

Equality Impact Assessment: D&I/15 Deprived Area Fund

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	Deprived Area Fund
Name of the person(s) carrying out the assessment?	Andy McCann, Economy and Regeneration Manager Rosemary Mackinnon, Principal Policy Officer - Equality
Service and Department	D&I 15 - Employability
Date of assessment	04 Feb. 16
What are the aims and objectives of the policy/function/strategy?	<p>The Employability team provides a range of services to support young people (16+ who are not in work or in education/training) and adults (who need support to overcome barriers) to progress towards and into sustained employment. These services are client driven and provided across Highland with particular efforts made to support clients who are disabled, looked after or from a disadvantaged background. The Deprived Area Fund (DAF) currently disburses grant to third sector and other providers to provide additional local added value services in Highlands most deprived areas.</p> <p>The saving proposal seeks to remove the DAF grant fund, leaving no funding for activity specifically focused across the existing deprived areas from 2016/17. Mainstream Employability funding will still be available to support activity</p>

	across the Highlands, including in deprived areas. The implication is that there will be no grant recipients of DAF funding, resulting in a smaller number of out of work individuals or organisations benefitting from DAF resourced activity.	
Who may be affected by the policy	A range of organisations (23 in number) working in deprived area datazones and their client group	
How have stakeholders been involved in the development of the policy?	No involvement as policy is budget driven. Current grant recipients have been advised that the 2016/17 Fund is dependent on Council budget settlement.	
<i>Which parts of the public sector duty is the policy relevant to?</i>		
1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination	✓	Activities work with groups historically who face discrimination, stigma or prejudice
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	✓	
<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?	As DAF is a grant fund – applicants are required to outline who their client group are, activity proposed and outcomes expected. This is gathered/monitored on an annual basis.	

Screening: Which of the protected characteristics is the policy relevant to?
Tick and briefly describe any likely equalities impact (positive/negative/neutral).

Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	comments
Gender		✓		
Age		✓		
Disability		✓		
Religion or Belief			✓	
Race			✓	
Sexual Orientation			✓	
Gender reassignment			✓	

Pregnancy/maternity			✓	
Marriage and Civil Partnership*			✓	

Other: Socio-economic status, marginalised/disadvantaged groups, those recovering from substance misuse, clients who are 'looked after'

<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>The removal of the fund will affect the ability of organisations to provide value added services in deprived areas and which will impact on the following groups:</p> <p>Age – The DAF supports a number of work related activities targeted at young people 16+ who are not in work or in education/training.</p> <p>Disability – The DAF supports a range of activities supporting people with learning disabilities, mental health problems, adults with complex needs and additional support need.</p> <p>Gender – The DAF support activities targeted at young mothers, at parents, health promotion groups working with predominantly male participants.</p> <p>Other – The nature of the fund means it is targeted at 'most deprived' areas to support people from disadvantaged backgrounds. There are a range of projects funded to support people affect by poverty, substance misuse and requiring employability related support.</p>
<p>Justification – if negative impact is identified, can this be justified?</p>	<p>This is a value added service, the justification would be a business case in order to provide savings to balance the Council budget.</p>
<p>Mitigation - can the potential for negative impact on particular groups be removed or minimised?</p>	<p>Core service delivery to be monitored and reviewed to ensure clients from disadvantaged backgrounds, including geography, are supported to progress towards and into sustained employment.</p> <p>For a number of existing grant recipients, they have client activity which crosses financial years and hence the proposed budget reduction will require to be managed carefully to ensure</p>

	existing clients are not disadvantaged beyond April 2016.
Are there actions identified to advance or promote equality? Please detail.	The saving proposal seeks to remove the DAF grant fund, leaving no funding for activity specifically focused across the existing deprived areas from 2016/17. Mainstream Employability funding will still be available to support activity across the Highlands, including in deprived areas and for clients with protected characteristics.

Please provide details of arrangements to monitor and review the policy and any mitigating actions or actions to promote equality.

The nature of employability related support (be that provided directly or financially supported by the Council or others) and wider national and local economic factors all influence labour market participation. Insofar as it is difficult to measure the impact any one individual contribution makes to achieving full and inclusive employment, it is also difficult to measure the impact if a service is removed. Rather the challenge is how the Council and its partners deliver services across the 'strategic skills pipeline' and how collectively they monitor and review such activity including equalities. This work is being progressed through the Community Planning Partnership structure.

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

This proposal was withdrawn during the budget discussions at Council on 25 February 2016.

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

NO

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

Name

Position

Date: