

Equality Analysis Guidance

1 Introduction and explanation of terms

This revised guidance incorporates multiple processes covering good practice for any policy development and decision making. The individual elements included are:

1.1 Equality Analysis

Formerly known as Equality Impact Assessment (“EIA” or “EqIA”), this is a programme of continuous improvement based on a systematic analysis of a policy*, in order to explore the potential for an adverse impact on a particular group or community. It is a method of assessing and recording the likely differential and/or adverse impact of a policy on people from different groups. If a policy results in unfairness or discrimination then we should consider changes to eliminate or lessen the impact.

**Although the term ‘policy’ is used in this document, this covers all the activities that the Council undertakes, so includes procedures, services, functions, projects, decisions etc.*

1.2 Health Impact Assessment

According to the World Health Organisation, *“Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a means of assessing the health impacts of policies, plans and projects in diverse economic sectors using quantitative, qualitative and participatory techniques. HIA helps decision-makers make choices about alternatives and improvements to prevent disease/injury and to actively promote health.”*

1.3 Rural proofing

Rural proofing is a process for evaluating Council policies to ensure that they take account of rural needs. This evaluation will ensure that, as policies are planned, developed and implemented we consider whether there is likely to be a different impact in rural areas because of differing circumstances or needs, if there is such impact what it might be, and where the impact is significant, what adjustments, changes or alternative methods of delivery will be needed to ensure that rural areas and communities derive the same, or similar benefits.

1.4 Age proofing

Age proofing is a process for evaluating Council policies to ensure that they take account of the changing demographic profile of West Cheshire. These changing demographics include significant increases in the number of older adults within communities. Age proofing aims to ensure that the planned impacts from these policies respects the needs of older adults and that consideration is also given to any potential unintended consequences for older people.

2 Aims of the Equality Analysis

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. The processes involved in conducting the analysis should not be looked on as an end in themselves. Instead, it should be borne in mind that the aim is the promotion of fairness and equality of opportunity and thus it is the outcomes that are of primary concern. Finally, the analysis helps the organisation to progress against the Equality Framework for Local Government.

3 Responsibility and involvement in the process

Since conducting the analysis requires drawing on a range of experiences, knowledge, expertise and data sources, it is recommended the exercise is carried out in a group rather than delegate the task to one individual. The group carrying out the analysis should, ideally, comprise of a balanced mix of employees/partnership representatives (e.g. not all of the same gender/age, individuals with relevant and appropriate knowledge and skills etc). It is also important to include someone with an external perspective/independent view (not associated with the service), who acts as a challenger, helping the team “to think outside of the box”.

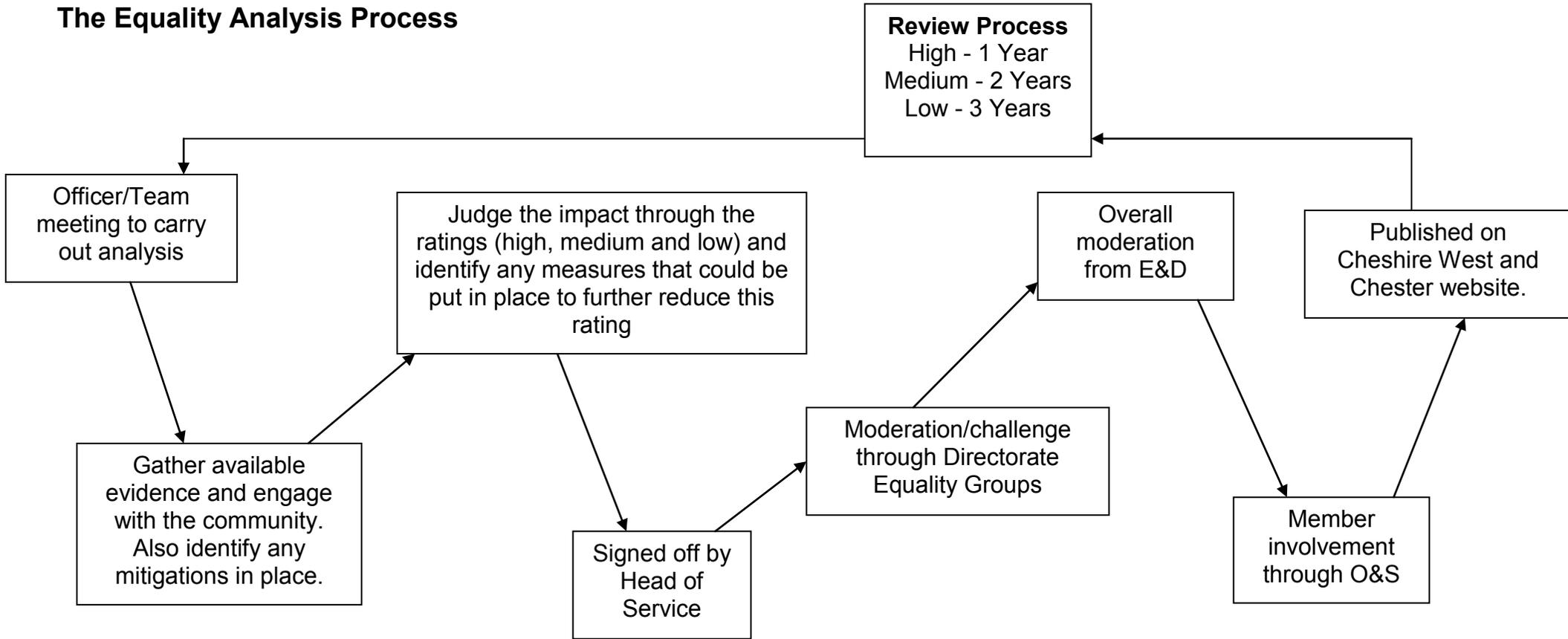
The analysis and outcomes belong to each service/department. It is the responsibility of the service to use the outcome to help to shape the service/inform the policy. A lead person should be appointed to take responsibility for overseeing the analysis and ensuring that it is completed appropriately. Heads of Service approve and sign off all assessments. Selected analyses will be subject to Elected Member scrutiny via the Corporate Scrutiny Committee

