Climate Impact Assessment Tool

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West Oxfordshire District Council

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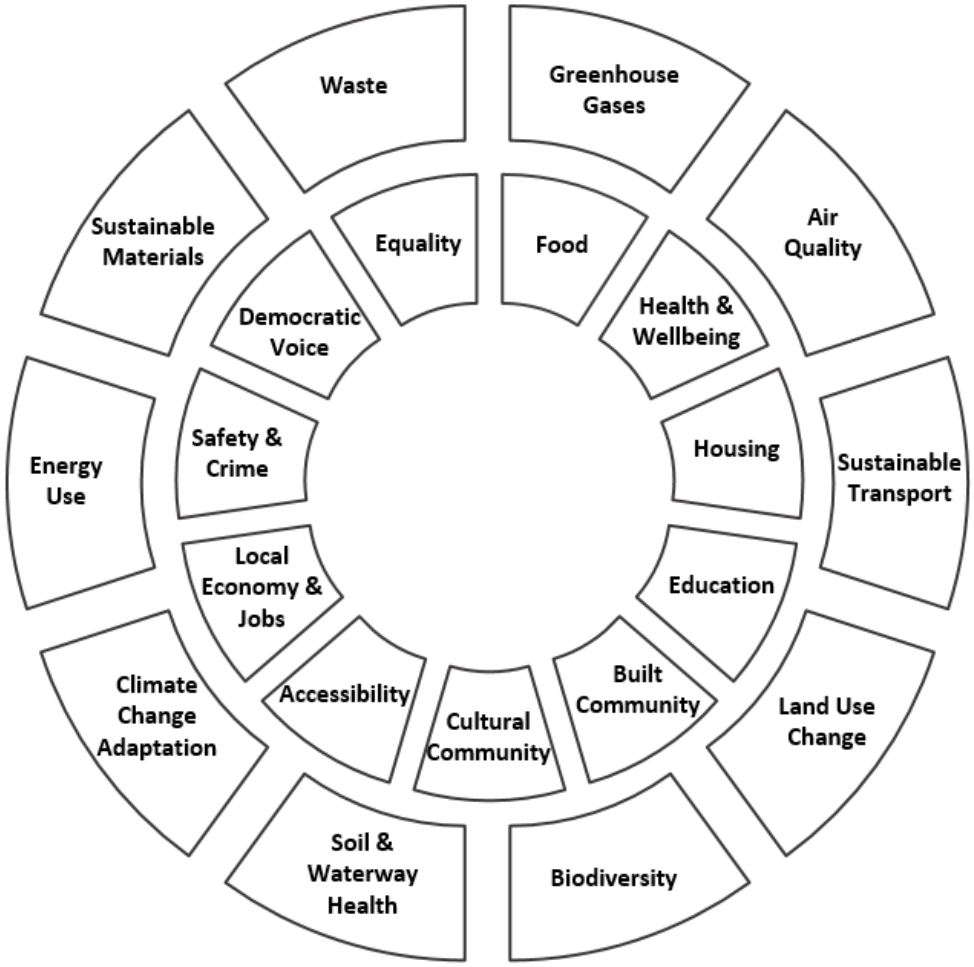
Why do we need an Impact Assessment Tool?

Before the Tool

- Finance first approach
- Social & Environmental implications considered last minute as a tick box exercise
- Climate impacts a concern for the Climate Team

Demonstration


Waste
Greenhouse Gases
Air Quality
Sustainable Transport
Land Use Change
Biodiversity
Soil & Waterway Health
Climate Change Adaptation
Energy Use
Sustainable Materials
Equality
Food
Health & Wellbeing
Housing
Education
Built Community
Cultural Community
Accessibility
Local Economy & Jobs
Safety & Crime
Democratic Voice

