

Equality Impact Assessment – Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity.

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Name of policy, strategy or function:	Budget Proposal 2016/17 Phase 2: Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Licensing
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	1.0
Owner of item being assessed:	Paul Anstey/Sean Murphy
Name of assessor:	Paul Anstey
Date of assessment:	11 February 2016

Is this a:		Is this:	
Policy	Yes	New or proposed	Yes
Strategy	Yes	Already exists and is being reviewed	No
Function	Yes	Is changing	No
Service	Yes		

1 What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy, strategy function or service and who is likely to benefit from it?

Aims:	Bring together a wide variety of resident and business services under a single 'triage' system for public protection functions (Environmental Health, Licensing and Trading Standards) as a result of reduced staffing levels and revenue budgets.
Objectives:	To make financial savings
Outcomes:	There will be reduced capacity, both in total numbers of staff, and range of skills available to deal with complaints and investigations.
Benefits:	This approach will minimise the likelihood of a successful ombudsman investigation and ensure that resources are allocated in the most effective way. The combination of services will minimise the impact of staff cuts on

frontline services and minimise the reduction in overall service quality.

2 Note which groups may be affected by the policy, strategy, function or service. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this.

(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this.
Vulnerable	If the triage system fails to properly identify an element of vulnerability in the enquiry/complaint, they may suffer health/financial implications.	Experience of dealing with vulnerable groups suggests they are reluctant to share all their problems. Officers are trained to ask the right questions and ensure that a full picture has been established to determine the most satisfactory course of action.

Further Comments relating to the item:

Most elements of public protection services have been designed to ensure the most at risk in the community are prioritised, this approach is being formalised as a result of the need to reduce budgets and may lead to a greater risk of cases being missed or inappropriately handled. Reduced management in a system like this does mean that each case has less oversight and places more emphasis on individual decision making which can be flawed on occasion.

3 Result

Are there any aspects of the policy, strategy, function or service, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?

No

The 'triage' system is designed to properly take account of equality issues and when working effectively there is always a professional assessment of the individual to determine their level of need.

Will the policy, strategy, function or service have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?

Yes

By definition the 'triage' system does lead to some cases being used as intelligence information only and the matter will not result in any direct action. People who are expecting the service to respond quickly and fix their issue may become disappointed/frustrated/angry at a lack of action – this is often our experience with those in society who are most able to help themselves e.g. effective communicators, financially independent, confident, mobile, good support networks etc....

This will lead to an increase in contact with managers and members to make service

complaints – this will need to be handled professionally and robustly so as not to undermine the ‘triage’ system and the most effective use of limited resources.

However, there was always a risk that the current system would not always work effectively and the changes should not result in a greater impact on the elderly and people with disabilities, as they will be prioritised.

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered ‘yes’ to either of the sections at question 3, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template.

4 Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	No, unless any equality issues are raised during the consultation
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	Paul Anstey
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	

Signed: Paul Anstey

Date: 11 February 2016
