

## Equality Impact Assessment

<b>Service Area</b>	Housing and Property Services as part of a County Wide Shared Service to deliver aids and adaptations
<b>Policy/Service being assessed</b>	<b>Housing Environment and Assessment Response Team (HEART)</b>
<b>Is this a new or existing policy/service?</b>	New county wide shared service, following running pilots services North of County (6 years) and South of County (2.5 years)
<b>If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment</b>	
<b>EIA Review team – List of members</b>	Debbie Cole Mark Lingard Abigail Hay
<b>Date of this assessment</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> July 2016
<b>Signature of completing officer (to be signed after the EIA has been completed)</b>	Debbie Cole
<b>Name and signature of Head of Service (to be signed after the EIA has been completed)</b>	Andy Thompson

**A copy of this Equality Impact Assessment Report including relevant data and information should be saved in the Equality and Diversity Folder on the shared drive.**

**Form A1**

INITIAL SCREENING FOR STRATEGIES/POLICIES/FUNCTIONS FOR EQUALITIES RELEVANCE TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AND PROMOTE EQUALITY



High relevance/priority



Medium relevance/priority



Low or no relevance/ priority

**Note:**

1. Tick coloured boxes appropriately, and depending on degree of relevance to each of the equality strands
2. Summaries of the legislation/guidance should be used to assist this screening process

DEPARTMENT:	Relevance/Risk to Equalities																							
State the Function/Policy /Service/Strategy being assessed:	Gender			Race			Disability			Sexual Orientation			Religion/Belief			Age			Socio-economic			Priority status For EIA		
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**Form A2**

**Equality Impact Assessment**  
**Please Explain**

**Stage 1 – Scoping and Defining**

(1) What are the aims and objectives of policy/service?

The aim of the HEART is to improve the delivery of aids and adaptations services (including Disabled Facilities Grants) both in quality and timescales and offer a holistic assessment which is much more than just delivering adaptations.

(2) How does the policy/service fit with the council's wider objectives?

Fit for the future - The purpose of the HAT pilot project accords with the Service and Money strands of Fit for the Future. The service and related processes have been designed using lean systems thinking principles to deliver customer focused services to:

"To provide customers with the advice and information to help them make the right choice, and provide practical help to deliver the right housing solution when they want it"

The service is focused on managing staffing resources including partners' resources efficiently to meet customer demand and make best use of available budgets.

Sustainable Communities Strategy - The effective delivery of aids and adaptations to resident's homes directly and positively contributes to the Housing and Health and Wellbeing priorities within the Council's Sustainable Communities Strategy by ensuring that;

- Everyone's housing needs are met
- Everyone is able to enjoy a healthy lifestyle and sense of well being
- The gap between affluent and poor people has been significantly reduced
- Our older and vulnerable citizens are valued and live fulfilling and independent lives

(3) What are the expected outcomes of the policy/service?

Who is intended to benefit from the policy/service and in what way?

The pilot service (South HAT) indicates that HEART will deliver better outcomes for service users. This should result in a positive impact for adults and children with disabilities, older people and other service users as defined under the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.

<p>(4) Does this policy/service have the potential to directly or indirectly discriminate against any particular group?</p> <p>Please identify all groups that are affected and briefly explain why</p>	<p>RACE NO</p>	<p>AGE NO</p>	<p>GENDER NO</p>
	<p>RELIGION/BELIEF NO</p>	<p>DISABILITY NO</p>	<p>SEXUAL ORIENTATION NO</p>
<p>Other – please specify</p>			
<p>(5) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service?</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>Given that the HEART service will be a new service, further work is planned following implementation to publicise and promote the service.</p>		
<p>(6) How does the policy/service contribute to promotion of equality?</p>	<p>A core purpose of the service is to improve the quality of life and maintain independence for Warwickshire residents, including disabled and older people, thus improving equality of opportunity for HEART customers.</p> <p>On initial contact to the HEART service, caseworkers undertake a holistic assessment of needs with customers. This ensures that customers' needs are understood on an individual basis and bespoke interventions can be designed for each service user. The service will enable customers in receipt of lower incomes to access funding to enable adaptation or housing grants to improve housing. Research shows that these interventions also improve other outcomes including, health and wellbeing and quality of life.</p>		