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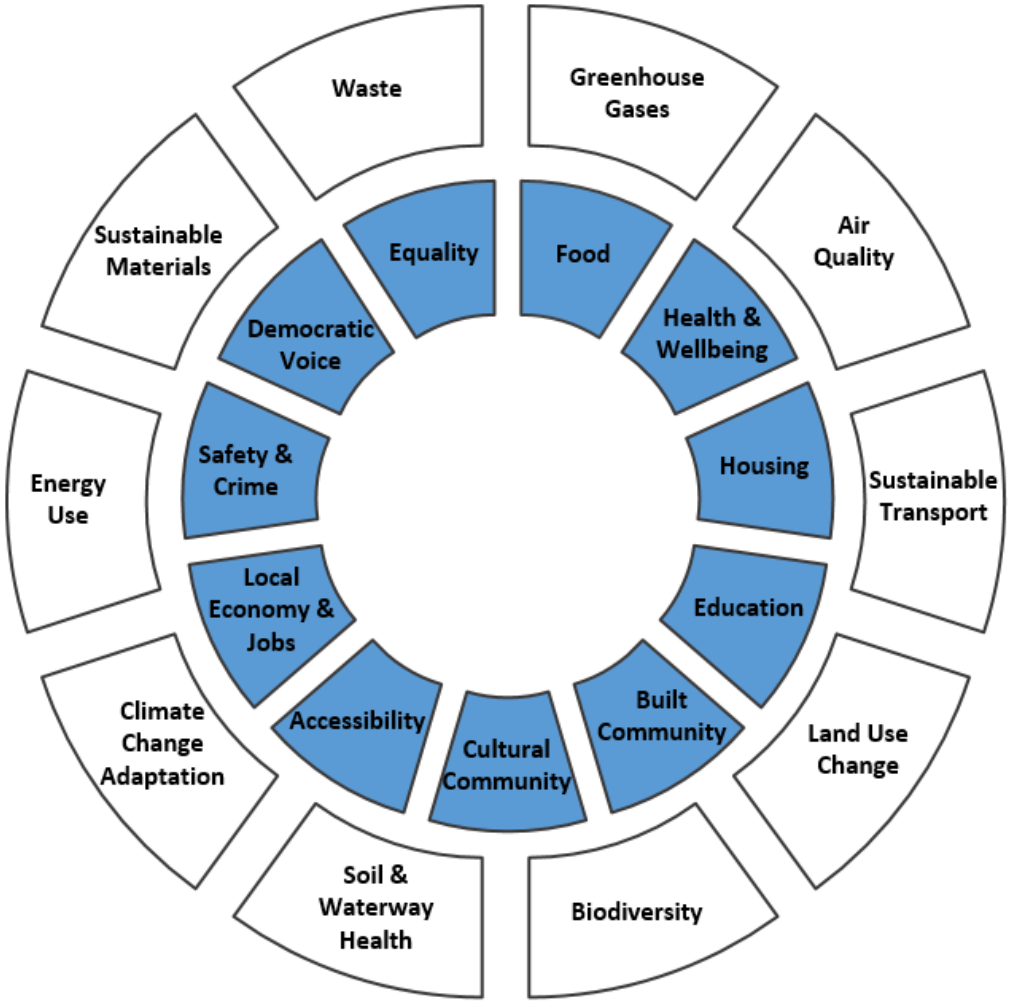
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1. Greenhouse Gases (GHGs)

How will this proposal impact levels of GHG emissions? Consider:

- Fossil fuels used to heat homes or drive vehicles
- Methane released by livestock or waste processes
- Fertilisers or agricultural activities
- Industrial refrigeration and air-conditioning processes

Why does this matter?

A. Please specify the impact your project will have on GHGs:

→ Type of impact (+/-)

B. Will this impact last beyond the delivery phase of the policy/project [i]

→ Longevity of impact

C. Will this have an impact beyond the intended location of the policy/project?

→ Geographical scope

Need help?

The greenhouse gases are (a) Carbon Dioxide, released when fossil fuels (coal, gas, oil) are burnt, (b) Methane, primarily released by livestock and waste processes, (c) Nitrous Oxide, primarily comes from fertilisers for agriculture, (d) Fluorinated Gases, produced by industrial refrigeration and air-conditioning processes. High levels of these gases have led to the greenhouse effect, causing average temperatures to rise and the climate to change.

Does your project relate to or involve any of the following?

