

Committees

Evidence based equality analysis

Main aims, purpose and outcomes and how does it fit in with the wider aims of the organisation:

The purpose of the analysis is to increase participation and inclusion, to change the culture of public decision-making and to place a more proactive approach to the promotion of equality and fairness at the heart of public policy.

Lead officer: Mandy Ramsden

Stakeholders: Democratic Services team, Elected Members, Chief Executive, senior officers and relevant partner organisations e.g. National Health Service/ Health and Wellbeing Board.

Equality analysis is a valuable tool to help embed equality into everything we do

While process is important, equality analysis is essentially about outcomes.

Lack of evidence of discrimination is not evidence of a lack of discrimination.

It is not acceptable to say that a policy is applied uniformly to all groups and is therefore fair and equal. Applying a policy or procedure consistently may result in differential outcomes for different groups.

For each of the areas overleaf, an assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a **positive, negative or neutral impact**, and brief details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation should be included. Where the impact is negative, this needs to be given a **high, medium or low assessment**. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

| Target group / area | Neutral | Positive | Negative |
|---|---|--|---|
| Race and ethnicity (including Gypsy and Travellers; migrant workers, asylum seekers etc.) | | Translation service available for school appeals and for documents on website, agendas, minutes etc. | Language difficulties leading to inability to participate in meetings open to the public. Cultural issues (low level of engagement from some ethnic minority communities) |
| Disability (as defined by the Equality Act - a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities) | | Wheelchair access ensured at all public meetings. Hearing loop in place where possible and turned on. Mobile hearing loop acquired. High proportion of meetings are webcast live (and archived online). All documents on website and people able to submit questions in advance of meetings and written response given. | Awareness that meeting rooms accessible to all, and that hearing loop is in place. |
| Gender/gender reassignment | No impact | | |
| Religion and belief | Staff awareness of prayer room facilities | Timetable of public meetings checked against religious holidays. Meetings avoided on Friday evenings. Meetings on Saturdays carefully considered to balance the needs of the community affected. | |
| Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual) | No impact | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>Age (children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults aged 25 – 50, younger older people aged 51 – 75/80; older older people 81+. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs).</p> | <p>Varying times of meetings and venues, staff available to assist and advise at meetings.</p> | <p>Wherever appropriate, agenda order is varied to take into account anticipated attendance / participation by young people / older people. High proportion of meetings are webcast live (and archived online) Public question time. Use of Twitter</p> | <p>Timings may not always assist working people /those with children – mitigation measures taken wherever appropriate. Public / personal transport issues for some.</p> |
| <p>Rural communities</p> | | <p>Venue of meeting considered if limited public transport available. If local issue meeting held at a local venue if possible.</p> | <p>Access to meetings difficult</p> |
| <p>Areas of deprivation</p> | | <p>Encourage use of plain English in reports. Visitors welcomed, procedures explained and helped to feel at ease.</p> | <p>Low expectation of being able to contribute – uncomfortable with public speaking.</p> |
| <p>Human Rights</p> | <p>Covered by legislation - Human Rights Act 1998. Right to free speech.</p> | <p>Constitution sets out rights of citizens to participate – varied methods</p> | |

Evidence (see guidance note for details of what to include here):

- Review Council website and update regularly.
- Webcast of meetings – thereby promoting public attendance. Archive of past meetings.
- Reviewed timetable of meetings for 2013/14 in January 2013
- Use of Twitter and other social media sites – including the Council’s Newsdesk website.
- Hearing loops provided at main Council venues.
- Varying times and venues of meetings where appropriate e.g. school appeals, licensing.
- Promotion of the use of other Council and partner venues.

Action plan:

| Actions required / Key activity | Priority | Outcomes required | Officer responsible | Review date |
|--|-----------------|--|--|--------------------|
| Regular review provision of access to democratic service information, councillor details, decision making process and meeting agendas and minutes. | Medium | Increased number of people having exposure to Council meetings and paperwork via the Council website, and actual viewing of meetings via webcast meetings and social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, etc) Part of departmental performance review | Mandy Ramsden and Democratic Services team | February 2015 |
| Promote local democracy through events such as ‘mock council’ | Medium | Broader engagement | Mandy Ramsden and Democratic Services team | February 2015 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Sign off | |
| Lead Officer: | Mandy Ramsden |
| Approved by Head of Service: | Simon Goacher on 14 January 2013 |
| Moderation and/or Scrutiny | |
| Date: | Moderated at directorate equality group on 23 July 2013 |
| Date analysis to be reviewed based on rating (high impact – review in one year, medium impact - review in two years, low impact in three years) | |

Please forward the completed Equality Analysis to the Equality and Diversity Managers for publishing on the Council's website