

West Lothian Council: Equality Impact Assessment

A. About the function, service, policy, procedure, project etc

- 1 What is the name of the function/service/policy/procedure/project etc (called “policy” from this point) to be assessed?

Performance, Communications & Customer Service Commitments function for Housing & Building Services

- 2 What were the results of the screening for relevance?

- The parts of the general duty covered are, eliminating discrimination where it exists, providing equality of opportunity and encouraging good relations between different groups of people in the community.
- A full impact is not necessary as these procedures merely combines our approach to a number of working policies and strategies which have largely been impact assessed on an individual basis where there are any concerns or perceptions of inequality, e.g. Arrears, Anti-Social Behaviour, Repairs and complaints.
- There is no evidence to believe that any groups of people are intentionally or indirectly treated differently or in a discriminatory manner.
- The performance & communication functions within Housing & Building Services includes:
 - Communication Strategy
 - Published Information
 - Strategic Management in Housing & Building Services
 - Housing Structure and Interactions
- Performance reporting in the service covers the entire range of functions and measures outcomes against statutory and non-statutory targets and guidelines, in particular, there is a dedicated Equalities Performance report produced each year to report on various key functions across different strands of equalities. Benchmarking has shown that this is not commonplace on a national basis. The service operates within a robust performance culture which has been audited both internally and externally with no cause for concern on equalities issues.
- The communications strategy ties in closely with the council wide marketing strategy and ‘West Lothian Way’ or house style. Information is made available

to the public on over 60 topics, and is presented in variety of formats – with additional formats available upon request. There is a quarterly tenants newsletter, which is sent to every tenant and has regular reporting features on performance and delivering progress reports against targets and announcing new service developments. There are also quarterly Homelessness newsletters and the bi-annual Applicants News.

- Customer Service Commitments encapsulate the values of West Lothian Council service delivery and focus on 2 key themes:
- How we will understand customers needs
- How customers will know we are keeping our promises
- These service standards and commitments are monitored and reported on. They cover all Housing & Building Services functions and approaches and are publicised widely. Progress against these measures is also reported on frequently and to the public.

3 Briefly describe the aim of the policy etc.

What needs or duties is it designed to meet? Who are the intended beneficiaries? How will it affect employees? How will it affect the community and the different groups of people within it?

Is the service contracted out or delivered under a service-level agreement or with partners? Who else is involved?

In what way will you involve any of these people in the impact assessment process?

B. Gathering the evidence and assessing the impact

4 Is there any evidence (or reason to believe) that this policy could have a different effect on some groups of people compared to others? (e.g. different needs, different experiences, different outcomes, different rates of participation, different abilities to access opportunities).

Is there an adverse impact around race, gender, disability, faith, sexual orientation, age, health, etc? What are the reasons for this adverse impact?

5 Please describe the evidence or reasoning you have used to make your judgement. What existing data for example (qualitative or quantitative) have you used to form your judgement? Tell us about the information as it applies to different groups (e.g. by race, gender and disability etc).

6 Are there any unmet needs/requirements that can be identified that affect any of the specific groups?

C. Making changes and promoting equality

7 If in your judgement, the policy etc does have an adverse impact, can you modify the policy to reduce/eliminate any adverse impact?

You need to think whether your modifications will:

- have a positive or negative effect on the promotion of equality of opportunity for any group
- help eliminate discrimination in any way
- encourage or hinder community relations.

8 If you cannot modify the policy to reduce adverse impact, consider if the impact can be justified and explain. (It is unlikely that you will be able to justify any impact which amounts to unlawful discrimination.)

If the impact cannot be justified, how do you intend to deal with it?

D. Consultation

8 What steps have you taken/are you taking to consult externally as part of your assessment?

Whom have you consulted? What methods did you use? How long was the consultation period?

Have you consulted any “experts”? Did you involve any people in the affected groups in some other way during the process?

E. Next steps

10 What were the results of the consultation?
What have you done with the results i.e. how do you intend to use the information gathered as part of the consultation?

11 Have you published the results of that consultation? If so, where?
What arrangements were made to reach specific groups affected?

12 What are your recommendations based on the conclusions of this assessment?

13 Please provide us with separate information about how you intend to monitor this policy in future. What is the review date set for this policy?

14 How will you publish the results of this assessment? What methods will you use?
What arrangements are there to reach specific groups affected?

15 Have you conducted any other types of impact assessment on this policy? (e.g. health, financial, environmental).

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16 Is there anything else you wish to add?

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Assessment made by:	Sarah Kelly
Others involved in assessment:	
Summary of assessment (this will be published). <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What you did▪ What evidence you used▪ What you found▪ What consultation you undertook▪ What changes you made▪ What will happen next.	Completed screening of Performance & Communication policies. Review of policy & procedure, Communities Scotland Inspection Report, feedback reports No evidence of discrimination or concerns about discrimination within Performance & Communication Publication on service consultation web pages for full feedback N/A Further review under cyclical Assessment & Review timetable (within 3 years)
Manager's Signature	
Date:	December 2008
Service area and job title:	

When you have completed this form, please take a copy and send it to your service representative on the Corporate Working Group on Equality and/or the Equality Officer.