

# Equality Impact Assessment

## Introduction

The Council's Single Equality Scheme states that:

*“We will achieve equality of opportunity by removing direct and indirect discrimination wherever it exists. It is recognised that people may be disadvantaged because of their: age; gender; race, colour, ethnic, national, cultural or social origin; disability; religious belief, or non belief; marital status, family circumstances, or caring responsibilities; sexual orientation; class, level of income, or housing circumstances; membership or non membership of trade unions, or involvement or non involvement in trade union activity.”*

The Single Equality Scheme brings together action plans for Race, Gender and Disability equality, meeting the Council's statutory duties in these areas. The scheme also goes beyond these three streams and begins to consider how the Council develops its approach to equalities and diversity for all residents of Stockton in response to the recent Equalities Review report, Discrimination Law Review and the report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion. The Council is also committed to responding to all diversity related legislation and the single equality scheme is the best mechanism for achieving this. Equality Impact Assessments play an integral role in ensuring that all the council policies are operating to support these aims to offer the highest level of service for all our residents

## What is an Equality Impact Assessment?

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool to enable individuals and services to think carefully about and measure the impact that procedures, policies and strategies will have on all its service users. EIAs can be used to assess whether the policies that guide your work, the procedures you operate and the day-to-day working practices you have developed are likely to have a positive or negative impact across the diverse communities we serve in the Borough. This will enable us to plan out or minimise any negative consequences across the diversity strands:

- Age
- Disability
- Faith
- Gender
- Race
- Sexual Orientation
- Community Cohesion

We can then take action to prevent and eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and contribute positively to community cohesion objectives. Providing services that do not discriminate also leads to better quality services and increased satisfaction.

## Why Undertake Impact Assessments?

### **Improving the services we offer**

The purpose of Equality Impact Assessment is to improve the work of the Authority by ensuring it does not discriminate in the way it provides services and employment and that we promote equality and positive community relations across the six diversity strands. To understand why EIAs are necessary requires agreement that equality is not about treating everyone the same. It may mean accommodating individual requirements and taking the needs of different communities and groups into account when delivering services. The outcomes of a service must be the same for all service users, however the way they receive that service may very well differ.

## **Being systematic about how we measure impact**

This guide will provide you with a means of systematically assessing and recording the actual, potential or likely impact of a service or project on particular groups and identifying associated actions to improve services. EIAs are a good method of analysing what we are doing using the service user and their needs as our focus as well as considering potential impact of any new strategies.

The benefits of impact assessments include:

- Identifying whether we are excluding different groups from any of our services
- Identifying if direct or indirect discrimination exists
- Allowing us to consider alternative policies or strategies to address adverse impact
- Enabling us to embed equality issues into all our policy areas and everyday practice
- Targeting resources more effectively
- Developing a better understanding of the needs and aspirations of the diverse communities that we serve
- Developing good practice that promotes equality across all the diversity strands
- Raising public satisfaction with services and the Council
- Allowing us to understand whether the way we provide services is helping communities to come together.

## **It is a Statutory Requirement**

There are specific statutory duties for race, disability and gender through the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2006 to ensure that our policies and practices do not discriminate against any group within our community and that we promote equality of opportunity and good community relations. This impact assessment however will extend beyond this to cover age, faith and belief and sexual orientation as well as disability, race and gender. This will ensure that we are working with other statutory equality drivers including the Sex Discrimination Act, the European Directives on age, faith and sexual orientation and the Equality Standard for Local Government.

## **Links to other Council Initiatives**

The work we do on Equality Impact Assessments will link to a number of other local and national priorities including:

### **Comprehensive Performance Assessment**

If our services are to be of the highest quality, which is the aim of CPA, they need to be provided in a way that ensures they meet the diverse needs of all our service users.

### **Service and Business Unit Planning**

Actions identified within Equality Impact Assessments will feed into a range of Council plans at all levels, including corporate, service and, business unit planning.

### **Community Cohesion**

The outcomes of Equality Impact assessments will feed into the Community Cohesion Strategy and our work with key partners on the Local Strategic Partnership

### **Resident Satisfaction**

Ensuring our services are delivered in a non-discriminatory way and meet the needs of all residents will be reflected in increased resident satisfaction results.

