

## Worcestershire County Council Equality Impact Assessment Simplified Desktop Screening

This exercise is not an Equality Impact Assessment. It is a simplified desktop exercise designed to establish if there is a need to carry out a full assessment.

<b>Part One:</b> basic information needed to identify the policy/function and to prepare for the screening.		
1.1	Directorate and Section/Unit.	Environmental Services Dept. Trading Standards Service
1.2	Title or brief description of the policy/function being screened.	Consumer Advice
1.3	To which section of the Directorate or Corporate "business/service plan" does this relate?	Trading Standards Advice & Support Unit
1.4	Are there any related policies/functions? If so what are they?	Consumer advice policy and service request procedures. Receipt of incoming requests primarily via Consumer Direct.
1.5	Screening carried out by	Chris Phillips
1.6	Date of screening	7/12/06
1.7	What is the policy or function trying to achieve?	To provide Worcestershire residents with the information and knowledge they need relating to resolve consumer-related problems e.g. contractual issues relating to the purchase of goods or services. Where necessary e.g. where the consumer is considered to be 'vulnerable', action will be taken to resolve the matter on behalf of the consumer through direct intervention with the trader.
1.8	What are the specific outcome measurers?	Resolution of justified consumer complaints.
1.9	Who is formally responsible for ensuring the delivery of this policy/function?	Steve Birch.
1.10	Who is responsible for leading the delivery if different from 1.9?	Chris Phillips
1.11	Are there any priorities within this policy/function? If so what are they?	Priority given to vulnerable people in relation to direct intervention.
1.12	Has any consultation, explicitly on the policy/function, taken place? If so who was consulted and when?	No consultation has taken place on the policy.
1.13	Is equality monitoring in place for this policy/function?	Monitoring is carried out continuously. Satisfaction survey forms are sent to the consumer one month after the complaint is closed. The survey form includes questions to monitor ethnicity and gender of the complainant.

**Part two:** the test to see if further action is required. For the purpose of this exercise concentrate on the impact on people of differing race, sex, disability, age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

		Yes	No	Details
2.1	Is there any way in which the policy/function is directly discriminatory or in breach of the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy?		No	<p>No direct discrimination as consumer advice is available to any person who contacts Consumer Direct or otherwise contacts the Trading Standards Service. Consumers referred to Worcestershire Trading Standards who live outside this county would be referred to their own Trading Standards Service, unless a purchase was made within the county.</p> <p>Once contact had been made, problems such as language differences could be resolved using Ethnic Access Link. Officers would visit people with disabilities that prevented them being able to get to the office where personal meetings were necessary. Communication is possible via telephone or e-mail in order to ensure people with vision or hearing impairments can access the service.</p>
2.2	Are there any barriers to people from minority groups getting the full benefit of this policy/function which have not been resolved as part of the policy/function?		No	<p>Access to the service is primarily by way of a referral from Consumer Direct, which is a telephone call centre, although it also has an Internet web site. The Trading Standards Service will also take complaints/enquiries made directly through personal callers to the office, letter or e-mail via the service's web site.</p> <p>It is possible that the service is less accessible to people who cannot speak English well or those who cannot read or write English. There may be cultural barriers that prevent people from some ethnic groups from wanting to approach what may be viewed as an enforcement body.</p> <p>Data from the satisfaction surveys, however, indicates that there are slightly more women accessing the service than men and a small number of people who could be considered to be from ethnic minorities. This latter figure is above the 2.5% of ethnic minorities recorded as residing within Worcestershire.</p> <p>Information is available on our website to people with hearing difficulties who cannot use the telephone.</p> <p>Information is available by telephone for those with sight impairment.</p> <p>Since there is no direct evidence to show any detriment, consultation will be undertaken in the near future.</p>

2.3	Are there any other ways the policy/function could unintentionally deliver poorer quality outcomes for individuals because they were members of a minority group?		No	Once contact had been made the outcome would depend on the facts or whether it fell into the remit of the service, not the nature of the minority group.
2.4	Could people from minority groups reasonably believe that they would be likely to get poorer benefits from the policy/function?		No	Any belief that they may get poorer benefits would have to come from preconceptions from past experience with other services, rather than any contact with the service.
		↓	→ If the answer to any of these questions is yes or “could be yes” then you <b>must</b> take action. If the issue is straightforward remedy it <b>now</b> so the answer changes to no. If it cannot be remedied now or there are outstanding issues you should go on to a full EIA.	