

Equality Impact Assessment

Purpose of the Equality Impact Assessment process:

The Equality Act (2010) introduced the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) requiring public bodies to give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Consideration must be given to the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act (2010). Assessments should consider relevant evidence relating to persons with protected characteristics in relation to assessments of potential impact.

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is to ensure that policies, functions, plans or decisions (hereafter referred to as 'policy/ decision') do not create unnecessary barriers for people protected under the Act. Where negative impacts are identified these should be eliminated or minimised, and opportunities for positive impact should be maximised. An EIA is not required for a decision in relation to an individual.

Screening is a short exercise to determine whether a policy/ decision is relevant to equalities, and if so, whether a full EIA should be conducted.

Section 1: Equality Impact Assessment Screening

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|--|--|
| Basic Details | |
| Title and description of the policy/ decision: | Review & Update of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy |
| Job title of the person(s) undertaking the assessment: | Specialist Lead for Community Safety & Safeguarding |
| Council service: | Public Health |
| Date of assessment: | 13 th February 2024 |

What are the aims, purposes, objectives and proposed outcomes of the policy/ decision?

This is a review of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy taking into account updates to legislation and best practice, and the feedback from partner organisations and an internal working group.

The policy was last reviewed by the Community PDG and adopted by Cabinet in March/April 2022. The policy would normally be reviewed every 3 years. The next review is due in April 2027.

In essence the Council has a duty to work with other agencies and the policy reminds us of the Council's responsibility under the Children's Act 2004, the Care Act 2014 and other legislation, which is essentially to ensure that our functions are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and other vulnerable groups.

We have a shared responsibility with a variety of statutory agencies to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm, ensure their safety, and prevent impairment of their health or development. As a partner agency we appreciate that safeguarding is not just the duty of Devon County Council Adult Social Care and child protection specialists.

The aims of the Policy are to:

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties within scope of the policy.
- Minimise chances of abuse through effective Council recruitment and selection procedures.
- Have procedures in place for dealing with concerns through the process of timely and appropriate reporting of issues to Devon County Council or other relevant agencies.
- Support the promotion of a safe working environment and a culture of care in which the rights of all children, young people and adults with care and support needs are protected and respected and have the right to be safe.
- Ensure the importance of listening to children and adults at risk and responding appropriately.
- Promote best practice in how employees, elected members and associated workers interact with children, young people and adults with care and support needs while providing Council services.

What are the aims, purposes, objectives and proposed outcomes of the policy/ decision?

- Develop clear guidance and procedures for those employees, elected members and associated workers and ensure through training and support that they are aware of these and able to implement them.
- Provide a framework for developing partnerships with appropriate external bodies e.g., Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership and Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership, to ensure that the policy continues to reflect legal and best practice requirements in respect of the responsibility of care of children, young people and adults with care and support needs.
- Provide a framework for local Practical Guidance to exist for the consideration and management of safeguarding via the MDDC Safeguarding SharePoint Page.

Further Details

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Who may be affected by the policy/ decision?</p> | <p>The Policy gives guidance and policy framework for staff and Members, and our contractors and volunteers, based on our legal obligations, good practise and local organisational arrangements in Devon. The policy will support our own staff and Members who may find themselves at risk or vulnerable. The policy supports our service users (including tenants) particularly those who are vulnerable adults with care needs, and children and young people under 18 where we have specific legal duties.</p> |
| <p>How have stakeholders been involved in the development of the policy/ decision? E.g. a consultation exercise</p> | <p>An internal working group of staff and members met to review the policy and raise issues for review or clarification. Devon County Council officers have reviewed the policy, and an independent consultant working with Mid Devon Homes has also reviewed the policy from a housing regulatory perspective.</p> |
| <p>Will there be scope for prompt, independent reviews and appeals against decisions arising from the policy/ decision?</p> | <p>The Policy is generated in response to a range of legal duties imposed on the Council by legislation. In the main, the Council refers safeguarding concerns to other agencies (such as Devon County Council) for their evaluation and formal decision making under the legislation.</p> |

| To which part(s) of the Public Sector Equality Duties is the policy/ decision relevant: | Yes | No | Details |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 2. Advance equality of opportunity | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| To which part(s) of the Public Sector Equality Duties is the policy/ decision relevant: | Yes | No | Details |
| 3. Foster good relations between different groups | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |

Which of the protected characteristics is the policy/ decision relevant to?