## **The Completed Equality Impact Assessment**

Equality Impact Assessments need to be part of the early stages of policy development so that they can be incorporated into any decisions. Whilst they can and will be used retrospectively for policies already approved and functions currently operating, they should never be considered a “bolt-on” to be used to complete the policy development process. Incorporating Equality Impact Assessments into the planning and delivery of services will enable us to integrate and embed equality principles into all areas and aspects of the council’s service delivery. The completed Equality Impact Assessments should be returned to the Diversity Team [diversity@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:diversity@stockton.gov.uk) who will publish them on the Diversity section of the council’s website. This meets our statutory duty to publish equality impact assessments. New policies will not be given Cabinet or Council approval without a completed Equality Impact Assessment.

## The 3 Stage Process- Guidance Notes

Once you have identified the aims and objectives of your policy, the 3 Stage Process gives you a robust mechanism to systematically assess it for the impact across the six strands of diversity.

### Stage 1 - Collecting information and data to support the assessment

An effective EIA relies on the effective analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data whether externally or internally developed as this gives us a clear description of the effectiveness of our service provision. Whilst it is tempting to undertake consultation exercises to support your EIA, you are likely to have already undertaken much data collection work throughout the early stages of the policy development, or through an existing policy's ongoing delivery and monitoring. Any decision to collect new data or introduce new monitoring needs to be in proportion to the importance of the policy or service, and mindful of the additional systems or investment that will be required to provide this.

In order to complete the impact assessment you will need to:

- Consider what information or data you have available either within your service or elsewhere in the Council and whether any further data will be needed.
- Use both quantitative (e.g. census, BVPI, Resident Satisfaction, national statistics, research, economic and workforce profile) and qualitative data (customer feedback information, complaints about the service, policy or function)
- There are comprehensive equality profiles available on the equality and diversity pages on the Stockton Borough Council website to support the EIA process [www.stockton.gov.uk/yourcouncil/33299/](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/yourcouncil/33299/)
- Consider information about the take-up and investigate who is not able to access the service or benefit from the policy

Use this data to identify the significant findings or trends, relating to the policy area and any impact across the 6 strands. It will be your judgement to identify what constitutes a significant impact but you must be mindful to consider all data which reflects difference between different groups. The person undertaking the EIA should clearly identify and document gaps and inadequacies in data, explain how these will be addressed and how future impact will be monitored.

## Stage 2 - Scoring the Policy / Function

Once all the information available has been gathered and considered, you can move onto scoring the policy for impact. A simple scoring system and chart is included on the proforma. Again the judgement on whether the policy is having / is likely to have a positive or negative effect under each of the headings is your own, but to help inform the judgement you should bear the following key considerations in mind when coming to your conclusions:

- Will / does the policy / function involve, or have consequences for, the people the council serves or employs?
- Are there any customer groups which might be expected to benefit from the policy / function but do not?
- Is there any reason that people's access to a service may be affected differently by the proposed policy due to age, disability, faith and belief, gender, race or sexual orientation?
- Is there any evidence that any part of the policy / function could discriminate unlawfully either directly or indirectly across the diversity strands?
- Are there any groups which are not satisfied with the policy / function or are more likely to make complaints?
- Is there a need to gather further information in order to assess this policy / function?
- Are there any barriers to the policy / function being received equally by all residents?
- Will the policy / function create the opportunity for integration?

The headings that you are being asked to score the policy against are taken from the range of equality duties that the council is required to operate within in order to demonstrate that our services offer true equality of access. This is recommended practice from the Commission for Racial Equality.

If you don't have enough data to make a judgement about the impact of the policy this needs to be recorded as 2<sup>ND</sup> to indicate that the anticipated neutral impact is not based on the data analysis. Where this occurs one of the actions recorded in the action plan will be to show how the lack of data will be addressed prior to the next review.

Some examples of positive and negative impacts are given below; use them to inform your deliberations. Remember something designed to offer extra support to one group of people may also have a positive or negative impact on others and you must be mindful of this. The examples highlight the need to gather and interpret high quality data and to fully understand your customer profile:

**Example 1**

The council has proposed a policy of only using meeting rooms that are fully accessible for disabled people. The data analysis identifies that there are no accessible meeting rooms which can be used located in the area of the town where the majority of BME residents live, therefore there will be a positive impact for disabled people in that all meetings will now be fully accessible

**But**

It may have a negative impact on the number of BME residents attending meetings as they will have further to travel to meeting venues.

**Example 2**

The Youth Service is proposing to increase its youth club provision by purchasing another double-decker Youth Bus. This will increase the number of youth club sessions substantially. The policy will therefore have a positive impact for young people by increasing youth provision across the borough

**But**

It may have a negative impact because data analysis has identified that access to the Youth Buses is limited for disabled young people who are already underrepresented as service users.

**Example 3**

Following consultation with their large print borrowers, the Library Service is proposing to produce a range of new information leaflets in large print. The policy will have a positive impact for disabled users as supported by the consultation findings

**And**

It will also benefit other groups, especially older people.

Where you make a judgement what you are impact assessing will have a positive impact (3), then you will be asked to evidence this and indicate the areas of the policy / function that are demonstrating this positive impact.

Once you have completed the scoring exercise, you will arrive at a total score for the policy / function under review. This score will assist the Diversity Team in determining whether any further work is required.

You may find that for some of the diversity strands there is no evidence to identify either a clear positive or negative impact for the policy function. In this case the score will be 2 (neutral impact) but this will indicate that future data collection needs to investigate this area and that subsequent review of the policy may be required.

Based on the score and the responses in other areas, the Diversity Team will consider whether the policy / function is likely to have a negative impact on one or more groups within the diversity strands and will advise on steps to mitigate this adverse impact before the policy can be implemented, or change it as soon as possible if already in place. This will be either by:

- **Changing the policy / function or amending the way it is delivered** to address stakeholder concerns or issues highlighted by the data or
- **Substantiating the aims of the policy / function as originally proposed** even when it could affect some people or groups adversely, for example because of the policy's importance to meet the specific needs of particular groups and there is no other way of achieving the aims of the policy. This should only be used when the negative impact of not pursuing the policy would be greater than its amendment or withdrawal. As such it should only be used on rare occasions.



## Stage 3 Publication and Monitoring

Once you have completed the EIA form, you will need to complete the summary sheet which gives space to indicate EIA score for the policy / function under review and also detail any remedial action required. You will then need to return the whole form to the Diversity Team [diversity@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:diversity@stockton.gov.uk) who will consider the assessment and make any suggestions or comments where appropriate. Once the assessment is agreed the summary form will be published on the internet under the Equality and Diversity section of the Council's homepage.

Following completion of the EIA process and even if the function / policy under review scores highly you will need to be conscious of the ongoing monitoring process which includes:

- submitting the Equality Impact Assessment Proforma to the Diversity Team for quality assurance checking and publication
- reviewing the equality impact of the policy / function at least on an annual basis and recording any changes
- reviewing the equality impact of the policy / function if it is amended
- including any remedial actions into Service Improvement Plans where required

It is vital to monitor policies / functions continuously to ensure that they are not having any adverse impact on people across the different diversity strands and to be aware that even if the policy / function doesn't change that the needs of communities which it is designed to serve may well do so.

# Equality Impact Assessment

Section One: About the Strategy / Policy / Function - *instructions appear in the status bar at bottom of screen*

Service Group	Service	Section	Lead Officer For EIA
DNS	Technical Services		Richard McGuckin Head of Service – Technical Services
<b>Support Officer(S)</b>		<b>EIA Completion Date</b> 25/11/11	
<b>1) Name of policy / function</b>	Stockton High Street Regeneration		
<b>2) Is this new or existing?</b>	New		
<b>3) What is the overall aim(s) of the policy / function?</b>	To improve the economic performance of Stockton Town Centre.		
<b>4) What are the objectives of the policy / function?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve the physical appearance and functionality of Stockton High Street to support meaningful economic growth in Stockton Town Centre.</li> <li>• To improve the High Street infrastructure and public realm for residents of the Borough and all users of the town centre.</li> <li>• To improve the accessibility of the High Street for all town centre users.</li> <li>• To change perceptions of Stockton Town Centre on a local, regional and national level.</li> <li>• To bring forward further investment and developments in line with the principles identified</li> </ul>		

	in Stockton Town Centre Prospectus.
<b>5) Who implements this policy / function within Stockton-on-Tees and how?</b>	Proposals will be implemented by staff across most departments within the Council, such as Regeneration, Technical Services, Property Services, Planning, Resources, and Law & Democracy, through the acquisition of land and properties, letting and project managing landscaping and construction contracts.
<b>6) Are there any partner agencies involved in the delivery of this policy / function? If so, whom?</b>	<p>The recommended developments for the regeneration of the town centre are likely to be delivered in partnership with public and private sector partners including, local developers and land owners, bus operators and local businesses.</p> <p>Throughout the development of the High Street improvements engagement with a range of key stakeholders has taken place, which has raised many issues, ideas and opportunities. Council officers will continue to involve town centre stakeholders including local businesses, taxi traders, market traders and bus operators throughout delivery of the schemes to ensure that the revised infrastructure and public realm schemes are acceptable for all users of the town centre.</p>
<b>7) Are other services affected by this policy / function? If yes which are they?</b>	Officers across most departments within the Council, such as Regeneration, Technical Services, Property Services, Planning, Resources, and Law & Democracy will be involved through the acquisition of land and properties, letting and project managing landscaping and construction contracts.