Likely to reduce GHG emissions:

- Improving insulation in buildings
- Replacing gas/oil boilers with air-source heat pumps
- Encouraging public transport, walking, cycling
- Reducing the amount of waste produced
- Reducing use of petrol or deisel vehicles

Likely to increase GHG emissions:

- Construction
- Road closures with detours increase travel time
- Temporary relocation of a service (if further away)
- Increase in energy use of a building
- Replacing grassland/woodland with agriculture

Pilots

Thoughts:

- **Positives**: The ice rink provides ample opportunities for the community including health, education, cultural experience.
- **Where can we improve?** More accessible options, consider the impact of lighting on nature
- **Where must we look for alternatives?** The use of diesel generators, providing more sustainable transport options for visitors

Pilots

Feedback

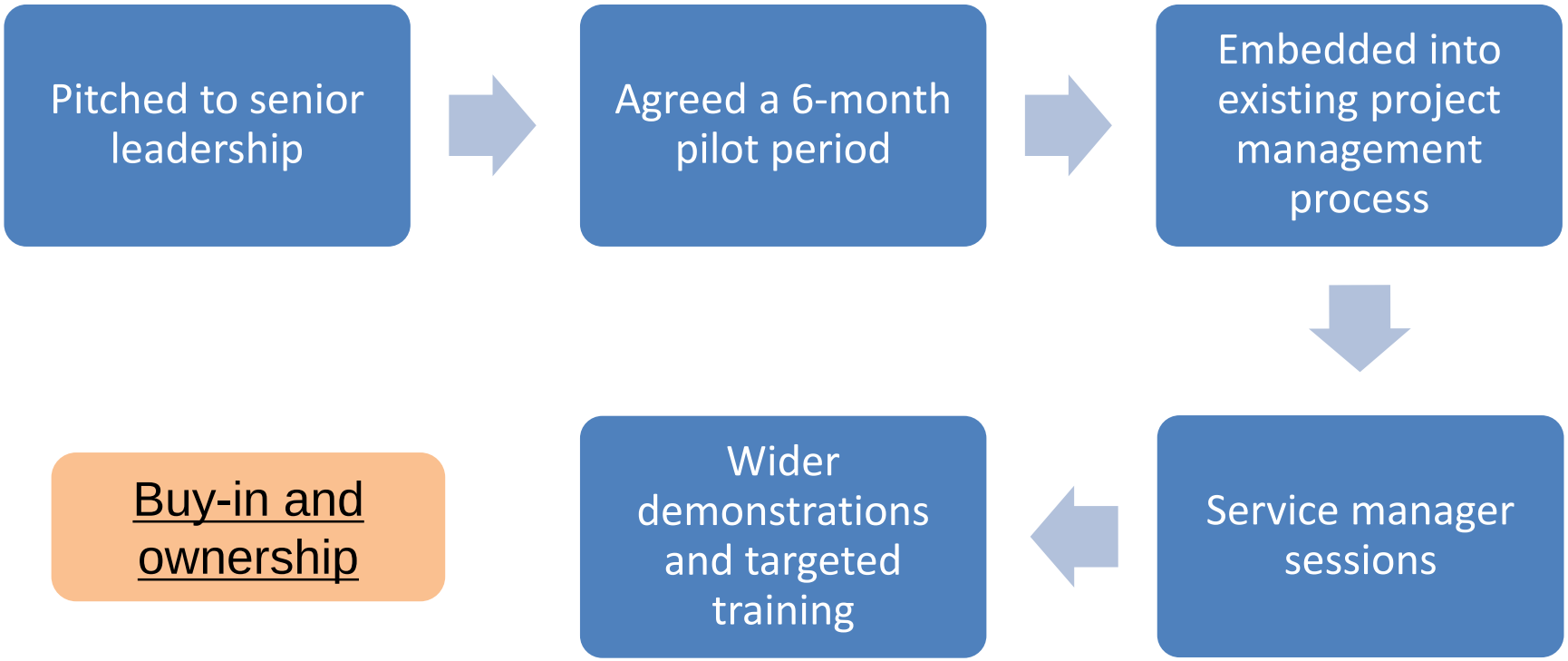
- Tool gives structure / framework to different aspects for consideration and makes climate questions more tangible by breaking them down into different elements
- Dashboard visual of Red/Amber/Green/Grey – helps to focus the mind on what the key impacts are

