

Surrey County Council Equality Impact Assessment



Initial Screening Form

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|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Service: Strategy and Policy Projects Service | Project: Information Provision | Name of officer: Camilla Thrush |
| 1. Is this a major project: i.e. high profile / will effect many people / will have a severe effect on some people? | No | |
| 2. Is the project likely to have an impact on a specific group of people? | Yes | |

| Equality and Diversity strands that the policy is to be assessed against: | Age | | Belief / Faith | | Disability | | Gender | | Race | | Sexual Orientation | | HR Issues Only | |
|---|-----|-----|----------------|-----|------------|-----|--------|-----|------|-----|--------------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| | + | - | + | - | + | - | + | - | + | - | + | - | + | - |
| Could the information provision have a negative or positive impact? | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

Head of Service: Louise Footner

Signed:

Date: 8th October 2007

Surrey County Council Full Equality Impact Assessment

1. Summary of impact identified by equality and diversity strand:

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| <p>Disability Age Race Belief / Faith Gender Sexual Orientation Transgender: Positive and negative impact:</p> | <p>Information provision for people from any of the strands can have a positive or negative impact depending on the methods used. It is widely recognised that this is an area, which needs improvement across the organisations if we are to truly meet the needs of our communities and staff. There are a number of examples of when information can have a positive or negative impact:</p> <p>Positive impact: when information is provided in different formats, or methods i.e. not just through the SCC website. When the services provide interpreters to meet the needs of people for whom English may not be their first written or spoken language i.e. BSL interpreters. Surveys, engagement and consultations include E&D monitoring questions to ensure we reach people across the seven strands.</p> <p>Negative impact: can be felt by these groups when they don't see themselves represented in the images SCC uses, when there is an over-reliance on the website to get information out to our communities who for a number of reasons may not regard this as their main point of contact for information. When the information provided is or, is not relevant to a group but has a been produced for 'all'. People often feel uncomfortable answering the E&D questions, which makes it hard to ensure we have reached people across the seven strands.</p> |
| <p>HR issues only: Positive and negative impact:</p> | <p>Information is provided for staff via the S-net, posters, leaflet campaigns, pay slip information to name just a few, however there is an over-reliance on electronic methods which can result in a negative impact on the majority of staff not having access to the information.</p> <p>Information provision for our staff is not just the responsibility of HR, each service has a duty to their staff to ensure they are meeting the needs of all staff when producing information.</p> |

2. Give details of involvement and consultation or research undertaken for each relevant equality and diversity strand, upon which this project could have an impact either internally or externally:



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| <p>Age Disability Belief / Faith Gender Race Sexual Orientation Transgender</p> | <p>The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) has undertaken initial work looking at the views and experiences of disabled people with regard to the quality of available information across local and national public services. This research found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lack of, or misleading, information is an important factor in preventing disabled people from accessing the services they need; • There is little information made easily available to people at the onset of their disability; • Disabled people often have difficulty in identifying and accessing information at the point of a key life transition, for example starting school, or leaving school for further education, training, or employment; • Information is often fragmented where people need to access different services from different providers across the public, private and voluntary sectors; and that • There is a relationship between the quality of information that disabled people received about public services, and their perceptions about the quality of those services overall <p>The initial work mapped services for disabled people across a number of central government departments and local authority services including SCC, and identified a number of issues that need to be addressed in the provision of information and advice about those services.</p> <p>The ODI report can be viewed on the ODI website www.officefordisability.gov.uk or copies ordered from Office for Disability Issues, The Adelphi, 1-11 John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HT</p> <p>Although the research focused on the needs of disabled people, the needs of young people, older people, and people who have difficulty reading and /or writing English often face the same issues and must therefore also be taken into account if SCC is to be truly inclusive in the way it provides information. If the needs of groups from all our diverse communities are taken into account this will result in better information provision for everyone.</p> |
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2. Give details of involvement and consultation or research undertaken for each relevant equality and diversity strand, upon which this project could have an impact either internally or externally:

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| Age Disability Belief / Faith Gender Race Sexual Orientation Transgender | <p>The results of the public engagement for the Disability Scheme, the 50+ Strategy, the Children’s Trust / Plan and the Information Provision project stakeholder workshop held in September have all shown that peoples’ concerns are around the processes, quality and methods used to provide information rather than the detail of the information produced. The project will therefore focus on these issues.</p> <p>The consultation and engagement was representative of people from all seven strands.</p> |
| HR issues only: | <p>The project team will be carrying out engagement with the SCC E&D Staff Network to ensure the needs of our staff are represented in the project outcomes.</p> |

3. Recommendations to improve the project outputs:

The project will focus its work in three areas following the five core information principles developed by the ODI as a result of their research:

1. Ensure that (disabled people) are involved from the start
2. Provide information through a range of channels and formats
3. Ensure your information meets users’ needs
4. Clearly signpost other services
5. Always define responsibility for information provision

These principles are essential to make sure that services and information are designed and delivered to a high standard. The ODI is working with SCC and three other local authorities to develop the five principles identified in the guide and to look at how to improve information for disabled people at a local level. The ODI is also working with partner organisations, government departments and disabled people to take forward recommendations in the ‘Improving Information for Disabled People’ report.

4. Actions required to implement the EIA recommendations:

| Action Plan: | Responsibility: | Date to be completed: |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| Engage the services of consultants and an end user steering group with specialist knowledge in this area to ensure the project team delivers solutions to the issues, which are in line with the 1 st principle. | Project Team | March 2008 |
| Research and map the current information provision workstreams and projects within SCC. | Project Team | November 2007 |
| Research partner information provision services / methods and best practice guidance. | Project Team | November 2007 |
| Work with services to develop an improved understanding of the needs of various groups with regard to information provision. | Project Consultants | December 2007 |
| Develop options analysis and business case for improved information provision across SCC. | Project Team with Consultants and Steering Group | February 2008 |
| Ensure interested parties / stakeholders are kept informed of the projects' progress throughout. | Project Team | March 2008 |
| Present business case to County Council management Team and if required Council Executive. | Project Team | February 2008 |

Review date: **March 2008** Name of person responsible for review: **Camilla Thrush** EIA Assessor: Camilla Thrush

Head of Service: Louise Footner

Signed:



Date Completed: 8th October 2007

Date sent to Web Operations Team: 09.10.07