## Data Review and Analysis

The data analysis should be used to identify who are the actual and potential customers for this policy. And any significant findings across the diversity strands i.e. any data that shows a difference or tells a story about the strand

### **NATIONALLY COLLECTED DATA e.g. Census 2001, Labour Force Survey etc.**

**Please list significant findings for age, disability, faith/belief, gender, race, sexual orientation and community cohesion.**

ONS: In 2010, the population of Stockton-On-Tees was approximately 192,125 and has been increasing steadily since 1995, following a period of population decline throughout the 1980's. The gender profile of the borough equates to 51% female and 49% male and is projected to remain at this balance.

ONS: Revised Sub National Population Projections (2008) - Stockton Borough's resident population is forecast to grow in size over the next 25 years, at a level of 12% which is considerably in excess of the Tees Valley (4%) and regional (1%) averages. Whilst this offers opportunities for Stockton town centre's future growth, an ageing population presents challenges in terms of public realm design.

2001 Census - Black and minority ethnic community residents make up 2.8% of the Borough's population, however, the vast majority reside in the wards of Parkfield & Oxbridge and Stockton Town Centre where non-white proportion of the population is 12%. These wards are within walking distance of the town centre.

All proposals for the town centre need to be DDA compliant, especially given that the proportion of the population registered as incapable of work due to sickness or disability is higher in the Stockton Town Centre ward at 14%, than the Borough average of 5.4% and national average of 4.8% (TVU, May 2011)

### **LOCALLY COLLECTED DATA e.g. IPSOS MORI Household Survey, BVPIs, Viewpoint**

**Please list significant findings for age, disability, faith/belief, gender, race sexual orientation and community cohesion**

IPSOS Mori Residents Survey 2008 Key Findings:

- 84% of the population was satisfied with Stockton as a place to live, however only 1% of respondents attributed this satisfaction to the improvement of Stockton Town Centre.
- Of the respondents that were dissatisfied with Stockton as a place to live, 5% attributed this to Stockton Town Centre being run down, dirty and losing its character.
- 7% of the population stated that improved town centre shopping facilities were one of the most important improvements

required to improve their quality of life, whilst 2% felt that this should be more parking in town centres.

- When asked to choose the top three priorities for the Borough over the next 5 years, 23% of the population rated town centres, 37% rated the regeneration of run-down areas and 15% rated environmental improvements.

Viewpoint Panel Questionnaire April 2008 - The findings of a viewpoint panel questionnaire on Stockton Town Centre are as follows:

- Of the 581 respondents, 89% used the town centre.
- Of the respondents that stated they did not use the centre, there were similar proportions of able-bodied (10.5%) and disabled (11%) respondents.
- With regards to gender, males used the centre slightly less (13.2%) than females (8.1%)
- The 65-74 age group were found to use the centre most frequently (93.9%) whilst the 25-34 (16.3%) and 45-54 (15.3%) age groups were found to use the centre least.
- Respondents from the BME community were found to use the town centre facilities (93.3%) slightly more than white respondents (89.3%).

### **SERVICE AREA COLLECTED DATA e.g. Comments and Complaints, User Surveys, Evaluation Forms.**

**Please list significant findings for age, disability, faith/belief, gender, race sexual orientation and community cohesion**

Throughout the development of the High Street proposals, a detailed programme of consultation was undertaken with the public, partners, stakeholders, Members and MPs from 10-31<sup>st</sup> March 2011. Officers also attended scheduled meetings of other groups with an interest in the town centre proposals including the Central Area Board, Area Partnership Boards, Markets Forum, Bus Operators, Taxis, Retail Forum, Over 50's Assembly and the Disability Advisory Group.

Throughout the consultation period, views were encouraged via a "Tell Us What You Think" form which was developed to record feedback on the proposed schemes and ideas for revitalising Stockton Town Centre. The form contained 6 sections which sought views on Car Parking, Markets, Events Space, Public Transport, Heritage and Public Realm, which form the basis of the proposed improvement schemes within the prospectus. An "Any Other Comments" section was also included to record any other specific comments and issues raised on the plans for the regeneration of the town centre and wider area.

