

Template for Impact Assessment Level 1: Initial screening assessment
Appendix 3

Subject of assessment:	Advertising Policy			
Coverage:	Overarching			
This is a decision relating to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Function
	<input type="checkbox"/> Process/procedure	<input type="checkbox"/> Programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Review
	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)		
It is a:	New approach:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Revision of an existing approach:	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is driven by:	Legislation:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local or corporate requirements:	<input type="checkbox"/>

Description:

Key aims, objectives and activities

The proposed advertising policy aims to provide a clear, consistent framework for acceptable advertising, ensuring compliance with legislation and safeguarding public health. It supports the Council's Healthy Weight Declaration and Public Health Strategy, contributing to ambitions for a healthier, more sustainable, and more equal Middlesbrough.

Key Features of the Policy

- Prohibits advertising of HFSS foods, alcohol, tobacco, gambling, payday loans, fossil fuels, and other harmful commodities on Middlesbrough Council advertising assets including bus shelters, lampposts, roundabouts and social media channels.
- Allows limited exceptions for public health campaigns (e.g., stop smoking or responsible drinking).
- Applies content-based restrictions rather than brand-based, encouraging advertisers to promote compliant products.
- Protects local SMEs through exemptions and support for compliance.

Statutory drivers (set out exact reference)

- Middlesbrough Council - Council Plan – Priority 2 A Healthy Place
- Public Health South Tees - Public Health Strategy –
- Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government - Pride in Place Strategy 2025
- Recommended code of practice for local authority publicity - GOV.UK
- Marketing and advertising the law: Regulations that affect advertising - GOV.UK

Differences from any previous approach

Middlesbrough Council do not currently have an advertising policy in place to determine acceptable advertising, the implementation of such a policy will provide clarity on acceptable advertising

Key stakeholders and intended beneficiaries (internal and external as appropriate)

Stake Holders:

- Environmental and Commercial Services – particularly Transport and Sustainability Teams
- Marketing and Communications Team
- Public Health Team
- Regeneration Team
- Procurement Team
- Advertising Companies

Intended beneficiaries

- General public

Live date:	February 2026
Lifespan:	Until further notice
Date of next review:	March 2028

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
	No	Yes	Uncertain	
Human Rights Could the decision impact negatively on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK legislation?*	☒	☐	☐	No evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse impact on individuals in terms of human rights.
Equality Could the decision result in adverse differential impacts on groups or individuals with characteristics protected in UK equality law? Could the decision impact differently on other commonly disadvantaged groups?*	☒	☐	☐	There are no concerns that the policy could have a disproportionate adverse impact because individuals hold one or more protected characteristics. The body of the covering report sets out the evidence base for the policy and identifies that the policy would have a positive impact on the health outcomes of vulnerable residents including on exposure of children to unhealthy advertising. Evidence used to inform this assessment includes Public Health England research on the impact of advertising and sugar, British Medical Journal analysis of the interaction between advertising and exposure of unhealthy food advertising and analysis of the town's indices of multiple deprivation.
Community cohesion Could the decision impact negatively on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town?*	☒	☐	☐	No evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse impact on individuals in terms of community cohesion.
Armed Forces Could the decision impact negatively on those who are currently members of the armed forces of former members in the areas of Council delivered healthcare, compulsory education and housing policies?*	☒	☐	☐	No evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse impact on individuals who are current or former armed forces personnel
Care leavers Could the decision impact negatively on those who are care experienced?*	☒	☐	☐	No evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse impact on care experienced individuals

* Consult the Impact Assessment further guidance for details on the issues covered by each of these broad questions prior to completion.

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
<p>Reducing Poverty Could the decision impact negatively on the Council's ambitions to reduce poverty in the town?</p>	☒	☐	☐	<p>Application of the policy should reduce the exposure to unhealthy food and drinks. Evidence from the British Medical Journal has identified that those from lower socio-economic backgrounds have increased exposure to unhealthy advertising, compared to those in higher socio-economic groups. It should therefore have a positive impact on the Council's wider ambitions to reduce poverty.</p>
<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➡ If the answer to all of the above screening questions is No then the process is completed. ➡ If the answer of any of the questions is Yes or Uncertain, then a Level 2 Full Impact Assessment must be completed. 				

Assessment completed by:	Laura More	Head of Service:	Rebecca Scott
Date:	11/12/2025	Date:	11/12/2025