

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

As a result of the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, the authority has a specific duty to conduct Race Equality Impact Assessments. Due to the Disability Equality Duty, Welsh Language Act and the Gender Duty it has been decided that it would be sensible both in financial and human resources terms to conduct generic impact assessments covering all of the equality strands.

The purpose of this document is to help assess if the policy in question helps the Council to achieve its legal duties in respect of equality. The equality strands under consideration here include **race, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, belief/ Non belief, age and the Welsh language.** This document will also help to identify areas for improvement, to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and to ensure that equality is mainstreamed into the policy framework.

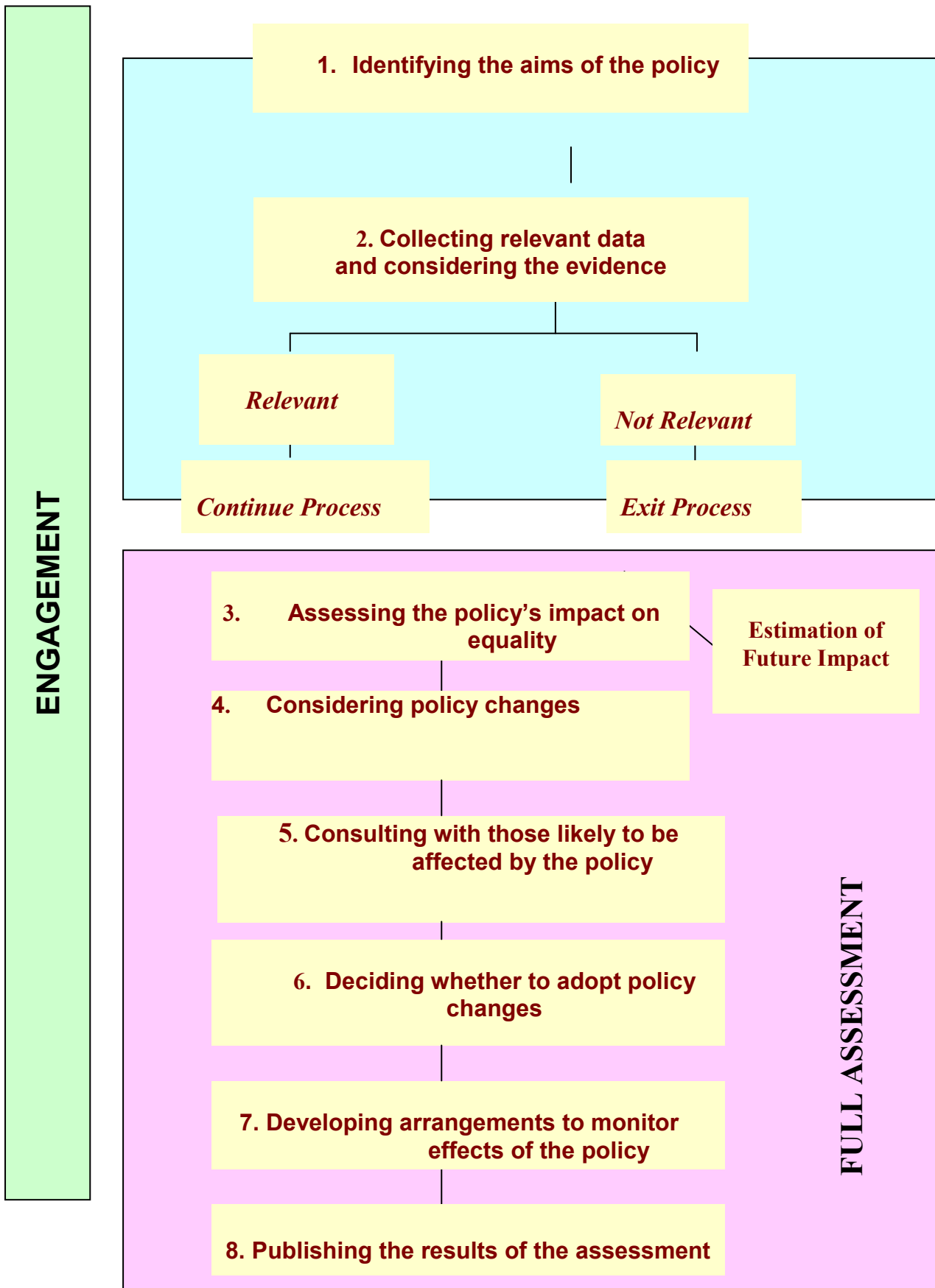
In ensuring that policies and services are planned and delivered in a non-discriminatory manner, the Council will continue to strive to create and support a culture, which enables the mainstreaming of equality issues into Council policies and services. The Council strives to increase public confidence in the fairness of its policies and services.

