

**Making Equality Real in Tamworth
(MERIT)**

**Diversity and Equality Scheme
2015 - 2019**

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Diversity and Equality Scheme		
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1. Statement of Intent

The Council recognises the importance of involving the wider community in the development of services, which are accessible and reflect people's needs. The Council's values go further to specify the promotion of equal opportunities and to celebrate diversity.

By making equality and diversity a core element of all things that we do, we will be best placed to achieve our vision.

Where barriers exist which prevent us from achieving our goals, we have a moral and legal obligation to break them down.

The starting point and primary focus is this council's commitment to improving outcomes for people, place and organisation against the three strategic themes common to all our partner organisations and stakeholders are then

- Regeneration, growth and prosperity
- Healthier, more confident communities
- Safer, more resilient communities

These in turn translate into the council's strategic plans and intentions and form the basis of the Corporate and local plans, the sustainability strategy and the medium-term financial strategy.

Tamworth Borough Council (TBC) has recently launched a new demand management model, which provides vital knowledge about our citizens and, more importantly, enables us to shape and redesign our services to meet the needs of those most vulnerable within our community. However, the most important aspects of our Scheme are not the words within it but the actions and outcomes we have set ourselves in conjunction with the Tamworth community and visitors to the area.

2. Introduction

The Scheme outlines how we will promote diversity and equality in the delivery of our services provided both directly by ourselves and in conjunction with our partners.

Taking into account UK legislation, we have taken the decision to produce a scheme which clearly addresses our duties and responsibilities in relation to:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race (which includes ethnic or national origins colour or nationality)
- Gender
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership *

The above are known as protected characteristics within the act

* Only the first aim of the General Duty applies to the characteristic of marriage and civil partnership

This reflects our commitment to the wider equality agenda while ensuring that the strict duties that are placed upon us under the provisions of Equality Act. Consequently our actions in respect of each area are set out throughout the scheme.

With increased partnership working, commissioning and procurement of services, the Scheme also sets out the expectations placed on partners, suppliers and the voluntary sector to contribute to the Council's equality and diversity agenda.

The aim of this Scheme is to integrate the Council's equality and diversity activities into normal service delivery mechanisms, while at the same time encouraging directorates to deliver their products and services in an innovative and creative way. Prior to any mainstreaming, a key element of the Scheme will be the expectation that consultation and involvement of individuals and organisations will take place within the community to better understand their requirements and any barriers they face.

The scheme will be reviewed annually and reported to Cabinet.

3. Policy Statement

We need to create and maintain a community that embraces change and welcomes diversity; diversity helps to build such communities by celebrating differences and combining our talents.

To achieve this, the Council is committed to removing discrimination from public life. This includes major commitments that establish the Council as a community leader:

- The Council is striving to ensure that it does not discriminate against staff or members of the public.
- The Council is working to make Tamworth a place free from discrimination.
- People are proud to be who they are.
- Striving to ensure that the contribution of all groups is valued.
- All people are empowered to engage as citizens.
- Differences between people are welcomed.
- Removing barriers to ensure that all groups have the same chances of success.
- The Council will provide services that are inclusive and designed to meet customer needs.

The Council will support anyone who shares the same aims, including community groups, trade unions and partner organisations.

Tamworth Borough Council is committed to providing value for money and accountability which will underpin the delivery of all corporate themes. Working with others, the Council will deliver services that are well-governed, ethical, effective, efficient and economically viable.

4. Diversity and Equality at Tamworth Borough Council

4.1 What are our legal duties?

4.1.1 Equality Act 2010

The act brings together, harmonises and extends previous equality law. The Equality Act has replaced all previous discrimination law with a single act. The majority of the Act came into force on 1 October 2010. Within the Act there is a public sector equality duty which came into force on 6 April 2011. The public sector equality duty applies to public bodies and others carrying out public functions.

4.1.2 The public sector equality duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty consists of a general duty and specific duties which apply to the council.

4.1.3 The general duty

The general duty requires the Council to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

This means the Council is required to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encourage people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

4.1.4 The specific duties

The specific duties underpin the general duty, they require the Council to:

- Publish its equality objectives and review them at least every four years starting from April 2012; and
- Publish information on employees and those affected by the council's policies at least annually, this can be found at www.tamworth.gov.uk.

The Council's objectives are:

- To use customer insight to develop accessible services, particularly aimed at those demonstrating the greatest need.
- To ensure all council strategies policies and procedures consider the impact on our diverse community/workforce to ensure maximum inclusion.

4.2 Monitoring the Scheme

The Scheme will be reviewed annually to check progress against actions and refresh the action plan for the following year. Progress will be reported to Cabinet on all diversity and equality matters annually this will be done via the council's performance management system COVALENT.

4.3 Consultation, Communication, Input and Involvement of the Community and Partner Organisations

A key element of the Council's overall programme of services, which forms an integral part of the Diversity and Equality Scheme, is customer involvement. The ability to access groups and individuals who face barriers and discrimination, which can provide a positive input to the development of services, is vital. Consultation and involvement with people is an essential part of current equality legislation.

4.4 Communication

A copy of the Scheme will be issued to all staff via NETCONSENT and elected members via email, in an effort to ensure that the Scheme is put into practice. In addition, the Scheme will be placed on the Council's intranet and internet.

The Scheme will also be included with tender information and contracts for work undertaken for Tamworth Borough Council by external organisations and individuals. All of our policies, including those relating to equality and diversity, will upon request be made available for translation and/or in another medium where required.

Our Procurement Strategy makes specific reference to our commitment ensure that all procurement practices comply with equality legislation.

Our partners and contractors will also be made aware of our commitment and targets under this scheme and again this will be detailed in the action plan.

5. Community Impact Assessments

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the council to assess the impact on equality of policies, procedures; however the mechanism to do so is not specific.

Tamworth Borough Council has developed a straightforward internal process that seeks to ensure strategies and policies are impact assessed. This assessment goes further than just the protected characteristic and includes a number of other elements including safeguarding of the vulnerable, health and the environment. The process can be found at 14.1.

6. Programme of Training and Development

Diversity training is a mandatory requirement for all employees and elected members. All staff and elected members will attend a workshop by June 2016, the aim of which will be to provide refresher training and launch the updated scheme.

Staff

TBC has a comprehensive Diversity and Equality awareness training workshop which is mandatory for all new staff within the first six months of employment, with a refresher for all staff every three years. The programme is delivered in partnership with IODA who are diversity specialists.

The aim of the programme is to raise awareness of both legal and moral duties in the development of service provision, ensure all employees have read and understood the council's Equality and Diversity Scheme and to afford employee the opportunity to develop their knowledge.

Elected Members

We recognise each year that our elected membership may change and as such we need to ensure that their knowledge and skills in this area is current. Future activities in this area are contained within the action plan.

7. Breaches of this Policy

Any breach of this Policy will be treated very seriously and employees may be disciplined in accordance with the Council's Capability and Conduct Policy.

8. Responsibilities

- **Cabinet Members:** are responsible for approving this policy and monitoring performance via the performance management framework and all strategic policies are impact assessed.
- **Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Assets:** has responsibility for equality and diversity. The portfolio holder is required to work closely with the Council's designated officers and champion the scheme and its contents with elected members.
- **Chief Executive:** is responsible for ensuring that the Council is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- **Director for Transformation and Corporate Performance:** is the organisation's Equality Champion and is responsible for ensuring equality activities are carried out in the Authority.
- **All Directors:** will ensure that policies presented to cabinet for approval and supporting strategies and procedures are impact assessed as per the scheme.
- **Children's and Families Safeguarding Officer:** is the Council's lead Officer for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The Safeguarding and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy can be found on the Council's intranet site Infozone
- **Human Resources:** will advise on the scheme, organise delivery of necessary training, monitor and produce employee profiles and workforce data and liaise with all service delivery managers to ensure awareness and compliance.
- **Managers:** are responsible for delivering equality in their area of responsibility, embedding it into policy and delivery of the services provided. Managers will also be responsible for ensuring breaches of the scheme are brought to the attention of the relevant director for any necessary action.
- **All Employees:** have a responsibility to treat people fairly, take account of different people's needs, challenge inappropriate behaviour and not knowingly discriminate, harass or victimise anyone and attend relevant training with regard to equality and diversity.
- **Contractors, Suppliers and Consultants:** are expected to meet equality requirements within contracts and service level agreements. The Council will not award contracts without an appropriate level of equality commitment from contractors.
- **Volunteers:** are expected to comply with, and be treated in line with, the principles of this policy.
- **Audit:** are expected to carry out reviews of the scheme as specified by the annual audit plan

