

Equality Impact Assessment

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	Orkney Community Covenant
Service/service area responsible	Chief Executive's Service
Name of person carrying out the assessment and contact details	Anna Whelan, anna.whelan@orkney.gov.uk 01856 873535 x 2160
Date of assessment	30 August 2012
Is the function/policy/plan new or existing? (Please indicate also if the service is to be deleted, reduced or changed significantly)	New

2. INITIAL SCREENING	
What are the intended outcomes of the function/policy/plan?	The purpose of the Community Covenant is to encourage support, engagement and understanding between the Armed Forces Community working and residing in Orkney and the civilian community.
State who is, or may be affected by this function/policy/plan, and how	The Community Covenant is intended to help serving, transiting and veteran members of the armed forces, and their families, by raising awareness of their particular circumstances and needs among service providers and the civilian community, and taking action to improve services where appropriate.
How have stakeholders been involved in the development of this function/policy/plan?	The Community Covenant has been drawn up by the Orkney Firm Base partnership group, which comprises representatives of the Council's housing, emergency planning, lifelong learning and human resources services, NHS Orkney, JobCentre Plus, Voluntary Action Orkney and the Royal British Legion, along with serving Army representatives. Firm Base is a joint

	UK/Scottish Government initiative to provide a firm home base for the defence community. There are two main strands of activity: support for service personnel and their families during service and after leaving the Army, and community engagement in general. The Covenant is based on a standard template designed by the Armed Forces, adapted to local circumstances. It includes commitments to local undertakings which are proportionate to local need.
Is there any existing data and/or research relating to equalities issues in this policy area? Please summarise. e.g. consultations, national surveys, performance data, complaints, service user feedback, academic/consultants' reports, benchmarking (see equalities resources on OIC information portal)	There are many examples available on public sector websites of EqlAs for Community Covenants in other local authorities (and some health authorities) across the UK. No negative impacts are identified in any of those reviewed when compiling this EqlA. Several mention the need for measures to combat discrimination against serving or veteran members of the armed forces, and this issue has also been raised in the UK Parliament. It is not thought by members of the Firm Base group to be an issue in Orkney, where the civilian and armed forces communities have historically demonstrated a high degree of mutual respect and support.
Could the function/policy have a differential impact on any of the following equality strands?	
1. Race: this includes ethnic or national groups, colour and nationality	No differential impact
2. Sex: a man or a woman	No differential impact
3. Sexual Orientation: whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes	No differential impact
4. Gender Reassignment: the process of transitioning from one gender to another	No differential impact
5. Pregnancy and maternity	No differential impact
6. Age: people of different ages	The Community Covenant may have a positive differential impact on older service veterans and on young families of serving forces personnel.
7. Religion or beliefs or none (atheists)	No differential impact
8. Caring responsibilities	The Community Covenant may have a positive impact on service families caring for children in the absence of one parent on active service, or caring for veterans with disabilities.

9. Marriage and Civil Partnership	No differential impact
10. Disability: people with disabilities (whether registered or not)	The Community Covenant may have a positive impact on service veterans with disabilities including mental health disorders, which affect a relatively high proportion of service veterans compared with the civilian community.

3. IMPACT ASSESSMENT	
Does the analysis above identify any differential impacts which need to be addressed?	No. The undertakings in the Community Covenant are designed to improve outcomes for anyone in the armed forces community, including those who are also in one or more of the protected groups.
How could you minimise or remove any potential negative impacts?	n/a
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?	Not arising from this EqIA.
What action is to be taken?	a) Any actions arising from the undertakings in the Community Covenant will be included in service and OCPP thematic group plans.
Who will undertake it?	a) Firm Base partnership group and partner bodies
When will it be done?	The work will be ongoing
How will it be monitored? (e.g. through service plans)	Actions will be monitored by the Firm Base partnership group and reported periodically to the OCPP Steering Group.

Signature

Date

30 August 2012

Name ANNA F WHELAN
(BLOCK CAPITALS)

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send a copy to Corporate and Community Strategy. It should also be emailed to Corporate and Community Strategy.