

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

Title of strategy / policy / service being assessed:	
Contact Telephone Number:	
Date assessment completed:	
Signature and name of Head of Service signing off this impact assessment and equalities improvement plan.	Name:
	Signature:
	Service:
<p>PURPOSE:</p> <p>To develop an equalities improvement plan based on an assessment of whether the strategy/policy or service is or could adversely impact on particular groups of people due to their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnic origin (including gypsies & Roma travellers) • Gender (including transgender) • Impairment (physical, sensory, learning disability, mental health or long term limiting illness) • Age • Religion/belief • Sexual orientation (defined as people from the lesbian, gay or bisexual communities) • Or as a result of living in a rural community, lower socio economic group or being a new group to this country (migrant worker, refugee or asylum seeker) • Caring responsibilities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To assess whether the adverse impact constitutes illegal discrimination (see separate EIA guidance notes) and identify the actions to remedy this. If the discrimination is legal, to consider whether action is necessary to mitigate the effect on other groups. 2) To record any unmet needs/requirements identified as result of carrying out this assessment, even where these are not directly relevant to the assessment (see guidance notes for explanation). 3) To put in place arrangements to monitor, analyse and report the ongoing effect across the groups identified. 4) To consider if and how different groups of people could be involved in monitoring the outcomes and/or contributing to further development of the strategy/plan/function/objective/target. 5) To ensure that all equalities actions arising from the above processes are mainstreamed into the relevant service/business plan.
<p>More detailed guidance has been produced to accompany this proforma see intranet under A to Z>Equalities together with details about free training sessions.</p>	

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Section A. To Assess or Not to Assess

To determine whether an EIA is required, please read the questions below and indicate your answer by putting an X in the box to the right of the “Yes” or “No” at the end of each question.

Does the service affect the public or staff directly?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does it affect how other services are provided?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there information e.g. survey data or complaints that suggests that it is affecting particular groups of people?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does it have employment implications?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have answered “Yes” to one or more of the questions listed above, you will need to continue with a full equalities impact assessment (EIA).

However, if you have carried out an assessment of this strategy/policy or service in the past two years, for example, as part of the transformation programme, or there has been an external audit of the service, which has resulted in explicitly stated equalities outcomes, you will not need to continue with an in depth EIA. You will, instead, need to consider any gaps in relation to the groups identified under “Purpose” and agree actions/targets.

If you have answered “No” to all of the above the statements, you will not need to continue with a full EIA because it is not relevant to the strategy/policy or service.

Please send this document to your Service equalities representative (see “Equalities” on the intranet for a current list) and copy it also to Angie Sarchet, Cohesion & Equalities Manager, Room 404, County Hall or via email to asarchet@buckscc.gov.uk. Ensure you do this prior to final sign off by the Head of Service to enable the challenge process to be applied effectively.

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Section B. Reviewing the design	
Questions to consider	The Findings
<p>1. Why is the strategy/policy or service necessary? What are the key aims and objectives? What outcomes is it designed to achieve and for whom?</p>	
<p>2. Consider your answers at question 1. How have the needs of different groups of people, where relevant/appropriate, been taken into account? What does needs assessment data tell you about who should be benefitting from the strategy/policy or using the service? What else do you know about people's needs or views? What information do you have from consultations/focus groups, national or local published research reports, satisfaction surveys, service monitoring data, benchmarking with other providers, demographic data or other information that has been used to formulate the design and delivery of the strategy/policy/ or service. Also refer to the council's "Research" information on the website.</p> <p>If you identify a gap in information, for example, about the needs of a particular group of people, include this as an action point in the equalities improvement plan.</p>	

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Questions to consider	The Findings
<p>3. Are other organisations responsible for delivering the strategy/policy or service? If yes, how have you incorporated the council's cohesion and equalities priorities into the procurement process or contractual arrangements? How is compliance monitored? What steps have you taken to reduce the council's legal liability where services are being delivered on our behalf? If not relevant, go on to question 4.</p>	
<p>Section C. Reviewing the implementation/delivery</p>	
<p>4. Does the strategy/policy need to be communicated to the public/our employees or does accessing the service depend on information being communicated to the public? If yes, how will this be achieved? Consider the information we already have about how our residents prefer us to communicate with them and consider the ways that different groups of people generally find out information. How do you or how will you ensure that communication is appropriate to meet the different communication needs of different groups of people? If not relevant, go to question 5.</p>	
<p>5. Is delivery of the strategy/policy or service dependent upon particular buildings, open space or mode of transport being used by the public? If yes, what facilities and transport access arrangements have been put in place to ensure that the needs of different groups of people have been addressed? See the EIA guidance notes for suggested issues that you need to think about. If not relevant, go to question 6.</p>	