9. Reporting Harassment or Discrimination

We have established systems for employees to raise any issues around harassment or discrimination via our Grievance and Dignity and Respect at Work policies.

We have also reviewed our arrangements for the reporting on incidents of harassment or suspected discrimination from members of the public in relation to service provision. The scheme covering this is known as the harassment, assaults and threats policy and is available on the Council's website.

10. Complaints, Comments and Compliments

We encourage feedback from local people and undertake to investigate complaints thoroughly in accordance with our procedures.

The council has complaints, comments and compliments procedure known as "Tell Us", which is operated in accordance with our diversity and equalities agenda.

We are committed to:




- dealing with complaints and comments quickly and effectively
- using feedback to review and improve our services
- encourage feedback from all sections of the community and undertake to investigate complaints thoroughly in accordance with our procedures.
- ensuring complaints, comments and compliments are fed back to the service area for a prompt response.
- ensuring that information from complaints are captured and monitored with the diversity agenda in mind.

11. Our Workforce



11.1 Full Time Equivalent Employees

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
FTE (April)	361.69	378.92	344.47	339.87	340.14	351.34	325.20

Key Facts:





-  The headcount and FTE figures of the Council have fluctuated over the last five years in response to a Voluntary redundancy exercise undertaken in 2010, which took effect in 2011. While FTE figures did reduce, the number of contracts and employees overall has remained reasonably stable in this period.
-  A peak in 2014 reflects an increase in temporary contracts and the dip in April 2015 is as a result of service reviews taking effect along with a delay in seasonal summer recruitment which took effect after that date. FTE on 1st October 2015 is 323.08. The figure is currently low due to a high number of vacancies in many areas which are subject to service reviews (customer services, arts and events, castle etc) or are in the process of recruitment (supported housing, housing solutions, streetscene).
-  A recruitment moratorium in force since July 2013 has prevented further growth to reduce the current FTE count.

11.2 Number and Type of Contracts Issued

							
	Male Full-time	Male Part-time	Male Casual	Female Full-time	Female Part-time	Female Casual	Total
Sep-15	135	4	44	139	79	75	477
Sep-13	144	10	54	148	85	67	508
Jun-06	165	14	49	172	122	76	598

Note: multiple contracts can be issued to the same individual above figures exclude elections/canvass staff.

Key Facts:

-  There is a slight shift away from full time workers into more flexible arrangements to meet with business needs through casual and part time contracts.
-  We do have a reasonable proportion of staff with multiple part time or casual contracts.
-  Careful consideration will need to be given in the future to the use of casual contracts due to their implications to pensions and close monitoring will need to take place in this area to ensure employment rights are recognised where appropriate.
-  Elections and canvass staff contracts equate to a further 832 contracts amongst 585 staff.

11.3 Length of Service

	<1 year	1 to 2	3 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	16 to 20	>20
2013	44	55	112	112	65	31	67
2015	28	45	95	92	115	36	61





11.4 Workforce demographics

Based on headcount including casuals but not election/canvass

11.4.1 Age

	55+	45 -55	35-44	25 -34	Under 25	Total
Sept-15	131	148	103	67	28	476
Oct-13	104	136	118	82	46	486
Jun-06	73	141	142	78	39	473


Key Facts:

-  The average age of a TBC worker is 46.
-  Nine workers are over 65 years of age.
-  There is a noticeable shift in the age profile of the organisation to a generally ageing workforce compared to 2006 and worryingly, the number of staff under 25 has dropped dramatically.
-  While flexible retirement is proving a very popular option for staff who qualify, very few individuals are showing indications of retiring at 65, with many working beyond this.