HOW SHOULD IMPACT BE ASSESSED?

There are **EIGHT** parts to this equality impact assessment toolkit, which are described in greater detail later in this document. They are as follows:

1. Identifying the **aims** of the policy and how it will work etc;
2. Collecting relevant **data** and considering the evidence;
3. Assessing the policy's **impact** on equality;
4. Considering **Policy Changes**
5. **Consulting** with those likely to be affected by the policy
6. Deciding whether to **adopt** policy changes
7. Developing arrangements to **monitor** the effects of the policy;
8. **Publishing** the results of the assessment.

FIGURE 1. THE EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS





EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Impact Assessment process is a process that enables an organisation to consider the effects of its decisions, policies or services on different communities, individuals or groups.

It involves anticipating or identifying the consequences of this work on individuals or group of service users/employees and making sure that any negative effects are eliminated or minimised and opportunities for promoting positive effects are maximised.

As a result of this, the services provided should be improved and meet the needs of those using them. This authority has decided to carry out generic impact assessments that will cover all 7 of the equality strands;

Race, Disability, Gender, Welsh Language, Age, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief/ Non belief

PART ONE – POLICY DETAIL

Section A - General Detail

A1. Name of policy/procedure/function *(Please specify below)*

Blaenau Gwent Regeneration Strategy

A2. Responsible Directorate *(Please specify below)*

Environment

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A3. Responsible Division *(Please specify below)*

Regeneration

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A4. Responsible Officer *(Please specify below)*

GED MCHUGH

.....

Section B - Equality Impact Assessment Detail

B1. Assessment Date *(Please specify below)*

16 Oct 2009

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B2. Staff Involved in Assessment *(Please specify below)*

Alan Burkitt, Ged McHugh, Brian Swain

Policy Definition

All the ways in which an organisation carries out its activities and should include the full range of functions, activities and decisions for which an organisation is responsible

Note: From this point on policy/procedure/function will be referred to as policy.

Section C – THE AIMS OF THE POLICY

IDENTIFYING THE AIMS OF THE POLICY AND HOW IT WILL WORK

Identifying the aims of the policy at the outset of its development is needed to achieve clarity of purpose. Policy information often begins with a statement of purpose, which is translated into a series of objectives. Clear understanding of the differences between the aims, purpose, and objectives of a policy reduce unintended or unexpected consequences of policy implementation. When addressing the aims of a policy:

Policy aims should be stated at the outset. The questions included in the relevant section of this document will help focus the task of agreeing clear aims prior to developing the policy or strategy, that support the promotion of equality and elimination of direct or indirect discrimination.

C1. Date of Policy Adoption if an existing Policy *(Please specify below)*

September 2009

C2. Was the Policy piloted? *(Please tick one box)*

Yes

No

C2B. If no, please list reasons *(Please specify below)*

C3. What are the aim/purpose of the policy? *(Please specify below)*

The Regeneration of Blaenau Gwent

C4. What are the objectives of the policy? *(Please specify below)*

6 principles:-Diversify the economy and develop manufacturing; Boost business support and enterprise; Promote learning and modern skills. Focus investment in Key Communities.

