

# Equalities Impact Assessments 2008-09



## **What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?**

The aim of an EIA is to look at council services and identify any unintended discrimination against, or negative impact on, people from the six equality strands (race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion and belief). The EIA also details the actions to be taken to avoid or minimise any issues found.

## **Why does the council do them?**

Legislation about race, disability and gender equality asks all public bodies, including councils, to carry out EIAs. They are also a requirement of the Equality Framework for Local Government, which sets the standards for equality work in the public sector, as well as different inspection bodies, for example the Audit Commission, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

More importantly EIAs are a tool to make sure that the council provides high quality services that meet the needs of all people, especially those who need public services the most.

## **What is in this document?**

This document gives a summary of the key EIAs done in 2008. Many of these EIAs were consulted on at an event in November called the "Help us to Get it Right Day". This was organised with the council's Social Inclusion Working Group. A number of community groups met with council officers, looked at key areas of council work and identified actions needed to ensure there is no negative effect on people from any of the equality strands.

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## The Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement

Community Strategies were introduced in response to the Local Government Act 2000. A **Community Strategy** promotes improvement of the economic, social and environmental well being of the area. The Community Strategy is delivered through the **Local Area Agreement (LAA)**, which is a three-year action plan for the Community Strategy.

The Community Strategy and LAA is developed and delivered by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), York's is called 'Without Walls'. The LSP helps different neighbourhoods engage in decision-making processes and influence public services in the city.

### Key Issues in the Community Strategy

1. Key changes such as the influence of a changing population, increasing prominence of climate change and challenge, and the growing impact of globalisation must be catered for in future plans for the city.
2. The Sustainable Community Strategy now incorporates Strategic Ambitions, which have been identified as being most important to safeguard the city's future. The ambitions will be used to guide the work of the partnership over coming years.
3. There are a number of major issues that need to be addressed if we are to achieve our strategic ambitions and realise the vision. They include challenges such as tackling traffic congestion and determining appropriate levels of housing.
4. There are many plans and partnerships within the city that have been created to address the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities we face. Without Walls' role is to bring the issues that have been identified as being most important to the fore and encourage everyone (partnerships and individuals) to work together to improve quality of life and reduce inequalities.

## **Key Actions we are taking**

1. To address issues contained within the SCS / LAA that have been recognised by residents and / or service planners as a priority for improvement.
2. To focus attention on cross-cutting challenges e.g. poverty, where delivery plans are sparse and would benefit from city scrutiny.
3. To stimulate more cross-partnership working and identify where joint action could be better co-ordinated or targeted.
4. To ensure that no-one is left behind in York's continuing development and to minimise inequality gaps for specific neighbourhoods and groups.
5. To ensure that detailed LAA action plans (particularly those resulting from LAA delivery grant grants - Apr 09), which are pertinent to one or more of the six equalities strands, are incorporated in Partner service plans.

For more information contact Denise Simms, [denise.simms@york.gov.uk](mailto:denise.simms@york.gov.uk) 01904 552027

## Local Development Framework – Core Strategy and Statement of Community Involvement.

The Local Development Framework (LDF) will guide and manage development in York over the next two decades. The LDF is a folder of documents that will each cover a specific topic or area of the city. York's LDF will be made up of the following documents:

- **Core Strategy:** the principal LDF document, this will describe York's future vision and broadly set out where, and in what way, York will develop over the next 20 years.
- **Allocations Document:** this will set out the mix of development sites and land uses, which together will help deliver York's vision.
- **City Centre Area Action Plan:** this will look in detail at issues specific to the city centre, focusing on conserving York's historic core.
- **York Northwest Area Action Plan:** this will look in detail at the redevelopment of an area of the city known as York Northwest, focusing on delivering planned regeneration.
- **Statement of Community Involvement:** this sets out the council's proposals for how the community will be involved in the production of the above LDF documents and through consultation on planning applications.

Each of the above documents go through at least two stages of public consultation and independent examination by a government inspector, before being formally adopted by the council. The council will complete a separate Equality Impact Assessment for each of the above documents, however, there will be crossovers between the different documents. For example, the Core Strategy is the principal document and all other LDF documents will conform with it.

