## Equality Impact Assessment:

**Purpose of the Equality Impact Assessment:**

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a [Public Sector Equality Duty](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/Scotland/PSED_in_Scotland/essential_guide_to_the_psed.doc) (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 protected characteristics in relation to 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. Where negative impacts are identified these should be eliminated or minimised, and opportunities for positive impact should be 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 Savings – Access Panels | |
| Name of the person(s) carrying out the assessment? | Rosemary Mackinnon | |
| Service and Department | Chief Executive’s Office | |
| Date of assessment | 19 January 2018 | |
| What are the aims and objectives of the budget proposal | | |
| *There are 8 Access Panels in the Highland area. The Access Panels are groups of volunteers who work to address access issues in the built environment and towards improving social inclusion for disabled people and access in the broadest sense.*  *The saving proposal seeks to reduce an annual discretionary grant award to each of the Panels by 10% in 2018/19 from the current amount of £1250 to each Panel to £1125, resulting in a £1000 saving overall. This is in line with previous reductions to discretionary grants to third sector bodies applied by other Council services.*  *Panels are expected to represent and identify the needs of disabled people in Highland affected by a wide range of impairments or conditions.*  *Each panel is an autonomous, separately constituted body, and the functions of each panel can vary but typical access work is: • To review building standards/planning applications to ensure the best access possible. • As a first point of contact with local authorities and other public bodies on access issues. • To provide input to the decisions and policies of statutory and other organisations concerning access and issues of importance to disabled people. This includes assisting local authorities, public bodies and designers to meet their statutory obligations. • Promote ‘best practice’ on all issues of access therefore ensuring that the environment is accessible to as many people as possible. • Publish Access Guides, leaflets and posters to raise awareness. • Encourage Social Inclusion and help create an accessible environment for all. • Work with other sector organisations to ensure that a holistic approach is taken to access for disabled persons.*  *The Panels are voluntary organisations based throughout Highland. The panels rely on volunteer members who have experience of the barriers faced in the environment and community, either through their own disability, or that of someone close to them* | | |
| Who may be affected by the policy | *Access Panels and associated volunteers who work to improve disabled access.*  *General public (esp. disabled people)* | |
| How have stakeholders been involved in the development of the policy? | *This is a budget proposal - there has been no stakeholder involvement.* | |
| *Which parts of the public sector duty is the policy relevant to?* | | |
| 1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination | ✓ | *Aims of the Panels include removing barriers and addressing discrimination with a focus in disabled people.* |
| 1. Advance equality | ✓ | *Panels aim to increase inclusion and access* |
| 1. Promote good relations | ✓ | *Between disabled people and non-disabled* |

***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 |  | ✓ |  | Improved to access to the build environment may also increase access for pregnant women and parents with pushchairs. |
| Age |  | ✓ |  | Likelihood of disability, mobility difficulties increase with age |
| Disability |  | ✓ |  | Primary focus of Access Panels is to improve access for disabled people which should result in improved access for all. |
| Religion or Belief |  |  | ✓ |  |
| Race |  |  | ✓ |  |
| Sexual Orientation |  |  | ✓ |  |
| Gender reassignment |  |  | ✓ |  |
| Pregnancy/maternity |  | ✓ |  | Improved to access to the build environment may also increase access for pregnant women and parents with pushchairs. |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership\* |  |  | ✓ |  |

\*applies only to Employment and the duty to give regard to the elimination of discrimination

**Recommend this policy for full Equality Impact Assessment?** **Yes**

If “Yes”, continue to the next section. If "No", please give brief reasons here.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Equality impact Assessment:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Evidence and consultation** | |
| 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?  Eg Consultations, national or local data and/or research, complaints or customer feedback. Are there gaps in available data? | |
| *Census 2011 and SHS data provide some demographic information.*  *Under current funding arrangements, Panels in Highland submit an annual report to summarise their activities and also copies of their minutes – these combine to provide a fairly comprehensive overview of the impact of the Panels and the range of issues they cover.*  *Concerns about the nature of barriers in the physical environment which disabled people in Highland face are also received through customer complaints and various Council consultations.* | |
| **Impact**  a) Describe any evidence of, or potential for, negative impact  Across the groups identified below, in particular disability and age, reduction in funding, albeit small, may impact on the ability of Panels to respond to queries at local level including to comment on Council Planning and/or Development proposals. Council funding supports core work of the Panels which are made up of volunteers, none of which have paid employees. Some Panels may have reduced capacity to cover travel and administrative cost.  and/or  b) Does the policy contribute positively to the promotion of equality on any particular group  *Maintaining some level of discretionary grant to all Panels will help to support the work they carry out at local level.* | |
| Gender: | *Improved to access to the build environment may also increase access for pregnant women and parents with pushchairs.* |
| Age: | *The likelihood of having a long-term, limiting illness increases with age, with 59% of men and 66% of women over the age of 75 having a LLTI compared to 8% of men and 7% of women under 30 (Scottish Household Survey).*  *This is likely to be result in older people facing reduced mobility, sensory impairments etc* |
| Disability: | *According to the Census Scotland 2011, 19% of people in Highland have a limiting long-term illness (LLTI), health problem or disability compared to 20% in Scotland. Of these,10% of the Highland population has a long-term health problem or disability that limits their day-to-day activities a little, and 8% are limited a lot.*  *Rates of LLTI vary across Highland, from11.8% of the population in the Inverness South Ward to 23.1% in the East Sutherland and Edderton Ward.* |
| Religion or belief: |  |
| Race: |  |
| Sexual Orientation: |  |
| Gender reassignment: |  |
| Pregnancy/maternity: | *Improved to access to the build environment may also increase access for pregnant women and parents with pushchairs.* |
| Marriage and civil partnership: |  |
| **Justification** | |
| If negative impact is identified, can this be justified? | *This is a discretionary grant from the Council’s Policy Team (Equal Opportunities) and which supports the core work of the Panels. All other equal opportunities discretionary grants which support third sector groups have been previously removed..*  *The reduction in funding of 10% is in line with reductions to other 3rd sector organisations in previous years by other service.*  *The reduction is a relatively small amount of £125 per Panel.* |
| **Mitigation** | |
| Can the potential for negative impact on particular groups be removed or minimised? | *The umbrella body for Access Panels across Scotland,* [*Disability Equality Scotland*](http://disabilityequality.scot/) *is funded by the Scottish Government and administers an Access Panel Grant on a yearly basis to all Access Panels (£1000 for each Panel in 17/18). This money is intended to secure the long term sustainability of the Panel network.*  *Access Panel payments are paid in arrears towards the end of the financial year. This should allow Panels time to consider other sources of funding. Panels are already reminded that they can apply for sources of funds and this advice will continue.* |
| **Actions** | |
| Are there actions identified to advance or promote equality, or to mitigate potentially negative impact? Please detail or attach an action plan. | |
| *None additional to the above* | |

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

*The impact on Panels will be monitored and reviewed through the submission of minutes from each Panel and annual report of activities.*

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 🞏 NO🞏

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

Name. A Clark

Position: Acting Head of Policy Date: 19-1-18