

## Due Regard Statement

Person(s) responsible for completing this statement <b>Vanessa Lucas</b>	<b>Date statement started: 05/01/13</b> <b>Date statement completed:15/01/13</b>
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**Name of the policy, service, strategy, procedure or function: (indicate whether new or revised)**

Revision of Gloucestershire County Council Complaints Policy and Procedures

**Briefly describe its aims and expected outcomes**

To update and improve the corporate complaints policy to better reflect customer requirements, improve the effectiveness of services and to reflect best practice and advice from the Local Government Ombudsman.

The revised policy and procedure incorporates a:

- Clear definition of a 'complaint'.
- Streamlined two stage process, with faster timescales.
- Fair approach to the escalation of a complaint.

As a result, both customers and staff will benefit from a less convoluted policy and a simpler, more consistent complaints process.

## Gathering the evidence base

List the main sources of data, research and other sources of evidence, including full references, used to determine the impact of your work on each of the protected groups. If there are gaps in evidence, state what you will do to close them in the Action plan at the end of this document.

	<b>Service user data</b> (if applicable) If service user data is not available, use the action plan below to identify how service user data will be collated in the future.	<b>Other</b> (for example, local demographic data, research , ONS, partner data, officer knowledge)
<b>All</b>	Complaints Data	Legal Services Local Government Ombudsman Advice on Best Practice Equality Expert Gloucestershire County Council Officer input from all levels of the organisation Research on Complaints practice in other Local Authorities Equalities and Diversity Information Booklet: <a href="http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=50416&amp;p=0">http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=50416&amp;p=0</a>

	<b>Workforce data</b> If employees are affected by your 'project' please outline the profile of the workforce affected below.
<b>All</b>	Not appropriate at this time.

## Consultation and engagement

List all types of consultation that has taken place during the development of this activity. Include on-line consultations, events, meetings with stakeholders, community events, employee consultation exercises etc

The Project Team has collected and analysed complaints data (volumes, timescales, outcomes) from across the council, and also gathered qualitative information about existing procedures – and ideas for improvement – from complaints officers, with representation and input from all main parts of the organisation. Data was obtained from a Complaints Fact-Finding exercise carried out in May 2012 and further questionnaires in October, focusing on officer experience of complaints i.e. volume, type, processing times.

We have looked at good practice at other local authorities and followed guidance from the Local Government Ombudsman.

## Equality analysis: What the evidence shows

Considering the evidence and engagement activity you listed above, please summarise the impact of your work. Consider whether the evidence shows potential for differential impact, if so state whether adverse or positive and for which groups. In the next section you will be required to document how you will mitigate any negative impacts.

Useful questions to consider:

Do policy outcomes and service take-up differ between people with different protected characteristics?

What are the key findings of your engagement?

If there is a greater impact on one group, is that consistent with the policy aims?

If the policy has negative impacts on people with particular characteristics, what steps can be taken to mitigate these effects?

Does any part of the policy discriminate unlawfully?

Will the policy deliver practical benefits for certain groups?

Does the policy miss opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations?

Do other policies need to change to enable this policy to be effective?

What are the impacts to the workforce?

Briefly outline your main findings that relate to the Council's commitment to: **Eliminate discrimination (consider potential for indirect discrimination) Advance equality of opportunity Promote good relations. This can include challenges and opportunities.**

***Note: If you are assessing a number of options, you should consider the opportunities and challenges of EACH option.***

Protected group	Challenge or opportunity
All	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The streamlined approach and clear definition of 'complaint' will result in a better customer experience for all</li> <li>2. We aim to introduce Equality monitoring of complainants where appropriate in order to increase awareness of negative impact on protected groups and mitigate against this wherever possible. Work will need to be carried out and guidelines agreed to ensure monitoring is carried out appropriately, does not infringe on customer privacy and that all data is kept in a secure database.</li> </ol>

**Strengthening actions: Outline what actions have been identified to mitigate the key findings identified above by protected group.**

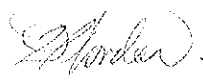
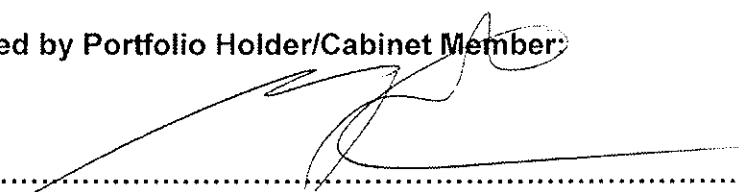
Potential/ actual impact	Protected group (s) affected	Proposed mitigating action(s)	Accountability	Timeframe
Change of Complaints Policy and Procedure negatively impacts protected groups	All	Introduce appropriate equality monitoring into the Complaints process in order to safeguard against negative impact on protected groups	Corporate Complaints Team	(Provisionally based on approval of revised policy and procedure)  01/03/13-01/05/13

## Monitoring and Review

Please indicate what processes/actions will be put in place to keep this 'activity' under review.

Action	Accountability	Timeframe
Use recent equality monitoring guidance to embed appropriate monitoring in Complaints process	Corporate Complaints Team	01/03/13-01/05/13

### Sign off and Scrutiny

Signed off as complete by: Vanessa Lucas	Date: 22-01-13
<p>Senior level sign off:</p>  <p>Chief Operating Officer</p>	Date: 23-01-13
<p>Name of relevant Portfolio Holder/Cabinet Member:</p> <p>I confirm that I have examined sufficient information and understood the potential impact of the proposal. I am in agreement with the proposed mitigating actions and confirm that I have had due regard to the needs set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.</p>	
<p>Signed by Portfolio Holder/Cabinet Member:</p> 	Date: 23 January 2013
Assessment published alongside cabinet report	Date: 29.1.2013