

West Lothian Council: Equality Impact Assessment

A. About the function, service, policy, procedure, project etc

- 1 What is the name of the function/service/policy/procedure/project etc (called “policy” from this point) to be assessed?

Housing & Building Services Complaints & Appeals procedure

- 2 What were the results of the screening for relevance?

The results from the screening for relevance are as follows:

- The parts of the general duty covered are, eliminating discrimination where it exists, providing equality of opportunity and encouraging good relations between different groups of people in the community.
- There is no evidence to believe that any groups of people are being treated differently or in a discriminatory manner.
- There has been no public concern raised regarding discrimination within this area.
- This report screens across all strands of equality, including race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion.
- Our assessment & Review programme, and the Communities Scotland inspection found no issues within our approach, deployment and delivery of complaints & appeals – the service was the first in Scotland to receive an A grading for this area. The inspectors found the system of complaints ‘robust’ with very clear guidelines for staff and customers. They also highlighted good practice in evidence where complaints had been used for service development.
- The complaints & appeals procedures have since been reviewed, and have been further improved since this inspection. Areas of good practice have been continued and built upon and the approach has been strengthened through a review of all required letters. The approach is very clear, well publicised and is readily available. Staff issue information leaflets on the procedure routinely when tenants sign up, and when a decision is made to enable access to the procedure should the customer wish to complain or appeal the decision.
- This, combined with the satisfaction levels for complaints, the tenant satisfaction survey results and the level of customer concern, finds that a full impact assessment is not required at this time.
- There are some areas that would benefit from future development within any

future reviews – such as segmenting complaints satisfaction results for inclusion in the annual equalities performance report, this is not a statutory requirement, but would be an excellent area of good practice if implemented. At the time of this assessment a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system is being piloted within WLC – and it was unclear at this time as to whether segmentation by ethnicity, gender, disability etc could be made via this system. New customers are captured, existing customers are being collated retrospectively, but the system is not currently able to update this information. Once this is fully launched and tested it should be clearer how this development is carried out.

3 Briefly describe the aim of the policy etc.

What needs or duties is it designed to meet? Who are the intended beneficiaries? How will it affect employees? How will it affect the community and the different groups of people within it?

Is the service contracted out or delivered under a service-level agreement or with partners? Who else is involved?

In what way will you involve any of these people in the impact assessment process?

B. Gathering the evidence and assessing the impact

4 Is there any evidence (or reason to believe) that this policy could have a different effect on some groups of people compared to others? (e.g. different needs, different experiences, different outcomes, different rates of participation, different abilities to access opportunities).

Is there an adverse impact around race, gender, disability, faith, sexual orientation, age, health, etc? What are the reasons for this adverse impact?

5 Please describe the evidence or reasoning you have used to make your judgement. What existing data for example (qualitative or quantitative) have you used to form your judgement? Tell us about the information as it applies to different groups (e.g. by race, gender and disability etc).

6 Are there any unmet needs/requirements that can be identified that affect any of the specific groups?

C. Making changes and promoting equality

7 If in your judgement, the policy etc does have an adverse impact, can you modify the policy to reduce/eliminate any adverse impact?

You need to think whether your modifications will:

- have a positive or negative effect on the promotion of equality of opportunity for any group
- help eliminate discrimination in any way
- encourage or hinder community relations.

8 If you cannot modify the policy to reduce adverse impact, consider if the impact can be justified and explain. (It is unlikely that you will be able to justify any impact which amounts to unlawful discrimination.)

If the impact cannot be justified, how do you intend to deal with it?

D. Consultation

8 What steps have you taken/are you taking to consult externally as part of your assessment?

Whom have you consulted? What methods did you use? How long was the consultation period?

Have you consulted any “experts”? Did you involve any people in the affected groups in some other way during the process?

E. Next steps

- 10 What were the results of the consultation?
What have you done with the results i.e. how do you intend to use the information gathered as part of the consultation?

- 11 Have you published the results of that consultation? If so, where?
What arrangements were made to reach specific groups affected?

- 12 What are your recommendations based on the conclusions of this assessment?

- 13 Please provide us with separate information about how you intend to monitor this policy in future. What is the review date set for this policy?

- 14 How will you publish the results of this assessment? What methods will you use?
What arrangements are there to reach specific groups affected?

- 15 Have you conducted any other types of impact assessment on this policy? (e.g. health, financial, environmental).

- 16 Is there anything else you wish to add?

Assessment made by:	Sarah Kelly
Others involved in assessment:	Linda Cowan Assessment & Review Team (mock inspection)
<p>Summary of assessment (this will be published).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What you did ▪ What evidence you used ▪ What you found ▪ What consultation you undertook ▪ What changes you made ▪ What will happen next. 	<p>Screening for relevance of Housing & Building Services Complaints & Appeals procedure</p> <p>New procedure and relevant documentation, Tenant Satisfaction Visit results, Communities Scotland Inspection.</p> <p>No evidence to support a full assessment – 1 potential area for improvement as best practice.</p> <p>Findings to be published on specific ‘Equalities for Consultation’ page on internet which we make available to everyone for comment</p> <p>N/a</p> <p>Following consultation this assessment will be reviewed to take into account any received comments and progressed as required. This will then be added to WLC’s list of published impact assessments</p>
Manager’s Signature	
Date:	May 2008
Service area and job title:	

When you have completed this form, please take a copy and send it to your service representative on the Corporate Working Group on Equality and/or the Equality Officer.