

## MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

### Equality Impact Assessment

**Title of Policy/Service/Contract:** Democratic Services- Elections  
**Division:** Member Support  
**Lead Officer:** Tom Clark- Solicitor to the Council/  
David Peake- Senior Elections Officer  
**Date Assessment completed:** 30 November 2012

#### 1. SCOPING

##### 1.1 What are the aims of the policy, service/service change or contract?

1. To manage the Register of Electors including publishing the final register;
2. To manage, co-ordinate and oversee by-elections, general elections, referendums and local police commissioner elections;
3. To liaise with the Electoral Commission and the Boundary Commission;
4. To respond to any queries and/or assist members of the public, councillors, candidates in relation to any election/ register process; and
5. To ensure that democracy is accessible, fair and unbiased.

##### 1.2 Who does the service/policy/contract affect? Who are the main customers (internal or external)?

This service affects:-

- (1) all residents within the district (external); and
- (2) Candidates, Members and the Council (internal and external);

##### 1.3 What equality information is available, including any evidence from engagement and analysis of use of services?

The Election Team acknowledge the Equalities Profile and Key Statistics and Data about the District.

The key information to note are as follows:-

- (1) This district has a large number of residents over the age of 65 years and this trend is set to continue;
- (2) The corporate data also suggests that there will be an increase in the number of elderly persons with disabilities;
- (3) There is also a high population growth within the area;
- (4) There is a change in the make-up of the districts ethnicity; and
- (5) Approximately 30% of the residents of Mid Sussex live in an area classed as rural.

**1.4 What does this information tell us about the equality issues associated with the service and implications for the protected groups?**

The above key points noted by the Elections Team will be important considerations when it comes to service re-design or service planning and any election functions. The information enables the Elections Team to carry out a needs assessment and ensure that the service have provisions to meet their aims as listed in 1.1.

**1.5 Are contractors or partnerships used to deliver the service? Not applicable**  
If No go to section 2.

If yes, please refer to the guidance notes, particularly Appendix One of the MSDC Guidance "Integrating Equality and Diversity into Procurement", and complete the next three questions.

**Identify the contractors/partnerships used to deliver the service.**

**What is their contribution to equality in service delivery and the promotion of equality?**

**How are equality issues addressed through contractual arrangements and service level agreements?**

## 2. Assessment of Impact; Analysis and Action Planning

Any gaps in information or provision, opportunities to promote equalities and good relations identified above need to be translated into SMART actions and recorded here. These actions need to be delivered and monitored through the service planning process.

Opportunity to promote equality, good relations and/or address barriers to service/differential impact	Current action taken to address these	Further actions required and timescales	Lead Officer	How will impact be measured
<p>The needs of different ethnic groups including white minorities, but also established white communities</p> <p>Language barriers with non-English speakers living in the district</p>	<p>Customers are directed to the Election Commission website:- <a href="http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/lan guages.aspx">http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/lan guages.aspx</a> to which they can request information in 12 different languages.</p> <p>The Council's website:- <a href="http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/6585.htm">http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/6585.htm</a> provides links to the Council's homepage in a number of different languages. From the home page customers should be able to navigate the entire site in their chosen language.</p> <p>The Council also provide a telephone interpreting service in your language on 01444 458166.</p> <p>Officers continue to participate in -house and external training</p>	<p>No further action planned for the future as the current actions appear to be sufficient.</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>David Peake/ Tom Clark</p>	<p>Statistics on the use of these alternative services and customer feedback.</p>

	<p>course on equality and diversity provided corporately by HR as well as external training providers so as to be aware of the issues including the "Thumbs Up" Pledge.</p>			
<p>The needs of men and women. Including taking account of pregnancy and maternity.</p>				
<p>None identified</p>	<p>Officers continue to participate in -house and external training course on equality and diversity provided corporately by HR as well as external training providers so as to be aware of the issues including the "Thumbs Up" Pledge.</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>The needs of disabled people</p>				
<p>Access and accessibility to Polling Stations within the District.  Access- The Elections Team has carried out regular assessments on suitable polling station sites and has found some venues are difficult to enter and move around for those with physical mobility issues.</p>	<p>The Elections Team have complied with the most recent statutory requirement to carry out a polling place review continue to comply with their statutory requires to review polling facilities at regular intervals.  Access- Election Team continues to look at each venue and where it has been deemed unsuitable have sought to find alternative</p>	<p>The current actions taken have addressed many of the issues and the team feel these actions continue to work well and are manageable.  On-going</p>	<p>Departmental  David Peake/ Tom Clark</p>	<p>Any complaints received and customer feedback.</p>

