

Revised 26/01/2017

Equality Monitoring

Introduction

It is impossible to know if we are delivering services to people and groups who need them most if we have no way of measuring who is using them. Knowing who is using services (and who is not) gives us vital intelligence that can feed back into service planning and resource allocation. Targeting services correctly has become even more important as overall resources grow scarcer.

Equalities monitoring is not an end in itself but a powerful tool. The Council already carries out employment equalities monitoring in terms of Race, Disability, Gender and Age. Some services already monitor in these areas.

Proportionate monitoring helps to provide the information to enable the Council to look at the diversity of the workforce and see how this reflects the population. This kind of monitoring looks at several things e.g. the proportion of people from particular groups, for instance, younger versus older people are applying for jobs, and which age groups might be more successful at gaining employment.

Asking for personal information is common in today's society, employees and service users can be assured that the Council uses this information to compile statistical reports; Equalities Monitoring is about identifying patterns and trends, not individuals. A useful guide (What's it got to do with you?) about equalities monitoring is available from [Stonewall Scotland's website](#); an easy read version is also available.

Legal Changes on Employment Monitoring

From May 27th 2012 the Council and other listed bodies are required by the Specific Equality duties in Scotland under the Equality Act 2010 to expand the range of 'protected characteristics' they monitor in terms of employment to:-

Race	Sex
Disability	Sexual Orientation
Age	Belief & Religion
Gender Re Assignment	Pregnancy/Maternity

A number of public (e.g. the Scottish Government), private and voluntary sector employers already monitor on employment for most of the areas above.

Service Monitoring

'To have an equality policy without (ethnic) monitoring is like aiming for good financial management without keeping financial records'

(Commission for Racial Equality website, 2007)

Though there is no legal requirement to carry out service monitoring, there are sound business and ethical reasons (effectiveness and fairness) to do so. The Council is committed to proportionate monitoring; this is line with the Equality and Human Rights Commission's recommendations for best practice.

A number of WDCCP organisations equality monitor some of the services they provide as do some voluntary sector organisations involved in Community planning programmes.

Confidentiality and data protection

Service monitoring information gathered should be anonymised. It should be separate from any other details held on file about an individual. People should be able to return forms completely anonymously. You may want to think about allowing people to fill the form in and put it in a separate box, rather than handing it to a staff member. Or issuing forms with a freepost envelope. Experience suggests that guaranteeing and actually ensuring anonymity greatly increases the completion rate of monitoring forms. Monitoring forms should state why the data is being collected and how it will be used.

Use of data

It is counter productive to carry out monitoring and not analyse and use the data made available; such data can be form an important part of EIA and other aspects of service planning and review, and performance monitoring.

Partnerships working

Public sector partners, like West Dunbartonshire Community Planning partnership (WDCCP) are responsible for meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the EA within their partnership role.

In practice, this means that initiatives or joint work conducted under the remit of the Community Planning Partnership will be subject to the requirements of the equality duties.

Advice and Support

You can address enquires to policy development officer based in the community planning and policy team community.planning@west-dunbarton.gov.uk