The tool in decision making

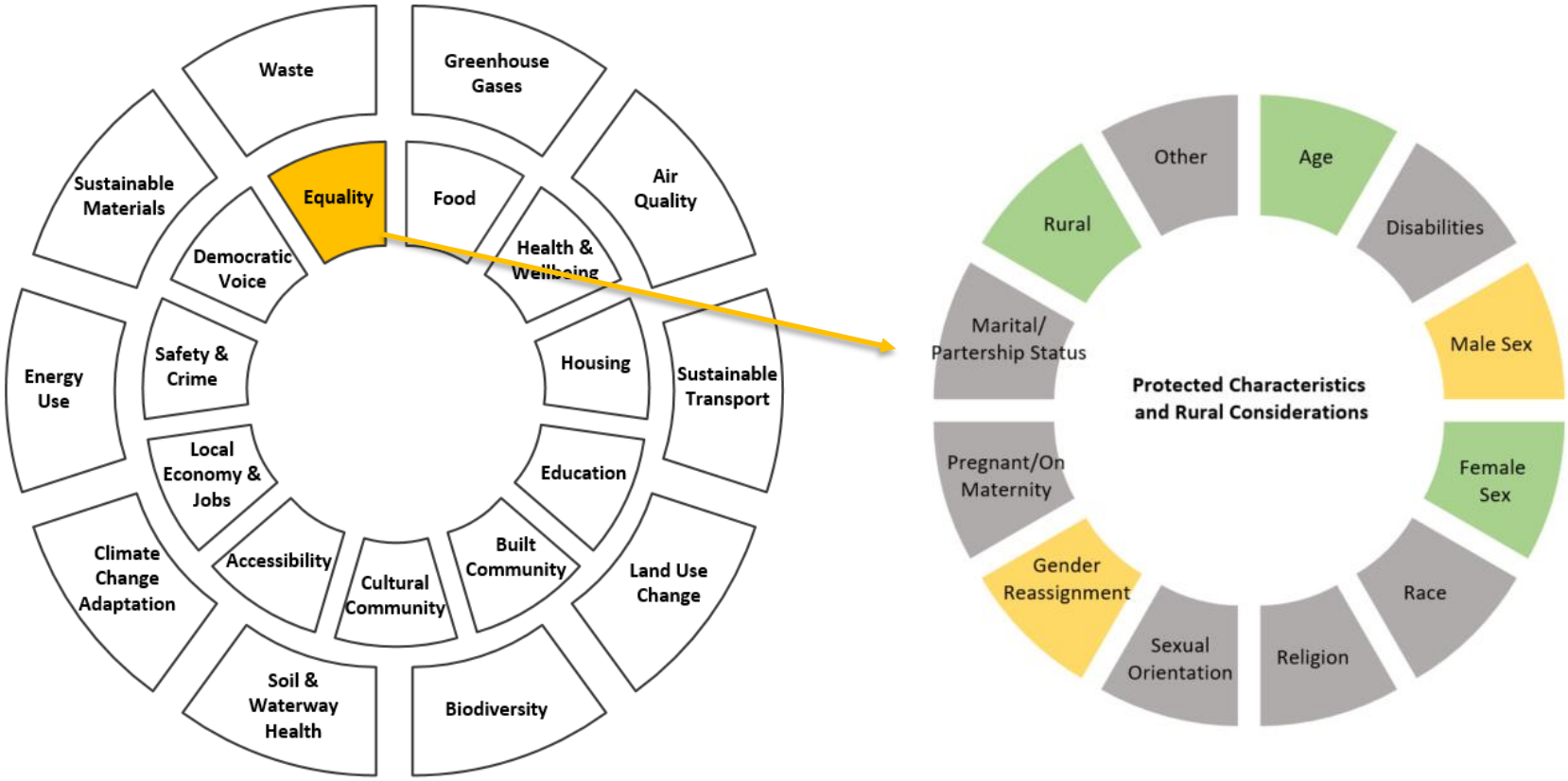
- The tool should be used on any project/proposal that:
  - comes forward for approval
  - is presented to cabinet for a decision
- A number of **red** sections signifies that a project or policy will have severely negative impacts in the indicated areas. This may be cause for concern, but at this stage will not be reason enough to reject a proposal.
- To encourage transparent use of the tool, the project manager should take one of three routes, and should add this to any proposal or cabinet report:

