

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

<b>STRATEGY/ACTION:</b> 2012/2013 Budget Proposal : Fundamental Review of Social capital Equalities and Talking Together Budgets	<b>Department:</b> People
<b>Person responsible for assessment:</b> Chris Sivers – AD Development and Commissioning	<b>Date of assessment:</b> January 2012
<b>Person responsible for strategy where different from above:</b>	

**Brief description of strategy, partners and those who will be affected by its delivery:**

This is a proposal to reduce this service to the absolute minimum. This will reduce the corporate consultation (Talking Together) budget, the Darlington Together budget and the support for equalities work. As well as a reduction in the WHAT is delivered as a part of Darlington Together, the proposal would also see a change in the WHO delivers this.

There will be significant reduction in the amount of consultation activity and the amount of support to facilitate development of equality policy and impact assessments and the resultant consultation processes. There will be no dedicated staff within the Council to support Darlington Together and Community Partnerships activity.

The impact of the reduced support available for consultation process may increase the risk of public confidence in the Council, and potentially increases the risks associated with poor decision making due to the lack of understanding of full impact of decisions. There is also potentially risk to the success of the Darlington Together Strategy. These proposals will therefore impact on community groups, residents, elected members as well as other service areas across the Council. Indirectly the voluntary sector, health care partners and joint agencies who we currently support for consultation events will also be impacted.

The following financial saving has been identified against this proposal.

2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
£000	£000	£000	£000
157	216	216	216

The above savings include an employee impact of 5 to 7 people been made redundant and the new service offering a much reduced team.

### Introduction

This is a generic document that will require interpretation in particular circumstances. If, after reading the guidance, you require further information on how to implement the assessment, please contact Peter Roberts, Social Enterprise Development Manager 01325 388713

**Q.1 Is your strategy and the actions it proposes accessible to everyone within the community? Bear in mind any economic, social, environmental, physical, intellectual, cultural, linguistic, technological or other barriers.**

Issue	Yes	No	If yes, what evidence do you have to demonstrate this?	If no, what do you plan to do to remove barriers to access?
Equality Act 2010 Protected characteristics:				
Age	√		The proposals as outlined will have an impact on the whole of the population of Darlington. No particular group will be affected more than others. There may be a secondary impact if the current work taking place with community groups is discontinued, and those community groups have a significant proportion of their membership from a group with protected characteristics.	
Disability	√			
Gender reassignment	√			
Pregnancy and Maternity	√			
Race	√			
Religion or belief	√			
Sex	√			
Sexual orientation	√			
			The proposal ensures continuity for completion and carrying out of impact assessments, including disability impact assessment work and the consultations as a	

Issue	Yes	No	If yes, what evidence do you have to demonstrate this?	If no, what do you plan to do to remove barriers to access?
Marriage and Civil Partnership	√		part of that process, thereby safeguarding the priority of the work with groups with protected characteristics.	
Local Priorities:				
Geographical impacts	√			Not a specific area that this service group supports, consultation and support provided by specific service area. This service area will however continue to support community cohesion where funding / resources are available
Carers		√		
Young People leaving care		√		
Gypsies & Travellers		√		
Refugees & Asylum Seekers		√		
Unemployed or low income	√			
People with spent criminal convictions		√		

**Q.2 (a) For whatever reason, does your strategy and the actions it proposes treat any group differently from others?**

Yes	
No	√

The strategy associated with this service area does not treat any group differently however the nature of community cohesion does target specific groups as part of identifying needs.

**If you have answered 'yes', please specify those individuals or groups affected and whether the impact has the potential to be adverse.**

Not applicable

**(b) What needs to be done to prevent any potentially adverse impact?**

To use intelligence data 'smarter'; i.e. in a more targeted way to maximise resources. Access and promotion of network groups to be self sufficient and therefore reducing the adverse impact

**Q.3 (a) Does your strategy promote equality? (e.g. does it contain actions that demonstrate a consideration of community cohesion and the needs of the members of Darlington's diverse communities)**

Yes	√
No	

**If you have answered 'yes', please give examples of how equality is promoted.**

By maintaining the service in limited / absolute minimum rather than removing / deleting service completely.  
The Council will continue to meet the equality act responsibilities and requirements  
Develop community cohesion and encourage self sufficiency / support and networking amongst community groups.

