

Equality Impact Assessment

Part 2 – Form



November 2016



Introduction

Before carrying out this assessment, you will have had an initial discussion with a member (or members) of the Diversity & Equality Group about whether you thought an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is required (see EIA Part 1 - "Prompt").

Obviously you decided to carry out an EIA, and the reasons you gave for doing it is a good place to start discussing the EIA itself.

You should carry out this assessment with the same person (or persons) that you had the initial discussion with, if at all possible, as this will give your discussion some context and consistency.

Process

Before completing the short form (overleaf), you will find this easier to do if you discuss in more detail why you thought an EIA was needed in the first place, and talk in more detail about what this means for the policy, practice or decision, as well as any actions you need to take.

Before completing the form you need to consider our specific duties under the Equalities Act. In summary these are:

- **Assess the impact of applying a proposed new or revised policy, practice or decision**
- **Consider relevant evidence relating to people with a protected characteristic, where this is appropriate**
- **Be able to demonstrate the evidence you have considered when making your decision**
- **Take into account the findings of any assessment on the potential impact of a new or revised policy, practice or decision**

- **Publish the results of any assessments made into the potential impact of a new or revised policy, practice or decision**
- **We review and where necessary revise any updated policy, practice or decision, ensuring on going compliance with equality duties**
- **Simply considering whether to assess a policy, practice or decision is not in itself an assessment.**

You should also think about the following:

- When considering whether or not to carry out an EIA in the first place, you thought about which issues or groups would or could be affected by the policy, practice or decision. Can you be more specific about this?
- Do you need further information about these areas, for example more data? If so, what exactly?
- Would it be helpful to contact any of the groups involved? You don't have to, but you can choose to involve others you think may be affected. Who would that be?

Policy, practice & decisions

It is important to note that legislation requires us to consider the potential impact of revised or new policies, practices as well as decisions.

Policies are clear, simple statements of how we intend to conduct our services, actions or business. They provide guiding principles when we're making decisions.

Procedures describe how each policy will be put into action.

If you decide you do need more information, then you need to gather it before completing this assessment.

- Taking everything into consideration, including any evidence you have gathered, will or could the policy have a differential impact on particular equality groups, either positively or negatively?
- If so, you need to discuss what you need to do to ensure the policy is robust.
- What will you do now? Your analysis should allow you to say whether you will:
 - Make no major change as you feel the policy is robust
 - Adjust the policy to take into account the potential impact of the policy

In some (rare) cases you could also consider continuing the policy even though it has the potential for adverse impact, or stopping the policy altogether for the same reasons.

In each of these cases, you must be able to explain clearly why you have taken your decision.

Next steps

Let your line manager know that you have carried out this EIA and let your Diversity & Equality Group representative have a copy of the completed form. This is mainly for information but also to allow the group to monitor EIAs and follow up any points that the group may have. A representative from the group will confirm that the EIA has been successfully completed. The form will also be published, where appropriate, on ishare and/or our external website.

Equality Impact Assessment form

(see guide on previous page to help complete)

Date of assessment
13th April 2017
Title of policy or practice (or decision) to be created (or changed)
This assessment covers: The new approach to auditing Best Value (BV) in Local Government, implemented from the 1st October 2016.
What is the policy or practice (or decision) intended for?
<p>The new approach to auditing BV establishes revised arrangements for undertaking and reporting BV audit activity within Audit Scotland and 'the firms' on behalf of the Controller of Audit for Scotland. This BV audit responds to the requirements of the duty of BV introduced in the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.</p> <p>The relevant primary changes to arrangements are -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undertaking BV audit activity through the local audit arrangements on an on-going basis. This will increase the coverage of BV in local audit planning, local audit work and in local annual audit reports.• Published public reports, Best Value Assurance Reports, will be produced at least once per five year period on each council, covering the assessment of how effectively the council is performing against the duty of BV.• The revised arrangements include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ More integrated working between local audit teams and Performance Audit and Best Value (PABV) staff.○ An expectation that all BV characteristics, including equalities, will be assessed as part of the local audit work within the five year appointment period.
In relation to the general equality duty and the protected characteristics, which issues or groups do you think would or could be affected and how? Be specific
<p>Audit Scotland aims to embed equalities in all aspects of our audit work, and in how we treat our colleagues by considering our behaviours, actions and decision-making. Our work covers almost every public body in Scotland and many of these organisations provide services directly to members of the public. It is important that they ensure that their services meet the needs of the individuals who make up Scotland's diverse population.</p> <p>The protected characteristics are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age• Disability• Gender• Gender reassignment• Pregnancy and maternity• Race• Religion or belief• Sexual orientation <p>In terms of our workforce and colleagues in the private sector appointed as local auditors, we do not consider that any of the revised arrangements have either a detrimental or positive affect on any of the protected characteristics.</p>

Across all 32 council local audits, an assessment will be made about how effectively each council is responding to its responsibilities in terms of equalities. For each local audit, this will be relevant to all protected characteristics but may also identify any specific protected characteristics as a focus for assessment.

Did you need to obtain further information? If yes, how did you do that?

No

Please summarise the relevant evidence you considered.

We considered:

- The equalities requirements of the duty of Best Value from the 2003/04 Statutory Guidance and our current knowledge of progress with drafting of refreshed guidance.
- The auditors' manual and assessment guidance for auditing Best Value.
- The Accounts Commission's expectations of the new approach, articulated in a range of meetings throughout the development period.

What do you conclude is the potential impact on these areas?

Our BV audit work has the potential to have a positive impact on the protected characteristic groups, by considering the outcomes for, and their perspective on, issues in local government.

Protected characteristics groups may be impacted by our BV work through:

- Judgements and recommendations made about a council in public reports promoting improvement that impacts on protected characteristic groups.
- Involvement of individual or representative groups in the audit process through interviews, focus groups, surveys, observation of meetings.

What will you do now?

- We will progress with delivering the new approach to auditing BV which includes equalities as a specific characteristic for consideration within the work.
- We will consider the impact of audit activity on equalities as part of an internal review of the first year of implementation and future review and improvement activity. Any lessons learned to improve the arrangement will be included in auditor guidance and assessment tools.

Date 26/6/17



Signature