In total 323 responses were received via the "Tell Us What You Think" form. 175 paper forms were submitted and a further 148 responses were submitted electronically through the Stockton Town Centre Regeneration web pages. Responses were varied and have provided a range of useful comments for consideration during the detailed scheme design.

Representatives from the taxi trade raised concerns about the location and size of taxi ranks. These concerns have been addressed through a number of meetings with taxi representatives, providing an opportunity for input into the infrastructure designs that will enable an acceptable working practise for taxis on the High Street. Taxi representative comments have been taken on board as part of the design process and the current High Street layout reflects these discussions with taxi ranks now located in areas that are acceptable to taxi representatives.

Market trader representatives gave mixed reviews with some traders voicing their concerns around the amount of space that would be available for the market, potential conflict with bus stands and bus operations. However, support was also given to proposals with some traders citing the need to 'move with the times' and adapt a more modern approach to trading. To address these concerns, discussions for the location of market stalls for the regular market have been ongoing throughout 2011 via the Market Forum and latterly a specialist working group attended by market trader representatives. Council officers will continue to work alongside market trader representatives to ensure that the location and layout of regular market stalls is acceptable to market traders and to ensure that the market can continue to play a lead role in the High Street alongside other activities.

Key findings from the consultation:

- **Car Parking**
  - 50% agree with re-introducing short stay parking on the High Street, 12% agree this should be free of charge
  - 31% don't agree with re-introducing High Street parking
- **Events Space**
  - 70% agree with a dedicated events space in the location proposed
- **Heritage**
  - 88% agree with investing in the town centre's historic buildings
  - 8% believe the funding could be better spent elsewhere
- **Markets**
  - 51% agree with redesigning the market layout. 12% agree with changing the layout, but not the location
  - 37% thought the layout and location should remain unchanged
- **Public Transport**
  - 54% agree with the proposed changes to bus and taxi facilities
  - 15% stated that buses shouldn't be removed from the High Street
  - 27% didn't agree with the proposals
- **Public Realm**
  - 75% agree with the proposed public realm improvements
  - 8% agree with the improvements, but not the proposed design or location
  - 17% disagree with the proposals and believe the funding could be better spent elsewhere

Following the consultation exercise, designs for infrastructure improvements and public realm have been amended and where possible some of the comments have been incorporated. Information sessions to inform the public on the revised schemes were undertaken from 24<sup>th</sup> Oct-4<sup>th</sup> Nov in the Shambles Market Hall. Other stakeholders including the Central Area Board, Area Partnership Boards, Markets Forum, Taxis, Retail Forum, Over 50's Assembly and a Disability Advisory focus group were also updated on the revised schemes during this time. Updated information is available on SBC website, Facebook and Twitter.

Stakeholder engagement will be maintained throughout the delivery of the High Street improvement schemes.

## Stage 2 Scoring the Policy

Now that you have all the information available you can move onto scoring the policy for impact:

	Does it reduce discrimination?	Does it or is it likely to promote equality of opportunity?	Does it promote good relations between these groups?	Does it encourage participation in public life and access to council services?	Does it promote positive attitudes and images to different groups?	Total Score for strand
Age	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	14
Disability	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	15
Faith/Belief	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	10
Gender	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	10
Race	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	10
Sexual Orientation	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	10
Community Cohesion	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	14
<b>Total Score</b>						<b>83</b>

### Scoring System:

- Score 3 if the policy has a positive effect
- Score 2 if the policy has a neutral effect
- Score 1 if the policy has a negative effect
- If a score has been awarded due to lack of data rather than anticipated effect please indicate by using **the check box**







## Equality Impact Assessment Summary

<b>Name of policy / function</b>	[REDACTED]	
<b>Service Group</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Lead Officer For EIA</b>
	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
<b>Support Officer(S)</b>	[REDACTED]	<b>EIA Completion Date</b> [REDACTED]

### Action Plan:

This action plan highlights that will address the issues highlighted in the Equalities Impact Assessment. Longer term issues will be developed into actions within the relevant Service Improvement Plan. They will also be included in the Disability, Gender and Race Action plans that form part of the Council's Single Equality Scheme

Objective - To ensure [REDACTED] Policy / Function is being delivered so all residents have equal opportunities to benefit from its aims and objectives.		
<b>Key Actions</b>	<b>Who is responsible?</b>	<b>Timescale</b>

<b>Stage 3 Publication and Monitoring</b> Date of Publication Date Set for Review	<b>Published Score</b>
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