## **Key Issues in the Core Strategy**

The Core Strategy will seek to address the following equalities issues:

- creating safe, accessible and coherent environments; and
- delivering an appropriate type and mix of housing to meet York's needs.

## **How will we tackle these issues?**

The Core Strategy will consider the needs of different groups in the design and layout of spaces, specifically disabled people. This will be particularly important when designing public spaces and the space around buildings and seeking to balance improved accessibility with the protection of the historic environment. One way that the Core Strategy may address these issues is to develop a policy that requires the spaces around buildings be designed to allow easy access for all.

To inform the Core Strategy we have carried out research into the make-up of York's population and identified a range of specific housing needs for particular groups. For example:

- more than a quarter of households in York contain only older people and with the forecast 26% increase in older people living in York over next twenty years there is likely to be an increased need for specialist housing;
- in York, one in six households contains at least one person with a support need, whether a physical, mental or sensory impairment, and these households are much more likely to currently live in unsuitable accommodation;
- considering its size York has a proportionally high number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans compared with the regional and national average. According to the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2008) there is a need for 36 additional pitches in York and a small demand for a permanent base for Showpeople in the area; and

- York has a rapidly growing BME population, although it remains comparatively low as a proportion of the overall population. A large number of the BME population are students. BME households are more likely to live in private rented housing. Only 10.1% are pensioner households, while nearly two thirds are all-adult households without children.

The LDF will seek to ensure that the mix of homes provided over the next 20 years reflects the needs of the population. This might be through the identification of suitable sites or accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers, or through the provision of housing which is appropriate for older people or those with support needs. One example of the latter is 'Lifetime Homes' which incorporate design features that make the house more flexible or accessible such as level entrances, wider doorways and stairways, and downstairs bathroom facilities.

## **Key Issues in the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

Whilst consultation and involvement in the planning system is a well established principle, as part of the new LDF process the council was keen to improve on current consultation practices and to address a number of barriers to involvement. With reference to equalities the SCI identifies a number of reasons why people may not get involved, including:

- language or cultural differences
- different beliefs or values
- lack of confidence in the planning system
- lack of time or ability to attend events.

The aim of the SCI is to set out how all sections of the community can be involved in the planning system by encouraging more people to be involved and by making it as easy as possible for them to do so.

## How will we reach more people?

We will use the following guiding principles:

- a) ensure early and continuous communication and opportunities for public involvement;
- b) keep the process simple, transparent and accessible to all;
- c) seek to provide information in an interesting, clear and accessible way;
- d) ensure ideas and comments are considered;
- e) ensure involvement is meaningful and effective;
- f) share information and provide feedback to individuals, groups and the wider community;
- g) allow for continuous development and improvement of consultation methods;
- h) coordinate consultation effectively and inclusively; and
- i) coordinate with other departments to reduce risks of consultation fatigue

For more information contact Claire Beech, [Claire.beech@york.gov.uk](mailto:Claire.beech@york.gov.uk) 01904 552410



## **Safeguarding Adults**

The Safeguarding Adults policy and procedure aims to assist all agencies in North Yorkshire and York, from the public, private and voluntary sectors, that are involved in working with vulnerable adults who may be at risk of abuse. The aim of the work with vulnerable adults is to both prevent abuse and provide protection from abuse, and to promote their well-being. The policy is intended to ensure a consistent response so that all agencies can work together more effectively. The importance of inter-agency working cannot be over emphasised. The policy is not meant to be a substitute for the knowledge, skills and judgement of those in the professional and caring agencies.

### **Key issues**

- Making sure that the policy is accessible to all communities.
- Finding out what might stop people reporting abuse and getting the information and help they need.

### **Key Actions**

After consulting with local people they made the following suggestions to address the key issues above.

#### **How to make the policy more accessible:**

- Provide information in an accessible style/format, for example
  - TV adverts, articles in the press.
  - send a leaflet to every household.
  - give out wallet sized cards with details of who contact.
  - run a drama workshop with different scenarios.

- Website/DVD.
- Use pictures in information.
- Put information on tapes.
- Posters in doctor's surgeries/post office/libraries.
- Provide information through people's own community groups and organisations where they can talk to their peers/ feel safe/get advice.
- Use existing forums to spread information.
- Set up a help-line or help-centre.
- Train staff to understand issues experienced by particular communities or involve vulnerable people in training sessions.
- Explain the steps of what happens when you report to reduce people's anxieties.