<p>Accessibility- Some venues may not be placed in an easily accessible place particularly in rural areas.</p>	<p>premises.</p> <p>Accessibility- Election Team continues to look at each venue and where it has been deemed unsuitable have sought to find alternative premises.</p>	<p>On-going</p>	
<p>Voting can be difficult for those with visual impairments.</p>	<p>Presiding Officers are provided with comprehensive training in how to assist those with mobility issues and visual impairments in accordance with the Electoral Commissions guidance.</p> <p>Electors also have the option of choosing a postal vote or proxy vote.</p>	<p>On-going</p>	
<p>The needs of people with a religion or belief</p>			
<p>None identified</p>	<p>Officers continue to participate in -house and external training course on equality and diversity course provided corporately by HR as well as external training providers so as to be aware of the issues including the "Thumbs Up" Pledge.</p>	<p>On- going</p>	<p>Tom Clark</p> <p>Check training records</p>

Opportunity to promote equality and/or barriers to service/differential impact	Current action taken to address these	Further actions required and timescales	Lead Officer	How will impact be measured
The needs of gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and heterosexual people				
None identified	Officers continue to participate in -house and external training course on equality and diversity provided corporately by HR as well as external training providers so as to be aware of the issues including the "Thumbs Up" Pledge.	On-going	Tom Clark	Check training records
Issues from marriage and civil partnership				
None identified	Officers continue to participate in -house and external training course on equality and diversity provided corporately by HR as well as external training providers so as to be aware of the issues including the "Thumbs Up" Pledge.	On-going	Tom Clark	Check training records
The needs of different age groups, for example older and younger people				
None identified	Officers continue to participate in -house and external training course on equality and diversity provided corporately by	On-going	Tom Clark	Check training records

	HR as well as external training providers so as to be aware of the issues including the "Thumbs Up" Pledge.	On-going		
The needs of transgender communities				
None identified	Officers continue to participate in -house and external training course on equality and diversity HR as well as external training providers so as to be aware of the issues including the "Thumbs Up" Pledge.	On-going	Tom Clark	Check training records
The needs of people who are disadvantaged by socio-economic factors such as low incomes, skill or living in a deprived area				
None identified	Officers continue to participate in -house and external training course on equality and diversity HR as well as external training providers so as to be aware of the issues including the "Thumbs Up" Pledge.	On-going	Tom Clark	Check training records
The needs of people who live in a rural area				
Accessibility- Some venues may not be placed in an easily accessible place	The Elections Team have already carried out an assessment this	Council to maintain polling stations in rural locations.	David Peake/ Tom	Any complaints received and

particularly in rural areas.	year and continue to do so prior to any elections to comply with their statutory requires to review polling facilities. Accessibility- Election Team continues to look at each venue and where it has been deemed unsuitable have sought to find alternative premises.	On-going	Clark	customer feedback.
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**3. Mid Sussex District Council Equality Impact Assessment Summary**

Key Findings	Future Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Much of the Equalities Profile and Key Statistics and Data about the District have been addressed with satisfactory results.</li> <li>• All the above will need to be monitored closely for any changes to the District so that the department can adapt to ensure the service meets the needs of the customers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor the above progress.</li> </ul>

**4. Signing off this assessment and action plan**

Signature ..... *M Peckle* .....  
 Person undertaking the assessment

Date ..... *18/12/12* .....

Signature ..... *NA* .....  
 Head of Service

Date ..... *18/12/12* .....

Please send your completed impact assessment to Neal Barton for publication on the website.