

Guidance Note on Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) Process and it's Application within WCC

The Council must under the Equality Act 2010, have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, etc (b) advance equality of opportunity and (c) foster good relations. . The particular protected characteristics dealt with by the Act are **age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.**

Members must consider the effect that implementing a particular policy will have in relation to equality before making a decision and must have an adequate evidence base for its decision making. Careful consideration of the outcomes of Equality Impact Assessments are one of the key ways in which members can show “due regard” to the relevant matters.

It is WCC policy to use EqIA for this purpose and to ensure a consistent approach across the services. An EqIA is an evidence based assessment tool for identifying the potential impact of the county council's strategies, policies, services and functions on its customers and staff.

The EqIA can help anticipate the equality consequences of particular policy/service initiatives and ensure that as far as possible, any negative consequences for a particular group or sector of the community are eliminated, minimised or counterbalanced by other measures.

They are therefore essentially about service improvements and can help staff provide and deliver excellent services to customers by making sure that these reflect the needs of the community.

If initial screening indicates low or no equalities relevance (which can be positive or negative), then further assessment or analysis of equalities impacts may be unnecessary, unless the changes planned are very different from the original concept.

If a policy/ service has been identified as having potential equalities relevance (which can be positive or negative); an assessment using **Form A2** of the **Toolkit** should be carried out. Consideration will be need to be given to actions which could be carried out to mitigate impact on protected groups including significant amendment to the proposals if necessary.

Strategies/ policies will usually be developed through engagement with stakeholders and care should be exercised to ensure groups with protected characteristics identified in the Initial Screening are consulted.

The decision maker should be furnished with the **EqIA** and action plan in order to inform their decision making. This should also apply to a decision made through the democratic process (e.g. by a portfolio holder) and the **EqIA** should be appended to the formal committee reports.

FLOWCHART: THE EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA) PROCESS

The toolkit is available on the following web page under the heading Equality Impact Assessment.

<http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/staffequalityanddiversity>

The purpose of this document is to provide a flowchart of the process to be undertaken.