### **Getting help when abuse is reported:**

- Establish peer support through people's own networks / existing forums.
- Support befrienders / survivors networks.
- Establish back-up team for long term support.
- Give presentations at meetings of groups/forums.
- Use mediation not just punishment (e.g. school bullying mediation).
- Tell potential abusers that we take it seriously and we will do something to stop it long term.
- Encourage reporting from people in the community e.g. neighbourhood watch.

### **What we will do with these suggestions:**

- Report the outcome to the Safeguarding Partnership Board and consider any further resources required.
- Report on safeguarding to other Partnership Boards that are in place and request that members take the suggestions and concerns into the forums that they represent.
- Ensure that staff training and public awareness programmes to promote safeguarding are reviewed.

- Consider any strategies, which may need amending to take account of the EIA outcome.
- Ensure that approaches to personalisation reflect different individual requirements for safeguarding.

For advice and information on safeguarding contact:

Advice & Information Service, PO Box 402, 10-12 George Hudson Street, York, Y01 6ZE  
8.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday

tel: (01904) 554141, minicom: (01904) 554120

fax: (01904) 554119

email: [housing.socialcare@york.gov.uk](mailto:housing.socialcare@york.gov.uk)

For comments on the Safeguarding Adults Policy contact:

Anne Bygrave, Assistant Director Assessment & Personalisation

[Anne.bygrave@york.gov.uk](mailto:Anne.bygrave@york.gov.uk) 01904 554045

## **Personalisation Agenda**

The Personalisation Agenda covers Self Directed Support and Individual Budgets and is a way of working that puts the person at the centre of the planning for their support. It gives someone the opportunity to have an amount of money that they can use to decide how best to meet their support needs. There is a National Organisation called 'In Control' that are supporting Local Authorities to introduce this approach to people. There is lots of information on their website in easy accessible format. [www.in-control.org.uk](http://www.in-control.org.uk)

### **Key Issues**

1. Managing the cultural shift in ways services will be delivered.
2. Communication about Personalisation to all customer groups.
3. Different service provider's ability to change to meet new ways of working.
4. More community development to support all people being able to have equal access to what is available within their community.
5. Link with children and young people services to support transition change.

### **Key Actions**

1. Work with Finance, Administration and Commissioning teams to facilitate this new approach.
2. Develop a Communication Plan to ensure that all groups are reached.
3. Develop accessible information and website where customers can share their stories.
4. Ensure that people who use services, and their family carers, are communicated with appropriately, recognising their own specific needs.

5. Commissioning Team to support existing service providers, and encourage new providers, to deliver new personalisation approach.
6. Work with other departments and voluntary organisations (the Third Sector) to support wider community engagement.
7. Provide small, one off, grants to stimulate community /social networks.
8. Maintain dialogue with Children and Young People Services to ensure that when people move into adult services they are aware of the Personalisation agenda.
9. Explain the process to family carers, voluntary organisations and individual people.
10. Carry out a number of road-shows.
11. Use examples of where an Individual Budget has helped someone, and how they overcame any problems
12. Help people tell their own stories to inspire others.

For more information contact Ralph Edwards, Deputy Head Of Learning Disabilities.

[Ralph.Edwards@york.gov.uk](mailto:Ralph.Edwards@york.gov.uk) 01904 554105

## Homeless Strategy

The council has a statutory duty to provide homeless advice and temporary accommodation in accordance with the Housing Act 1996. This includes:

- support to customers and advice regarding homeless prevention;
- provision and co-ordination of non-statutory re-settlement services, such as Archlight, The Salvation Army and the Peaseholme Charity; and
- production and implementation of the Rough Sleepers Strategy.

### Key Issues

We need to:

1. improve customer profiling information so we can see who our customers are in terms of ethnicity, disability, gender etc.
2. improve on monitoring the quality of the services provided
3. review the provision of the service to a number of vulnerable groups including young people, Gypsies and Travellers and those with mental illness.