11.4.2 Ethnic Group

	Withheld	British	Bangladeshi	Caribbean	Chinese	Indian	Irish	Pakistani
2013	15	455	1	6	2	2	1	4
2015	26	438	1	6	2	1	1	1

Key Facts:




-  These levels are consistent with the local population profile.

11.4.3 Disability

	Withheld	Disabled	Not Disabled
2013	8	9	469
2015	6	2	469

12. Our Community

12.1 Profile of our Council Tenants

Gender	 39% of our tenants are men and  61% are women.
Ethnicity	We know the ethnicity of 79% of our tenants. 77% of our tenants are White British, 2% are Black and Minority Ethnic and 21% unknown.
Age	We know the age of 93% of our tenants. 63% of our tenants are aged between 16 and 64 and 31% are aged over 65 and 6% unknown.
Disability	 We know that 17% of our tenants have a disability of some form.
Religion	We know the religion of 32% of our tenants.
Sexual Orientation	We know the sexual orientation of 29% of our tenants.

12.2 Demographic Overview of our Community with Regional and National Comparison

	Tamworth		Staffordshire		England	
Total 2013 population	77,157		857,007		56,948,229	
Total under 5 population	4,978	6.5 %	46,099	5.4%	3,592,907	6.3%
Total under 16 population	15,242	19.8%	149,370	17.4%	10,764,403	18.9%
Total Working age (16-64) population	49,426	64.1%	536,755	62.6%	36,278,017	63.7%
Total 65+ Population	12,489	16.2%	170,882	19.9%	9,905,809	17.4%
Minority Ethnic Group %	5.0%		6.0%		20.2%	

It is recognised that the percentage of our community from minority ethnic groups has significantly increased from 1.9% (when data was collected for the previous scheme) to 5% (in the locality profile March 2015). Further research into this is underway.

13. We would like to hear your feedback.

We welcome all feedback on the content of this scheme.

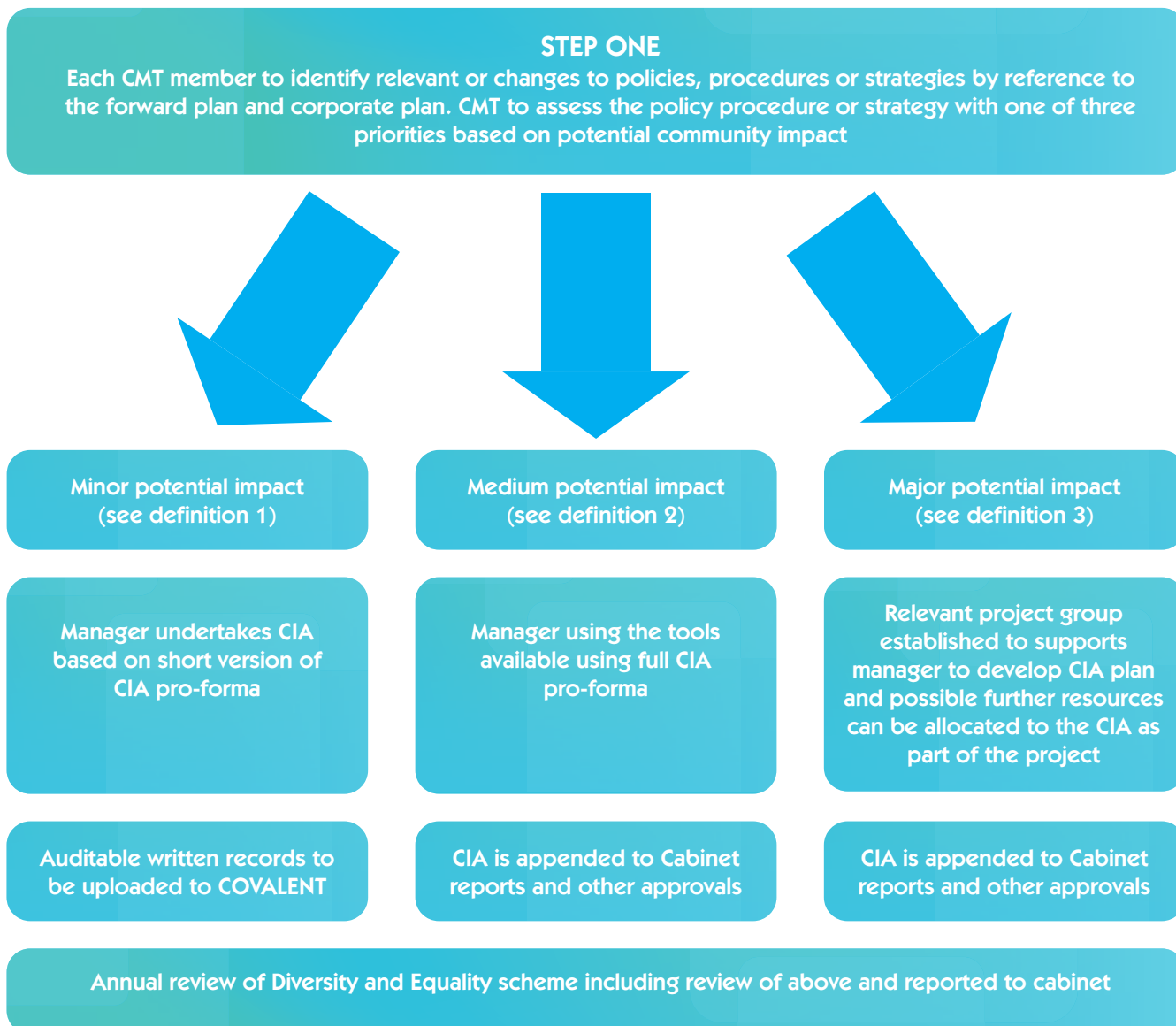
You can contact us by:

 enquiries@tamworth.gov.uk

 01827 709709

14. Appendices

14.1 Community Impact Assessment



Definition 1

Minor Potential Impact

This refers to policies, procedures or strategies such as HR policies, Subsistence Policy, these will be deemed to have no or minimal direct impact on place, people or organisational performance and will more likely be internal processes, procedures or strategies that affect only Tamworth the organisation or the people within it.

Definition 2

Medium Potential Impact

This refers to policies and strategies such as Licensing Policy, Repairs Policy. These will be deemed to have significant impact affecting one or more groups within the community.

Partners to be involved as required and some community consultation may be required.

Definition 3

Major Potential

All policies procedures and strategies defined within this area will be referenced within the corporate plan and forward plan. CMT will be aware of the high level impact of this document, every decision within this area should have a Community Impact Assessment carried out at an in depth level. The impact of these policies, procedures and strategies will be fundamental to Tamworth the Place and its community and/or the organisation and will be both complex and potentially contentious by nature examples of these are Core strategy, Customer Service and Access Strategy, Housing and Health Strategy.

14.2 Supporting Information

What do we mean by Diversity and Equality?

The two concepts of Diversity and Equality are very different and together form a whole that is larger in many respects than the sum of its individual constituents.

Diversity recognises that we can only achieve equality by taking into account the different needs of communities, equality is impossible to achieve without recognising diversity. Diversity is more about good management practice.

An example of Diversity

To ensure that all communities benefit equally from services, the Local Authority recognises that they need to address the different communities in the area. They developed an action plan for Black and Minority Ethnic people which included:

- Involving Black and Minority Ethnic organisations in advising on how they could change their service.
- Training staff in adapting services to meet diverse cultural, religious and dietary requirements.
- Researching best practice in other Local Authorities.
- Ensuring that information about the service can be produced in different languages, or in plain English versions.

A similar action plan was developed for services that needed to target particular disabled groups and gay, lesbian and bi-sexual communities.

Equality refers to outcomes, making sure that all social groups benefit equally from our activities.

An example of Equality

By comparing take up for services with the census, a Local Authority is aware that some community groups are underrepresented. Equality would only be achieved if service uptake is in the same proportion to the numbers of people in the district from different communities.

What is discrimination?

Discrimination is a type of negative treatment that affects a whole group of people or an individual because they belong to a group.

The best way to understand discrimination is to set it against other types of negative treatment. Negative treatment edges into discrimination when the person on the receiving end is being badly treated by someone else who assumes a dominant or superior position.

Reasons for bad treatment	Who it affects
Individuality	Individuals, such as personality conflicts, or aspects of a person that lead to them being harassed or bullied (i.e. a response to a person's personal behaviour).
Life circumstances/condition	People who have a change of life circumstances that leads to temporary bad treatment (i.e. becoming homeless or losing a job, and seeing how other people's behaviour changes towards them).
Social identity	A person's basic identity (who they are) is abused. The target is something about the individual which they share with a whole group and cannot change. This affects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ethnicity ■ Gender ■ Sexuality ■ Disability ■ Religion and cultural identity ■ Age

Discrimination affects whole groups in the following ways:

- Discrimination is a prejudiced reaction to a person's social identity (such as their gender or race).
- Discrimination is systematic, or institutional (i.e. it is embedded in laws, policies and in everyday culture – including much 'common sense').
- Discrimination leads to negative patterns (i.e. continuing pay gap between men and women, or continuing link between disability lack of employment).

Equality law recognises two types of discrimination:

- Direct discrimination: this is when there is a conscious intention to discriminate.
- Indirect discrimination: this is when discrimination is an intended result of a decision or action.

An example of Equality

A Council introduces a free advice service for single mothers who are employees. A male single parent objects on the grounds of sex inequality and is told that there is insufficient demand to extend this discretionary service to male employees.

An example of indirect discrimination

A Council introduces an employee support group for single parents. After a year the Council carries out a monitoring exercise of the group and finds that all members are female. This is despite the fact that there has been an increase in male single parents who are employees. The Council refuses to consult with male single parent employees on the grounds that all employees know about the group. The result is that the Council is not able to find out why the pattern has emerged that only women are using the group.

Equality Impact Assessment

Is this a new or existing policy?	Update to existing		
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy?	To comply with the Equality Act 2010 which will ensure TBC's employees and services it offers are not discriminatory		
2. Are there any associated policy/ procedure/ practice which should be considered whilst carrying out this equality impact assessment?	Landlord Services Health Inequalities Policy Housing Strategy TBC Corporate Objectives		
3. Who is intended to benefit from this policy and in what way?	Employee of TBC and citizens of Tamworth or those accessing Council services within the borough		
4. What are the desired outcomes from this policy?	Compliance with legislation, all strategies and policies consider the impact on those who will access the service		
5. What factors/ forces could contribute/ detract from the outcomes?	Inconsistent application, indirect discriminatory practices		
6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?	Citizens of Tamworth, Employees, Trade Unions, Elected Members		
7. Which individuals/ groups have been/ will be consulted with on this policy?	Trade unions, CMT, Heads of Service, Elected Members		
8. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on racial groups?	gg	As a result of	
9. Are there concerns that the policy/ procedure/ practice could have a differential impact due to gender?		N	
10. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to them being transgender or transsexual?		N	
11. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to disability?		N	
12. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?		N	
13. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to age?		N	
14. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to religious belief?		N	
15. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on Gypsies/ Travellers?		N	
16. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to dependant/caring responsibilities?		N	
17. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to them having an offending past?		N	
18. Are there concerns that the policy could have an impact on children or vulnerable adults?		N	
19. Does any of the differential impact identified cut across the equality strands (e.g. elder BME groups)?		N	
20. Could the differential impact identified in 8 – 19 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy/ procedure/ practice?		N	
21. Can this adverse impact be justified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? ■ For any other reason? 	N/A		
22. As a result of carrying out the equality impact assessment is there a requirement for further consultation?		N	Please explain
23. As a result of this EIA should this policy be recommended for implementation in it's current state?	y		Statutory compliance will be achieved.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING ACTION PLAN FOR ALL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS
Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Complete the action plan demonstrating the changes required in order to meet TBC's commitment to equality and diversity. The action plan must contain monitoring arrangements, the publishing of results and the review period required for this policy.

Action/ Activity	Responsibility	Target	Progress
Review in line with implementation of action plan	AG/ZW	2019	
Monitoring arrangements:		Data collected quarterly	
Publication:			
Review Period:		Reviewed 12 monthly unless otherwise stated	

End of Document