

3. What does your current data tell you about who your policy, strategy, function or service may affect:

Service users	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Employees	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wider community	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please provide an explanation for your 'Yes' or 'No' answer

We have very little data available in relation to this new Policy, and are currently unable to identify how the Policy will impact on the above groups.

We have identified the following action - 'To collect management information from the Counter Fraud System (CFS) as it develops'. We will monitor our findings and review this EA in twelve months' time, when we will consider whether a full EA is required.

4. Are there any aspects of the policy, strategy, function or service, including how it is delivered, or accessed, that could contribute to inequality? (including direct or indirect discrimination to service users or employees)

Yes No

Please provide an explanation for your 'Yes' or 'No' answer

We have no evidence that the Policy could be more detrimental to certain groups.

5. Will the policy, strategy, function or service, have an adverse (negative) impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?

Yes No

Please provide an explanation for your 'Yes' or 'No' answer

The Council is committed to protecting public funds through its actions against Council Tax fraud. The policy sets out how the Council will address Council Tax fraud through prosecution and other sanctions available for Council Tax fraud offences. The policy forms an integral part of the Council's overall strategy to prevent, detect and deter fraud, promoting high standards of governance and accountability. It aims to benefit the tax payers of Birmingham and the overall governance of the community.

The Policy is intended to have a positive impact as it is designed to protect public funds, and make sure that Council Tax Support, discounts and exemptions are given to those most in need, and to ensure that those who are dealt with in accordance with the Policy are treated fairly.

However, one of the outcomes of a Council Tax fraud investigation is to administer sanctions; including prosecution.

Prosecutions are dealt with by the Criminal Courts which are governed by the Criminal Justice System and operated by Her Majesty's Court and Tribunal Service. Courts can deal with offenders by way of Custody, Community Punishment Orders, Financial Penalties or discharges. This will have an adverse impact on the lives of defendants and their immediate families. Having a criminal conviction may affect the ability to return to gainful employment or in some instances cause the termination of employment.

Another sanction operated by the Council for offences is a caution and likewise these will have an adverse impact on individuals and their families.

Cases taken for prosecution are contested in court via the Criminal Justice system processes.

At all stages within the process it is explained to individuals why the actions are being viewed as being outside of the law and what remedial action will be taken within the legal framework.

6. Is an Equality Assessment required?

If your answer to question 2 has identified potential adverse impact and you have answered 'yes' to any of the following questions 3, 4, or 5, then you should carry out a Full Equality Assessment.

Does the Policy, Strategy, Function or Service require a Full Equality Assessment? Yes No

If a Full Equality Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the assessment with service managers in your service area as well as the Directorate Contact Officer.

If a Full Equality Assessment is Not required, please sign the declaration and complete the Summary statement below, then forward a copy of the Initial Screening to your Directorate Contact Officer

If a Full Equality Assessment Is required, you will need to sign the declaration and complete the Summary statement below, detailing why the Policy, Strategy, Function or Service is moving to a Full Equality Assessment. Then continue with your Assessment

DECLARATION

A Full Equality Assessment not required, the Initial Screening has demonstrated that the Policy, Strategy, Function or Service is robust; there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. All opportunities to promote equality have been taken.

Chairperson: Laeeq Beg

Summary statement:

Sign-off Date: 24th September 2013

Completion of the initial screening indicates that the policy is unlikely to have the potential for discrimination or adverse impact upon the lives of people or service users.

Quality check: The screening document has been checked using the agreed audit arrangements in the Directorate:

Name: (Officer/Group carrying out the Quality Check):
Suresh Sharma, Quality & Community Engagement Officer

Date undertaken:
24th September 2013

Screening review statement: "This is fine and in my opinion can be signed off. I agree that there is no need to go to a full EA at this stage".

Directorate: Corporate Resources

Contact number: 303 2102

Equality Assessment Task Group Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Role on Task Group</u> (e.g. service user, manager or service specialist)	<u>Contact Number</u>
1. Laeeq Beg	Chairperson / Operations Manager – BCFT	303 1723
2. Cynthia Carran	Principal Business Auditor - CABS	303 2104
3. Paula Moloney	Service Specialist - Internal Audit	464 1422
4. Sue Payne	Service Specialist - BCFT	303 0193

FULL EQUALITY ASSESSMENT– STAGE 2

Step 1– Scoping the Equality Assessment

Building on the material included at the Initial Screening stage, you should begin the Equality Assessment by determining its scope. The Equality Assessment should consider the impact or likely impact of the policy, strategy, function or service in relation to all areas of our remit. The Equality Assessment should be proportionate to the significance and coverage of the policy, strategy, function or service.

1. What data, research and other evidence or information is available which will be relevant to this Equality Assessment? Please tick all that apply

Service Targets	<input type="checkbox"/>	Performance Targets	<input type="checkbox"/>	Service Take-up	<input type="checkbox"/>
User Satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Press Coverage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Census Data	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workforce Monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Intelligence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Previous Equality Impact Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complaints & Comments	<input type="checkbox"/>	Information from Trade Unions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff Survey	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Please provide details on how you have used the available evidence/information you have selected as part of your Assessment?

2. Have you identified any gaps in relation to the above question? Yes No
If 'Yes' please detail including what additional research or data is required to fill these gaps? Have you considered commissioning new data or research?

Step 2 – Involvement and Consultation

Please use the table below to outline any previous involvement or consultation with the appropriate target groups of people who are most likely to be affected or interested with this policy, strategy, function or service. (See Appendix 2 - for details on each target group)

Target groups	3. Describe what you did, with a brief summary of the responses gained and links to relevant documents, as well as any actions
Age	
Disability	

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Step 7 – Action Plan

Any actions identified as an outcome of going through the Steps 1 – 6, should be mapped against the headings within the Action Plan.

NB: summarise/evidence actions taken to mitigate against adverse impact.

10. Taking into consideration the responses outlined in the Initial Screening Stage and Steps 1-6 of the Full Assessment, complete the action plan below.					
	Ref (if appropriate)	Actions	Target date	Responsible post holder and directorates	Monitoring post holder and directorates (if appropriate)
Involvement and Consultation					
Data Collection	1	To collect management information from the Counter Fraud System (CFT) as it develops.	31/03/14	Neil Farquharson, Group Auditor CFT, Corporate Resources	Craig Price, Principal Group Auditor, Corporate Resources
Assessing Impact					
Procurement and Partnership					
Monitoring, Evaluation and Reviewing					

Step 8 – Sign-Off

The final stage of the Equality Assessment process is to formally sign off the document as being a complete, rigorous and robust assessment

The policy, strategy or function has been fully assessed in relation to its potential effects on equality and all relevant concerns have been addressed.