



Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Completed by: Breige Convery

Date: 4 September 2009

Updated: following internal consultations, 6 October 2009

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Created: 21/9/2006

Officer: Joanne L Thain

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<p>Name of policy or function to be assessed: Comprehensive Equality Scheme 2009 -2012</p>	<p>Name of manager responsible for assessment: Jonathan Free</p> <p>Team undertaking this assessment Policy Team, Organisational Development</p> <p>Name of Officer providing guidance on this assessment</p> <p>Any other relevant individuals or groups involved in this assessment</p>
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<p>Is this a new or existing policy/function/service?</p>	<p>Existing policy: <i>Mid Suffolk District Council Comprehensive Equality Scheme (Incorporating the Race Equality Scheme) 2005-2008</i></p>
<p>Step 1. Describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy or function/service (include how it fits in to wider aims or strategic objectives).</p>	<p>Aim of the existing scheme 2005-2008:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To detail how the Council proposes to address the requirements of the Equality Standard for Local Government (Equality Framework for Local Government since April 2009). 2. To set out how the Council proposes to fulfill its statutory duties under the Race Relations Act. <p>Following consultation the updated scheme was amended and the second aim was withdrawn and met through a stand alone <i>Race Equality Scheme</i>, currently under consultation, which will sit within the context of this revised Comprehensive Equality Policy. The first</p>

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	aim remains.
Are there any associated objectives of the policy or function (i.e. setting a standard of good practice, improving consumer confidence in the service)?	Associated objectives: To ensure for Mid Suffolk District Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. accessible and responsive services for customers and residents from all communities2. a workplace of first choice for potential and existing employees from all backgrounds3. A Council reflective of the diversity of our local population and providing strong civic leadership4. A district where people from people all backgrounds and communities live together in

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	<p>peace, harmony and prosperity and where people want to come to live and work</p> <p>To enable the Council to meet its Strategic Priorities of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Affordable and decent housing 2. Responsible environmental management 3. Safer cohesive communities 4. Jobs and the rural economy 5. Responsive planning 6. Community engagement
<p>Who is intended to benefit from the policy/function and in what way?</p>	<p>The policy is intended to benefit people from groups or communities that have been in the past, or may currently be, at risk of discrimination in terms of services and or employment provided by the Council, specifically people affected by legislation regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Disability • Gender and Transgender

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race • Religion / Belief • Sexual orientation • Caring responsibilities • Civil partnerships • Trade Union membership/non-membership
<p>What are the intended outcomes of this policy/function?</p>	<p>The intended outcomes are to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate sustainable and consistent progress on the Equality Framework for Local Government 2. Produce, adopt, publish, implement, monitor and report on an action plan to achieve Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-related outcomes in terms of the five themes of the Equality Framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing our community and equality mapping • Place shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement and satisfaction • Responsive services and customer care • A modern diverse workforce
<p>Step 2</p> <p>What baseline quantitative data do you have about the policy/function relating to equalities groups (e.g. monitoring data on proportions of service users compared to proportions in the population)?</p>	<p>District demographic information regarding the equality strands from Census 2001.</p>
<p>What qualitative data do you have on different groups (e.g. results of previous consumer satisfaction surveys/consultation, feedback exercises, or evidence from other authorities undertaking similar work)?</p>	<p>Information from the Disability Equality Scheme consultation in 2006</p>
<p>Step 3</p> <p>Are there concerns that the policy / function could have a differential impact on different Racial groups?</p>	<p>The policy is intended to achieve equal outcomes for people in all racial groups in terms of access to</p>

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What evidence do you have for this?
Do the differences amount to an adverse impact or unlawful discrimination?

If there are concerns that it is indirectly discriminatory could it still be justifiable e.g. on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? (It is advisable to get legal advice on this.)

employment and services.

We have poor evidence of the differential access to services currently according to race. Our employment monitoring is of poor quality due to low responses and unwillingness to disclose – 12.41% *left blank* and 1.43% *do not know*. This has an impact on the ability to report to MSDC. However the information we have suggests that people from Black and minority ethnic groups are under-represented in our workforce.

In terms of services, particularly in respect of accommodation (legally defined requirements) for Gypsy Roma Traveller people is an area of need.

So there is no evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse negative impact on any racial group. It is intended to have a positive impact in terms of achieving equal outcomes for groups currently

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	disadvantaged.
<p>Are there concerns that the policy / function could have a differential impact on Gender?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for this? Do the differences amount to an adverse impact or unlawful discrimination?</p> <p>If there are concerns that it is indirectly discriminatory could it still be justifiable e.g. on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? (It is advisable to get legal advice on this.)</p>	<p>The policy is intended to achieve equal outcomes for people of all genders in terms of access to employment and services.</p> <p>We have poor evidence of the differential access to services currently according to gender. Our employment monitoring suggests that women are poorly represented at more senior management levels within the Council: although the majority of MSDC's staff are female (57.4%) only 19.35 of bands 7-8 are female, however this is an increase since 2007 when only 9.5% of bands 7-8 were female employees.</p> <p>Overall 38.34% of employees work part time. 31.36% are female employees with only 6.98% of part time workers being male. The trend for part time working</p>

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	<p>appears to be higher at bands 0-4. As the bands increase, the number of part time employees starts to decrease.</p> <p>In bands 7-8 there is only one part time employee. In terms of services, we have evidence to suggest that services for people at risk of violence, usually women, are poor. The Equality and Human Rights Commission has been in contact with the Council, as with other councils in Suffolk and nationally, regarding this issue.</p> <p>So there is no evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse negative impact on any particular gender. It is intended to have a positive impact in terms of achieving equal outcomes for people currently disadvantaged by their gender.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact on Disabled People (including</p>	<p>The policy is intended to achieve equal outcomes for people in all disability groups in terms of access to</p>

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<p>children with additional needs)</p> <p>What evidence do you have for this?</p> <p>Do the differences amount to an adverse impact or unlawful discrimination?</p> <p>If there are concerns that it is indirectly discriminatory could it still be justifiable e.g. on grounds of promoting equality if opportunity for one group? (It is advisable to get legal advice on this.)</p>	<p>employment and services.</p> <p>We have some evidence from complaints of the differential access to services and negative impacts of policy decisions made by the Council or by partnerships of which the Council is a part, according to disability.</p> <p>Our employment monitoring is of poor quality due to non responses (31.26% no response). However the information we have suggests that people with disabilities are under-represented in our workforce.</p> <p>So there is no evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse negative impact on either disabled or non-disabled groups. It is intended to have a positive impact in terms of achieving equal outcomes for people who have a disability.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the policy / function could have a differential impact on Lesbians, Gay Men, Bi-</p>	<p>The policy is intended to achieve equal outcomes for</p>

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sexual and Transgender People than on heterosexual young people or adults?

What evidence do you have for this?

Do the differences amount to an adverse impact or unlawful discrimination?

If there are concerns that it is indirectly discriminatory could it still be justifiable e.g. on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? (It is advisable to get legal advice on this.)

people of all sexual orientation and for transgender people in terms of access to employment and services.

We have no evidence about access to services according to sexual orientation or transgender.

Our employment monitoring data in terms of sexual orientation is of poor quality due to low response rates. However the information we have suggests that LGBT people may be under-represented in our workforce.

Regarding the outcomes of this policy, there is no evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse negative impact on people of any particular sexual orientation or transgender people. It is intended to have a positive impact in terms of achieving equal outcomes for people from LGBT.



<p>Are there concerns that the policy/ function could have a differential impact on Younger or Older people?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for this?</p> <p>Do the differences amount to an adverse impact or unlawful discrimination?</p> <p>If there are concerns that it is indirectly discriminatory could it still be justifiable e.g. on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? (It is advisable to get legal advice on this.)</p>	<p>The policy is intended to achieve equal outcomes for people of all ages in terms of access to employment and services.</p> <p>We have no evidence about access to services according to age. The Strategy supporting older people has recently been reviewed and a consultation has taken place. A continuing increase in the aging population of Mid Suffolk has been reported and comment made on the implications for service provision.</p> <p>Our employment monitoring data in terms of age suggests that younger people are under-represented in our workforce. The highest proportion of employees within the authority is those aged between 50 and 59, closely followed by the 40-49 age group.</p>
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The Local Government employment figures show that nationally 33.7% of employees are over 50, in the East of England it is 33.6% and in Mid Suffolk it is 46.4%.

In 2007 there were 8 employees who were 20 or under and there are now none, the figures for people who are 21-29 are the same as 2007.

Across the East of England the Local Government workforce* is made up as follows:

- 16 - 24 years old – 7.3%
- 25 - 39 years old – 27.2%
- 40 - 49 years old – 31.9%
- 50 - 59 years old – 26.8%
- 60 plus – 6.8%

(*Local Government Workforce Overview 2008)

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	<p>Regarding the outcomes of this policy, there is no evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse negative impact on people of any particular age group. It is intended to have a positive impact in terms of achieving equal outcomes for people of all ages.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the policy / function could have a differential impact on Faith Groups /Individuals?</p> <p>What evidence do you have for this?</p> <p>Do the differences amount to an adverse impact or unlawful discrimination?</p> <p>If there are concerns that it is indirectly discriminatory could it still be justifiable e.g. on grounds of promoting</p>	<p>The policy is intended to achieve equal outcomes for people of all faiths.</p> <p>We have no evidence about access to services according to faith.</p> <p>Our employment monitoring data in terms of faith suggests that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agnostic – 1.43% • Buddhism – 0.47% • Christianity – 39.8%

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equality if opportunity for one group? (It is advisable to get legal advice on this.)

- Humanist – 0.23%
- No Religion - 14.14%
- Not specified – 5.8%
- Other – 0.23%
- Pagan - 0.23% - however this should be ignored as not completed seriously
- Prefer not to disclose – 8.87%
- Blank – 29.3%

However poor quality is due to lack of responses (over 43%) fall into either prefer not to disclose, blank or not specified

Regarding the outcomes of this policy, there is no evidence to suggest that the policy will have an adverse negative impact on people of any particular faith group. It is intended to have a positive impact in terms of achieving equal outcomes for people of all faiths.



<p>Step 4 Should the policy proceed to an Intermediate Impact Assessment (Template 2) and if so why have you decided this?</p> <p>Date by which the Intermediate Impact Assessment will take place:</p> <p>Should the policy / function move to a Full Impact Assessment (Template 3) and if so why have you decided this?</p> <p>Date by which the Full Impact Assessment will take place:</p>	<p>No. It does not need to progress to a further stage because no differential negative impact fro any of the six equality strands is anticipated.</p> <p>The action plan arising form this policy will put in place activity and processes to enable better quality impact assessment and equality information for the Council in the future.</p>
<p>Signed (completing officer): Breige Convery</p> <p>Job Title: Policy Officer</p>	<p>Date of completion of Initial Impact Assessment: 4 September 2009</p> <p>Updated following consultation in the Council on 6 October 09.</p>

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