**Q.4 In the past three years, have you consulted with any of the following groups regarding the development of your strategy?**

Group	Yes	No	If yes, please summarise evidence (Who? When? What were the outcomes?)	If no, are you satisfied that the strategy has no impact on this group?
Age	√		<p>This service area was also subject to a budget proposal in 2010/2011 financial year and was widely consulted.</p> <p>Consultation events have taken place as part of the 2011/2012 MTFP budget consultation events, these include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public consultation events specifically targeted for disabled, young people and older people</li> <li>• Town Crier publications</li> <li>• Online forums</li> <li>• Talking Together Events</li> <li>• Staffing road shows and internal communications to employees</li> <li>• Attendance at local community groups and action groups (i.e. DAD)</li> </ul> <p>Please see attached summary of issues raised at Meeting with Community Partnerships on 19.01.12</p>	
Disability	√			
Gender reassignment	√			
Pregnancy and Maternity	√			
Race	√			
Religion or belief	√			
Sex	√			
Sexual orientation	√			
Marriage and Civil Partnership	√			
Geographical impacts	√			
Carers	√			
Young people leaving care	√			
Gypsies & Travellers	√			
Refugees & asylum seekers	√			
Unemployed or low waged	√			

Group	Yes	No	If yes, please summarise evidence (Who? When? What were the outcomes?)	If no, are you satisfied that the strategy has no impact on this group?
People with spent criminal convictions	√			

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Meeting with Community Partnerships

**Date:** 19.01.12

**Location:** Town Hall, Committee Room 2

**Time:** 17:00-18:50

**Present:**

**John Bosson** – Darlington Borough Council, Strategy and Performance Manager, in the Capacity as Equalities Support for the MTFP

**Helen Watson**- Darlington Borough Council, Supporting People Officer, in the Capacity as Equalities Support for the MTFP

**John Curry** – Northgate Partnership

**Kath Cheadle** – North Road Partnership

**Anne- Marie Curry** – North Road Partnership

**Christine Dickinson** - Lascelles Partnership

**Proposal: Fundamental review of social capital and equalities**

Clarification was given by Officers relating to the scope of this proposal. Partnership representatives reflected upon the work undertaken by Community Development Officers and the potential impacts arising from this proposal. This included:

A concern across all partnership representatives that the community development work within their localities is likely to end up either much reduced or cease without a robust support structure.

The Lascelles Partnership identified that previously they have been able to access large grants for development work with the support of the community development workers, who the partnerships have identified as undertaking an essential co-ordination function. If the support offered by the community development workers was no longer available, it was identified by the Lascelles Partnership; there would be reluctance for the community members to apply for Large Grants. This related to the legal implications and accountability which arise from accessing grants, and the potential accountability which community members are not prepared to take on without access to specialist support. It was described that the community development workers have been the anchor in the process in ensuring that required paper work is completed, supporting the partnerships to understand the requirements and implications of particular grants, making links to enable the partnerships to obtain legal advice, to ensure they understand the implications and requirements of accessing particular grants.

It was felt across the partnerships present that people would be too anxious to apply and sign for grants without support, as it was felt that the potential for personal liability and accountability was too great for individuals undertaking a function in a voluntary capacity. The partnerships felt that they would not know where to go for help and advice, they would not have knowledge of what is available to apply for, or how to co-ordinate bids. It was recognised that there is knowledge within the partnerships, but they would not be able to sustain undertaking the development role at the level at which it has previously been at and there is a risk that the partnerships would cease from undertaking significant development initiatives and should they continue, the focus will be on much smaller grant applications and initiatives.

A further potential impact was identified relating to what provision would there be for instant advice and signposting within the authority in the future, as the partnerships have had the need to make direct contact with community development workers outside of scheduled meetings to progress issues.