Deliver The Works as a national flagship; Develop the Transport Infrastructure.....

C5. Why was this policy introduced? *(Please specify below)*

Needed to replace Strategy prepared in 2002, to reflect latest economic conditions and opportunities.....

C6. Who were intended to benefit from this policy? *(Please specify below)*

Everybody; residents, firms, employees, investors.....

C7. Please identify the stakeholders for this policy?

(Please specify below)

As above plus Regeneration Partnership Board stakeholders.....

C8. How was the policy communicated? *(Please specify below)*

Consultation on the Draft produced in Nov 2008, including: website, leaflets, Draft in Libraries and Communities First Offices, and Draft sent to organisations.....

C9. What are the intended outcomes from this policy? *(Please specify below)*

Regeneration of Blaenau Gwent.....

C10. What criteria have been used to measure progress towards the outcomes?

(Please specify below)

Unemployment, activity, employment and self employment rates, earning and
quaifications

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C11. Are there any specific resource implications linked to this policy?
(Please specify below)

..... Funding requirements for projects

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Section D – COLLECTING RELEVANT DATA AND EVIDENCE COLLECTION

- It is important to consider how, where, and when information is collected, to assess the impact of policies upon different groups and individuals, which will include working with other public sector bodies, and making use of different types of data. Relevant, reliable and up-to-date information is essential when conducting this stage of the process. Information relating to different equality dimensions must be broken down to facilitate an understanding of the impact of the policy upon those affected by its implementation. You should consider this in relation to **race, gender, disability, age, sexuality, religion and belief, and Welsh language**.
- Once the data has been gathered, it is important to give consideration to what it might mean in relation to development of the policy. This is an important analytical stage of the process, allowing the information to be placed in context, and its relevance considered in relation to the policy's aims and purpose. The questions included in the relevant section of this document will help to clarify this process and focus attention upon potential consequences of the policy for groups and individuals.

At the end of Section D you need to consider whether the policy/procedure/function is relevant.

If it is relevant you proceed to the next stage of the process

If it is not relevant then you may exit the process.

D1. Were experts/relevant groups involved in the formulation of this policy?

(Please tick one box)

Yes → Go to D2.

No → Go to D3.

D2. If yes, please indicate who these experts/relevant groups were?

(Please specify below)

Shared Intelligence, Council Officers, experts in stakeholder organisations

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D3. Please identify which of the following data sources and evidence were used to develop the policy? *(Please tick all that apply)*

- Secondary Data & Statistical Sources**, e.g. Census, WIMD, ONS Data, Stats Wales, Nomis, Equality Data
- Secondary Research Reports**, e.g. JRF reports, Social Research Association, Economic and Social Research Council
- Specific Equality Information**: e.g. Information from Welsh Language Board, VALREC, Stonewall Cymru etc
- Academic Reports**: e.g. University Publication, Specific Related-Research from Students
- Questionnaires and Surveys**: e.g. Service Satisfaction Surveys; Awareness Surveys; Evaluation Survey; Opinion Polls; Referendum; Needs Analysis
- Relevant Formal Consultation Activities**: e.g. Consultation on Documents, Strategies, Plans, Schemes, Projects, Initiatives etc.
- Other Engagement Evidence**: e.g. Complaints/ Suggestions Schemes; Public Meetings; Question and Answer Sessions; Interactive Website; Visioning Exercises.
- Relevant Policy Review and Evaluation**: e.g. Evaluation Survey, Reports, Service Reviews
- Monitoring Data** e.g. Performance Management Information, Equality Data and Statistics
- Other data sources and evidence** *(Please specify below)*

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ASSESSING THE POLICY'S IMPACT ON EQUALITY

This is the most challenging step in the equality impact assessment process, requiring the interpretation of information and research to assess whether a detrimental impact is likely to occur for specific groups and individuals as a consequence of the policy or strategy being implemented. An adverse impact is likely to be evident when the direction of the policy is potentially different that that for which it was intended. It may be an unintended consequence of having developed a policy based upon the experience of one particular group, to the detriment of others. If an adverse effect is identifiable, policy makers will need to assess if the policy is unlawfully discriminatory. Where it is not, but is nevertheless discriminatory, policy makers will need to consider what actions to take to address or eradicate the effects of inequality.

