

North Yorkshire Probation Area EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE



NORTH YORKSHIRE

This template is used to:

- Review an existing function, policy or practice
- Develop a new function, policy or practice.

Policy can be unwritten procedures as well as formal written policies – equality impact assessment should be carried out on any aspect of probation work which has an impact on service users and staff.

The aims of impact assessment are

- to identify potential unfair treatment or adverse impact in the way the policy or practice is implemented on any groups (in respect to race, disability, gender, faith, sexual orientation or age).
- to promote good relations in conducting Probation business
- to promote equality
- to eliminate discrimination
- to comply with the general duty in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, and forthcoming new legal requirements covering disability (2006) and gender (2007) and other diversity strands.
- to meet legal requirements in the equality legislation and protect the Area and Service from legal action
- to improve the quality of Probation work overall and produce a real benefit for all concerned.

Ten key points to help to ensure a good impact assessment are attached. More detailed guidance is available in the Home Office template for race equality impact assessment and on the CRE web site (www.cre.gov.uk). The Disability Rights Commission have issued guidance on Disability impact assessment. (www.drc.org.uk).

Most aspects of probation service work have the potential to affect people (service users, staff, partners, contractors) in different racial or ethnic groups in different ways, even though this may not be apparent at first. There may be barriers to equality which only a process of exploration and consultation will reveal. It is therefore safer to conduct a full impact assessment on most probation service policies, functions and practices.

Areas should first list all functions and policies and set priorities for impact assessment according to relevance: high, medium or low relevance.

This template has been designed mainly for use to comply with legislation on race. However it is also be used for impact assessment in relation to disability, gender, faith, sexual orientation and age.

However there is some variation in requirements in the different legislation and it is important to note that a generic template such as this may need to be adapted as further guidance is issued, for example, from the Disability Rights Commission.

PART A: INITIAL SCREENING

PART B: PREPARING FOR IMPACT ASSESSMENT

PART C: CONDUCTING IMPACT ASSESSMENT

PART D: FOLLOW-UP TO IMPACT ASSESSMENT

North Yorkshire Probation Area

A. INITIAL SCREENING

1. Title of function, policy or practice (including common practice)

Is this a new policy under development or an existing one?

- **Communications and Public Relations Policy**

2. Aims, purpose and outcomes of function, policy or practice

What is the function, policy or practice addressing? What operational work or employment/HR activities are covered? What outcomes are expected?

- To protect a clear rationale which focuses on two-way communication between stakeholders, publics, staff, managers and NYPA Board;
- To create a genuine and visible dialogue at all levels within the organisation;
and
- To build on the identified strengths of the organisation and address the areas for improvement via effective public relations and good communications.

The policy covers all aspects of work carried out

Expected outcomes are an increase in public confidence and awareness of the NYPA and staff satisfaction with information available

3. Target groups

Who is the policy aimed at? Which specific groups are likely to be affected by its implementation? This could be staff, service users, partners, contractors.

- The Board, staff and employees of North Yorkshire Probation Service
- Service users
- Partners agencies
- All communities of North Yorkshire
- Local and regional media

Equality target group	Positive impact – could benefit	Negative impact - disadvantage (High, medium, low)	Reason for assessment and explanation of possible impact
Women	Non specific non gender specific language	Low	
Men	Non specific non gender specific language	Low	
Transgender people	Non specific non gender specific language	Low	
People with language / literacy needs	Different methods of communication	Medium	Concern that if different format(s) not available, certain groups will not be aware that we are trying to communicate with them (ii) may not be able to access some of our services
Asian/Asian British people		Medium	<p>The provision could be made to make information accessible in language formats to suit the needs of the person accessing the service, if English is not a first language or if the person requires the information in other formats</p> <p>If we don't offer this they receive unequal services, which perpetuate</p>

			inequalities
Black/Black British people		Medium	The provision could be made to make information accessible in language formats to suit the needs of the person accessing the service, if English is not a first language or if the person requires the information in other formats
Chinese people or other groups			The provision could be made to make information accessible in language formats to suit the needs of the person accessing the service, if English is not a first language or if the person requires the information in other formats
People of mixed race		Medium	The provision could be made to make information accessible in language formats to suit the needs of the person accessing the service, if English is not a first language or if the person requires the information in other formats
White people (including Irish people)			

Equality target group	Positive impact – could benefit	Negative impact - disadvantage (High, medium, low)	Reason for assessment and explanation of possible impact
Travellers or Gypsies		Low	<p>No specific arrangements in place to actively communicate with travellers or gypsies</p> <p>Possibility of working with County Council or local CDRP's? Links with community groups to aid communication?</p>
Disabled people		Low	<p>No specific arrangements to promote images of disabled people. Policy does not make any reference to specific legal duty to promote positive images of disabled people</p> <p>Information could be made more accessible through the use of a minimum 12 point print and appropriately contrasting colours as recommended by the RNIB and CIPD</p>
Lesbians, gay men, bisexual people		Low	No specific arrangement to promote positive images of lesbian, gay and bisexual people
Transgender people		Low	No specific arrangements to promote positive images of transgender people
Older people over 60		Low	<p>No specific arrangement to promote positive images of older people</p> <p>Information needs to be made available in large print formats if requires where</p>

			people may have a visual impairment
Young people (17-25) and children		Low	No specific arrangements to promote positive images of young people
Faith groups		Low	

4. Further research/questions to answer

As a result of the above, indicate what questions might need to be answered in the full impact assessment and what additional research or evidence might be needed to do this.

- Suggest and identify communication mediums used and information available about different ethnic groups
- How does this policy address diversity issues? Suggest this policy makes specific reference to our public duties to promote good community relations, proactively promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Challenge negative stereotypes?
- Avoid gender bias in language?
- Clearly state that information will be supplied in different formats upon requests and agree the best most standard font and size that are accessible to most people
- Press releases; specifically say these will be made available in alternative formats upon request
- Internal communications – suggest specific links to the unions, BME support groups and DINNY are made and Employee Care forum removed. Other staff networks?
- Suggest paragraphs 7.4 needs removing & 4.8 needs amending.
- Possible consultation with service users?

Initial screening done by:

Name / position

- Elaine Watkins Public Protection Manager OM
- Kathryn Cooper, PM Interventions
- Justine Taylor HR Manager

Date

- September 2007

B. PLANNING A FULL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. Title of function, policy or practice (including common practice)

Is this a new policy under development or an existing one?

- **Communications and Public Relations Policy** (Existing policy since March 2005)

2. Aims, purpose and outcomes of function, policy or practice

What is the function, policy or practice addressing? What operational work or employment/HR activities are covered? What outcomes are expected?

- To protect a clear rationale which focuses on two –way communication between stakeholders, publics, staff, managers and NYPA Board;
- To create a genuine and visible dialogue at all levels within the organisation;
and
- To build on the identified strengths of the organisation and address the areas for improvement via effective public relations and good communications.

The policy covers all aspects of work carried out.

Expected outcomes are an increase in public confidence and awareness of the NYPA and staff satisfaction with information available

3. Target groups

Who is the policy aimed at? Which specific groups are likely to be affected by its implementation? Use the initial screening to summarise potential adverse impact on each group as identified above and the reasons given. What knowledge and information do you already have, what further research or evidence should be collected in the full impact assessment?

- The Board, staff and employees of North Yorkshire Probation Service
- Service users
- Partners agencies
- All communities of North Yorkshire
- Local and regional media

4. Impact assessment process

Which staff will conduct the IA? (e.g. Board members, senior managers, policy leads, or a team of staff.) Will you include external advice from community groups or individuals?

How will the IA be approved and integrated into senior management processes?

What is the role of the diversity manager?

- The IA will be conducted by PR and Communications Officer
- The Policy will be sent to the Diversity Officer for comment

5. Consultation

Give details of any planned internal staff and external community consultation and engagement. Who will be consulted, how will it be done, when, what are the aims of the consultation, what will be done with the results?

- The DINNY network group will be asked to comment on a draft. This will ensure that all aspects have been considered. This will be done in February/March 2008. The aim is to ensure that a cross-section of staff, with diverse needs, have had the opportunity to give feedback and comment on the revised Policy
- The results will be fed, if appropriate, into either the communication policy or a supporting strategy. A staff practice note will be drafted which addresses best practice of for plain English

C. CONDUCTING THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6. Q & A: Effect of function, policy or practice

What questions were identified in the initial screening above?

See above.

What other aspects of the way this policy is, or might be, implemented, should be explored?

- Consider whether a service is not being fully used because people do not have enough information about it, or because they are not confident that the service can meet their particular needs sympathetically or fairly?
- Ask whether information is available at the right time in the right place?
- External events and exhibitions – consider how accessible venues are i.e. hearing loops, ramps etc?

Are there any points within the policy as it stands where the potential exists for negative impact on staff or service users or stakeholders across all groups?

- External material should, as a standard, always state that the information is available in alternative formats
- Robust approach when responding to information and requests from customers for who English is not a first language

Is there any existing evidence to show that adverse impact on any racial group has occurred previously in this area, if so what?

- No evidence to support this

If not what evidence will you need to collect to assess the impact? (This might be monitoring, evidence from staff networks, evidence from service users, surveys, interviews, focus groups, wider consultation, research at national or area level on impact of similar policies or functions, etc.)

- Longer term this will be through wider consultation at a local level. More knowledge and information about these diverse groups in North Yorkshire to be able to assess the impact of this policy on each of them
- Little or no existing external consultation methods at this time; need longer term for the service to develop a strong and effective system of regular consultation with local communities.

7. Assessment of evidence and action on results

What conclusions can be drawn from the consultation and the evidence collection?

Support the conclusions by reference to the outcomes of consultation and evidence collection.

Is there is a need to change amend or withdraw the policy or practice?

- There is a need to amend the policy to address our legal duty and ensure that all information is available for all users

In what ways will be policy promote good relations, promote equality and eliminate discrimination? Does it need amending to reflect this?

If so, what action is needed, by when and who is responsible?