

Addressing Inequalities

Equalities Impact Assessment Template

Surrey County Council Equality Impact Assessment Template

Stage one – initial screening

(Please refer to pages one to twelve of the guidance before completing this screening)

What is being assessed?	Vulnerable Persons
Service	Trading Standards
Name of assessor/s	Neil McLoughlin Andy Pollard
Head of service	Peter Denard
Date	13 January 2010
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Existing

Write a brief description of your service, policy or function. If this screening is part of a project it is important to focus on the service or policy the project aims to review or improve.

Surrey County Council's Trading Standards Service vision is "Confident Consumers - Trusted Traders". Our mission is to target the work of Trading Standards closely on the needs of Surrey consumers and businesses, working in flexible and innovative ways and in partnership with others. Trading Standards carry out a great deal of planned and proactive work looking at specific areas of trade. We use information gathered both locally and nationally to identify where we can target our work. One aspect of this work is dealing with doorstep sellers and rogue traders who often prey on the vulnerable.

The aim of our vulnerable persons work is to ensure that persons who may be regarded as being vulnerable adults are not denied access to our service because of their vulnerability.

A vulnerable adult is defined as:

"A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age

or illness; and who is or maybe unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.”
 (Who decides? 1997 Lord Chancellor's Department and ['No Secrets'](#) 2000 - Department of Health)

In order to achieve this objective we have created the role of Vulnerable Persons Officer from within existing staffing resources.

Indicate for each equality strand whether there may be a positive impact, negative impact, or no impact.

Equality Strand	Positive	Negative	No impact	Reason
Age	X			Specific emphasis on the protection of vulnerable adults.
Race	X			See the separate EIA on Investigations for details.
Disability	X			Aim to protect vulnerable persons.
Gender	X			Actively seek to protect older or vulnerable single females. See separate EIA on Investigations for details.
Belief / Faith			X	
Sexual Orientation			X	
Other equality issues – please state				
HR issues			X	

If you find a negative impact on any equality group you will need to complete stage one and move on to stage two and carry out a full EIA.

A full EIA will also need to be carried out if this is a high profile or major policy that will either effect many people or have a severe effect on

some people.

Is a full EIA required?	Yes (go to stage two)	No
If no briefly summarise reasons why you have reached this conclusion, the evidence for this and the nature of any stakeholder verification of your conclusion.		
<p>The policy applies equally to all aspects of our work ensuring that all users of our service receive the same treatment irrespective of any vulnerability. However, to date, the main beneficiaries have been victims, or potential victims, of doorstep crime.</p> <p>SCC Trading Standards Service has never received any complaints from the public alleging discrimination, harassment or unequal outcomes in this service/policy area.</p> <p>The beneficiaries are: anybody who resides in, works, visits or has an interest in Surrey or who wishes to access a service provided by Surrey County Council. The Vulnerable Persons work is intentional in order to address a particular need identified, and reflect our enforcement responsibilities.</p> <p>All SCC Trading Standards consumer and trader leaflets have a statement that:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>This information may be made available in an alternative language, large print, Braille, or on audio tape and computer disk.</i></p> <p>All information contained on our website is in a format that ensures it is accessible to those who may be visually impaired. The web pages can be accessed using software that will read the contents of the page to individuals. The format of the web site has been designed to assist those who may have learning difficulties through using simple English and appropriate images.</p>		
Briefly describe any positive impacts identified that have resulted in improved access or services		
<p>We have a policy of intervening when there is a vulnerable adult person involved particularly elderly, disabled or customers who have English as a second language. We have a Trading Standards Officer who also has a role as a Vulnerable Person's Officer in relation to doorstep crime and rogue traders. He also has links to other agencies such as Social Services.</p> <p>The service also has officers who are trained in special measures to assist vulnerable adults who have been victims of crime. This ensures that vulnerable persons are not denied access to justice because of their vulnerability. We also have formal memoranda of understanding for referring vulnerable persons to appropriate partner agencies, such as, social services. These arrangements also cover the procedures for making referrals to Trading Standards.</p>		

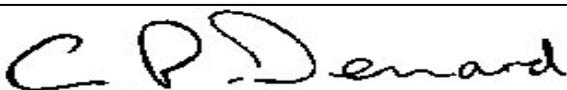
Where appropriate, we can apply for compensation on behalf of victims of crime, thereby avoiding the need for them to take civil litigation themselves.

