

# Equality and Cohesion Impact Assessment (ECIA) Initial Screening Form

The following questions will identify what type of impact your proposed policy, procedure, strategy, plan or working practice will potentially have upon the diverse groups within our community and their cohesion.

Your answers should form part of the development of your proposal, and inform your decision making process.

This will ensure that you consider the potential impact of your proposals on equality and cohesion, and make sure that as far as possible any negative consequences are eliminated or minimised, and opportunities for promoting equality and cohesion are maximised.

<b>Name of Proposal</b>	Corporate Complaints & Compliments Annual Report 2008-2009	
<b>Service</b>	Customer Contact (ICT)	
<b>Department</b>	Chief Executives	
<b>Date</b>	5 <sup>TH</sup> May 2009	
This initial screening Equality and Cohesion Impact Assessment has been completed to the best of our knowledge:-		
<b>Officer Completing the ECIA</b>	Name:	Karen Brockway
	Post Title:	Customer Contact Co-ordinator
	Contact Number:	0161 253 5124
	Signature:	
	Date:	26/03/09
<b>Details of the Equalities Representative consulted</b>	Name:	Andrea Gorton
	Post Title:	
	Contact Number:	0161 253 5335
	Signature:	
	Date:	26/03/09

For further information and support, please refer to the Guidance Notes found on the intranet at <http://intranet.bury.gov.uk/CE/PersonnelDivision/CorpHumanResources/EqualityDiversity/default.asp> or contact your Departmental Equality Representative:-

Adult Care Services – Karen Young extn 6123  
Chief Executive's Department – Andrea Gorton extn 5335  
Children's Services – Liz Trayford extn 5658  
Environment and Development Services – Hayley Whittles extn 5334

Details about your proposal.

**1. PURPOSE: What are the aims, objectives, and purpose of the policy, procedure or working practice?**

To ensure that all citizens who work, live or visit the Borough have the same opportunities to register their dissatisfaction with regards to Council services irrespective of who they are. This covers all the 7 Equality and Diversity Strands.

That no citizen is hindered or excluded in anyway and is able to make a complaint to the Council in a manner which suits them.

**2. DESIRED OUTCOMES: Outline what the policy, procedure or working practice will achieve.**

That the Complaints Procedure is open and transparent and everyone has the right to inform the Council if they are not happy with a particular service.

The Council's definition of a complaints is as follows:

A complaint is a way of informing the Council that you are not happy with a particular service. It may be about the standard of service you have received, delay, lack of communication, discourtesy or failure to consult. So please let us know if:

- You think we have not got it right;
- We have not done something we said we would do; or
- You are not satisfied with a particular service or set of services that we provide.

**3. Who is intended to benefit from the policy, procedure or working practice and how will they benefit?**

The Complaints Procedure is a mechanism by which the citizen has the opportunity to inform the Council if they are not happy with a particular service. The complaint in turn equips the relevant service with intelligence to be able to learn from that complaint and take appropriate action so it does not happen again.

All citizens within the Borough and the Council itself benefit's from improved services delivery.

**4. Who will be affected by this policy, procedure or working practice but will not directly benefit?**

Anyone who lives, works or visits the Borough.

**5. Who are the main stakeholders? (eg services, community groups, partnerships, other departments etc)**

The main stakeholders are Citizens, Service Departments and Partner Organisations who deliver joint services.

## 6. Equality Impact

The policy, procedure or working practice may have a differential impact dependant upon a person's race, religion/belief, disability, gender, gender identity, age, sexual orientation or caring responsibilities. The impact could be positive (and benefit certain groups) or negative (and disadvantage certain groups). Alternatively there may be a neutral impact (where there are no consequences).

Please complete the table below to provide details of the impact, your reasons for reaching such conclusions and any justification for taking the proposed actions.

	<b>Positive Impact</b> (✓)	<b>Negative Impact</b> (✓)	<b>Neutral Impact</b> (✓)	<b>Reason for Impact</b> (Why will there be such an impact?)	<b>Details of People Impacted</b> (Who will be affected and how? Eg. disabled people due to lack of access.)	<b>Can any positive/negative impact be justified? Is it lawful? (e.g. positive action)</b>
<b>Race</b>	(✓)			Freely able to complain about Council Services.	All citizens irrespective of the Equality Strand are impacted by the Complaints Procedure.	N/A
<b>Religion/Belief</b>	(✓)					
<b>Disability</b>	(✓)					
<b>Gender incl Gender Identity</b>	(✓)					
<b>Age</b>	(✓)					
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	(✓)					
<b>Caring Responsibilities</b>	(✓)					

## 7. Cohesion Impact

Community Cohesion goes beyond the issues of tracking equality related discrimination and social exclusion. It is important to look at the potential impact of the service or policy on all the different sectors of the community and community relations.

A policy may have a negative or positive impact on one or more groups within the community. For example if a grant fund is aimed at one particular community how will other communities perceive this and how can this policy be used to promote community relations?

Please complete the questions below to assess the community relations implications of this policy.

