

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening



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, diversity, cohesion and integration.

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, diversity, cohesion and integration.
- whether or not equality, diversity, cohesion and integration is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

Directorate: Planning, Policy & Improvement	Service area: Business Transformation
Lead person: Katie McNeill	Contact number: 07891 271821

1. Title: Records Management Policy

Is this a:

- Policy**

 Service / Function

 Other

If other, please specify

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

The main aim of Records Management policy is to outline the requirements that must be met for the council to ensure that its records are created, captured, and managed appropriately, to recognised standards, in order to meet legal and operational needs.

The purpose of the policy is:

- To outline the standard to which the councils records must be managed in order to ensure they support the operations of the council, support accountability processes, and provide evidence of business activity.
- To enable all staff to recognise the importance of good records management, and to understand their roles and responsibilities with respect to compliance with this policy.
- To ensure relevant officers understand their responsibilities with regard to the provision of records management training for staff.
- To provide an overall statement of Records Management Policy that will be supplemented by procedures and guidance.

3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

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, diversity, cohesion and integration.

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 1 Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment 2 Advancing equality of opportunity 3 Fostering good relations	Yes – 1 & 3	

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, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 4**.
- Are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 5**.

4. Considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration 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, diversity, cohesion and integration?**

This policy is part of the Information Governance Project which is delivering a training programme for all staff and key partners with respect to information governance. Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration are all being considered as part of this programme of work, both in the way that training will be delivered, and also how the policy will impact on staff and partners.

The information governance policies are being communicated and trained to all users who are undergoing the Changing the Workplace programme as a first priority. In future training will also be provided to other council staff and Elected Members.

For each service undergoing Changing the Workplace, consultation takes place with users in the service to identify the best and most appropriate ways of disseminating information on information governance, taking into account the way different people learn, peoples working patterns and people's ability to access training. A plan is then drawn up to ensure the learning and training required for the policies is tailored to the diverse learning styles and needs of people within the service.

Similar consultation will take place with users and Elected members who are not involved in the Changing the Workplace programme, to ensure that user needs are taken in to account.

Aside from communication and training, this policy has an impact on any member of staff or customers of the council about whom the council creates and maintains records. It specifies standards to which records must be kept, and as it is embedded, the way information about people is managed will improve. Therefore it will play a role in improving relations between the council and its staff and customers. The officers involved with embedding this policy will ensure that:

- information is disseminated to inform customers and staff of what the policy means in relation to information about them. The communication needs of those involved will be considered to ensure it is disseminated in appropriate formats and ways to make sure it is accessible to all;
- any procedures written under the umbrella of this Policy will take consideration of promoting equality – for example, improvements in the management of people's records should be made for all customers and staff as far as possible. However it must be noted that delivering change/ improvements in this area will be driven by resources and risk factors (both potential risk to the customer / employees, and to the council), and therefore it will not be possible to effect change on a corporate level in a short period of time.

Embedding this policy will mean that the council becomes more pro-active about what records it creates, the quality of records, the conditions under which they are kept, security / access control and disposal / transfer to archives. Good record keeping underpins the successful operation of the council, as records evidence all council

activities. With respect to employee and customer records, improved record keeping could help to reduce unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment because the quality and protection of evidence held in records will be improved.

Finally, the policy seeks to improve the flow of information between the council and its archive provider – the West Yorkshire Archive Service. On this basis, embedding the policy will improve the amount and types of records that are available to the public via this service. As above, the communications needs of those who can benefit from this improvement will be taken in to account by officers involved in embedding this policy.

The West Yorkshire Archive Service seeks to provide access to records for any member of the public on behalf of the council, and therefore the council has a responsibility to ensure that this service takes account of the accessibility requirements of the public.

- **Key findings**

This policy has been prepared to ensure that all users of the council's information comply with the legislation relating to records management, which applies to everyone.

Embedding this policy across the council will be of benefit to customers and staff because it will improve the standards to which records containing personal information are managed, and will improve the flow of records to the council's archive provider, thereby improving public access to information. On this basis, there is an opportunity to improve relations between the council and its customers and employees, via effective communications.

With regard to the implementation of the policy, there are few equality implications that can be identified at this stage, but the potential impacts could include:

- Some staff, for example disabled staff, may have specific needs / requirements in order to ensure they can access and participate in training.
- Some groups of employees or customers may benefit sooner than others given that embedding this policy will be governed by resource availability and an assessment of risks to the council and groups of customers / employees.
- People who may have language and / or literacy issues may require additional assistance in order to implement this Policy.
- This policy is only available in English and not in other formats, but it is possible that it can be made available in other languages and formats on request.

- **Actions**

Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration are all being considered as part of the IG Project, both in the way the training is to be delivered as well as in how the policy will impact on staff and partners. This will be addressed as part of the roll-out to ensure staff take equality and diversity into account when implementing the policy.

This policy will be made publicly available in order to foster good relationships between the council and customers. Customers should be reassured by the policy that records

containing information about them will be managed appropriately.

This policy will be made available in appropriate languages and formats on request.

Communication needs of employees and customers will be considered when planning communications about this Policy and associated procedures.

Employee groups will be able to request exemptions to compliance with Policies for a range of reasons – these will be subject to a process of consideration for approval. Such requests will be monitored to ensure they do not impact adversely on a particular group of customers / employees.

5. If you are **not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you **will need to carry out an impact assessment.****

Date to scope and plan your impact assessment:	
Date to complete your impact assessment	
Lead person for your impact assessment (Include name and job title)	

6. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Katie McNeill	Corporate Records Manager	14 th February 2011.

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 impact assessment the screening document will need to be published.

Please send a copy to the Equality Team for publishing

Date screening completed	Initially completed 14 th February 2011; revised version completed 15 th August 2011.
Date sent to Equality Team	15 th August 2011.
Date published	5 th September 2011