

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.

Explaining the toolkit

Equality Impact Assessment	
1	Title of Function or Policy to be assessed: Internal Communications Strategy
2	Date: 27/02/2008
3	Name of Lead Officer: Jamie Angus, Communications Officer. (01902) 696502 j.angus@sstaffs.gov.uk
4	EIA Team Jamie Angus Kieran Smith
5	Director/Head of Service/Service Manager: Steve Winterflood – Deputy Chief Executive
6	Existing, new or review: Review of 2004 Internal Communications Strategy
7	Set out the aims/objectives/purposes/outcomes of the function or policy, and give a summary of the service provided: The purpose of this strategy is to improve and make clearer internal communications across the organisation.
8	Linked policies, functions: Are there any other functions, policies or services which might be linked with this one for the purposes of this exercise? External Communication, Consultation and Engagement Strategy Place Survey / Best User Satisfaction South Staffordshire Viewpoint (Residents' Panel) Staff Survey – Summer 2007/Summer 2008 Communications Group

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

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

9	<p>Who is it intended to affect or benefit (the target population):</p> <p>This document is primarily intended to affect and benefit members of staff at South Staffordshire Council, which includes; colleagues from remote-based locations such as Leisure Centres, Baggeridge Country Park, Hinksford Mobile Caravan site and officers based at the Lane Green depot.</p> <p>This strategy is also intended to help improve the level of service that the Council delivers to local residents. Improved lines of internal communication should help make colleagues feel more prepared and informed about the job they do, culminating in improved customer service.</p> <p>The document should also benefit local partners for the same reasons as above.</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" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 30%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%;">Positive Impact</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Negative Impact</th> <th style="width: 40%;">Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Age</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disability</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gender</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Race</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Religion/belief</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sexuality</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Comments	Age	Y			Disability	Y			Gender	Y			Race	Y			Religion/belief	Y			Sexuality	Y		
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11	<p>What evidence do you have for the statements you have made above?</p> <p>As this document is intended to help improve communications within the organisation, all staff should have a greater working knowledge of the Council's policies including, for example, its equalities scheme, relevant legislation, and relevant training opportunities available.</p> <p>The strategy also states that members of staff have a duty to inform and communicate with colleagues without discrimination on the basis of age, race, religion, gender, disability or sexual preference.</p> <p>The strategy also stipulates that briefings and other forms of communication should be made available to meet the needs of individual members of staff upon request.</p>																														
<p>12. From evidence given at Q.11 what actions, if any, will you need to take against each of the following equality strands:</p>																															
<p>Disability: To ensure that staff at all levels can participate by making all communications available, upon request, in various formats in order to prevent exclusion.</p>																															
<p>Race: To actively raise awareness of the Council's Equalities schemes.</p>																															
<p>Gender: To actively raise awareness of the Council's Equalities schemes</p>																															

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

Age:

To actively raise awareness of the Council's Equalities schemes

Religion/belief:

To actively raise awareness of the Council's Equalities schemes

Sexuality:

To actively raise awareness of the Council's Equalities schemes

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 organisation.

- **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 other colleagues.

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

N/A

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

This strategy aims to improve communications within the organisation therefore providing colleagues with the information they need to do their jobs and deliver the Council's services. Subsequently, improved delivery and engagement should have a positive impact upon all residents and groups within the District

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

This strategy has the potential to assist reintegration. By promoting the Council's Equalities Scheme it hopes to raise awareness about hard-to-reach groups within 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.

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

Staff Survey 2007 – results from this survey, which were open to all colleagues, were used to inform this strategy.

Task and Finish Working Group – The small Task and Finish Working Group gave thoughts and opinions, 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 and opinion were fed into the strategy.

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

SMT – This strategy was presented to SMT

Consultation period with all colleagues – The final draft of the strategy was 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/Director/Head of Service:

I am satisfied with the results of this EIA

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

Signature of Chief Officer/Director/Head of Service:



Completion of the Toolkit:

Accepted by the Diversity Reference Group 18.06.08

Kieran P. Smith
Corporate Policy Officer
19.06.08