		Yes (✓)	No (✓)	Not Applicable Please explain why (Eg. No community groups impacted)	Describe any concerns there may be relating to these relationships and perceptions	Is a Full Impact Assessment Required?				
7a	Are there strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities affected by the policy, procedure or working practice?			This is not applicable as the Corporate Complaints & Compliments Annual Report covers the final analysis as to how the Council has performed whilst dealing with complaints for the year 1/4/08 to 31/3/09		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td>(✓)</td> </tr> </table> <p>Note: If you answered any of the following</p> <p>No to 7a No to 7b Yes to 7c Yes to 7d your proposal has the potential to impact upon community cohesion and so you must proceed to a Full</p>	Yes		No	(✓)
Yes										
No	(✓)									
7b	Will this policy, procedure or working practice promote strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities identified?			This is not applicable as the Corporate Complaints & Compliments Annual Report covers the final analysis as to how the Council has performed whilst dealing with complaints for the year 1/4/08 to 31/3/09						

7c	Does this policy, procedure or working practice bring groups/ communities into increased contact with each other? (Eg. in schools, neighbourhoods, workplaces)			This is not applicable as the Corporate Complaints & Compliments Annual Report covers the final analysis as to how the Council has performed whilst dealing with complaints for the year 1/4/08 to 31/3/09		Impact Assessment.
7d	Could this policy, procedure or working practice be perceived as being unfair by parts of the community who do not directly benefit from it.		(✓)			

**8. Please list all evidence used to decide the impact of your proposal.** This could include details of who you consulted and what the outcome was, any data from the consultation exercise, service monitoring, satisfaction surveys, census data, complaints monitoring, legislation, guidance or comments from service users, clients or stakeholders.

Comprehensive data is collated with regards to Complaints and Compliments coming into the Council. This data can then be used to assess who are using Council Services and feeling justified in making a complaint for whatever reason.

The reports available via the Complaints Manager System captures details on the individual and allows for Equality and Diversity monitoring to take place.

The last Residents Survey in 2006 showed that 33% of those responded were satisfied by the way the Council handled complaints. The recent Place Survey 2009 no data was captured on Complaints.

**9. Summarise the facts and issues which arose as a result of the evidence gathering and/or consultation.**

As the Council has adopted a Complaints Procedure which is open to all to use this has a Positive Impact on everyone within the Borough.

No adverse affects have been identified at this stage.

The Corporate Complaints & Compliments Annual Report 2008/2009 makes the following recommendations:

- 14.1 It is imperative that all service areas within the Authority record the necessary data on the new Complaints Manager System so that an accurate representation can be made of the number and nature of complaints that the Council receives.
- 14.2 Ensure that Complaint Officers keep up to date with their data input and not enter complaints retrospectively i.e. following month for previous month. A cut off point of 5 working days will be introduced from the end of the month to coincide with the acknowledgment letters being sent out.
- 14.3 Baseline data will be collected during this coming year so that comparisons can be made year on year but also targets can then be set to improve/reduce the number of complaints received across the Council.
- 14.3 It is also important that learning from complaints is recorded and any corrective action logged and shared so that service improvements can not only be made within the respective service area but also shared across the Council.

**Issues**

Capturing Equality & Diversity data has proven to be very difficult. Working with the North West Complaints Network it is hoped that best practice will be shared as to how other Local Authorities are addressing this issue.

From the 358 Complaints received for 2008-2009 only 22 had specified their Ethnicity with 199 not being specified.

**10. Have you identified any gaps in your evidence or conclusions?**

If there are gaps in your evidence, it is likely that further research and a Full Impact Assessment will be required.

Please ✓ as appropriate	Yes		No	(✓)
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**11. Are there any unjustifiable negative or positive impacts?**

If so, it is likely that further research and a Full Impact Assessment will be required.

Please ✓ as appropriate	Yes		No	(✓)
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**12. State the risks and weigh them against the benefits of implementing the proposal, then explain the rationale behind what you intend to do next.** This could be either

- to proceed with the proposal,
- make amendments to the proposal, or
- to carry out further investigations and prepare a Full Impact Assessment.

Not Applicable.

**13. If you intend to proceed with the proposal, please list clearly what monitoring arrangements have been put in place to monitor the impact of the policy, procedure or working practice.**

Will you review the policy, procedure or working practice regularly? (for example every 3 years)  
If appropriate, will statistics be gathered to evidence the impact of the policy? How will they be published? (For example service user satisfaction rates or user take up broken down by equality strand.)

The Complaints Procedure was reviewed in 2008 and is due again in 2011.

The Corporate Complaints & Compliments Annual Report is presented to Management Board, Resource and Performance Scrutiny Commission and Standards Commission at the end of each Financial year.

The Complaints Manager System allows for monitoring to take place by service areas on a monthly basis and present to the appropriate officer group.

**14. As a result of this ECIA Initial Screening exercise, is a Full Impact Assessment required?**

Please ✓ as appropriate	Yes		No	(✓)
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**15. Has a copy of this EIA Initial Screening exercise been sent to Corporate HR for uploading to the web? ([equality@bury.gov.uk](mailto:equality@bury.gov.uk))**

Please ✓ as appropriate	Yes	(✓)
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**16. Have the findings of this EIA Initial Screening exercise been included in the main body of any report, and a copy attached to the report for submission.**

Please ✓ as appropriate	Yes	(✓)
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