### Key Actions

1. Review the provision of services that relate to young person homelessness.
2. Explore opportunities to develop a Foyer Scheme for young people. This would not only provide accommodation for this group but would look to address wider issues that will help young people sustain a tenancy, such as education, employment, training and life skills. It would form part of the council's planned approach to homeless accommodation.

3. Consider the recommendations in the recent Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment which has reported an under provision of sites across North Yorkshire.
4. Review the need for suitable supported accommodation for those with mental illness and act to address the demand that has been identified.

For more information contact Tom Brittain, [tom.brittain@york.gov.uk](mailto:tom.brittain@york.gov.uk) 01904 551262

## Communication and Consultation

The Marketing and Communications team's (M&C) primary role is to manage the council's reputation. It leads the council's media, publicity, marketing, print, research and consultation activity providing these services to council services and Councillors. The team also manages the Guildhall Print Unit.

### Key Issues

- Promoting social cohesion via the media.
- Monitoring media coverage for negatives. Although the council has no direct control over what is published in newspapers and on websites, M&C do monitor the media and are therefore in a position to react, within the confines of the law, if there is any overt threat to social cohesion.
- Need more diversity of people in photographs in the council's publications
- Encouraging internal take up of accessible communications guidance.
- Encouraging proactive equality profiling.

### Key Actions

- We will look to publish regular press releases that deal with equalities issues and seek to promote social cohesion through encouraging feature articles.
- Where possible, within resources, step up monitoring of media, especially on on-line noticeboards and blogs. We will seek to contact the publishers if comments incite hatred.
- We will seek to ensure that photographers working on council business understand that all sections of the community need to be reflected and ask them, and officers accompanying them, to bear this in mind.
- We will promote the accessible communication guidance via the council's internal publications and on the council's intranet.



- We will publicise the work of the equalities team (e.g. guidance) and all aspects of equalities work internally through the council's internal publications, the intranet, seminars and leaflets where appropriate.

For more information contact Matt Beer, [matt.beer@york.gov.uk](mailto:matt.beer@york.gov.uk) 01904 551071

## Democracy Services

Democratic services develop, support and scrutinise the political management structures in York. It has three sections:

- Democracy support and Members (Councillors) Support
- Scrutiny, and
- Civic.

**Democracy and Members Support** services the decision-making machinery of the council.

- It ensures that all information submitted is accurate and that papers are circulated within legal deadlines to all relevant parties.
- It provides procedural and operational advice and organises the 'calling-in' process, whereby proposals are challenged and questioned.
- It looks after Members' allowances and expenses, induction and training, personal development, and the administration of meetings.
- It also plays a key role in providing open local government by ensuring public access to council records and background paperwork.

**Scrutiny** services ensure the work of the Executive is effectively reviewed and checked. The scrutiny manager develops an annual scrutiny plan and commissions scrutiny investigations and reviews. Research from departments and external agencies is commissioned to support scrutiny work.

**Civic** services support the Lord Mayor and Civic Party in carrying out official engagements. It manages all activities and facilities in the Guildhall and Mansion House, including the promotion of events and guided tours in the Guildhall and Mansion House.

## **Key Issues**

- Accessibility of paperwork for meetings.
- When selecting topics for Scrutiny review, we do not currently consider the effect on, or relevance to, equality and diversity issues.
- Councillor's individual needs, in terms of disability, are not assessed upon induction.
- Councillors receive no training on equality and diversity upon election; however a copy of the equalities statement is included in their induction pack.
- The Civic Protocol that governs the Lord Mayor's engagements diary does not specifically promote supporting engagements and visits to groups representative of all the equality strands.
- Mansion House - disabled people or people with other access issues (e.g. buggies) can access the House via a lift at the back of the building. But there is no advice at the front door about this or how to access it.

## **Key Actions**

- We shall ensure that all documentation for meetings are in Arial font size 14 unless there are insurmountable issues that stop us from doing so in which case documentation will be produced in Arial font size 12. Whenever possible we shall use (and train our Councillors to use) plain English both in written and spoken communication. We shall move towards producing easy read versions of all our papers and consider having copies produced in Braille and two of the most popular foreign languages in York at the time when papers become available to the general public.
- We shall amend the Scrutiny Review registration form in a way that will encourage the consideration, promotion and inclusion of topics that relate to equality and inclusion, and which invite suggestions for Scrutiny Reviews from the public and all sections of the community.
- We shall assess Councillors' needs regarding disability on induction and update this annually.
- We shall ensure that the equalities strategy/policy forms part of the Member's Induction Pack. In addition we will make periodic training available to all our Councillors by way of Pre-Council Seminars.

- We shall amend the Civic Protocol to support engagements that are more representative of all the communities in York.
- We shall place appropriate signage about accessing the lift near the front door of the Mansion House. We shall provide the Custodian with equipment that will allow them to hear the side doorbell and provide a secondary bell by lift at the backdoor (as long as this fits in with the listed building requirements).

For more information contact Dawn Steel, [dawn.steel@york.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.steel@york.gov.uk) 01904 551030

## Children and Young People Plan

The Children and Young Peoples Plan (CYPP) is an overarching document covering all services provided to children and young people in York. It reflects plans from all sectors within the Yor-OK partnership. The need to draw up such a plan is a requirement of the Children's Act 2004. The responsibility for co-ordinating the plan rests with the Local Authority.

This EIA looked at the process used to draw up the 2007-10 Children and Young Peoples Plan, and its refresh in 2008, and how the contents of the plan were disseminated including:

- Data collection and assessment of need – both the process and the suitability of processes.
- Consultation with communities (children, families and partners) – including assessment of consultation processes.
- Dissemination of the plan to partners, children and families.

### Key issues

- No explicit section on the range of equality issues although there is 'Targeted work with specific groups';
- Ensure the plan document itself is accessible to the widest audience;
- Ensure the plan reflects the demographic make-up of York;
- Ensure consultation undertaken to support the development of the children's plan properly reflects the views and concerns of minority groups.

### Key actions

- Future plans continue to concentrate on 'targeted work' as this will encompass all disadvantaged groups but a key principle will be to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged ;

- Children and Young People's Plan documentation is clear, gives clear contact details and pathways to different versions, information on the Yor-OK website is made accessible for all sections of community in the most effective manner.
- Future plans will have an explicit description of York as a place to live, including a section on the demographic make up of the city. This will help target consultation more effectively.
- Ensure there is a robust methodology by which children and young people from all sections of the community can be involved in the development of the Plan;
- Leisure, Culture and Children's Services have an equalities network group of officers (chaired by the Assistant Director of Partnerships and Early Intervention) coordinating the approach to equalities. They will identify and lead on future EIAs for the directorate.

For more information contact Bernie Flanagan, [Bernie.Flanagan@york.gov.uk](mailto:Bernie.Flanagan@york.gov.uk) 01904 554463

## Lifelong Learning and Culture Service Plan

The aim of the above plan is to increase the skill base of people in York and to increase participation in learning in all areas but particularly informal learning. We looked at the types of buildings and land used by adult learning services (excluding partner organisations). We also looked at publicity and other information that is provided to members of the public to inform them about events, activities and services that are provided by lifelong learning and culture.

### Key issues

- Lack of participation data available apart from within adult and community education.
- Insufficient information and consultation feedback to be able to make a judgement about impact on different sorts of people.
- Changing facilities at swimming pools may not be suitable for some faith groups or cultures.
- Some possible issues around the balance of facilities. For example men rather than women mostly use sports pitches.
- Water temperature in pools, lack of hoists for disabled people, lack of Changing Places toilets (that have adult changing equipment such as a hoist) in sporting venues.
- Information about access to informal open spaces (e.g. the strays) is limited.
- Few raised beds in allotments for older or disabled people.
- Little play equipment adapted to different disabilities.
- Library shelving often too high to be fully accessible.
- Publicity material is not always consistent, for example by using the language panel.
- Printed material may not always be accessible to visually impaired people.
- Leaflets and brochures don't always state the availability of alternative formats.
- Distribution of material, including how it engages with any target groups, is not clear.

