

Appendix A

Issues raised by the Equalities Quality Assurance Meeting on the Equalities Impact Assessment of the Procurement Strategy

<i>Issue raised by Quality Assurance Meeting</i>	<i>Comments in response</i>	<i>Feedback from Equalities team</i>	<i>Amendment to Procurement Strategy</i>
<p>Sections A1 & A6</p> <p>The panel had concerns about the last line of section A1. (Service managers assess the potential impact on equalities at the start of any procurement project with an estimated value above Level 2 or where equalities is likely to be a consideration. Where necessary a suitable plan of action is undertaken.)</p> <p>They felt that it implied that the responsibility for ensuring that equality issues are embedded in procurement projects lies with the service managers involved. Clearly, service managers may not be familiar with equality issues, may not understand how their procurement projects might affect people, and may not make suitable provision.</p> <p>Would the procurement team be involved in checking that equality issues are considered in</p>	<p>The Council has adopted a decentralised model for procurement. Procurement occurs in each of the corporate areas, sometimes with the involvement of the Procurement Officer by request or on major projects, but often without his involvement. The Council has no plans to use a centralised procurement model.</p> <p>Service managers will be aware of equalities issues related to their service areas. Service managers are also the lead officers in individual procurement projects. Service managers are therefore the people with whom responsibility for ensuring that equalities issues are embedded in individual procurement projects does properly lie.</p> <p>The Procurement Strategy and</p>	<p>I agree with your response to sections A1 and A6. At the time of the Quality Assurance meeting, there was some confusion about the procurement model that the Council has adopted. Now that position has been clarified, I agree with you that service managers who are the lead officers for procurement projects should be the ones to embed equalities into the projects for which they are responsible - this will help deliver the message that everybody is responsible for delivering equalities at the Council and not just a handful of individuals or teams.</p>	<p>No change is required to either the Procurement Strategy or the Equality Impact Assessment of it.</p>

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procurement exercises?	Contract Regulations provide a framework for service managers to consider equalities issues in relation to individual procurement projects.		
<p>Section B1 & B6 In B1, you have identified that equality monitoring needs to take place as part of procurement, but you don't identify if and how we will commence such monitoring, and it does not appear in the Action Plan.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Also, in B6, the panel queried how we went about consulting with the other authorities, and whether the results of the consultation exercise influenced our strategy.</p>	<p>Equality monitoring had already been provided for, before the Equalities Impact Assessment was done, by changes made to both the Procurement Strategy and Contract Regulations, to the effect that monitoring will take place as part of relevant individual procurement exercises.</p> <p>Equality monitoring does not therefore need to appear in the Action Plan.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Discussions were held with equalities and procurement officers at the other authorities, together with reviews of relevant equalities and procurement documents, to see how those authorities had incorporated equalities considerations within their procurement strategies and processes.</p> <p>This improved understanding and provided guidance and direction</p>	<p>I think this links into the above - service managers would be responsible for equalities monitoring when it comes to individual procurement projects. We are in the process of devising a corporate equalities monitoring form, which could prove useful for service managers and ensure consistency across the Council</p>	<p>No change is required to either the Procurement Strategy or the Equality Impact Assessment of it.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>The comments have been added to the Equality Impact Assessment.</p> <p>No change is required to the Procurement Strategy.</p>

<i>Issue raised by Quality Assurance Meeting</i>	<i>Comments in response</i>	<i>Feedback from Equalities team</i>	<i>Amendment to Procurement Strategy</i>
	with regard to the general approach to equalities and how equalities considerations should be incorporated within the Procurement Strategy and Contract Regulations.		
<p>Section C The panel generally felt that the impacts described in section C were not made sufficiently relevant to procurement. i.e. in the Disability section, how does the procurement strategy help to eliminate disability-related harassment, and how does it encourage participation by disabled people in public life? Another example is in the Gender section - how does procurement eliminate unlawful discrimination, and how does the Equal Pay Act link in?</p> <p>This applies across the whole of section C. It may be that you still feel these elements are relevant, but if that is the case, then they need to be specifically linked into the procurement strategy so those links are clear to the public.</p>	<p>The Procurement Strategy and Contract Regulations require service managers to have regard to equalities considerations in relevant individual procurement exercises, including, for example, inserting terms and conditions relating to equality and diversity into pre-qualification questionnaires and contracts, as appropriate, and expecting relevant suppliers and contractors to complete an equalities questionnaire.</p> <p>However, it is considered that the Procurement Strategy could be strengthened by the addition of a paragraph regarding expectations of suppliers and contractors (see 'Amendment to Procurement Strategy' column).</p>	I agree with the statement that you have produced.	<p>The following text will be added to the Procurement Strategy as a new paragraph 4.6.3 (the previous 4.6.3 becoming 4.6.4):</p> <p>The Council expects suppliers and contractors to meet the Council's standards and requirements on equality. This will be tested by questions in tender and quotation documents about the elimination of unlawful discrimination and harassment and promotion of equality of opportunity on the grounds of gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or faith. The questions will cover policies, practices, treatment, pay and conditions.</p>