It is important to remember that if the policy is intended to specifically address the needs of a particular group, it may well be justifiable, perhaps even necessary, in order to promote the equality of that group. The questions included in the relevant section of this document will help to structure this important stage of the impact assessment process.

This stage of the impact assessment process requires the Authority to be solution seeking in its approach to policy development. It is important to focus upon ways in which the policy can be improved rather than defended.

D4. Do you think the information collected for this policy provided a comprehensive picture that helped you to identify potential impact of the policy upon different groups and individuals in relation to the seven equality strands?

Race

Gender

Sexual orientation

Disability

Religion and Belief / Non belief

Age

Welsh Language

Transgender

D4b. Were there any areas where you could not collect relevant secondary data?

(Please specify below)

Yes

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.....

D4c. Did this lack of information adversely affect the impact the policy had on equality issues? *(Please tick one box)*

Yes *Go to D4d.*

No *Go to Section E.*

D4d. If yes, how did this lack of information adversely affect the impact of the policy on equality issues? *(Please specify below)*

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CONSIDERING POLICY CHANGES

The consideration of mitigating measures and alternative policies is central to the equality impact assessment process. Considering alternative ways of reducing or eliminating the identified adverse impact is an opportunity for policy writers to think outside the box and would include consideration of a different policy that achieves the aims of the original policy.

Section E - Modifications Following Assessment – Existing Policy Only

E1. As a consequence of undertaking the Assessment, will action need to be taken to modify the policy to remedy any adverse impact or discrimination? *(Please tick one box)*

Yes *Go to E1b.*

No *Go to E3C.*

E1b. If yes, what level of modification is needed to the original policy? *(Please tick one box)*

Significant

Moderate

Minor

E1c. Please provide detail on the modifications? *(Refer to Part Two page 12 & 13)*
More mention of equality strands, where appropriate

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E2. Do you intend to inform stakeholders of these modifications? *(Please tick one box)*

Yes Yes,

E2b. How will you inform stakeholders of the modifications being taken?

(Please specify below) Yes No

Revised Draft Strategy, next April 2010.....

E3. Are there any specific resource implications linked to these modifications?

(Please tick one box)

Yes y → Go to E3b.

E3b. If yes, what are the resource implications? (Please specify below)

Officer time.....

E3c. It is at this point that you need to decide whether this policy is Relevant or Not Relevant

Relevant Please proceed to Section E

Not Relevant y Process completed exit process.

Signature of responsible officer.....Ged
McHugh.....Date...16/10/09.....

Department or Division.....Regeneration.....

PART TWO –POLICY ASSESSMENT

Section F - Assessing The Policy's *IMPACT* On Equality

Group	Adverse Impact?	What is the impact?	Direct or Indirect Discrimination	What has been done to prevent the impact?	What further action is required?
Race, ethnicity, colour, nationality	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				
Gender	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				
Religion/Belief	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				
Disability	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				

Welsh Language	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				
Age	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				
Sexual Orientation	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				
Transgender	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				

DISCRIMINATION

Note: Please ensure that the following section is completed thoroughly and effectively as if the policy is directly or indirectly discriminatory under relevant equality legislation it may mean the policy is unlawful, and could be subject to challenge. If you need further advice and guidance on this matter please contact Alan Burkitt, Equality Officer.

Direct discrimination is where as a consequence of prejudice; a person is treated less favourably on the grounds of his/her Gender, Age, Disability, Race, Language, sexuality, or religion.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision or practice is applied equal to all but has an adverse affect on a particular group.

