

Equality Analysis Form

The following questions will document the effect of your service or proposed policy, procedure, working practice, strategy or decision (hereafter referred to as 'policy') on equality, and demonstrate that you have paid due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

1. RESPONSIBILITY

Department	Department of Communities & Wellbeing	
Service	Communities Team	
Proposed policy	Enhancing Township Forums – Cabinet Report	
Date	12 May 2015	
Officer responsible for the 'policy' and for completing the equality analysis	Name	Cindy Lowthian
	Post Title	Communities Manager
	Contact Number	0161 253 7455
	Signature	
	Date	12 May 2015
Equality officer consulted	Name	Mary Wood
	Post Title	Principal Officer – Equalities
	Contact Number	0161 253 6795
	Signature	 32/2015
	Date	20 May 2015

2. AIMS

What is the purpose of the policy/service and what is it intended to achieve?	<p>To approve recommendations to enhance the operation of Township Forums.</p> <p>Significant budgetary challenges facing the Council, combined with a changing local partnership landscape and advances in digital technologies provide opportunities to refresh the Forums to make them more efficient, locally focussed and effective.</p> <p>The following proposals are included in the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Reduce the number of generic presentations carried out at meetings. Too many generic presentations pull the forums away from local issues and priorities. Protocols will ensure that where presentations are made, these are locally relevant and address specific concerns to the township. A local market place will run prior to each Forum meeting involving the erection of stalls and stands allowing partner agencies to seek the views of the public on more generic issues. (ii) Formalise Police involvement in the meetings –
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	<p>giving the public opportunities to raise and discuss community safety concerns.</p> <p>(iii) Reduce the frequency of meetings and harness wider engagement mechanisms. The intention is that the Forums will compliment a range of other community engagement methods, avoiding duplication and consultation fatigue.</p> <p>(iv) Localism Act 2011 - Community right to Bid. Ensure the views of Forums are sought on future nominations.</p> <p>(v) Community Funds – strengthen the decision making powers of the Forums in relation to the fund. This should help strengthen local transparency and accountability in relation to their allocation.</p> <p>Feedback on the proposals was sought at the last round of Township Forums; this feedback has helped shape the recommendations outlined in the report.</p>
<p>Who are the main stakeholders?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public • Elected Members • Advisory Group members • Partners, particularly Police and Health organisations • Voluntary, community and faith sector groups • Local businesses • Community Groups and Tenant/Resident Associations • Faith representatives • Bury Council Departments

3. ESTABLISHING RELEVANCE TO EQUALITY

3a. Using the drop down lists below, please advise whether the policy/service has either a positive or negative effect on any groups of people with protected equality characteristics.

If you answer yes to any question, please also explain why and how that group of people will be affected.

Protected equality characteristic	Positive effect (Yes/No)	Negative effect (Yes/No)	Explanation
Race	Yes	No	<p>The proposals will ensure more time is given at the Forum meetings to local issues and priorities aimed at reducing disadvantage within and between communities. This includes people from different minority communities and backgrounds.</p> <p>Enhancing the Township Forums and harnessing wider engagement methods should also help strengthen community relations and cohesion.</p> <p>Strengthening decision making powers in relation to grant funding will enhance local accountability and transparency. Forum members have the local knowlege and networks to help ensure funds are allocated to local projects which help reduce disadvantage within and between people from different ethnic backgrounds.</p>
Disability	Yes	No	<p>Enhancing the Township forums and harnessing wider engagement methods should help to ensure that people with disabilities are able to participate and engage using a variety of methods tailored to their needs.</p> <p>Township Forum members have the local knowlege and networks to help ensure Township Forum Grant funding is allocated to local projects which help reduce disadvantage within and between people from different communities, including those with disabilities.</p>
Gender	Yes	No	Enhancing Township forums and

			<p>harnessing wider engagement methods should help to ensure that all individuals are able to participate and engage using a variety of methods tailored to their needs.</p> <p>Township Forum members have the local knowledge and networks to help ensure Township Grant funding is allocated to local projects which help reduce disadvantage within and between people from different communities, including between different gender groups.</p>
Gender reassignment	Yes	No	<p>Enhancing Township forums and harnessing wider engagement methods should help to ensure that all residents, including those who have or are about to undergo gender reassignment, have opportunities to participate and engage using a variety of methods tailored to their needs.</p>
Age	Yes	No	<p>Township Forum members have the local knowledge and networks to ensure grant funds benefit a variety of local groups and projects, including the needs of young and old people within their areas.</p> <p>The report recognises that significant advances in digital technology and social media mean that increasing numbers of people prefer to share their views on line rather than attend meetings, particularly young people.</p> <p>However, a variety of engagement methods, including Township Forums, will continue to be used, providing opportunities for those who prefer to engage in other ways.</p>
Sexual orientation	Yes	No	<p>Enhancing Township forums and harnessing wider engagement methods should help to ensure that all residents are able to participate and engage using a variety of methods tailored to their needs, regardless of sexual orientation.</p> <p>Township Forum members have the</p>

			local knowlege and networks to help ensure Township Grant funding is allocated to local projects which help reduce disadvantage within and between people from different communities, including the local LGBT communtiy.
Religion or belief	Yes	No	Township Forum members have the local knowlege and networks to help ensure Township Grant funding is allocated to local projects which help reduce disadvantage within and between people from different communities, including local faith groups.
Caring responsibilities	Yes	No	Enhancing Township forums and harnessing wider engagement methods should help to ensure that residents are able to participate and engage using a variety of methods tailored to their needs, including caring responsibilities. Township Forum members have the local knowlege and networks to help ensure Township Grant funding is allocated to local projects which help promote overall wellbeing, including for those with caring responsibilities.
Pregnancy or maternity	No	No	□□□□
Marriage or civil partnership	No	No	

3b. Using the drop down lists below, please advise whether or not our policy/service has relevance to the Public Sector Equality Duty. If you answer yes to any question, please explain why.