## Key actions

- Standardise information across the various services.
- Agree the above with appropriate partner providers.
- Work out the best way of consulting with “missing” groups.
- Ensure that the questions in the Annual Data Collection exercise through Talkabout 2 give us sufficient information to assess our impact on the various equalities groups.
- Partner organisations to carry out EIA’s on the buildings and land used for activities funded by the council.
- Develop a policy for the production of written material with reference to alternative formats.
- Consult with older people’s groups and those with or representing people with visual impairments to help design alternative format written material.
- Consider whether and how material could be provided in a format other than written (spoken via the website?).
- 12 new and 10 refurbished play areas will be Disability Discrimination Act compliant.
- Phase 1 of the transformation of York Library to an Explore Centre will include new and accessible shelving and a Changing Places facility.

For more information contact Alistair Gourlay, [alistair.gourlay@york.gov.uk](mailto:alistair.gourlay@york.gov.uk) 01904 554294



## **Waste Services**

The council's Waste Services department deals with every resident's waste in York. This includes collecting waste, recycling and green waste, and providing household waste recycling centres, or 'tips', and providing a large range of communications to residents. Waste Services has a number of areas that involve communicating with residents, providing information and promoting ideas and campaigns. For example, each year a calendar is produced showing when recycling and waste collections are; this is delivered to all households. This also provides residents with a 'refresher' of what they can put out for their recycling and green waste collections as well as when their collections are. An example of a campaign that Waste Services may carry out is the Waste Minimisation Campaign. This is made up of a number of smaller campaigns, for example home composting, and consists of leaflets, posters, roadshows, displays, talks, information on the internet, and advertisements in the local press and council publications.

### **Key Issues**

- Ensure that all communications – leaflets, written correspondence and display material - is in plain English and has details on how to request information in different languages or large print.
- More feedback about information and results when consultation has taken place is needed.
- Use results from consultation and resident surveys, to incorporate actions into service plans for Waste Services.

### **Key Actions**

- Review all Waste Services information that is sent out to people for plain English. For example letters and leaflets.

- Review all site signage at bring recycling banks, for example those in supermarket car parks, and household waste recycling centres for plain English.
- Consult on areas of Waste Services when making changes and improvements to the services.
- Feedback results of surveys and consultation carried out by or for Waste Services where relevant.

For more information about Waste Services contact [recycling.team@york.gov.uk](mailto:recycling.team@york.gov.uk) 01904 551551

## **Procurement Strategy**

The corporate procurement strategy sets out an overall vision of the role, organisation and purpose of procurement activities at the Council. In doing so it:

- Promotes the achievement of community benefits through fostering the social and economic well-being of the local community;
- Supports the development of a vibrant local economy;
- Promotes openness and transparency in all aspects of the Council's procurement activities;
- Sets out a clear and measurable framework continuum showing progress in embedding equality best practice across the Council and the wider business community.

### **Key Issues**

- Lack of awareness amongst suppliers regarding the councils Equality Strategy.
- Little or no information about how council suppliers comply with equality legislation.
- Lack of awareness by council staff procuring goods and services, outside the corporate procurement team, that they and suppliers must adhere to equality legislation.
- Lack of evidence to suggest that suppliers' tender responses are assessed upon adherence to equality legislation by staff procuring goods and services outside the corporate procurement team.
- Poor understanding by local suppliers about how the council procures goods and services.
- Lack of awareness of EU Procurement Legislation from local suppliers.
- Many unsure about how the council is embedding equalities and diversity best practice in the procurement of

goods and services.

## **Key Actions**

- Develop a 3 year action plan for procurement and suppliers. Post details of the council's Equality Strategy onto the Procurement section of the council website with relevant links to legislation details.
- Develop a model to centrally capture and monitor information from suppliers to ensure compliance with equalities legislation.
- Develop a communication plan to share equalities information and ensure an understanding of the impact on the council as a result of non-compliance with equalities legislation.
- Ensure that a standard evaluation model is given to all staff procuring goods and services to ensure assessment of adherence to legislation.
- Hosted "Doing business with the council" event for local suppliers to explain how we procure goods and services. Heavily involved in organising the "Thrive & Survive" with Yorkshire Forward event for York to share the same information with suppliers and also enable them to access other information at the same venue e.g. access to training, funding etc. Provide procurement support at the Yorkshire Business Forum meetings held quarterly. Run seminars with the York Compact to respond to specific questions about procurement, in general, and equality in procurement specifically by the council.
- Host regular training seminars for suppliers to explain how the council is bound to adhere to the EU Procurement Legislation. Ensure suppliers understand where to find information about this and what the mandated timescales etc are for tenders. Information to be updated on the council website.
- Provide information to suppliers about how to tender for business and how tenders and quotes are assessed upon pre-defined criteria by posting information on the council website.
- Ensure suppliers are aware of how to contact the Corporate Procurement Team for queries by attendance at seminars and accessing information via the council website.

