

Stafford Borough Council

Equality Impact Assessment Guidance Notes (EIA)

Introduction

As functions or policies are reviewed, or new ones developed, an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) should be carried out to address the following legislation:

- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000;
- Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2006;
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975; and
- To help implement the Employment Equality Regulations on Sexual Orientation and Religion and Belief and Age.

Equality Impact Assessments can help the Council to meet the various stages of the Equalities Standard for Local Government and increasingly service inspections are asking questions about the findings of Equality Impact Assessments.

An EIA is a process to determine whether a policy or function has any “*differential impacts*” that could have an adverse (negative) implication on the basis of a person’s race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief or age. It is a method to ensure that a function or policy will not create any barriers, which could prevent access to services or employment opportunities.

Explaining the toolkit

Green text provides guidance on how to complete the form.

Equality Impact Assessment	
1	Title of Function or Policy to be assessed: Function refers to broad areas of activity, duties or powers - usually a service or set of services (including services which are provided internally). The word policy is used as shorthand for publicly recorded decisions about the way a function will be carried out, as well “custom and practice” and professional decisions - i.e. policies, procedures, guidance, strategies and/or plans.
2	Date:
3	Name of Lead Officer: The person leading on the EIA.

4	<p>EIA Team: State here the names of people who are assisting with the EIA. To gain a range of perspectives and knowledge an EIA should not be completed in total isolation. This does not mean having to set up a large meeting; this could consist of 4 – 6 people and must involve those who have contributed to the development of the policy or function. It may mean involving partner agencies where there are clear links. However, it is important to keep the meeting manageable.</p>
5	<p>Head of Service: The Head of Service for the function or policy.</p>
6	<p>Existing, new or review: State here whether the policy or function is existing, new or a review.</p> <p>The EIA should be carried out whenever a new policy or function is being developed or is under review. There may be a need to carry out an EIA on existing services, particularly where there is evidence of low take-up, a number of complaints or any other concerns.</p> <p>Ideally, an EIA should be carried out during the development stages, if this has not happened, it can be undertaken retrospectively. Any concerns identified will need to be addressed as soon as possible.</p>
7	<p>Set out the aims/objectives/purposes/outcomes of the function or policy, and give a summary of the service provided:</p>
8	<p>Linked policies, functions: Are there any other functions, policies or services, which might be linked with this one for the purposes of this exercise? State here whether there are any linked policies. Please note that most policies/functions are linked in some way. This section is asking for links that are of great <i>significance</i> and where it may be impossible for you to undertake the EIA without broadening the scope of the exercise.</p>
9	<p>Who is it intended to affect or benefit (the target population):</p> <p>The group or groups which the policy or function is intended to affect or benefit is “the target population”.</p>

10	<p>Within this table, state whether the policy or function will have a positive or negative impact across the following factors and provide any comments.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Positive Impact</th> <th>Negative Impact</th> <th>Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Age</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disability</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gender</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Race</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Religion/belief</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sexuality</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Socio Economic</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Examples of different impacts: Positive Impact: The service will be delivered from a particular building. The building has undergone a full access audit, and is accessible for people with both physical and sensory disabilities. Negative Impact: Information about the service/policy is published and contains jargon and small print. May have a negative impact on visually impaired people, those with learning disabilities and for people whose preferred language is not English.</p> <p>*sometimes a negative impact cannot be avoided if a function or policy has been deliberately designed for a particular group. For instance, a service for frail elderly people over 65 is positive in terms of disability but will have an unintended negative impact on those under 65 years old as they will not be eligible for the service. This does not necessarily mean that it is wrong. However, teasing out differential impacts, provides you with the opportunity to question whether a specifically designed service/policy is actually relevant in the present time. Demographic changes, unmet needs and or an increase in demands may mean that the service may need to be tailored differently.</p> <p>Should this section show negative impacts on all or the majority of the factors outlined, then you will need to question the legality of the policy/function.</p>		Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Comments	Age				Disability				Gender				Race				Religion/belief				Sexuality				Socio Economic			
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11	<p>What evidence do you have for the statements you have made above? Examples of Evidence: Negative Impact: e.g. evidence of concerns, issues or complaints etc.</p>																																

Positive Impact: e.g. data showing representative take-up of service, monitoring data, positive feedback from service users etc.

12. From evidence given at Q.11 what actions, if any, will you need to take against each of the following equality strands:

Disability:

Race:

Gender:

Age:

Religion/belief:

Sexuality:

Socio Economic

13. Briefly explain how the policy or function contributes to Community Cohesion by answering the following questions:

- How will it provide equality of access to services, information and employment?
- Does it or could it celebrate diversity?
- Will it or could it promote good relationships within and between communities?
- How will it help to prevent social exclusion?
- Will it help to reintegrate those who have become excluded?
- How will it provide good quality, inclusive services?

The Commission for Integration and Cohesion have described community cohesion as having five elements:

- Engagement and participation;
- Meaningful interaction across groups;
- Respect for diversity and social trust;
- Solidarity and collective community action;

If you have any queries about using Equality Impact Assessments, please contact Tracy Redpath on 01785 619195 or e-mail: redpath@staffordbc.gov.uk

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- Equality of opportunity, access, treatment and services.

What does this mean for the Borough?

- Local communities living in urban and rural areas of the Borough experience similar life opportunities.
- Strong and positive relationships are developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances
- In Stafford's workplaces there are strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds and circumstances.
- At a locality level in Stafford people from different backgrounds and circumstances have strong relationships and differences are celebrated and valued.
- People from different backgrounds living in Stafford have similar life opportunities and services are delivered in an inclusive way.
- Community leadership is strong and Members have play a key role in building cohesive communities through democratic renewal.
- Communities feel engaged in the process of planning, designing, and delivering services.
- The third sector is strong and vibrant.

14. Consultation:

Describe what consultation has been undertaken on this function or policy, who was involved and the outcome.

“Consultation” is a broad term, and for the purposes of EIA's can include:

- Data collected from surveys, customer feedback forms etc.
- Focus groups.
- Public meetings.
- Discussion groups.
- Participative exercises.
- Consultation with staff groups*
- Opinion polls.

N.B. This list is not exhaustive.

Head of Service:

I am satisfied with the results of this EIA

*The findings will be referred to within Business Plans and targets built around these.

I agree to review the Action Plan after 12 Months

*It is imperative that the findings of EIA's are built as target areas within business plans. It may not be possible to address everything all at once. Therefore you will need to prioritise which ones you will apply in the first year of your business plan, for instance. You should aim to cover all the equality strands.

Signature of Head of Service:

Completion of the Toolkit:

Legislation requires the publication of the results of impact assessments and these will be published on the council website. Completed toolkits and any action

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plans should be forwarded to Tracy Redpath who will quality check the EIA, ensure that the results of the EIA is added to the Website and assist with monitoring any actions identified in Q12.