactively advance equality.

Where further guidance is needed, please contact the Inclusion Champion or the [Diversity & Inclusion Officer](#).

1. Initial information

Name of the policy, project, strategy, project or service being assessed:

Extension of the outsourced leisure centre contracts

2. Is this a (please delete those not required):

Other – Extension of a contract

3. Is this (please delete those not required):

External

4. Please provide a brief overview of its aims and objectives:

Leisure Services are currently developing a new leisure strategy for Dorset. As part of the built facilities element of the strategy and as the current contracts for those outsourced leisure centres run out in March 2026 it is necessary to extend those contracts, with no changes to them, for a further two years plus one. This will allow the leisure strategy to be agreed and adopted and for the relevant time to procure a single new contract for our leisure centres in Dorset

5. Please provide the background to this proposal?

Dorset Council has an interest in 8 leisure centres across Dorset, those being in Weymouth(2), Blandford, Bridport, Verwood, Dorchester, Ferndown and Purbeck. These were inherited under Local Government Reorganisation in 2019. The centres in Blandford, Dorchester and Ferndown are outsourced and run by contractors on behalf of Dorset Council, those being Everyone Active, Freedom Leisure and Places Leisure respectively. Currently all operational management contracts are due to run out on 31st March 2026

Evidence gathering and engagement

6. What sources of data, evidence or research has been used for this assessment? (e.g national statistics, employee data):

Data has been gathered through procurement and finance colleagues

Throughout the contracts DC has received no physical complaints on how the leisure centres are run operationally throughout Dorset and it is credit to those operators on how they have improved month on month numbers through the doors whether that is in the learn to swim programmes or the over 50's sessions and GP Referral classes

Current provision?

7. What did this tell you?

The evidence gathered told us of the need to extend the contracts, as failure to do this could mean the current contractors walking away from the centres, handing the keys back to Dorset Council, leaving no leisure provision in those parts of the county.

Evidence told us as mentioned above on the success stories of more of our communities using our leisure centres for their health and wellbeing

All facility operators manage situations on a case-by-case basis, acting with sensitivity and understanding to continue to ensure all customers are treated with dignity and respect, and are supported while policies are under review. The EHRC states that employers and other duty-bearers must follow the law and should take appropriate specialist legal advice where necessary. Please refer to the interim update provided by the EHRC for further information (Leisure Network April 2025) This is paramount in the upcoming report on use of changing rooms and toilets for all genders within the leisure industry

8. Who have you engaged and consulted with as part of this assessment?

We have engaged with the current contractors of the leisure centres, finance and procurement colleagues as well as the portfolio holder for leisure and culture and Executive Director for Place

9. Is further information needed to help inform decision making?

No

Is an EQIA required?

Not every proposal will need an EqlA. The data and research should inform your decision whether to continue with this EqlA. If you decide that your proposal does not need an EqlA, please answer the following question:

This policy, strategy, project or service does not require a EqlA because (provide details):Yes

Assessing the impact on different groups of people

For each of the protected characteristics groups below, please explain whether your proposal could have a positive, negative, unclear or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is and if unclear or negative please explain what mitigating actions will be taken.

- use the evidence you have gathered to inform your decision making.

- consider impacts on residents, service users and employees separately.
- if your strategy, policy, project or service contains options you may wish to consider providing an assessment for each option.
- see guidance for more information about the different [protected characteristics](#).

Key to impacts

Positive Impact	• the proposal eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and/or fosters good relations with protected groups.
Negative Impact	• protected characteristic group(s) could be disadvantaged or discriminated against
Neutral Impact	• no change/ no assessed significant impact of protected characteristic groups
Unclear	• not enough data/evidence has been collected to make an informed decision.

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Age	Neutral	Continuation of Leisure provision in the county
Disability	Neutral	Continuation of Leisure provision in the county
Gender reassignment and Gender Identity	Neutral	Continuation of Leisure provision in the county
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral	Continuation of Leisure provision in the county

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	Continuation of Leisure provision in the county
Race and Ethnicity	Neutral	Continuation of Leisure provision in the county
Religion and belief	Neutral	Continuation of Leisure provision in the county
Sex (consider men and women)	Neutral	Continuation of Leisure provision in the county
Sexual orientation	Neutral	Continuation of Leisure provision in the county
People with caring responsibilities	Neutral	Continuation of Leisure provision in the county
Rural isolation	Neutral	Continuation of Leisure provision in the county
Socio-economic deprivation	Neutral	Continuation of Leisure provision in the county
Single parents	Neutral	Continuation of Leisure provision in the county

Impacts on who or what?	Choose impact	How
Armed forces communities	Neutral	Continuation of Leisure provision in the county

Please provide a summary of the impacts:

The main impact on the continuation of the contracts over the 2 year period will be to make sure that the operators at the sites adhere to the advice by UK Active, Sport England and CIMSPA mainly in the regard the use of changing facilities within our leisure centres but all new rulings that may take place throughout the contract period

Action Plan

Summarise any actions required as a result of this EqIA.

Issue	Action to be taken	Person(s) responsible	Date to be completed by
Use of changing facilities	Each contract will adhere to the guidance given by UK Active and Sport England	Darren Spreadbury	Jan 2026 and onwards
Monitoring	Continuation of monitoring the contract by DC on a monthly and quarterly basis through KPI's and Stakeholder groups	Darren Spreadbury	Monthly/Quarterly till 2028
All comments and complaints	The contract operator will deal with all complaints and comments and feedback through the stakeholder groups	Operator/Darren Spreadbury	Quarterly until 2028

Sign Off

Officer completing this EqlA: Darren Spreadbury

Officers involved in completing the EqlA: Darren Spreadbury

Date of completion: 18/11/2026

Version Number: 2

EqlA review date: 18/11/2026

Equality Lead Sign Off: James Palfreman-Kay

Next Steps: As per the contract it will be monitored quarterly and through monthly KPI's

- the EqlA will be reviewed by Communications and Engagement and if in agreement, your EqlA will be signed off.
- if not, we will get in touch to chat further about the EqlA, to get a better understanding.
- EqlA authors are responsible to ensuring any actions in the action plan are implemented.

Please send to [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer](#)