

Diversity impact assessment

Appendix 2

TITLE
Continuation of the Grow in Kent Visitor Economy and Inward Investment Service
DATE
22 September 2026
LEAD OFFICER.
Paul Cowell, Chief Culture Officer Sean Henry, Economic Development Manager
1 Summary description of the proposed change
What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed? How does it compare with the current situation?
The proposal seeks approval for Medway Council to continue participating in, and financially contributing to, the Grow in Kent service, delivered jointly with Kent County Council. The service incorporates the Visit Kent and Invest Kent functions and supports tourism, inward investment, business engagement and place promotion across Kent and Medway. The proposal does not introduce a new service or reduce existing provision. It extends the current service delivery model beyond March 2027 to maintain continuity of delivery, economic growth activity, stakeholder engagement and investment promotion during the period of Local Government Reorganisation and devolution
2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment
E.g. Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user. E.g. Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile
Evidence considered includes: • Performance information from the Grow in Kent service since its establishment in 2025. • Visitor economy data showing that the Kent and Medway visitor economy is worth approximately £4.1 billion annually and supports over 82,000 jobs. • Delivery of destination marketing campaigns generating significant audience reach and engagement. • An established inward investment pipeline of approximately 200 business leads. • Stakeholder feedback from local authorities, tourism businesses, investors, business groups and industry representatives, which has been supportive of the continuation of the service. • Assessment of service impacts contained within the Cabinet report, which identifies no significant adverse impacts arising from continuation of current arrangements.

Diversity impact assessment

3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age	No	Yes	Yes
Disability	No	Yes	Yes
Gender reassignment	No	No	Yes
Marriage/civil partnership	No	No	No
Pregnancy/maternity	No	Yes	No
Race	No	Yes	Yes
Religion/belief	No	Yes	Yes
Sex	No	Yes	No
Sexual orientation	No	No	Yes
Care experience	No	Yes	Yes
Other (e.g. low income groups)	No	Yes	Yes

4 Summary of the likely impacts

Who will be affected?

How will they be affected?

The proposal maintains existing services that support economic growth, employment opportunities, tourism and business investment across Kent and Medway. As the service promotes inclusive economic growth and access to employment and business opportunities, it has the potential to advance equality of opportunity across a broad range of communities, including younger people,

Diversity impact assessment

disabled people, ethnic minority communities, care experienced people and low-income households.

The service also promotes Kent and Medway to a wide range of audiences and stakeholders, helping to strengthen relationships between diverse communities, businesses and visitors. No specific adverse impacts on any protected characteristic group have been identified.

The proposal will affect residents, businesses, investors, visitors, cultural organisations, tourism businesses and other stakeholders across Medway and Kent.

Likely impacts include:

- Continued support for economic growth and job creation.
- Continued promotion of Medway as a destination to visit, invest and do business.
- Ongoing support for businesses through investment promotion and stakeholder engagement activities.
- Maintenance of coordinated destination management and marketing activity.
- Increased opportunities for residents to benefit from employment, visitor economy growth and business investment.

No adverse equality impacts have been identified as a result of continuing the current arrangements.

5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?

Are there alternative providers?

Can demand for services be managed differently?

Although no significant adverse impacts have been identified, the service should continue to:

- Ensure marketing and promotional activity reflects the diversity of Kent and Medway communities.
- Monitor stakeholder engagement to ensure representation from a broad range of businesses and communities.
- Promote accessible tourism and inclusive economic development opportunities where possible.
- Continue engagement with local authorities, business groups and community stakeholders to understand emerging needs and barriers to participation.

Diversity impact assessment

6 Action plan

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Monitor equality impacts through ongoing service review and stakeholder engagement	Chief Culture Officer / Economic Development Manager	Annually
Ensure promotional campaigns reflect diverse communities and audiences	Grow in Kent Service	Ongoing
Encourage inclusive participation in business and tourism engagement activities	Grow in Kent Service	Ongoing

7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

It is recommended that the proposal proceeds.

The assessment has identified **no significant adverse impacts** on any protected characteristic group. Continuation of the Grow in Kent service is expected to support inclusive economic growth, employment opportunities, business development and tourism benefits across Medway and Kent. Any potential equality issues can be managed through ongoing monitoring and stakeholder engagement.

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

Assistant Director

Date of authorisation