1. Change
2. Mitigate
3. Justify

Embedding to tool



Equalities Impact Assessment



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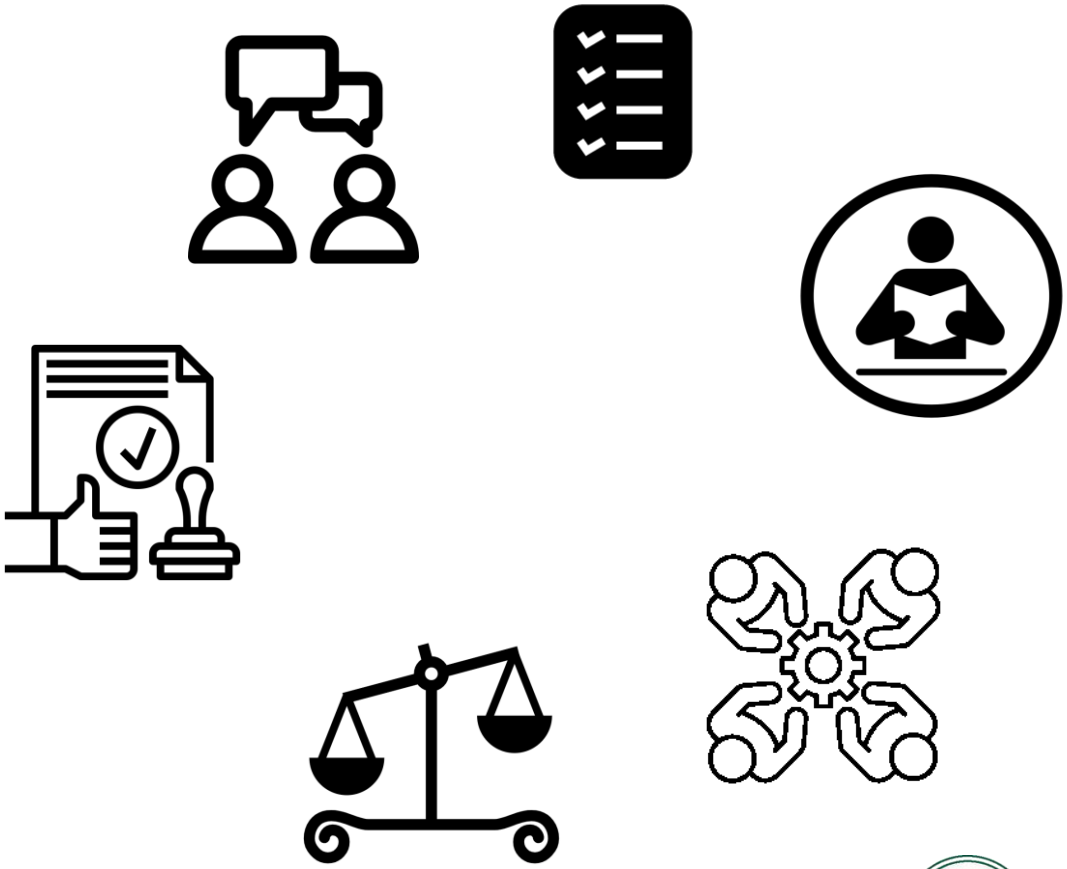
What works for us



Learnings

1. Buy-in is key
2. Simpler is better?
3. Embed into existing processes
4. Ongoing/iterative process
5. Intensive on staff time and resource
6. Software: online versus Excel

Next Steps

- Wider applications (grants, county-wide, festivals)
- Move to an online format
- More internal workshops
- Further embed into the project initiation phase

Thank you

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