

APPENDIX 3**Equality Impact Assessment**

The Equality Act 2010 replaces the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It simplifies the law, removing inconsistencies and making it easier for people to understand and comply with it. It also strengthens the law in important ways, to help tackle discrimination and equality. The majority of the Act came into force on 1 October 2010.

Public bodies are required in it to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The public sector Equality Duty came into force on 5 April 2011. The duty ensures that all public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all. It ensures that public bodies consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work – in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

The Equality Duty encourages public bodies to understand how different people will be affected by their activities so that policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people's needs. By understanding the effect of their activities on different people, and how inclusive public services can support and open up people's opportunities, public bodies are better placed to deliver policies and services that are efficient and effective.

The new equality duty replaces the three previous public sector equality duties, for race, disability and gender. The new equality duty covers the following protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- religion or belief – including lack of belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

It also applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.

Having due regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the equality duty as part of the process of decision-making. This means that consideration of

equality issues must influence the decisions reached by public bodies, including how they act as employers, how they develop, evaluate and review policies, how they design, deliver and evaluate services, and how they commission and procure from others.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves considering the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- meet the needs of people with protected characteristics, and
- encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low.

Fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

Complying with the equality duty may involve treating some people better than others, as far as this is allowed by discrimination law. For example, it may involve making use of an exception or the positive action provisions in order to provide a service in a way which is appropriate for people who share a protected characteristic.

The Equality Duty also explicitly recognises that disabled people's needs may be different from those of non-disabled people. Public bodies should therefore take account of disabled people's impairments when making decisions about policies or services. This might mean making reasonable adjustments or treating disabled people better than non-disabled people in order to meet their needs.

There is no explicit requirement to refer to the Equality Duty in recording the process of consideration but it is good practice to do so. Keeping a record of how decisions were reached will help public bodies demonstrate that they considered the aims of the Equality Duty. Keeping a record of how decisions were reached will help public bodies show how they considered the Equality Duty. Producing an Equality Impact Assessment after a decision has been reached will not achieve compliance with the Equality Duty.

It is recommended that assessments are carried out in respect of new or revised policies and that a copy of the assessment is included as an appendix to the report provided to the decision makers at the relevant Cabinet, Committee or Scrutiny meeting.

Where it is clear from initial consideration that a policy will not have any effect on equality for any of the protected characteristics, no further analysis or action is necessary.

Public bodies should take a proportionate approach when complying with the Equality Duty. In practice, this means giving greater consideration to the Equality Duty where a policy or function has the potential to have a discriminatory effect or

impact on equality of opportunity, and less consideration where the potential effect on equality is slight. The Equality Duty requires public bodies to think about people's different needs and how these can be met.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Directorate:	Chief Executive	Lead officer responsible for EIA	Rachel Shaw			
Name of the policy or function to be assessed:	Lifeline Policy					
Names of the officers undertaking the assessment:	Rachel Shaw					
Is this a new or an existing policy or function?	Updated policy for an existing function					
1. What are the aims and objectives of the policy or function? The Lifeline Service is designed to increase, maintain and improve the independence of customers to remain living within their own home. The aim of this policy is to set out the options available to customers accessing the service, as well as providing a clear mechanism to review the annual Lifeline charge. The objective of this policy is to provide guidance to managers following a request from a customer to enter into a Lifeline Customer Service agreement with the Council. This policy also seeks to outline the services available and the charging and income collection processes.						
2. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy or function? An efficient and effective Lifeline service, which provides support to residents who may be vulnerable through age and/or disability and may need assistance to summon help in an emergency situation.						
3. Who is intended to benefit from the policy or function? Customers of the Lifeline service Employees that deliver the service						
4. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy or function? Customers of the Lifeline service Employees that deliver the service Telecare provider						

5. What baseline quantitative data do you have about the policy or function relating to the different equality strands?

Personal data is held for customers of the service, which records age, disability and gender

Previous analysis has identified that more women access the service. 67% of customers are female, 26% are male and 7% are couples.

6. What baseline qualitative data do you have about the policy or function relating to the different equality strands?

Information is held regarding disability and how the customer feels that the service will benefit them.

7. What has stakeholder consultation, if carried out, revealed about the nature of the impact?

Regular monitoring is undertaken to review the service, this has not revealed any further action that needs to be taken in regards to the impact

8. From the evidence available does the policy or function affect or have the potential to affect different equality groups in different ways? In assessing whether the policy or function adversely affects any particular group or presents an opportunity for promoting equality, consider the questions below in relation to each equality group:

Does the policy or function target or exclude a specific equality group or community? Does it affect some equality groups or communities differently? If yes, can this be justified?

Although the service is predominately for those that require support and assistance, any resident of the borough can use the service. Therefore, no groups are excluded.

Is the policy or function likely to be equally accessed by all equality groups or communities? If no, can this be justified?

Older residents and those with a disability are more likely to access the service due to the support and assistance offered. This can be justified as that is the purpose of the service and although other groups are not the target of the service they can still use the service and are not excluded.

Are there barriers that might make access difficult or stop different equality groups or communities accessing the policy or function?

Steps have been taken to make the service as accessible as possible. Information can be provided in different formats and home visits are offered to explain the service in a way that meets the individuals needed.

Could the policy or function promote or contribute to equality and good relations between different groups? If so, how?

The service can support someone to be more independent, which can have a positive impact on their lives and their ability to be part of the wider community.

What further evidence is needed to understand the impact on equality?

Regular monitoring of the service will be undertaken.

9. On the basis of the analysis above what actions, if any, will you need to take in respect of each of the equality strands?

Age: The service is targeted at older residents of the borough, although younger residents are not excluded. The Council will monitor the users of the service to ensure that younger residents who would benefit from the service are aware of the service and are able to access it.

Disability: The service is targeted at residents with disability who would benefit from the sensors and assistance provided. The Council will work with the supplier to ensure that suitable solutions are provided.

Gender: The majority of customers are female (67%). The Council will ensure that the service is marketed and offered to both women and men equally. It is acknowledged that more women than men are interested in the service, although the reasons for this are not fully understood. Further work will be completed to increase understanding.

Gender Reassignment: It is not anticipated that the Council will need to take any further action in order to enable access for this group. Regular monitoring and analysis may identify reasons that have not been anticipated. Action will be taken to mitigate any barriers identified.

Marriage and Civil Partnership: Only a small number of customers are couples (7%). It is acknowledged that people living alone are more likely to access the service.

Pregnancy and Maternity: It is not anticipated that the Council will need to take any further action in order to enable access for this group. Regular monitoring and analysis may identify reasons that have not been anticipated. Action will be taken to mitigate any barriers identified.

Race: It is not anticipated that the Council will need to take any further action in order to enable access for this group. Regular monitoring and analysis may identify reasons that have not been anticipated. Action will be taken to mitigate any

barriers identified.

Religion and Belief: It is not anticipated that the Council will need to take any further action in order to enable access for this group. Regular monitoring and analysis may identify reasons that have not been anticipated. Action will be taken to mitigate any barriers identified.

Sexual Orientation: It is not anticipated that the Council will need to take any further action in order to enable access for this group. Regular monitoring and analysis may identify reasons that have not been anticipated. Action will be taken to mitigate any barriers identified.

I am satisfied with the results of this EIA. I undertake to review and monitor progress against the actions proposed in response to this impact assessment.

Head of Service

Signature: R Shaw