

Initial Equality Screening Assessment

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provides a record of both the **process** and **decision**. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity.
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an equality analysis.

Directorate: Assistant Chief Exec	Service area: PII
Lead person: Jackie Mould; Steve Eling	Contact number: 54419

1. Title: Advice Services Review Phase Two

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy
 Service / Function
 Other

If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

The second phase of the advice services review includes advice services provided directly by the Council and the enhancement of partnership working through the Advice in Rotherham Partnership (AiR).

Proposals now include bringing together under one management Council provided advice services and enhancing partnership working and referral systems. This will provide are more efficient set of inter-related services and improve access and referral routes for clients through a “Universal Door”

The screening at this stage in the process relates only to movement of the Advocacy & Appeals to the management of Housing and proposals for enhanced partnership working. It does not look at potential future service changes arising. However, the changes being proposed at this stage will

enable proposals to be brought forward for future service enhancements, which will have a positive impact for service users, and in doing so improve equalities outcomes too. An Equalities Assessment will be undertaken on the future service enhancements.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and any other relevant characteristics (for example socio-economic status, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background and education or skills levels).

Questions	Yes	No
Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?		x
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?		x
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	x	
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?	x	
Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment • Advancing equality of opportunity • Fostering good relations 		x

If you have answered **no** to the questions above please complete **sections 6 and 7**

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above and;

- Believe you have already considered the impact on equality and diversity within your proposal please go to **section 4**.
- Are not already considering the impact on equality and diversity within your proposal please go to **section 5**.

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality and diversity you have carried out an impact assessment.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below (use the prompts for guidance).

- **How have you considered equality and diversity?**

(think about the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

The proposals at this stage in the advice services review are about bringing staffing functions together within the Council and starting a discussion about enhanced partnership working around advice.

Data collected by the main advice service providers shows that demand for advice services across a range of equality considerations that need to be taken account of in developing the new partnership "Single Advice Model".

Data of service users at CARD / Kiveton Park shows that:

Male / Female split is about 45% to 55%

People with disabilities 32%

Age profile up to 25, 6.5%; 25 to 64, 83%; and over 65, 10%

Ethnic background:

White British 83%

White other 4.5%

Asian 5.1%

Black 2.6%

Mixed 1.4%

Other 3.1%

However, when these are compared to data for people accessing Food in Crisis, there is a disparity that suggests that the new model could potentially reach need that is currently unmet. Data for access to Food in Crisis shows:

White British 77.5%

White other 2.2%

Asian 4.1%

Black 6.1%

Mixed 0.1%

Other 10%

- **Key findings**

(think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

See above.

- **Actions**

(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/ reduce negative impact)

The proposals create a new platform both within the Council and working with partners to review future provision.

Work to date shows that the main challenges facing advice services looking forward relate to the ongoing roll-out of Universal Credit, including a potential increase in rent arrears, dealing with other impacts of welfare reform such as the benefit freeze and roll-out of PIP, debt and the need for crisis support. Working groups at both strategic and operational levels, drawing in people from across the Council and key external agencies are identifying and dealing with issues arising from Universal Credit.

There is a significant opportunity to add value through changes to working models including bringing together Council provided advice services under a single management and enhanced partnership working across the broader range of advice agencies.

Research undertaken as part of Phase one of the advice services review that addressed services provided in the voluntary sector identified user demand including equalities related details around demand for services and service users. Both the internal structural changes and the enhanced partnership working will allow for a new baseline to be established to enable services to better focus on need and vulnerable people with a full assessment of equality impacts.

It is developing the “Single Advice Model” that is the principal change opportunity to address equalities issues.

The Advice in Rotherham Partnership will take forward the full equalities analysis as part of putting in place the “Single Advice Model”. The Partnership is well placed to undertake this work. It consists of a range of organisations, which are:

- Citizen’s Advice Rotherham and District;
- Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance (REMA);
- Clifton Learning Partnership (CLP);
- Age UK Rotherham;
- RMBC Assistant Chief Executive’s Directorate;
- RMBC Advocacy and Appeals Team;
- Voluntary Action Rotherham;
- Kiveton park Independent Advice centre;
- Live Inclusive;
- British Red Cross;
- Apna Haq;
- Rotherham Rise; and
- Active Independence.

These providers already cover the full range of equality and diversity issues. From broad open door advice providers, open to all, there are specialist and specific provision services tailored to needs and requirement around age related issues; support for women; people with disabilities; support tailored to ethnic background

including support around immigration and asylum seekers. Making connections through enhanced partnership working will potentially enable better “outreach” and surgery style service provision that may remove barriers to accessing service provision.

The Partnership will be able to bring together the range of service providers and assessment of needs and barriers to access to services to produce a full Equalities Assessment as part of developing the “Single Advice Model”. The full scope and timing will be agreed as part of developing the model.

5. If you are **not already considering the impact on equality and diversity you **will need to carry out an Equality Analysis****

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	Autumn 2019
Date to complete your Equality Analysis	Subject to scoping
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title)	Jackie Mould

6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening

Name	Job title	Date
Jackie Mould	Head of PII	29 th March 2019

7. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If you are not carrying out an independent Equality Analysis the screening document will need to be published.

If this screening relates to a **Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, full Council** or a **Significant Operational Decision** a copy should be emailed to Corporate Governance and will be published along with the relevant report.

A copy of **all other** screenings should be sent to Zaidah.ahmed@rotherham.gov.uk. For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file (but not published).

Date screening completed	21 st June 2019
If relates to a Key Decision - date sent to Cabinet	21 st June 2019

Any other decision – date sent to Equalities Officer Zaidah.ahamed@rotherham.gov.uk	21 st June 2019
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