

HDC Initial Equality Impact Assessment Form (EIA1)

Service Area/Section	Building Control		Persons undertaking the assessment (please also state name of contact officer)		Jack Taylor
Name of policy or function to be assessed	Building Control Service	Date of assessment	17.09.07	New or existing policy	Existing
1. Briefly describe the aims, objective or purpose of the policy, or service function.	<p>To provide a Building Control service in accordance with the Statutory requirements, that achieves minimum standards of health and safety of people in and around all types of buildings, conservation of fuel/power and access to and use of buildings.</p> <p>The service is driven by the requirements of the Building Regulations and associated legislation.</p> <p>The service is provided in an open and competitive market and therefore has to be self-financing in accordance with the Building (Local Authority) Charges Regulations.</p> <p>Enforcement of the Building Regulations under sections 35 and 36 of the Building Act 1984.</p> <p>Control of dangerous structures under sections 77 and 78 of the Building Act 1984.</p> <p>Control of demolition of buildings under sections 80 and 81 of the Building Act 1984.</p>				
2. Are there any associated objectives of the policy/function?	Not Applicable				
3. Who is intended to benefit from this policy and in what way?	<p>Architects, designers and agents acting on behalf of applicants.</p> <p>Builders, developers and members of the public carrying out work in the built environment.</p> <p>Purchasers, tenants and users of buildings subject to the requirements of the Building Regulations.</p>				
4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy/function and for whom?	<p>Acceptable standards in building construction in accordance with the requirements of the Building Regulations.</p> <p>Acceptable levels of safety in relation to structural stability, fire precautions, sanitation and social environment through the Building Regulations.</p> <p>Acceptable standards of accessibility for people in the Built Environment.</p> <p>Self-financing status for the service delivery.</p>				

5. How do these outcomes meet or hinder other policies, values, or objectives of HDC?	All of the service area functions are Statutory and therefore not influenced by other policies or HDC objectives.		
6. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the intended outcomes?	Retention and recruitment of suitably qualified staff could affect our ability to meet all of the Councils Statutory Obligations. Changes in legislation. Increased competition from approved inspectors could affect our ability to be self financing.		
7. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to this policy?	Our customers and all users of the Built Environment.	8. Who implements the policy/function and is responsible for the policy?	Building Control Manager
9. Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact on racial groups?	Y	N ✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? 		There is very limited information available at present re: ethnicity of service users. As part of the councils general equality standards review, monitoring systems are being put in place. However, there is no evidence from customer consultation feedback that there are any barriers to using the service.	
10. Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to gender?	Y	N ✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? 		Whilst at present all of the frontline Building Control staff are male, in the past we have employed female surveyors. The existing all male staff structure has come about through a national shortage of qualified staff of both genders, particularly women. The council will shortly be undergoing an equal pay review and local labour mapping exercise. Corporate recruitment objectives will then follow, and HR will then be in a position to support Building Control in attempting to attract suitable female candidates when positions become available.	

11. Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to disability?	Y	N ✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? 			<p>The Building Control Service is very positive in dealing with this sector of the community. It is responsible for enforcing Part M of the Building Regulations (Access to and use of Buildings).</p> <p>Its officers actively encourage designers and builders to make all types of buildings (newly erected, altered or extended) accessible to all users.</p> <p>Applicants who are registered disabled do not incur charges when making Building Regulation Submissions for improved facilities within their properties.</p>
12. Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?	Y	N ✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? 			<p>There is no evidence to support this view other than there being no complaint history in respect of the service area.</p> <p>Current recruitment policies do not discriminate on grounds of sexual orientation.</p>
13. Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to age?	Y	N ✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? 			<p>The Building Control service makes no differentiation between age groups when carrying out its statutory functions. This is confirmed as there is no evidence from customer consultation feedback that there are any age barriers to using the service</p>
14. Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to religious belief?	Y	N ✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? 			<p>There is no evidence to suggest that the service or the Building Regulations discriminate against persons with different religious beliefs.</p> <p>Site inspections can be arranged upon request to meet with customer religious requirements (e.g. avoiding religious festivals and holy days). We are also aware that special consideration may have to be given to lone female occupants of properties when arranging site inspections.</p>

15. Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to people having dependants/caring responsibilities?	Y	N ✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? 			<p>There is no evidence to support this view other than there being no complaint history in respect of the service area.</p> <p>Current recruitment policies do not discriminate against people having dependants/caring responsibilities.</p>
16. Could any differential impact identified in 9-15 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy?	Y	N ✓	
17. Can any adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one or more groups or any other reason?	Y	N ✓	
18. Should the policy proceed to a full impact assessment?	Y	N ✓	
19. If no, are there any recommended changes required to the service to improve it around the equality agenda?	<p>Greater understanding of our customers and their specific needs (robust analysis of surveys/meaningful data collection). In line with all other areas of the Council, thought needs to be given to the approach to future stakeholder engagement including engagement with the public.</p> <p>Disabled people and people who read or speak little or no English could be affected through the ways in which information is made available and lack of understanding of how decisions are made. There are also language issues due to the technical nature of the legislation.</p> <p>The next customer survey we carry out will hopefully indicate the diversity of our customer base and this information will be used to decide if there is a need to make forms/correspondence available in languages other than English and in different formats</p>		

Additional notes/guidance (Policy Officer)	<p>Recently arrived people (builders and residents) who lack knowledge of the Building Control process and the need to obtain Building Regulation approval, could find themselves facing enforcement action. We need to make sure that people can access the information quickly and easily in the most common other languages (e.g. Polish) through our websites.</p> <p>There is a need to review collection and monitoring of key data corporately to ensure that we are monitoring against the six equality strands (race, gender, disability, age, faith or belief, and sexuality).</p>
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Signed (completing officer) Date __/__/__

Signed (EIA policy officer) Date __/__/__

Signed (Head of Service) Date __/__/__