

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 provide 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: ACH&PH | Service area: Commissioning |
| Lead person: Nathan Atkinson | Contact number: 822270 |

1. Title:

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

Service / Function

Other

If other, please specify

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

The Procurement of a local Healthwatch Service for service provision from April 2020 to March 2023.

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 makes provision for a local Healthwatch. This is a statutory service and each Local Authority is mandated to have a local Healthwatch.

Healthwatch Rotherham is expected to be the local consumer champion for patients, service users and the public, covering both health and social care for all ages.

Its main statutory functions are to

- Obtain the views of people about their needs and experience of local health and social care services and make these views known to those involved in the commissioning and scrutiny of care services.
- Make reports and recommendations about how those services could or should be improved.
- Promote and support the involvement of people in the monitoring, commissioning and provision of local health and social care services.
- Provide information and advice to the public about accessing health and social care services and the options available to them.
- Make the views and experiences of people known to Healthwatch England, helping us to carry out our role as national champion. Make recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the CQC to carry out special reviews or investigations into areas of concern.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough 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 |
|---|-----|----|
| Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i> | x | |
| Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i> | x | |
| Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i> | x | |
| Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? <i>(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i> | x | |
| Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i> | x | |
| Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or | | x |

employment practices?

(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)

If you have answered **no** to all the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals prior to carrying out an **Equality Analysis**.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below and 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)

Yes, the ethos behind a local Healthwatch, as set out by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, is to be a voice for the whole community by gathering views and experiences of local people to affect change and improve health and social care services.

- **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)

The current provider of the Healthwatch services holds limited data on equality and diversity but from information provided to the Council have indicated that 90% of the service users engaging with the NHS Complaints advocacy are White British. The intention is to address the paucity of Equalities data with mandatory requirements in the revised service specification for regular information to be provided to the Council.

- **Actions**

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

The tender method statement and the service specification requires that the service fully understands and its role in promoting equality and diversity in the provision of the service and can describe how it will monitor and evidence this. Evidence of how hard to reach groups will be accessed will also be a key factor in determining suitability.

The revised service specification will expect the successful organisation to provide clear and robust equality monitoring data.

Healthwatch is designed to remove barriers and will do this by ensuring their engagement activities reach all communities, that they act on information gathered from local people about what is stopping them accessing services and effect the necessary change assuring health and social care services are accessible to all.

This will be monitored by the Council over the length of the contract as part of its contract monitoring and quality assurance processes.

| | |
|--|--|
| Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis: | June 2019 |
| Date to complete your Equality Analysis: | August 2019 |
| Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title): | Joanne Bell, Strategic Commissioning Manager |

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

| Name | Job title | Date |
|-----------------|--|-----------|
| Nathan Atkinson | Assistant Director, Strategic Commissioning | June 2019 |
| | | |

6. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

| | |
|---|---------|
| Date screening completed | 21/6/19 |
| If relates to a Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, Council or a Significant Operational Decision – report date and date sent for publication | |
| Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk | |