

Equality Impact Needs Assessment (EINA)

Part 1 EINA (initial assessment with preliminary consultation)

Name of policy, procedure, function, project, etc Commissioning for the Future – Shropshire Council Commissioning Strategy	
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Names (list those involved in carrying out assessment)	Job titles	Contact details
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Date commenced	January 2014	

Aims of the policy and description

This Strategy sets out how the Council will quickly move to its new role as a commissioning body, our strategy for achieving this and the associated guidance and tools to help. Its purpose is to provide Officers, Members, Service Providers, Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations and the public with an understanding of the context of the Council's approach to commissioning, and to set out the direction this will take over the coming three years. This strategy builds on previous work undertaken in conjunction with representatives of the VCS and has been written to take account of the council's other strategic plans and the commissioning approaches being developed in a number of specific localities throughout the county.

This strategy complements and supports the delivery of the Council's Business Plan and Financial Strategy 2014 – 2017.

Aims of this Strategy

This strategy and supporting guidance will:

- support all areas of the council to adopt a consistent, comprehensive and robust approach to commissioning outcomes for our customers and communities;
- ensure that good commissioning drives the transformation of the council and the services it provides and enables;
- support the council in its aim to do things better, faster, cheaper and together with its partners with a focus on prevention;
- define the principles we will adopt which support effective commissioning and decommissioning;
- ensure that when planning, designing and carrying out our activity we do things based on evidence gathered from data, local knowledge and meaningful interaction with service users or customers before we make decisions on how we deliver or contract for services; and enable us to maximise the benefits to our communities and residents through our activities.

Stakeholders, people concerned, interested parties

Shropshire Council – all Members and Directorates; Public Sector Partners including Shropshire CCG, West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner, Town & Parish Councils; Shropshire Voluntary & Community Sector Assembly; Shropshire Business Board; Shropshire Partners in Care; Customers & Service Users; Service Providers

Progress summary		Date	Signature
Head of service	Part 1	14/05/2014	
Head of service	Part 2 (FULL)	N/A	

Potential Impact on Target Groups – Preliminary Consultation (see page 2)

Assess each of the following areas separately and consider how the policy may affect people's Human Rights

- Have you considered the relevant Protected Characteristics and/or consulted people with specialist knowledge?
- Will the policy create any problems or barriers to any Community or Group?
- Will any group be excluded because of the policy?
- Will the policy have a negative impact on community relations?

If the answer to any of these is **Yes** to any **High Impact criteria**, you must prepare a **Full (Part 2) EINA**. Preliminary consultation will be required to help identify the impact and evidence of this recorded.

Initial assessment (and preliminary consultation)

Protected Characteristic groups	Significant (High) negative impact <i>Full EINA required</i>	Significant (High) positive impact <i>Full EINA required</i>	Medium or Low impact <i>Part 1 EINA only required</i>
Race (also ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, gypsy, traveller)			Medium
Disability (mental & physical impairments, mobility, manual dexterity, speech, hearing, learning, understanding, visual, MS, cancer, HIV)			Medium
Sex (also associated aspects: safety, single-parenting, caring responsibility, potential for bullying & harassment)			Medium
Gender re-assignment (also associated aspects: safety, single-parenting, caring responsibility, potential for bullying & harassment)			Medium
Sexual Orientation (heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bi-sexual)			Medium

Age (children, young people, working age, elderly)			Medium
Religion & belief (Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Shinto, Non-conformists)			Medium
Pregnancy & Maternity			Medium
Other (other target groups relevant to your service, for example, family carers, marital status, rurality, poverty)			Medium

High	Significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place or no evidence available, urgent need for consultation with customers, general public, employees
Medium	Some potential impact, some mitigating measures in place but no evidence available how effective they are, would be beneficial to consult with customers, general public, employees
Low	Almost bordering with non-relevance to the EINA process (heavily legislation led, very little discretion exercised, limited public facing aspect, national policy)

What is your evidence for your answers to the above questions?

This strategy sets out how the Council will commission in future and supports the transformation of the organisation into that of a commissioner, rather than a direct deliverer of services. This strategy does not make proposals for individual commissioning projects, which will be subject to their own EINA in turn.

The Consultation

Initial assessment of the impacts on the protected groups listed above was 'Low' on the basis that this strategy supports the delivery of individual projects which would in turn develop their own EINA. A 12-week consultation exercise has been undertaken on the draft Commissioning Strategy which also incorporated the draft EINA for this strategy. The consultation was open for anyone to comment and was distributed to key stakeholders to seek their views. The consultation paperwork was sent directly to key stakeholders and representative groups and was also raised in the Shropshire Council Members' Bulletin and circulated to Shropshire Council Directors and ip&e.

One of the respondents to the consultation questioned the initial 'Low' impact assessment. This is in view of the fact that, whilst the commissioning strategy is the driver for change as opposed to a detailed financial document, the strategy articulates the Council's aim to do things "better, faster, cheaper..." and also to aim to renegotiate contracts to achieve a minimum 10% savings and therefore how has the potential impact on providers' ability to deliver been factored into the assessment?

Whilst the strategy also commits to a fundamental redesign of all services over a 3 year period with a firm focus on delivering outcomes for the customer whilst making best use of wider community assets and resources, this response and others which discuss the need to achieve a balance between making savings and improving customer outcomes would also suggest that, when rolling out communications in connection with the Commissioning Strategy and engaging with stakeholders, the Council will need to be clear that fundamental redesign aims to ensure

that these are not mutually exclusive. It is also important to reiterate that individual transformation projects will want to undertake their own assessment of the impact on customers and equality groups.

Conclusion from the Consultation

Reflection on the consultation feedback would point towards an impact assessment of 'Medium' to reflect that some respondents are highlighting some potential impacts due to the challenges of responding to the financial savings targets but that mitigating measures are in place due to the approaches proposed in the Commissioning Strategy and that individual project EINAs will be undertaken each time service changes are proposed.

This strategy aims to support the Council to be clear and consistent in the approaches it takes towards commissioning outcomes for our customers and communities and sets out a number of principles of good commissioning which will be applied regardless of what is being commissioned or whether any one or more protected characteristic groups are impacted.

This strategy also sets out the Council's expectations of commissioned services, whether they are commissioned internally, from a public sector partner, the VCS or private sector providers. These expectations aim to ensure that the focus is on delivering outcomes for our customers and communities through a collaborative approach.

This strategy is also clear about the need for, and importance of, strong engagement so that the Council and its partners have robust evidence in the form of information, data and intelligence to inform the best approaches to take when commissioning outcomes. In addition, the strategy is clear about the requirement to evaluate and understand the impacts of the ways in which we commission in individual projects.

This strategy is a development of work and ongoing engagement that began in 2012 with the VCS to develop principles and guidance around good commissioning, based on fairness, consistency, transparency, access to the market and a clear focus on outcomes for customers.

As this strategy supports delivery of the Council's Business Plan and Financial Strategy 2014 – 2017 it will influence the ways in which individual commissioning decisions are made by ensuring that common principles are applied in respect of the Council's practice and in the ways in which we expect providers to operate.

Important: Only policy, procedure, function, etc rated as **High Impact** needs a **Full (Part 2) EINA**. Full assessment requires more in-depth consultation with members from the target groups highlighted as being at the receiving end of any potential High Impact.

Part 2 – Full EINA

Sources of evidence

- List the main sources of evidence on each group, both quantitative and qualitative
 - Consider how the policy may affect people's Human Rights
 - Qualitative evidence may include comments and opinions from stakeholders, as well as academic research
- Useful sources of information: complaints monitoring, customer records, census data, focus groups, face to face interviews, surveys, related information produced by other public bodies)

Consider the following when assessing the impact & seeking evidence/during consultation

1. How is the policy likely to affect the **promotion of equality** and the **elimination of discrimination** in **each** of the areas?
 - a) Give a selection of key facts relevant to each area
 - b) If there is little or no evidence, say what you will do to find some evidence and give examples of the types of evidence you might find
2. How will the policy meet the needs of the **different communities** and groups?
3. Give details of any **consultation** that has already been done which is relevant to this policy
4. Give examples of **existing good practice** in this area, for example, measures to make it easier for people in particular groups to influence policy

Challenges and opportunities: questions to consider throughout the assessment

- Consider using a Critical Friend (external to the department or organisation) to challenge the assessment
- What measures does the policy include, or what could it include, to address existing patterns of **discrimination, harassment or inequality?** (Consider the alternatives)
- What impact will the policy have on **helping different groups of people** to get on well together to **improve community relations?**
- If the policy is likely to have a **negative** impact, what are the reasons?
- What **practical changes** will help reduce any adverse impact on particular groups?
- What will be done to **improve access to take-up** of services and **understanding the policy?**
- What can you do to **promote equality** and **eliminate discrimination** when you procure goods and services?

Detailed evidence

	Source of evidence & baseline data	Outline of impact
Race		
Disability		
Sex		

Gender Re-assignment		
Sexual Orientation		
Age		
Religion & Belief		
Pregnancy & Maternity		
Other		

EINA decision

Decide whether to adopt the policy based on the aims, evidence collected, consultation results, relative merits of alternative approaches and compliance with legislation. Ensuring that:

- The approach is methodical and logical, records are kept and decisions are justified
- Balanced decisions are made, best accommodating conflicting interests

Summary of findings and analysis - EINA decision

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Signature (Lead Officer)	Signature (Head of Service)
	
Date: 12/05/2014	Date: 15/05/14

Next review date of this EINA

Every 3 years or when policy changes, if earlier Date: 12/05/2017
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Action Plan guidance notes

<p>Give an outline of your action plan, based on the evidence you find to support your decisions, and the challenges & opportunities you have identified. It could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans that are already under way or that you are already thinking about to address the challenges and priorities you have identified • Arrangements for continued discussion and involvement with stakeholders • Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the policy for its impact on different groups throughout the policy making process and as the policy is carried out • Arrangements for ensuring that any pilot projects are evaluated and take account of issues described in the assessment, and that they are assessed to make sure they are having intended impact • Arrangements for discussing how far you can take account of the issues in the assessment with other agencies, service providers, Non-Departmental Public Bodies and regulatory bodies • Arrangements for ensuring that your relevant colleagues are made aware of the assessment • Arrangements to make sure the assessment contributes to the Single Equality Scheme (SES) • Arrangements for disseminating information about the assessment to all relevant stakeholders who will be implementing the policy • Arrangements for improving the body of evidence you have <p>Also consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area of negative impact • Actions/changes proposed • Resource implications
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Action Plan

		Person responsible	Target date

You may wish to change the above categories in the first column to reflect the actions needed, relevant to the policy and assessment