The network of support through partner agencies has led to a number of individuals benefiting from practical support and assistance with basic chores, such as gardening work to more significant matters, such as, re-housing.

The implementation of special measures allows those most vulnerable members of the community to access justice as effectively as everyone else. This can reverse the often-disproportionate detrimental impact of crime on those most vulnerable by empowering them and allowing their voice to be heard. The use of Victims' Personal Statements allows a court hear how the crime has affected the victim's life.

Vulnerable adult suspects have been treated fairly and with respect. National policies and legislation are rigidly adhered to ensuring the fair and consistent treatment of vulnerable adults. This has included the use of appropriate adults (to facilitate communication) and referrals to appropriate external agencies, such as social services and specialist mental health care services.

For screenings only:

Review date	
Person responsible for review	
Head of Service signed off	
Date completed	27.4.2010

- Signed off electronic version to be kept in your team for review
- Electronic copy to be forwarded to Equality and Diversity Manager for publishing

Stage 2 – Full Equality Impact Assessment

Page 14 of the guidance

Introduction and background

Using the information from your screening please describe your service or function. This should include:

- **The aims and scope**
- **The main beneficiaries or users**
- **The main equality, accessibility, social exclusion issues and**

barriers, and the equality strands they relate to (not all assessments will encounter issues relating to every strand)

If this EIA is part of a project it is important to focus on the service or policy the project aims to review or improve.

Now describe how this fits into 'the bigger picture' including other council or local plans and priorities.

Evidence gathering and fact-finding

(Page 15 of the guidance)

What evidence is available to support your views above? Please include:

- **A summary of the available evidence**
- **Identification of where there are gaps in the evidence (this may identify a need for more evidence in the action plan)**
- **Information on contributing factors to inequality.**
- **What information is currently captured with respect to usage and take up of services.**
- **What the current situation is in relation to equality and diversity monitoring (where relevant)**

Sources of evidence may include:

- Service monitoring reports including equality monitoring data
- User feedback
- Population data – census, state of the county, Mosaic
- Complaints data
- Published research, local or national.
- Feedback from consultations and focus groups
- Feedback from individuals or organisations representing the interests of key target groups

- Evidence from partner organisations, other council departments, district or borough councils and other local authorities

How have stakeholders been involved in this assessment? Who are they, and what is their view?

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Analysis and assessment

**Given the available information, what is the actual or likely impact on minority, disadvantaged, vulnerable and socially excluded groups? Is this impact positive or negative or a mixture of both?
(Refer to page 17 of the EIA guidance for full list of issues to consider when making your analysis)**

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What can be done to reduce the effects of any negative impacts? Where negative impact cannot be completely diminished, can this be justified, and is it lawful?

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Where there are positive impacts, what changes have been or will be Made, who are the beneficiaries and how have they benefited?

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Recommendations

Please summarise the main recommendations arising from the assessment. If it is impossible to diminish negative impacts to an acceptable or even lawful level the recommendation should be that the proposal or the relevant part of it should not proceed.

Action Plan – actions needed to implement the EIA recommendations

Issue	Action	Expected outcome	Who	Deadline for action

- Actions should have SMART Targets
- Actions should be reported to the Directorate Equality Group (DEG) and incorporated into the Equality and Diversity Action Plan, Service Plans and/or personal objectives of key staff.

Review date	
Person responsible for review	
Head of Service signed off	
Date completed	
Date forwarded to EIA coordinator for publishing	

- **Signed off electronic version to be kept in your team for review**
- **Electronic copy to be forwarded to your service EIA coordinator**