

## South Staffordshire Council Equality Impact Assessments (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.

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

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 that could prevent access to services or employment opportunities.

<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Title of Function or Policy to be assessed:</b> External Communication, Consultation and Engagement Strategy
<b>2</b>	<b>Date:</b> July 2008
<b>3</b>	<b>Name of Lead Officer:</b> Jamie Angus, Communications Officer. (01902) 696502 <a href="mailto:j.angus@sstaffs.gov.uk">j.angus@sstaffs.gov.uk</a>
<b>4</b>	<b>EIA Team</b> Kieran Smith Jamie Angus
<b>5</b>	<b>Chief Officer:</b> Steve Winterflood – Deputy Chief Executive
<b>6</b>	<b>Existing, new or review:</b> Review of 2005 External Communication, Consultation and Engagement Strategy
<b>7</b>	<b>Set out the aims/objectives/purposes/outcomes of the function or policy, and give a summary of the service provided:</b>  The purpose of this strategy is to improve links with local voluntary groups, resident groups, businesses, partners and other organisations.  To produce a media protocol for Council officers.  To help develop and support consultation and engagement with local residents through various mechanisms including the South Staffordshire Review newspaper.  To improve residents' perceptions of the Council and the services it provides.  To ensure that the Council's website is updated regularly and adheres to all accessibility standards.  This strategy will also allow the Council to undertake its statutory duty to consult with disabled people.

If you have any queries or comments about Equality Impact Assessments or about the toolkit, please contact:  
Kieran Smith, Policy and Partnerships, 01902 696537  
Or email: [k.smith@sstaffs.gov.uk](mailto:k.smith@sstaffs.gov.uk)

**South Staffordshire Council  
Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)**

<b>8</b>	<p><b>Linked policies, functions: Are there any other functions, policies or services which might be linked with this one for the purposes of this exercise?</b></p> <p>Internal Communications Strategy South Staffordshire Viewpoint (Residents' Panel) All Council services Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Council website</p>																												
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Who is it intended to affect or benefit (the target population):</b> This document is primarily intended to benefit all residents' of South Staffordshire, regardless of age, gender, race, religion/belief, disability, sexual orientation or any other self-defining group or persons.</p> <p>This strategy is also intended to help improve the level of service that the Council delivers to hard-to-reach/seldom heard groups including rural communities, travelling communities, those with no home, LGBT residents and domestic abuse victims.</p> <p>It is also hoped that this strategy will help foster improved communication and engagement with the Third Sector.</p> <p>This document also aims to ensure that South Staffordshire Council will meet its statutory consultation duties.</p>																												
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Within this table, state whether the policy or function will have a positive or negative impact across the following factors and provide any comments.</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%;">Positive Impact</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Negative Impact</th> <th style="width: 45%;">Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Age</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Y</b></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disability</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Y</b></td> <td></td> <td>Making information about the Council and its services available in other formats such as Braille, large print and audiotape. The Council's website re-design project will also ensure that it includes screen readers and other technological support to ensure that it complies with relevant legislation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gender</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Y</b></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Race</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Y</b></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Religion/belief</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Y</b></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sexuality</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Y</b></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Comments	Age	<b>Y</b>			Disability	<b>Y</b>		Making information about the Council and its services available in other formats such as Braille, large print and audiotape. The Council's website re-design project will also ensure that it includes screen readers and other technological support to ensure that it complies with relevant legislation	Gender	<b>Y</b>			Race	<b>Y</b>			Religion/belief	<b>Y</b>			Sexuality	<b>Y</b>		
	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Comments																										
Age	<b>Y</b>																												
Disability	<b>Y</b>		Making information about the Council and its services available in other formats such as Braille, large print and audiotape. The Council's website re-design project will also ensure that it includes screen readers and other technological support to ensure that it complies with relevant legislation																										
Gender	<b>Y</b>																												
Race	<b>Y</b>																												
Religion/belief	<b>Y</b>																												
Sexuality	<b>Y</b>																												
<b>11</b>	<p><b>What evidence do you have for the statements you have made above?</b></p> <p><b>Age:</b> see page 25, paragraph 2 of the Strategy</p> <p><b>Disability:</b> see page 27, paragraph 5 of the Strategy</p> <p><b>Gender:</b> see page 27, paragraph 1 of the Strategy</p> <p><b>Race:</b> see page 26, paragraph 3 of the Strategy</p> <p><b>Religion/belief:</b> see page 26, paragraph 7 of the Strategy</p> <p><b>Sexuality:</b> see page 25, paragraph 4 of the Strategy</p>																												