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Questions to consider	The Findings
<p>6. Review any processes people need to go through to be able to use the service or to benefit from the strategy/policy. For example criteria that are applied to determine eligibility for receiving the service and the completion of forms. Do these processes/criteria effectively prevent groups of people of people from using the service or benefiting from the strategy/policy?</p> <p>(Ideally you should be aiming to only keep those processes and criteria that are essential to implementation/delivery, for example, because they are a legal requirement.)</p>	
<p>7. What particular skills and knowledge will relevant staff need to ensure that the strategy/policy is properly implemented or that the service is delivered appropriately to meet people’s individual needs?</p>	
<p>Section D. Assessing for adverse impact and discrimination</p>	
<p>Consider the answers given in questions 1 through to 7 and assess whether the strategy/policy or service results, or could result, in adverse impacts on different groups of people. Essentially you are looking to identify and deal with any actual or potential unfairness, disadvantage or discrimination. (See the guidance notes for a more detailed explanation.)</p> <p>If you consider that there is an adverse impact, or the potential for an adverse effect, state whether these adverse impacts constitute illegal discrimination or not, and state whether these are justifiable or legitimate. You are required to give your reasons for this.</p>	

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If you have identified an adverse impact that constitutes illegal discrimination, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately.

If you have identified an adverse impact that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider whether actions can be taken to mitigate its affect on particular groups of people. This arises out of the duty to promote good relations between people of different groups and is in keeping with the Council's approach to "Strong & Cohesive Communities in Bucks".

Ensure that these actions are listed in the attached equalities improvement plan.

If you do not have the authority to take the action required, you will need to alert the relevant service manager to your findings.

Section E. Ensuring continuous improvement

Questions to consider	The Findings
<p>9. What measures will you be using to monitor the impact of the strategy/policy or service over the next three years?</p> <p>The council is committed to mainstreaming equalities, ensuring that it is integrated into our performance management frameworks and subject to continuous improvement through performance monitoring. We also have legal duties to ensure we are not discriminating against groups of people in the provision of goods, services and facilities or in our role as an employer.</p> <p>You should only expect to carry out an equalities impact assessment every three years (unless you are introducing a significant change in the interim). You will, therefore, need to have information systems in place that will enable you to analyse and interpret information to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show the numbers of particular groups using the services and what outcomes they experience	

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- Show under-use of a service by an equalities group
- Show over-use by an equalities group
- Reveal discrimination
- Demonstrate that services are not discriminatory
- Measure the effectiveness of service changes
- Identify the need for new or changed services

Please refer to the council's monitoring guidance (see website – add link?) to decide what type of monitoring is appropriate and what information you will need to gather.

Also consider whether you need have some targeted actions with particular groups of people to address the issues identified above.
Please ensure that these are listed in the attached equalities improvement plan.

Section F. Opportunities for community cohesion or promoting good relations between different groups of people

Community cohesion and equalities are priorities for Buckinghamshire County Council.

Community cohesion is the outcome of understanding and respect between different communities and a sense of identification with a wider community. In essence it's about promoting a sense of connection, trust and belonging both within geographical communities and across groups of people. It is at risk where illegal discrimination exists, or is perceived to exist, when stereotypes and disinformation go unchallenged and where lack of knowledge about, or experience of, different groups of people leads to fearfulness and segregation.

Equalities in Buckinghamshire are at risk when we fail in our duty to provide an appropriate and professional service that takes account of the different needs of groups of people as a consequence of their colour, culture and ethnic origin, gender, disability, age, religion/belief or sexual orientation or as a result of living in a rural community, lower socio economic group or being a new group to this country and/or county (migrant worker, refugee or asylum seeker).

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Questions to consider	The Findings
<p>10. Consider what opportunities and risks to the Council's community cohesion and equalities priorities could arise, for example:</p> <p>(a) Are there ways in which your service could bring different groups of people together, for example to develop future provision through consultation exercises?</p> <p>(b) Are there ways in which existing groups could interact with the service, for example, as part of ongoing monitoring of service provision?</p> <p>(c) Could the way you provide the service bring different groups of people together to use the service?</p> <p>(d) Does the way in which your service is provided have the potential to lead to resentment between different groups of people? How can you compensate for perceptions of preferential or differential treatment? Consider the role, or potential role, of the media and extremist groups when formulating your communication actions.</p> <p>(e) If the improvement plan identifies addressing a gap in the service for a particular group of people, have you also addressed the potential for perceptions of preferential treatment for the group? How will you ensure that people will understand the need for the actions proposed as a result of this impact assessment?</p> <p>Ensure that the actions you identify are put into the attached equalities improvement plan.</p>	

EQUALITIES IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Please list all the equalities actions and targets that result from the Equalities Impact Assessment (continue on separate sheets as necessary). These also need to be integrated into the relevant service plan for mainstreaming and performance management purposes.

Equalities Targets/Actions	Officer responsible	By when

Once the challenge process has been completed, please return the agreed Equalities Impact Assessment Form (signed by your Head of Service) and equalities improvement plan, to Angie Sarchet, Cohesion & Equalities Manager, Room 404, County Hall or via email to asarchet@buckscc.gov.uk and also copy to your service equalities representative (see “Equalities” on the intranet for an up to date list of service representatives).