

## SURREY HEATH BOROUGH COUNCIL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

The Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to ensure that in the delivery and development of your service you meet the needs of our diverse community and at the same time demonstrate the Council is meeting its duty its Equalities duties. Compliance with the general equality duty is a legal obligation, but it also makes good business sense to get things right for our community.

The Equality Impact Assessment should be a live document and it will be useful for you to start to complete it at the beginning of any process so that you can design into your work the steps you need to take to meet both customer needs and the legislative requirements. This will allow you to think both about the aims of the work and what you want to achieve, and also where there are barriers or issues for protected groups.

The public sector equality duty consists of a general equality duty, which is set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and specific duties which are imposed by secondary legislation. The duty covers eight protected characteristics which are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The equality impact assessment should cover the eight equality protected characteristics. The duty also covers marriage and civil partnership, but not for all aspects of the duty.

[The essential guide to the public sector equality duty](#) is available on the intranet.

The Equality Action Group and its members are available to consult before or during the assessment as well as reviewing it at the end. This does not have to be at formal meetings so please make use of this resource as and when you need to.

### Stage 1: Scope of the assessment

Service area: Regulatory	Assessing Officer: Clive Jinman
Date: 1/11/17	Activity/policy being assessed: Home Assistance Policy
<b>What are the aims, purpose of the strategy/service etc?</b>	
The Council has a duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants to adapt the homes of disabled residents to promote their health and well-being. The funding for this work can be used flexibly if the council has a Policy in place to allow this. The advantages of working flexibly include: quicker delivery of services by reducing the bureaucracy, ability to fund other works that promote health and well-being like repairs that remove hazards from people's homes, and ability to carry out research, wider take up campaigns and service development.	

**Detail who is / is going to be affected by the strategy, service etc (is it all Borough residents, or is it a particular group or groups of people).**

Disabled and vulnerable residents, individuals and families on low incomes and in poor quality housing that impacts their health.

**Procured services and grants**

The general equality duty applies to other organisations who exercise public functions. This will include private bodies or voluntary organisations which are carrying out public functions on behalf of a public authority. The duty therefore applies to where the Council has contracted out a service or is considering contracting out or is decommissioning a service. It also applies to the allocation or withdrawal of grants.

Please state if the service is being provided by another organisation on the Council's behalf and what actions have been taken to ensure that the service complies with the equality duty e.g. provisions in the contract, monitoring of the service provided in terms of the protected groups (please refer to the Council's Procurement Toolkit).

**Knowing our customers**

Understanding our community is an important part of developing and delivering our services.

To help understand how your work impacts on the protected equality groups please detail the information that you have about the interaction of these groups with your service.

From this information detail any evident gaps or issues that need to be investigated e.g. in who accesses the service, satisfaction or other outcomes.

Due to the nature of the work the client base is predominantly from protected equality groups and their families and carers.

This would be disabled adults and children, and older people.

### **Engagement**

If engagement is done well, it can help to improve the design and delivery of services, and increase trust in public authorities by promoting transparency and be a mechanism by which public authorities can be held to account by services users. It can lead to efficiency gains by improving service design at the planning stages. It can also help to identify whether more favourable treatment is necessary in order to meet particular needs. Good engagement can mean more sustainable services, as services that better meet the needs of users are likely to be more effective in the longer term.

You are only required to take an approach that is proportionate and relevant when deciding who to engage with and what methods to use.

Describe any engagement you have had in relation to this activity, and how this has influenced the final outcomes.

The Council, along with other Boroughs and Districts in Surrey and Surrey County Council, commissioned a piece of work by a national charity to look at the delivery of these services across Surrey to identify best practice locally and nationally and recommend service and efficiency improvements that could be adopted.

This work is being taken forward in partnership with Health and Social Care partners.

It did not at this stage include client consultation and the Service does not have a track record of engaging with clients on anything other than work specific contact. Work is needed to capture client satisfaction with the service and a transparent way of this influencing service delivery.

## Stage 2: Assessment and analysis

Public authorities under the equality duty, in the exercise of their functions, are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other 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.

Please give examples of how the policy/service etc has or will further the three equality aims in the general equality duty? Please consider the positive and negative equality impacts relating to the protected groups: race, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment and pregnancy and maternity within the policy/service etc? Public authorities also need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status.

In answering the above questions, think about:

### Positive Impacts

Do you think that the strategy, service etc could have a positive impact on any of the equality groups: improve relations between groups, promote equal opportunities, improve accessibility of services and prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation etc?

