Guidance for Collecting Equality Monitoring Information

Understanding and Using Equality Monitoring Questions

Introduction

The purpose of collecting equality monitoring information is to ensure that we can identify, tackle and prevent issues that would otherwise prevent engagement with different groups of people and ensure our processes and services reach as wide an audience as possible.

By collecting equality monitoring information we will be able to:

- Provide evidence that we are reaching the people that need particular services and identify when we are not.
- Identify barriers and areas for improvement.
- Ensure we've engaged and listened to all groups of people within the community.
- Enable the service to evidence how equality considerations have been taken into account when completing an Equality Impact Assessment.
- Find out if our equality policies are working effectively and prevent discrimination.
- Identify the need for new or changed services to meet the different needs of customers.
- Ensure that services are delivered fairly and equitably.
- Improve our reputation as a good employer and ensure that we create and retain a diverse workforce which reflects the communities we serve.
- Use this information to promote cohesion and integration.
- Make a strong proven case for a change in funding to address the imbalance in service use that the data has revealed.
- Meet our legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty which requires Warwickshire County Council (WCC) in the exercise of its functions 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.

To meet this duty we must collect and report on the profile of our customers and staff. This Equality Monitoring Guidance is intended to help you understand the principles of equality monitoring and provides you with information that will assist you to monitor your customers and staff effectively.

Equality monitoring by itself does not explain why a service is under or overused by some people. It provides a starting point for highlighting issues. This enables us to set realistic targets on how we can improve services to make them more inclusive.

How to Manage the Data

It is vital that we process and understand this data once it has been collected. The information must be analysed and collated in order to show the profile of those who have responded.

The questions **must** be included in a separate section from any personal data such as name and address. In practice this means a separate sheet of paper for paper copies and a separate section for online forms. In addition you will need to ensure you comply with information governance if you are collecting names and addresses.

It is always helpful to share and publish the results of the equality monitoring data.

Important to Note

If you receive any enquiries, you need to explain that under the Data Protection 1988 rules this information is confidential and is only to be used for statistical purposes in order to improve access to our services and engagement. Sometimes staff will feel awkward when asking these questions and this can often be because they do not understand why this information is needed. The key concern from the public is that such data is intrusive and irrelevant; however, the following response can be modelled to fit any particular inquiry but outlines a potential way of answering public concerns:

Thank you for raising your concerns over certain questions being asked within the equality monitoring information. I include the following reply on behalf of Warwickshire County Council, explaining why the questions you mentioned are included. As a public service provider the county council is expected to demonstrate that its services reach and are used by a broad section of the community. To this end we need to understand who is using our services. This data can then be collated and compared across the county as a whole. The resulting comparison helps us build an accurate picture of service users and allows any gaps in user uptake to be identified and explored. In relation to your question *Insert information related to their question here*…

On other occasions when we are undertaking a consultation prior to proposed changes to the service, we aim to seek a range of opinions from a broad cross section of the community. These questions help us to ensure that this is being achieved. We therefore ask these questions firstly to identify the makeup of the service users and secondly to help us build a better picture of Warwickshire. We generally always give people the option to decline to tell us this information; we use this as a measure of people's confidence in sharing such information with us. Where people do provide us with equalities monitoring information it is collated anonymously and not identifiable back to the specific individual.

Equality Monitoring Questions

The questions we need to ask to ensure that we are reaching out to all groups of people within the community are listed in the appendix along with a statement to help the respondent understand why they are being asked for this information.

Respondents should always be given a 'Prefer not to say' option.

Further Advice and Guidance

If you require any further advice and guidance, please contact the Equality and Diversity Team on 01926 412370 or equalities@warwickshire.gov.uk

APPENDIX

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) is committed to promoting and achieving equality and fairness for all. The information requested below helps us monitor and understand the profile of our customers, staff and members. The purpose of collecting this information is to ensure that we can identify, tackle and prevent issues that would otherwise prevent engagement with different groups of people and ensure our processes and services are suitable for and reach as wide an audience as possible.

Completing this monitoring form will help us achieve this, and also help WCC meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Information submitted is anonymous and will not be stored with personal information that makes you identifiable. Your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence, and all data disclosed will comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. If you have any questions in relation to this data collection, please contact *insert relevant email here*.

We thank you in advance for helping us ensure Warwickshire County Council is a place where people can be themselves, free from prejudice and bias where they feel valued and respected regardless of their identity.

How old are you?
Under 18 ☐   18-24 ☐   25-39 ☐   40-49 ☐   50-59 ☐   60-64 ☐   65+ ☐   Prefer not to say ☐

Please note: when asking about disability, only ask one of the next two questions below. If you need more information in relation to disability, for example, what impairment, health condition or learning difference individuals might have, please use the second question below.

Do you have an impairment, health condition or learning difference that has a substantial or long term impact on your ability to carry out day to day activities?   *Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered to have a disability 'if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.*
Yes ☐   No ☐   Prefer not to say ☐

Do you have an impairment, health condition or learning difference that has a substantial or long term impact on your ability to carry out day to day activities? (tick all that apply)   *Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered to have a disability 'if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.*
No known impairment, health condition or learning difference   ☐   A long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy   ☐   A mental health difficulty, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder   ☐   A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches   ☐   A social/communication impairment such as a speech and language impairment or Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder   ☐

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A specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D ☐

Blind or have a visual impairment uncorrected by glasses ☐

D/deaf or have a hearing impairment ☐

An impairment, health condition or learning difference that is not listed above (specify if you wish) ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

What is your ethnic group?

White British ☐

White Irish ☐

Gypsy or Traveller ☐

Other White background ☐

Black or Black British – Caribbean ☐

Black or Black British – African ☐

Other Black background ☐

Asian or Asian British – Indian ☐

Asian or Asian British – Pakistani ☐

Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi ☐

Chinese ☐

Other Asian Background ☐

Mixed – White and Black Caribbean ☐

Mixed – White and Black African ☐

Mixed – White and Asian ☐

Other mixed background ☐

Arab ☐

Other ethnic background ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

What is your gender?

Female ☐   Male ☐   Non-binary ☐   Prefer to self-describe ☐   Prefer not to say ☐

Does your gender identity match your sex registered at birth?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Prefer not to say ☐

Do you have a religion or belief?

No religion ☐

Christian ☐

Jewish ☐

Sikh ☐

Any other religion or belief ☐

Buddhist ☐

Hindu ☐

Muslim ☐

Spiritual ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

What is your sexual orientation?

Bi/bisexual ☐

Gay woman/lesbian ☐

Other ☐

Gay man ☐

Heterosexual/straight ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

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