If you have any queries or comments about Equality Impact Assessments or about the toolkit, please contact:  
Kieran Smith, Policy and Partnerships, 01902 696537  
Or email: [k.smith@sstaffs.gov.uk](mailto:k.smith@sstaffs.gov.uk)

**South Staffordshire Council  
Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)**

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

**Disability:**

To consult, where possible, with the relevant groups.  
To establish a forum through which consultation can take place for/through the Council's Diversity Reference Group

**Race:**

To consult, where possible, with the relevant groups.

**Gender:**

To consult, where possible, with the relevant groups.

**Age:**

To consult, where possible, with the relevant groups.  
To work closely with the LSP, through the Sustainable Community Strategy to address and support the District's ageing population.

**Religion/belief:**

To consult, where possible, with the relevant groups.

**Sexuality:**

To consult, where possible, with the relevant groups.

**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?**

This strategy helps establish a policy setting out clearly how we should communicate effectively across the District.

- **Does it or could it celebrate diversity?**

This strategy promotes inclusion and diversity by stipulating that information should be appropriate and recognise the needs of Residents.

- **Will it or could it promote good relationships within and between communities?**

Yes, please see above.

- **How will it help to prevent social exclusion?**

This strategy aims to improve communications within the District therefore providing residents with information in appropriate formats.

This document will also help examine issues around the reporting of, and reduction of, hate crime, whilst encouraging community cohesion.

- **Will it help to reintegrate those who have become excluded?**

This strategy has the potential to assist reintegration. By promoting information in appropriate formats to the appropriate people, it hopes to raise awareness about the services that the Council offers to everyone in our local communities.

- **How will it provide good quality, inclusive services?**

It is hoped that improved communications will give staff the opportunity to provide an improved, diverse and inclusive service to our residents.

If you have any queries or comments about Equality Impact Assessments or about the toolkit, please contact:

Kieran Smith, Policy and Partnerships, 01902 696537

Or email: [k.smith@sstaffs.gov.uk](mailto:k.smith@sstaffs.gov.uk)

**South Staffordshire Council  
Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)**

**14. Consultation:**

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

The Council's Diversity Reference Group provided previously established information on hard-to-reach groups within the District.

**Task and Finish Working Group** – The Task and Finish Working Group gave thoughts, opinions and previous experiences from their roles, which subsequently fed into the final strategy.

**Communications Group** – The Communications Group provided a broad ranging forum of colleagues from across various service areas whose ideas, opinions and experiences were fed into the strategy.

**SMT** – This strategy will go before SMT for further discussion

**Executive** - This strategy will go before the Council's Executive for further discussion

**Consultation period with all colleagues** – The final draft of the strategy will be placed on the Council's intranet for a period of time to allow all members of staff to comment. Copies will also be made available in other formats upon request.

**Chief Officer:**

I am satisfied with the results of this EIA

I have seen the Councils (3) Equality Schemes or Equality Action Plan and am satisfied with the contribution it can make.

I agree to review the Action Plan after 12 Months with the relevant Equality representative.

**Signature of Chief Officer/Director/Head of Service:**



**Steve Winterflood  
Deputy Chief Executive  
13<sup>th</sup> October 2008**

**Completion of the Toolkit:**

Kieran Smith  
Corporate Policy Officer  
South Staffordshire Council  
13<sup>th</sup> October 2008