General Public Sector Equality Duties	Relevance (Yes/No)	Reason for the relevance
Need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010	No	
Need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (eg. by removing or minimising disadvantages or meeting needs)	Yes	The Township Forums will be responsible for decision making in relation to a community grant allocation. These Grants will be distributed to voluntary organisations which provide services in response to local needs, many of these services meeting needs that fall below the threshold for statutory intervention but which, nonetheless, improve an individual's quality of life, enable them to participate more fully in society and may mitigate or delay the need for statutory intervention in the future. Proposals to channel more funding through Township Forums means that decisions will be taken more closely to the communities they serve and enable local people to be involved in the process.
Need to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (eg. by tackling prejudice or promoting understanding)	Yes	The recommendations outlined in the report will help ensure the Township Forums are more locally focussed and effective. Reducing the number of meetings, promoting other engagement methods and reducing the numbers of generic presentations should encourage more active engagement, strengthen community relations and community cohesion.

If you answered 'YES' to any of the questions in 3a and 3b

Go straight to Question 4

If you answered 'NO' to all of the questions in 3a and 3b

Go to Question 3c and do not answer questions 4-6

3c. If you have answered 'No' to all the questions in 3a and 3b please explain why you feel that your policy/service has no relevance to equality.

4. EQUALITY INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT

4a. For a service plan, please list what equality information you currently have available, **OR** for a new/changed policy or practice please list what equality information you considered and engagement you have carried out in relation to it.

Please provide a link if the information is published on the web and advise when it was last updated?

(NB. Equality information can be both qualitative and quantitative. It includes knowledge of service users, satisfaction rates, compliments and complaints, the results of surveys or other engagement activities and should be broken down by equality characteristics where relevant.)

Details of the equality information or engagement	Internet link if published	Date last updated
<p>Feedback on the proposals was sought at the last round of Township Forum meetings.</p> <p>A total of 72 responses were received via the Township Forums.</p> <p>The majority of responses received indicate widespread consensus and support for the proposals with one exception; proposals to reduce the frequency of meetings received more of a mixed response, particularly from Whitefield and Unsworth, Prestwich and Radcliffe Township</p>	<p>See Appendix A of the report.</p>	

<p>Forums.</p> <p>However the report recognises that people prefer to share their views using a variety of methods accessible to them. Having fewer meetings combined with the other changes recommended in the report should help improve overall engagement and ensure the Township Forums are more productive and locally focussed.</p> <p>Feedback received via the Township Co-ordinators indicates that where Police attend meetings, this is positively received by members of the public. The report proposes to formalise police involvement in the Township Forums.</p>		

4b. Are there any information gaps, and if so how do you plan to tackle them?

Further opportunities to streamline engagement approaches with partners through township forums will be explored over the coming six months, particularly health colleagues.

5. CONCLUSIONS OF THE EQUALITY ANALYSIS

<p>What will the likely overall effect of your policy/service plan be on equality?</p>	<p>Positive: whilst the changes will have little impact in individuals with protected characteristics and any benefit will be felt by all groups, the proposed changes should help to improve community engagement approaches, thereby improving community relations and community cohesion.</p> <p>Delegating funding decisions through the Township Forums should strengthen local transparency and accountability in relation to the allocation of grants and increase community involvement in decisions.</p>
<p>If you identified any negative effects (see questions 3a) or discrimination what measures have you put in place to remove or mitigate them?</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Have you identified any further ways that you can advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations? If so, please give details.</p>	<p>To continue to promote Township Forums and encourage people to become involved. The work of the Forums will also be complimented through the promotion of other communication and engagement methods which can meet the needs of different communities and groups. This recognises that not everybody wants to attend a formal meeting.</p>
<p>What steps do you intend to take now in respect of the implementation of your policy/service plan?</p>	<p>If approved by Cabinet on 10 June 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recommendation will be made to the next meeting of Full Council to amend the Operating Framework to reflect the proposals. In particular, to reduce the frequency of Township Forum meetings from six to four per year for 2015/16 onwards. • The decision will be communicated through the next round of Township Forum meetings. • Detailed discussions will take place with groups • The Township Forum 'presentation protocol' will be refreshed to reflect the proposals. • Guidance and governance arrangements will be finalised to facilitate the delegation of grant spending to Township Forums for the new municipal year.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

If you intend to proceed with your policy/service plan, please detail what monitoring arrangements (if appropriate) you will put in place to monitor the ongoing effects. Please also state when the policy/service plan will be reviewed.

The Cabinet Member for Communities will receive regular reports on the operation of the Township Forums, particularly in relation to the implementation of the new proposals.

All groups receiving funding from the Communities Fund will be monitored on a quarterly basis to review performance and funding levels.

An annual progress report on the operation of the Township Forums, including grant funding will be submitted to Council at its first meeting of the municipal year 2016.

Guidance will be produced for Township Forums to outline duties and responsibilities in respect of funding local bodies. Control of budgets will be retained centrally (with funding being released according to Forum decisions) whilst governance will be further strengthened by corporate monitoring of spending decisions on a quarterly basis.

COPIES OF THIS EQUALITY ANALYSIS FORM SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO ANY REPORTS/SERVICE PLANS AND ALSO SENT TO THE EQUALITY INBOX (equality@bury.gov.uk) FOR PUBLICATION.