For further definitions and examples please consult the Equality Glossary appended to this document.

F2. Was the policy directly or indirectly discriminatory? (Please tick one box)

- Directly → Go to F3.
Indirectly → Go to F3.
Neither → Go to F4.
Unsure → Go to G1.

F3. If discriminatory, was this justified by the policy's aims and importance?

(Please tick one box)

- Yes → Go to F3b.
No → Go to F5.

F3b If yes, why was this justified? (Please specify below)

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F4. If not discriminatory, did the policy have an adverse impact on certain groups?

(Please tick one box)

- Yes → Go to F4b.
No → Go to F5.

F4b. How did it have an adverse impact on certain groups? (Please specify below)

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F5. Could this policy have an adverse impact in the future? (Please tick one box)

- Yes → Go to F5b.
No → Follow Instructions below

F5b. Why could it have an adverse impact in the future? (Please specify below)

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Section G – Consulting with those likely to be affected by the policy

G1. As a consequence of the modifications, will it be necessary to undertake a further consultation exercise? *(Please tick one box)*

Yes → *Go to H1b.*

No → *Go to Section I.*

G1b. If yes, what type of consultation will be undertaken? *(Please tick all that apply)*

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Formal Policy Consultation Process | <input type="checkbox"/> | Focus Groups/ Workshops | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Respond by Questionnaires/Surveys | <input type="checkbox"/> | Forums | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Public Meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> | E-Consultation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Road show | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other <i>(please specify)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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G2. Please summarise who is expected to respond to the consultation process? *(Please specify below)*

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G3. Are any of the following being considered for the Consultation? *(Please tick all that apply)*

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Available in Welsh Language | <input type="checkbox"/> | Available in Audio Format | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Available in Alternative Language | <input type="checkbox"/> | Proactively targeting groups | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Available in Braille | <input type="checkbox"/> | Interactive Consultation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Available in Easy-to-Read Format | <input type="checkbox"/> | Electronic Consultation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Available in British Sign Language | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other <i>(please specify)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

To be completed following consultation

G4. As a consequence of this consultation, were further recommendations made or amendments necessary to this policy that related directly to equality? *(Please tick one box)*

Yes → *Go to G4b*

No → *Go to Section I.*

G4b. What were these further recommendations / amendments? *(Please specify below)*

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Section I – Arrangements to Monitor the effects of the policy

Monitoring the effects of the policy once it is in operation is an essential part of the impact assessment process, ensuring that the policy does not have a discriminating or adverse impact upon particular groups or individuals. It is therefore important to give consideration to the way in which the policy will be monitored and reviewed during the early stages of its development, perhaps piloting the policy to see its actual effects on individuals and groups.

i1. Do the monitoring arrangements for this policy collect and analyse information in relation to the effects of the policy on equality information?

(Please tick one box)

- Yes → Go to i2.
No → Go to i4.

i2. If yes, which equality information does the monitoring arrangement for this policy affect? *(Please tick one box)*

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Race, ethnicity, colour, nationality | <input type="checkbox"/> | Welsh Language | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gender | <input type="checkbox"/> | Age | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Religion/Belief | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sexual Orientation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other <i>(please specify)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

i3. How are results and analysis from the monitoring used?

(Please specify below)

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i4. When is the policy due to be reviewed/evaluated?

(Please specify below)

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Section J - Undertaking this EqIA

PUBLISHING THE RESULTS OF THE ASSESSMENT

It is a legal requirement of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act that public service organisations must publish the results of the impact assessments they have undertaken. This information should be placed within the public domain for all individuals to access should they wish to do so e.g. the Council’s Internet site. The information could also take the form of a report and be attached to reports for Scrutiny or Council to view, and any such report should contain a description of the proposed policy, an explanation of the process of impact assessment and an analysis of the effects of the policy upon different groups and individuals. It should detail any actions that need to be carried out to improve knowledge and understanding or mitigate adverse impact.

Review date.....