<p>(7) Does the policy/service have the potential to promote good relations between groups?</p>	<p>The HEART service has the potential to foster good relations between groups (i.e. older people and disabled people and the wider community) by enabling service users to fully participate / and contribute to society / communities.</p>
<p><b><u>Stage 2 - Information Gathering</u></b></p>	
<p>(1) What type and range of evidence or information have you used to help you make a judgement about the policy or service?</p>	<p>The HEART service is based on the following evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lean Systems Thinking Review of old way of working (based on understanding the service from a customer perspective)</li> <li>• Key performance data from pilot services (North and South Warwickshire)</li> <li>• Customer Satisfaction Data</li> <li>• Warwick University Research project on impact of change on workforce</li> </ul>

(2) What consultation/ information has been used?  
What new consultation, if any, do you need to undertake?

The new service has been developed by the five Warwickshire District and Borough Councils, Warwickshire County Social Care and the NHS. A project team studied the old way of delivering adaptations using a lean systems thinking approach. As part of this work staff (from senior leaders to frontline staff) studied the old processes from the customer experience in depth to understand how well the service was working from the customers' perspective. The information from this review exercise was used to design the shared service.

The Pilot services have been carrying customer satisfaction surveys of customer who have used the service. The results show that 100% of customer's rate their experience of the pilot service as very good or excellent.

In preparation for the HEART Shared Service a formal governance arrangement was agreed which includes a Project Board (represented by Heads of Housing from five Warwickshire District and Borough Councils, Warwickshire County Social Care and the health sector) The Project Board are overseeing the implementation plan and communication work package which includes actions to publicise the service including

- a range of tailored events with external and operational partners
- development of website/s and other promotional material.

The HEART service has also involved Foundations, the government appointed body who oversee the national network of Home Improvement Agencies in the development of the service.

Staff consultation: staff in the Northern Boroughs and County Council have formally been consulted with on the HEART shared service. The programme for the formal consultation with staff from WDC and SDC Council will be agreed following decisions by each authority to formalise the service.

**Stage 3 – Making a Judgement**

<p>(1) From your data and consultations is there any adverse or negative impact identified for any particular group?</p> <p>Is there any evidence of needs not being met? e.g. language or physical access barriers; lack of appropriate resources or facilities</p>	<p>No adverse or negative impact has been identified for any particular group as a result of proposed Shared Service.</p> <p>The evidence obtained from the pilot indicated that there is no evidence of needs not being met.</p> <p>For customers who experience communication problems a range of measures are available including the provision of information in different formats, use of interpreters and close working with partners in social care and health to provide the necessary support to enable customers to access the service. The service offers home assessments in addition to telephone assessment for those customers who for whatever reason are unable to complete a telephone assessment. There is no requirement for customers to attend Council offices. The information discussed during the telephone assessment is often of a sensitive nature. To ensure that any sensitive information is kept confidential telephone interviews are conducted in an interview room separate to the open plan office.</p>
<p>(2) If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?</p>	<p>N/A</p>



(3) What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact?	N/A																									
(4) Is there any positive impact? Does it promote equality of opportunity between different groups and actively address discrimination?	Yes. The purpose of the HEART service is to enable independence of disabled and older people, enabling these groups to access opportunities available to other groups in Warwickshire.																									
<b><u>Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review &amp; Monitoring</u></b>																										
<p>If No Further Action is required then go to – Review &amp; Monitoring</p> <p>(1) Action Planning – Specify any changes or improvements which can be made to the service or policy to mitigate or eradicate negative or adverse impact on specific groups, including resource implications.</p>	<p>EIA Action Plan</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="779 767 2040 986"> <thead> <tr> <th>Action</th> <th>Lead Officer</th> <th>Date for completion</th> <th>Resource requirements</th> <th>Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments																				
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(2) Review and Monitoring State how and when you will monitor policy and EIA Action Plan	The operation of the HEART shared service will be reviewed after it has been in place for 12 months. If any equalities issues have arisen these will be addressed during that review.																									

A copy of this EIA has been filed to the Council's L drive - **L:/Equalities & Diversity/EIA/2010/relevant service area**  
Please annotate your policy with the following statement:

The Equality Impact Assessment on this policy was undertaken on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2016 and it will be reviewed on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2019.