



Equality Impact Assessment Template (April 2011)

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to improve the work of Orkney Islands Council by making sure it promotes equality and does not discriminate. This assessment records the likely impact of any changes to a function, policy or plan by anticipating the consequences, and making sure that any negative impacts are eliminated or minimised and positive impacts are maximised.

1. IDENTIFICATION OF FUNCTION, POLICY OR PLAN	
Name of function/policy/plan to be assessed	Advice and Information Strategy
Service/service area responsible	Housing Services
Name of person carrying out the assessment and contact details	Frances Troup, Ext 2177 E-mail frances.troup@orkney.gov.uk
Date of assessment	15 August 2011
Is the function/policy/plan new or existing? (Please indicate also if the service is to be deleted, reduced or changed significantly)	Existing – revised

2. INITIAL SCREENING	
What are the intended outcomes of the function/policy/plan?	To ensure the Council meets its statutory obligations in respect of ensuring housing advice is available in its area free of charge.
State who is, or may be affected by this function/policy/plan, and how	Anyone regardless of the tenure they occupy.
How have stakeholders been involved in the development of this function/policy/plan?	<p>Consultations on Local Housing Strategy development and a range of related strategies including the Advice and Information Strategy were run during April 2011. This included other Council Services including Education and Recreation, Planning and Corporate Policy and other agencies including Orkney Health and Care, Orkney Housing Association Ltd, Sacro, Orkney CAB, Advocacy Orkney and Relationships Scotland.</p> <p>These stakeholders were then involved in the consultation once the document had been drafted.</p>

	<p>The consultation included tenants and public members. This included a press release and an article in Housing News. The Strategy was available from the Council's website at www.orkney.gov.uk and was available in hard copy at the Council's offices and libraries.</p> <p>Housing staff involved to draw on issues arising over recent months.</p> <p>Consultations on Local Housing Strategy development and a range of related strategies have linked to this issue quite closely. This included other Council Services including Education and Recreation, Planning and Corporate Policy and other agencies including Orkney Health and Care, Orkney Housing Association Ltd, Sacro, Orkney CAB, Advocacy Orkney and Relationships Scotland.</p> <p>The quality of our Advice and Information Service is assessed through our internal procedures and also the Advice & Information Service's Exit Questionnaire.</p>
<p>Is there any existing data and/or research relating to equalities issues in this policy area? Please summarise.</p> <p>e.g. consultations, national surveys, performance data, complaints, service user feedback, academic/consultants' reports, benchmarking (see equalities resources on OIC information portal)</p>	<p>The Scottish Government has launched a major project in respect of Housing Options from the perspective that more must be done to prevent homelessness from occurring. This links closely to the provision of advice and information.</p> <p>Homelessness prevention is one of the four main work strands of the Scottish Government/COSLA 2012 Steering Group. In the current constrained financial climate, the group has recognised that it is more crucial than ever that there is a focus on the benefits of homelessness prevention work and that partners work together to embed a strong corporate commitment within their organisations.</p>
<p>Could the function/policy have a differential impact on any of the following equality strands?</p>	<p>(Please provide any evidence – positive impacts/benefits, negative impacts and reasons)</p>
<p>1. Race: this includes ethnic or national groups, colour and nationality</p>	<p>Potentially if for instance there was a language barrier but our Accessibility Policy is specifically intended to address this. Our homelessness interview records/advice service records etc would include records of any requirements for information in different formats and languages.</p>
<p>2. Sex: a man or a woman</p>	<p>Impact is unlikely to be significant.</p>
<p>3. Sexual Orientation: whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes</p>	<p>Impact is unlikely to be significant.</p>
<p>4. Gender Reassignment: the process of transitioning from one</p>	<p>Impact is unlikely to be significant.</p>

gender to another	
5. Pregnancy and maternity	Impact is unlikely to be significant.
6. Age: people of different ages	Impact is unlikely to be significant.
7. Religion or beliefs or none (atheists)	Impact is unlikely to be significant.
8. Caring responsibilities	Impact is unlikely to be significant.
9. Marriage and Civil Partnership	Impact is unlikely to be significant.
10. Disability: people with disabilities (whether registered or not)	Impact is unlikely to be significant.

3. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Does the analysis above identify any differential impacts which need to be addressed?	Language barriers are a possibility in relation to different ethnic groups.
How could you minimise or remove any potential negative impacts?	Potential language barriers can be addressed through normal working arrangements and our Accessibility Policy.
Do you have enough information to make a judgement? If no, what information do you require?	Yes

4. CONCLUSIONS AND PLANNED ACTION

Is further work required?	No
What action is to be taken?	N/A
Who will undertake it?	N/A
When will it be done?	N/A
How will it be monitored? (e.g. through service plans)	Monitoring will be three yearly as part of Housing Services' rolling review programme.

Signature

Date 09.05.11

Name FRANCES TROUP
(BLOCK CAPITALS)