For more information contact Zara Carter. [Zara.carter@york.gov.uk](mailto:Zara.carter@york.gov.uk), 01904 552930

## Customer Feedback Strategy

City of York Council is committed to excellent customer service and to securing customer satisfaction in the way it responds to complaints and feedback from any of its service users. In order to do this we need to adopt and implement a new policy, which sets out a standard corporate procedure to achieve greater consistency in how we deal with feedback and complaints. It will also ensure we deliver a better service to our customers by monitoring and measuring complaints, feedback, suggestions and comments.

### Key issues

- Poor awareness of how to make a complaint across the community
- Inadequate / poor awareness of the provision of support for customers who may find it difficult to make a complaint
- Methods of contacting the council in order to make a complaint
- Keeping customers updated of progress of a complaint
- Publicising what we have learned and improved as a result of customer feedback
- No use of symbols or pictures on the Equalities and Diversity form.

### Key actions

- To be proactive in raising awareness of policy/procedures
- To monitor equalities and diversity of complaints/feedback received
- To monitor customer satisfaction levels of how we deal with complaints
- To promote support and / or advocacy services available for customers when making complaints and giving feedback.

- To include in staff training
- To promote the choice of contact methods available
- To ensure updated policy/procedures on keeping customers informed is followed by adopting appropriate Quality Monitoring of procedures
- To ensure that regular updates on “lessons learned” and areas improved as a direct result of customer complaints/feedback is provided
- To consider comments regarding “Let us know” leaflet before producing the final version.
- To consider comments regarding the Equalities and Diversity form before producing the final version.

For more information contact Jane Collingwood, Business Change Manager, 01904 553407  
Lorraine Lunt, Customer Relations Improvement Officer, 01904 553421  
Kofi Mensah, Business Analyst, 01904 553404  
Email: [yourviews@york.gov.uk](mailto:yourviews@york.gov.uk)

## Counter Fraud Strategy

This Strategy sets out the council's policy in relation to fraud and corruption carried out against it, and its overall arrangements for preventing and detecting fraud.

### Key issues

- Conduct of investigations – needs of individuals to be taken into account in conducting investigations. For example, arrangements for interviewing a disabled person who may not easily be able to access council offices, or where English is not someone's first language.
- Publicity - need to ensure York citizens know about the council's policy on fraud and know how to contact the service. For example, publicity is in English only.
- To consider how the service can consult with different community groups to assess awareness of fraud issues, and identify what further action, if any, is required to raise awareness.
- There is currently no requirement to take account of circumstances that may impact on specific communities in fraud investigation work. While the law/working practices require fraud investigations to be carried out appropriately, and take into account individuals' circumstances, issues that may apply to specific communities as a whole are not explicitly taken into account.

### Key actions

- Policy to include commitment to ensuring that investigations be carried in such a way as to take any reasonable needs of individuals into account. Further action: 1) To be monitored through ongoing supervision/review of case files. 2) Annually monitor ethnicity, age, and gender of claimants vs overall population profile and assess whether changes to overall arrangements required. 3) Record cases where have

had to make alternative arrangements and review annually to assess whether changes to overall arrangements required.

- Policy to include commitment to publicising anti-fraud and corruption message to all communities. Further action: 1) Initial discussion with groups in Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Fair workshop (Nov 08). 2) Input into overall benefits EIA, as action required in relation to fraud linked to overall issues across benefits (eg awareness of need to report changes in circumstances) – to consider using eg York ethnicity data to target publicity.
- Include developing relationships with community groups in Counter Fraud and Corruption Policy, if appropriate. Further action: 1) Initial discussion with groups in EIA Fair workshop (Nov 08). 2) Input into overall benefits EIA as action required in relation to fraud linked to overall issues across benefits (eg awareness of need to report changes in circumstances).

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