Tick and briefly describe any likely equalities impact (positive, negative, or neutral)

| Characteristic | Positive | Negative | Neutral | Comments |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Sex | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The Policy covers domestic violence and abuse which has a disproportionate impact on women. |
| Age | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The purpose of the Policy is to demonstrate the Council's commitment to safeguarding from harm all children, young people and adults with care and support needs using any council services and involved in any of their activities, and to treat them with respect during their dealings with the Council, our partners and contractors. |
| Disability | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The Policy has two key purposes, one of which is to demonstrate the Council's commitment to safeguarding from harm all adults with care and support needs using any Council services and involved in any of their activities, and to treat them with respect during their dealings with the Council, our partners and contractors. |
| Religion or Belief | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No specific impacts |
| Race | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The Policy includes actions to protect people experiencing cultural issues such as forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation which tend to affect young people from ethnic minority backgrounds disproportionately. |

| Characteristic | Positive | Negative | Neutral | Comments |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| | | | | The Policy covers Modern Slavery which can affect migrant workers. |
| Sexual Orientation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No specific impacts |
| Gender reassignment | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No specific impacts |
| Pregnancy/ maternity | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No specific impacts |
| Marriage and Civil partnership* | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No specific impacts |

*Applies only to Employment and the duty to give regard to the elimination of discrimination.

Decision by Corporate Manager to recommend this policy/ decision for an Equality Impact Assessment?

Yes/ No

If the answer is “Yes”, please continue to the Section 2 and complete the Equality Impact Assessment. If the answer is “No”, please give a brief reason here.

The Policy is overwhelmingly positive in terms of equalities with no negative impacts identified. It specifically sets out how the Council will meet its legal duties and also apply best practice in safeguarding vulnerable children and adults.

EIA Screening Complete

Section 2: Equality Impact Assessment

Evidence and Consultation

What existing sources of information have you gathered to help identify how people covered by the protected characteristics may be affected by this policy/ decision? E.g. consultations, national or local data and/or research, complaints or customer feedback. Please identify any gaps in the available information that might make it difficult to form an opinion about the effect of the policy on different groups.

Please complete this table for all the Protected Characteristics. If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be justified or where possible mitigated either to reduce or remove them. (Please add rows where needed)

| Protected Characteristic | Potential Impacts/ Issues Identified/ Opportunities identified | Mitigation required (action) or Justification | Lead Officer and target completion date | What is the expected outcome from the action? |
|--------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Sex | | | | |
| Age | | | | |
| Disability | | | | |
| Religion or Belief | | | | |
| Race | | | | |
| Sexual Orientation | | | | |
| Gender Reassignment | | | | |

| Protected Characteristic | Potential Impacts/ Issues Identified/ Opportunities identified | Mitigation required (action) or Justification | Lead Officer and target completion date | What is the expected outcome from the action? |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Pregnancy/ maternity | | | | |
| Marriage and civil partnership* | | | | |

*(Applies only to Employment and the duty to give regard to the elimination of discrimination)

Please provide details of arrangements to monitor and review the policy/ decision and any mitigating actions or actions to promote equality:

Please state where the EIA will be published (e.g. on the Mid Devon District Council website):

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Equality Impact Assessment Sign off

For completion by Corporate Manager

Are you prepared to agree and sign off the EIA?

Yes **No**

If "No", provide details of why and next steps:

Name:

Job Title:

Date: