

Equality Impact Assessment: CEO/12 Policy team staff reduction and reduce discretionary spending on mental health events

Purpose of the Equality Impact Assessment:

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requiring public bodies to give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Consideration must be given to the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act. Assessments should 'consider relevant evidence relating to persons with relevant protected characteristics in relation to such assessments of impact'.

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is to ensure that policies, functions, plans or decisions (hereafter referred to as 'policy' do not create unnecessary barriers for people protected under the Act, and that negative impacts are eliminated or minimised and opportunities for positive impact are maximised.

Screening is a short exercise to determine if a policy is relevant to equality and whether a full equality impact assessment (EQIA) should be carried out.

Title/description of the policy	CEO/12 Policy team staff reduction and reduce discretionary spending on mental health events
Name of the person(s) carrying out the assessment?	Alison Clark, Principal Policy Officer Rosemary Mackinnon, Principal Policy Officer - Equality
Service and Department	Chief Executive's Office: Policy, Reform and Ward Management
Date of assessment	08/02/2016
What are the aims and objectives of the policy/function/strategy?	<p>The Council has a commitment in its programme to promoting mental health and reducing stigma associated with mental ill health, with a focus on young people. The performance measures all relate to activity in the Care and Learning Service and this is not affected by the savings proposed from the policy team budget.</p> <p>The proposal is to remove discretionary funding for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The annual Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival - £11k • NHSH to support awareness raising around suicide prevention £20k <p>The remaining funding for mental health is £8,600 in grants to the Samaritans (Inverness - £5000 and Caithness £3600).</p>

Who may be affected by the policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisations in receipt of funding to support activities for the SMHAFF. Suicide prevention funding is primarily for organising, and also some delivery of, training to NHH and HC staff. 		
How have stakeholders been involved in the development of the policy?	SMHAFF is overseen annually by a steering group comprised of key stakeholders, including public and third sector organisations. NHH manages and administers the suicide prevention training to which the Council contributes.		
<i>Which parts of the public sector duty is the policy relevant to?</i>			
1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination	✓	SHMAFF in particular addresses issues of discrimination, prejudice and stigma	
2. Advance equality	✓	Opportunities to remove or minimise barriers or disadvantage, including steps to promote equality and meet different people's needs.	
3. Promote good relations	✓	Raising awareness of mental health issues between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.	
<i>What existing sources of information have you gathered to help identify how people covered by the protected characteristics may be affected by this policy or service?</i>			
Eg Consultations, national or local data and/or research, complaints or customer feedback. Are there gaps in available data?	<p>There is a range of national information available on mental health issues and the benefits of encouraging involvement in arts and cultural activities.</p> <p>Arts Council (2013) The value of arts and culture to people and society</p> <p>Scottish Government (2013) Healthy Attendance? - The Impact of Cultural Engagement and Sports Participation on Health and Satisfaction with Life in Scotland</p> <p>SHMAFF – information is recorded on the activities that have been funded.</p> <p>Suicide Prevention training – lack of data on courses run and recipients</p>		

Screening: Which of the protected characteristics is the policy relevant to?

Tick and briefly describe any likely equalities impact (positive/negative/neutral).

This can be copied over from screening sheets

Tick and briefly describe any likely equalities impact (positive/negative/neutral).

Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	comments
Gender		✓		Males

Age		✓		Young males
Disability		✓		Mental health
Religion or Belief			✓	
Race			✓	
Sexual Orientation		✓		Higher incidence of MH issues
Gender reassignment		✓		Higher incidence of MH issues
Pregnancy/maternity			✓	
Marriage and Civil Partnership*			✓	

As well as the protected groups, are there vulnerable groups e.g. Looked after Children, Homeless people, Carers etc. Please note below:

Relevant in that many vulnerable groups are liable to higher incidence of MH issues:

Assessments:

<p><i>Is there any evidence of, or potential for, negative impact? Does the policy contribute positively to the promotion of equality on any particular group?</i></p>	<p>Groups may be less able to run activities during SMHAFF, however, this is discretionary funding to raise awareness of the stigma of MH and encourage the benefits of involvement in cultural activities for individuals with a MH condition.</p> <p>While the Council is considering removing its funding contribution towards the organisation of the Suicide Prevention courses, it is anticipated that these would still run. It is proposed to discuss the best way forward with NHS to deliver the training which may involve targeting other funding or utilising in-house training teams.</p>
<p>Justification – if negative impact is identified, can this be justified?</p>	<p>Mitigation identified, this is discretionary funding, and its removal will support the Council's requirement to balance its budget.</p>
<p>Mitigation - can the potential for negative impact on particular groups be removed or minimised?</p>	<p>The mental health arts and film festival could still be run without Council support, but scaled back if no other funding is available.</p> <p>A programme of suicide awareness raising and prevention should still be run by NHS as the Council's contribution only covered some costs.</p>

	We can discuss with the Samaritans how they may support the awareness raising events through the grant we provide.
Are there actions identified to advance or promote equality? Please detail.	SMHAFF - The mental health arts and film festival could still be run without Council support, but scaled back if no other funding is available. Suicide Prevention – NHS SH are lead body and courses will still run

This suicide awareness element of this proposal was withdrawn during the budget discussions at Council on 25 February 2016.

Please state where the EQIA will be published: The assessment will be published on the Council website.

Equality Impact Assessment Sign off: For completion by Director or Head of Service

1. Please check if you are satisfied that the following elements of the EQIA have been considered:

- Gathering information
- Consultation and involvement
- Assessing impact for all protected characteristics
- Mitigating actions identified (if required)
- Opportunity to promote equality
- Arrangements to monitor and review
- Publication arrangements

2. a) Are you prepared to sign off the EQIA? **YES**

b) If "NO" provide details of why and next steps

Name Carron McDiarmid

Position Head of Policy and Reform

Date: 17.2.16