4 Key aspects of the Equality Analysis process

Main aims of the policy/function/decision etc	Why is the policy needed? What does the authority hope to achieve (outcomes)? How is it ensured that the policy will work as intended? How does it fit with the wider aims of the Council?
Lead Officer	This should be the person who is responsible for the policy
Stakeholders	Identify individuals who need to be involved in the exercise. These can be decision makers, front line staff implementing the policy, partners etc.
Target group/area	<p>An assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a positive, negative or neutral impact on each of these areas, 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).</p> <p>High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.</p> <p>Medium impact –some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence</p> <p>Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led</p>
Human Rights	The main Human Rights principles include: Right to life (<i>example - safeguarding</i>); Prohibition of torture (<i>example - caring for other people</i>); Prohibition of slavery and forced labour (<i>example - if someone has power to make people work in emergencies</i>); Right to liberty and security; Right to a fair trial (<i>example – processing benefits, awards, permits or licences and dealing with appeals of decisions</i>); No punishment without law; Right to respect for private and family life (<i>example – surveillance; entry to property; dealing with personal data</i>); Freedom of thought, conscience and religion (<i>example – religious organisations providing services to others, conflicts with someone’s religious beliefs such as timetabling</i>)

	<p><i>meetings/examinations etc.); Freedom of expression (example - broadcasting, media, press, writing speeches); Freedom of assembly and association (example - industrial relations; decisions regarding public protests, demonstrations); Right to marry (example - registering marriages); Prohibition of discrimination; Protection of property (example - licensing, trading standards); Right to education; Right to free election (example - democratic services, elections)</i></p>
Evidence	<p>Evidence can include documents, quotes, and web links for photos and videos. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this area and what are the results? What consultation will be needed, how it will be undertaken? Report the results. Identify where there are gaps in evidence and how these will be filled.</p>
Action plan	<p>Summarise all actions and outcomes identified, assign a lead officer and a timescale.</p>
Monitoring and review	<p>Equality analysis is not a one off exercise, they are to be reviewed regularly as follows: If high impact is identified – review in 1 year (are mitigations effective, review evidence), medium impact is reviewed in 2 years, low impact in 3 years.</p>
Signing off, scrutiny, moderation and publishing	<p>Heads of Service sign off in order to demonstrate they are satisfied with the content. Elected Members on the Corporate Scrutiny Committee are involved in scrutinising the content and outcomes of selected analyses. Equality analyses are public documents and are therefore published on the Council’s website, once moderated by the Equality Directorate Groups (in order to ensure consistency) and finally approved.</p>

The Equality Analysis Process



More information

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Rural communities	Rob Callow ext. 72858 Rob.callow@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk	Health and wellbeing	Please contact the PCT via the E&D team

Please delete guidance notes (*in italic*) after completion