### Negative Impacts

Do you think that the activity could impact negatively on people from the equality groups, if the impact is negative how can it be mitigated? Please consider the below areas.

- Publicity (including communication issues, design, distribution)
- Accessibility, location, opening times
- Poverty and social inclusion issues
- Discrimination
- Are groups represented in the consultation and the decision making process?
- How does current policy currently meet needs around the equality groups are there any unmet needs?
- Is there any evidence that there is higher or lower take-up by particular groups?
- Have there been any demographic changes or trends locally?
- Is there any indication that particular policies create problems for specific groups?

**Race** (Race refers to a group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins).

Give examples of how this activity or policy has a positive or negative impact on this characteristic, or why you consider it has no impact. Please also describe any future work that you will be carrying out because of this assessment.

This Policy has no specific impact on this characteristic. The service is available all sections of the community.

**Disability** (A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)

Give examples of how this activity or policy has a positive or negative impact on this characteristic, or why you consider it has no impact. Please also describe any future work that you will be carrying out because of this assessment.

This Policy will have a positive impact on this characteristic. This is because:

- Those entitled to grant aided adaptations will have that work delivered in a more timely manner;
- Those not entitled to grant aid will still have access to a service to help meet their physical needs within the home;
- More timely intervention and the removal of hazards from the home environment will reduce hospital admissions;
- A faster response will allow faster hospital discharge where it is delayed because of a physical factor in the home;
- Research and take up campaigns will increase knowledge and consequently take up of services.

**Sex** (Sex refers to someone being a man or a woman)

Give examples of how this activity or policy has a positive or negative impact on this characteristic, or why you consider it has no impact. Please also describe any future work that you will be carrying out because of this assessment.

This Policy has no specific impact on this characteristic. The service is available all sections of the community.

**Sexual orientation** (This is whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposites sex or both)

Give examples of how this activity or policy has a positive or negative impact on this characteristic, or why you consider it has no impact. Please also describe any future work that you will be carrying out because of this assessment.

This Policy has no specific impact on this characteristic. The service is available all sections of the community.

**Age** (This refers to a person having a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or being within an age range (e.g. 18-30 year olds))

Give examples of how this activity or policy has a positive or negative impact on this characteristic, or why you consider it has no impact. Please also describe any future work that you will be carrying out because of this assessment.

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- Research and take up campaigns will increase knowledge and consequently take up of services.

The service is open to residents of all ages including children

**Religion or belief** (Religion means any religion, including a reference to a lack of religion. Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (for example, Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included).

Give examples of how this activity or policy has a positive or negative impact on this characteristic, or why you consider it has no impact. Please also describe any future work that you will be carrying out because of this assessment.

This Policy has no specific impact on this characteristic. The service is available all sections of the community.

**Gender reassignment** (This is the process of transitioning from one sex to another. See also trans, transgender, transsexual)

Give examples of how this activity or policy has a positive or negative impact on this characteristic, or why you consider it has no impact. Please also describe any future work that you will be carrying out because of this assessment.

This Policy has no specific impact on this characteristic. The service is available all sections of the community.

**Pregnancy and maternity** (Maternity is the period after giving birth. It is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, including as a result of breastfeeding).

Give examples of how this activity or policy has a positive or negative impact on this characteristic, or why you consider it has no impact. Please also describe any future work that you will be carrying out because of this assessment.

The Policy could have a positive impact on this characteristic as it includes a child welfare package where such issues as damp and mould could be addressed which for those bringing a new born into poor housing conditions would benefit from.

**Marriage or Civil Partnership** (Marriage is a union between a man and a woman: Civil partnership is legal recognition of a same-sex couple's relationship. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a range of legal matters).

Give examples of how this activity or policy has a positive or negative impact on this characteristic, or why you consider it has no impact. Please also describe any future work that you will be carrying out because of this assessment.

This Policy has no specific impact on this characteristic. The service is available all sections of the community.

**Stage 4: Sign off**

Completion by Assessing Officer:

Signature:

Date:

Received and reviewed by Service Head:

Actions arising:

Signature:	Date:
Received and reviewed by Equality Action Group:	
Actions arising:	
Date:	

**Date of EIA review** (usually in 3 years time or earlier if necessary): .....

Equality impact assessments and an annual summary of the results will be published on the Council's web site and sent to stakeholders and partners.