

<b>Title of Report: Equality Impact Assessment – Single Equality Scheme and action plan</b>	
<b>Decision Making Body: Hackney Homes Executive Team</b>	<b>Date: 16<sup>th</sup> June 2010</b>
<b>Classification: FOR INFORMATION</b>	<b>Report of: Finance &amp; Resources</b>
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## Report Outline:

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. What is an Equality Impact Assessment?

An Equality Impact Assessment is a systematic way of establishing the likely equality implications (both positive and negative) either of implementing a new policy or initiative or of the operation of a current policy function or service. An EIA will help the service to identify the equality consequences of a policy, function, service or procedure and implement positive action to ensure that the identified negative impact is eliminated.

There are three positive equality duties which require Hackney Homes to promote equality and eliminate discrimination, all of which have a requirement to conduct EIAs:

- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 requires Race Equality Impact Assessments
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places similar duties on promoting equality for disabled people (since December 2006)
- Equality Act 2006 requires promotion of equality between women and men (since April 2007)

#### 2. Review of Equality Impact Assessments

Both initial and full EIAs require the relevant Director and the Service Development Team (quality check) to sign off the reports and action plans. Completed EIA's and action plans will be reported to the Executive Team, the Equality & Diversity Group (for information purposes) and summary to the Board. Progress of the Hackney Homes EIA Programme will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the Hackney Homes Equality & Diversity Group.

#### 3. Overall Aims and Objectives

The Single Equality Scheme is a timetabled and evidence based plan of action to

ensure that the organisation:

- treats people fairly and gives people fair chances
- values diversity i.e. differences of individuals and groups

#### **4. Main Beneficiaries**

Hackney Homes tenants and leaseholders, key stakeholders, partners and contractors, staff and trade unions

#### **5. Desired Outcomes**

We see to promote an opportunity for all people whether they:

- seek access to or use our services or services provided on our behalf
- apply for employment with us or are already employed by us
- seek access to training and promotion
- work with us in partnership
- are contracted to supply goods and services to us

### **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 1. Summary of Positive Impacts by different groups** e.g. age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation. (Refer to evidence e.g. consultation, complaints, monitoring etc).

The scheme's action plan includes targets to make improvements to services that will benefit diverse groups of residents.

For example:

**Age:** Providing a youth area on the Hackney Homes website for young people, establishing a resident forum for older people and involving young people in the develop of estate plans.

**Disability:** Increasing the reporting of disability harassment by disabled residents; making information accessible to people with learning disabilities language/literacy needs or who are partially sighted by producing 'Easy Read' leaflets about services; improving the usability of bathrooms and kitchens for people with visual impairments on Decent Homes Estates and repair surgeries for disabled residents and their carers.

**Race:** Increasing reporting ASB by BME groups; take-up for household insurance; the Direct Debit Scheme; engagement opportunities for Vietnamese residents by establishing a resident forum and targets to improve literacy and health care awareness for Gypsy, Travellers and Roma households.

**Gender:** Increasing the number of female applicants for posts in Estate Environmental Services.

#### **Other groups:**

**Literacy:** Improving literacy levels for the workforce in Estate Environmental Services (Staff Survey 2009).

**Single Parents:** Creating opportunities to participate by establishing a resident group for single parents (Annual Tenants Satisfaction Survey 2008, Resident Participation Gap Analysis 2009/10).

**Carers:** Improve satisfaction levels for carers when reporting repairs (Repair Policy EIA).

**Vulnerable People:** Develop a protocol for contractors and vulnerable tenants on Decent Homes estates

- 2. Summary of Negative Impacts by different groups** e.g. age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation. (Refer to evidence e.g. consultation, complaints, monitoring etc). If possible explain how it can be justified and/or eliminated.

### **Gender Reassignment, Religion and Belief and Sexual Orientation**

The scheme and action plan does not specifically include targets for these groups (although other targets will benefit all diverse groups) and there is also a low percentage of customer profiling information collected for these groups. Steps are being taken to address the lack of customer profiling data for these groups by revising the current 'Access to Service' form and to distributing to both staff and residents a Stonewall leaflet 'What's it got to do with you?' This leaflet explains in ten points why customer profiling information is important and how it can be used to improve services. After wide consultation on the scheme with residents, staff and external equality related groups both during the EIA and through consultation feedback a target has been added to the scheme to provide training on the 7 equality strands (e.g. age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion/faith and sexual orientation), carers and customer profiling. This will supplement the existing mandatory equality and diversity training for staff.

### **Carers**

Feedback from staff identified that needs of staff who are carers should be taken into account by the organisation. A target has been added to the scheme to identify a baseline figure for staff that have carer's responsibilities and to find out what their needs are. In addition, Human Resources plan to develop a Carers Policy for staff by Mar-11. Feedback from the Council's Carers Lead Officer suggested a Carers Scheme on estates would have a beneficial impact by providing support and advice. The manager of the RPT has said that resources are not available at this stage to develop such a scheme as they are concentrating on developing engagement forums for other groups such as older people based on an engagement gap analysis and equality targets. The needs of residents who are carers could be addressed by developing a Carers Policy (for residents) to identify how the organisation can meet their needs based on the services we provide. Staff awareness training of the needs of carers is discussed above.

### **Disability**

See above regarding training for staff on the 7 equality strands which will include disability. Feedback from Disability Back-up recommended that the organisation should review accessibility issues for disabled people on estates i.e. access to wheelie bins and storage of mobility scooters. Individual requests for ramped access to bin areas for disabled residents is considered but there is unlikely to be sufficient funds available for a capital programme to improve accessibility in bin areas accessible due to volume and costs. Storage of mobility scooters on estates is under review at the Fire Risk Assessment Group.

## **Race**

Previous consultation has identified that reporting of ASB by Turkish residents is low. To produce a leaflet about ASB in Turkish can be incorporated into the work around increasing the reporting of ASB by BME residents to help make the service more accessible to Turkish residents.

### **Summary of internal/external research or consultation(s) carried out:**

Over the last year, the scheme has been developed with the involvement of customers and staff through focus groups and surveys. The action plan was developed with managers taking into account the views of customers, staff and stakeholders from focus groups, surveys, customer profiling, equality impact assessments and it will be part of the annual service planning process. The scheme and action plan was reported to the Resident Liaison Group and the Council's Corporate Equality and Cohesion Board in March 2010. Wider consultation took place during March 2010. Consultation included both a paper and on-line survey for residents and staff. Copies were sent to representatives from Neighbourhood Panels, TRAs, TMOs, resident forums and the equality focus group. Other consultation included a survey at the Residents Open Day and face-to face interviews with a selection of Gypsy and Traveller residents. External organisations were invited to give comments and responses were received from the Council's Equalities Team, Domestic Violence & Hate Crime Team, Age Concern and the East London Out Project.

### **3. Recommendations.** Include, if further consultation is required and whether a full impact assessment is planned with timescales

A full impact assessment may not be required as any adverse impacts can be mitigated by either:

- altering the scheme and action plan
- where not specifically relevant to the scheme through the EIA action plan so managers can take action through other policy and work plans

The EIA action plan will be regularly monitored and progress reviewed by the E&D Group.

**If you have any questions about this report, please contact B Jones 0208 356 4043 or email: [Belinda.jones@hackneyhomes.org.uk](mailto:Belinda.jones@hackneyhomes.org.uk)**