



Lancaster City Council's Equality Impact Assessment Guidance and Form

What is an equality impact assessment?

An equality impact assessment is a way of understanding the impact that a new way of doing things might have on members of our community, in particular people from protected groups. This could be a new service, practice, policy, strategy, project or decision.

Protected groups include age, disability, faith, religion or belief, gender (including marriage, pregnancy and maternity), gender reassignment, race and sexual orientation (including Civil Partnership).

Please note: the impact on rural communities and people on low incomes must also to be considered.

Why do I need to carry out an equality impact assessment?

Part of the council's core purpose is to *'provide a range of customer focused services and offer value for money and meet the needs of people who live, work and visit the district' and to 'maintain a cohesive community by ensuring we understanding the needs of our communities and provide equality of access to our services and employment opportunities'*.

It is therefore important that we collect and use information about our community to help us to understand how service changes and decisions might impact on the local community.

Our corporate *Ethos* makes it clear that in our stewardship role the council has a responsibility for *'ensuring the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the local area'* and that in terms of social justice that *'the values of local government are founded on equality and meeting community needs'*.

Therefore we should consider how everything we do will impact on the communities that we serve. This should lead to more informed decision making, more customer focussed, cost effective, efficient services for local people.

When delivering services and employment, the council has a general equality duty to consider the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other unlawful conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

How do I carry out an equality impact assessment?

A simple form has been developed to assist services with carrying out equality impact assessments.

The form provides a consistent approach to equality impact assessment, however, it is more important that we consider how everything we do will impact on the local community and that action is taken to mitigate impact. The form provides a way of recording this.

The council's 'getting to know our communities' data will help services to assess potential impact on protected groups. This provides both local and national statistics and is available on the Elsie equality and diversity page (via HR).

All councils have to produce similar information, therefore it may be useful to do a web search rather than starting from scratch.

An example of a completed form is also available on the Elsie equality and diversity page (via HR).

When do I need to carry out equality impact assessment?

Equality impact assessment should take place when considering doing something in a new way.

For example:

- A change in a current service or introduction of a new service
- The review of a current policy/strategy or the development of a new policy/strategy
- The start of a new project or when making a decision.

A decision making flow chart is available on the Elsie equality and diversity page (via HR).

An equality impact assessment form will need to be completed as an appendix to decision making committee reports eg Cabinet, Council.

Please note: the outcomes of your equality impact assessment should be used to inform your reports.

Please refer to the report writing guidelines on Elsie or contact democratic services for advice on this.

Who should carry out equality impact assessment?

An equality impact assessment should be carried out by the officer leading on above examples.

Who can I contact for support and guidance?

Equality impact assessment support is available from the HR and Organisational Development Team.

Equality impact assessment form

An equality impact assessment should take place when considering doing something in a new way.

Please submit your completed form as an appendix to your committee reports for monitoring and publishing purposes to [‘report clearance’](#) (please refer to report writing guidance).

Please keep your answers brief and to the point. Consideration needs to be reasonable and proportionate.

Please also remember that this will be a public document – do not use jargon or abbreviations.

Section 1: Details

| | |
|--|---|
| Service | Health and Housing Service - council housing |
| Title and brief description (if required) | Service Review – Council Housing <i>proposals to restructure the housing management service of the council</i> |
| New or existing | New - An organisational restructuring to deliver service change. |
| Author/officer lead | Chris Hanna, Principal Housing Manager |
| Date | 31 October 2016 |

Does this affect staff, customers or other members of the public?

Yes Staff

The reorganisation is focussed on the staff delivering the housing management services of the council. The outcomes of the reorganisation will have universal impact on the wider community both in terms of service delivery and access to services.

Section 2: Summary

What is the purpose, aims and objectives?

The purpose of the review is to look at the changing service delivery needs within the housing management service to respond to key drivers for change within the housing management services include (but are not limited to):

- encouraging interaction with the council as a landlord;
- encouraging tenant independence;
- supporting tenancy sustainment;
- providing further support for tenants to address their needs;
- improving choice in service delivery;
- improving tenancy enforcement;
- supporting community investment activities;
- supporting wider organisational change.

And restructure the housing management service to deliver change to meet these needs.

Who is intended to benefit and how?

Staff and Service Users

Section 3: Assessing impact

Is there any potential or evidence that this will or could:

| | | |
|--|--|------------------|
| • Affect people from any protected group differently to others? | | No |
| • Discriminate unlawfully against any protected group? | | No |
| • Affect the relations between protected groups and others? | | No |
| • Encourage protected groups to participate in activities if participation is disproportionately low (won't always be applicable)? | | Yes ¹ |
| • Prevent the council from achieving the aims of its' Equality and Diversity Policy? | | No |

If yes, please provide more detail of potential impact and evidence including:

- A brief description of what information you have and from where eg getting to know our communities data, service use monitoring, views of those affected ie discussions or consultation results?
- [Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2015/2016](#) including demographic profile identified service delivery areas which tenant concerns and were key drivers to improve tenant satisfaction.
- Consultation with the District-wide Tenants' Forum on wider service objectives and future needs
- Consultation with staff – both formal and informal
- Equality profile of the current establishment
- What does this tell you ie negative or positive affect?

| | |
|--|---------|
| Age including older and younger people and children | Neutral |
| Disability | Neutral |
| Faith, religion or belief | Neutral |
| Gender including marriage, | Neutral |

¹ One of the outcomes sought from the restructure is to support greater engagement and involvement of tenants in service design and delivery.

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| pregnancy and maternity | |
| Gender reassignment | Neutral |
| Race | Neutral |
| Sexual orientation Including Civic Partnership | Neutral |
| Rural communities | Neutral |
| People on low incomes | Positive Impact |

Section 4: Next steps

Do you need any more information/evidence eg statistics, consultation? If so, how do you plan to address this?

Equality profile of the current establishment has been reviewed.

Controls to address any equality impacts arising out of the restructuring proposals include:

- Consultation with staff on any proposals - [Consultation and Negotiation Protocol](#)
- Approval of the proposals will be undertaken with scrutiny of Management Team, Cabinet, and the overall scrutiny procedures of the council

Issues and actions arising will be investigated and any additional and response and control measures will be considered as required.

Following any future decision:

- Any implementation any structure changes will follow the council's HR policies and procedures including - [Equality and Diversity Policy](#); [Consultation and Negotiation Protocol](#); [Early Termination of Employment Policy](#); [Recruitment and Selection Policy](#)

How have you taken/will you take the potential impact and evidence into account?

Equality profile of the current establishment has been reviewed.

Issues and actions arising will be investigated and any additional and response and control measures will be considered as required.

How do you plan to monitor the impact and effectiveness of this change or decision?

Feedback through the council's

Ongoing feedback on service satisfaction levels from customers regarding service delivery following the implementation of the new structure including Biannual Tenant Satisfaction Survey.

Thank you for completing this equality impact assessment form, please submit your completed form as an appendix to your committee reports for monitoring and publishing purposes to [‘report clearance’](#) (please refer to report writing guidance).