

Leicestershire County Council's

Equality Monitoring Policy

May 2008

Introduction and purpose

The County Council is committed to ensuring that we are operating fairly and equitably in both our employment practices and service delivery. We will tackle all forms of discrimination and to promote equality and diversity at every opportunity.

Equality monitoring is good practice and is central to the principle of ensuring continuous improvement and it is a vital part of the effective performance management of our organisation. It can tell us about our staff and service users and their potential needs.

It can tell us which groups are using our services and how satisfied they are with them. This data can then be used to:

- highlight possible inequalities;
- investigate their underlying causes; and
- remove any unfairness or disadvantage.

What is equality monitoring?

Equality monitoring is:

- a process that is used to collect, store and analyse data about the ethnic background, gender, age, religion or belief, disability and sexual orientation of service users or potential service users, employees or potential employees.
- a basis for setting objectives and targets by providing a baseline on which to measure change.

Why collect and analyse equality monitoring information?

- **to ensure our policies are effective** – unless we know who is, and more importantly who isn't, using or services and what people think of them, we cannot tell if we are achieving our aims of providing services that are appropriate and accessible to everyone.
- **to assist service planning** – monitoring is vital for planning, targeting and measuring development in service provision. It can show inefficiencies in the way we organise services and indicate new opportunities to meet people's needs.
- **to value diversity** – ensuring our workforce reflects the community it serves is central to the development of services that respond to local needs.
- **to comply with the law** – there is a legal duty to take account of equality issues when planning and delivering services and developing policies.
- **to meet the criteria for accessing financial and other resources from external sources** – many funding organisations now require assurance from bidders that they meet equalities and diversity requirements and standards.
- **to provide information for inspections** – the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and Local Area Agreement (LAA), Joint Area Review (JAR) and Commission for

Social Care Inspection (CSCi) inspections all want to know how well we're meeting the needs of all sections of our community, and want evidence to prove it.

- **to improve service quality** – challenging inequality will improve the quality of our services because it ensures we are delivering our services in the most appropriate way to meet the needs of all Leicestershire residents.
- **to achieve standards** – we are obliged to provide information for Best Value and Audit Commission Performance Indicators about the provision of services. It is therefore vital that equality monitoring is embedded in our performance management framework.

Things to consider prior to implementing equality monitoring:

The first and most important question to ask is what is it that we are looking to find out or prove with the information being collected. Do we have specific questions that need answering or are you simply looking to compare responses to questions by different equality groups?

The following questions may prove useful if still undecided about monitoring for equality:

- What information will be useful and will lead to improvements in service planning for different sections of the community?
- What will the information tell us about our users and about our service?
- How often can the data be collected and analysed?
- What methods will be used to collect the information?
- What resources are available for this work?
- Will the data help to set meaningful equalities targets?

We have a duty, under the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998, to protect personal information. It is important that the data collected is kept confidential and secure and that it is only used for the purpose for which it was collected. It will need to be made explicit to the people responding to equality monitoring questions that we abide by the rules of the DPA and will only use the information for the purpose it has been collected. Guidance has been produced for staff and can be found on CIS.

Monitoring questions – what to use and when?

It is imperative that equality monitoring information is only gathered if it is going to be analysed and used to inform service design or delivery and/or policy development.

Equality monitoring should become part of an existing process whenever possible. The frequency of monitoring will vary depending on what's being monitored and can be:

- a snapshot - a one off exercise;
- periodical, regular monitoring; or
- ongoing, continuous monitoring with regular reviews.

Equalities monitoring questions should be asked to individuals when consulting on personal opinions or experiences to gather information about ownership and workforce profile. Suggested wording of equality monitoring questions are at Appendix 1.

The level of personal detail required from respondents will vary depending on the purpose of the monitoring. It will also not be appropriate or possible to monitor all services and policies – services must determine what should be monitored. However, it is good practice and recommended by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Equality Standard to monitor the six equality ‘strands’:

- age
- gender
- disability
- ethnicity
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation

The following statement, or something similar, should precede all equality monitoring questions:

Leicestershire County Council is committed to ensuring that our services, policies and practices are free from discrimination and prejudice and that they meet the needs of all sections of the community.

To enable us to check that what we are providing is fair and effective, we would be grateful if you would answer the questions below. You are under no obligation to provide the information requested, but it would help us greatly if you did.

At Appendix 1 there are three examples ‘About you’ (equality monitoring questions) sections - a short version, a standard version and a detailed version. These examples are only illustrative and the choice of questions used in individual research projects or surveys should be determined on a case by case basis according to the consultation purpose. At Appendix 2 is a menu of monitoring questions and a wider range of types and formats of questions to choose from.

The type and level of data analysis required will also help you to identify whether you need to ask the shortened, standard or more detailed version of the equality monitoring questions.

For example, some simple event evaluation forms may only require a basic set of equality monitoring questions. Also, if it is anticipated that only a very small number of responses will be achieved which would only allow a very limited interrogation of the data by demographic categories, then a simple version may also suffice here. If you are unsure about which equality monitoring questions to ask, please speak to one of the contacts listed at the end of this policy.

If however, the consultation being carried out is specifically designed to further understanding of specific needs of communities of interest then a more detailed set of monitoring questions would be required to fully answer the research questions being posed. More detailed monitoring questions would also be necessary if it was likely that the service being provided, for which the consultation was about, was experienced or accessed differently by people according to their age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion or belief, and sexuality.

It is important to note though that the usefulness of the monitoring information gathered would still be dependent on being able to get a sufficient number of replies for the results to be meaningful. If a sufficient sample of responses is not possible, other means of consultation (other than a questionnaire) may be more appropriate for gathering the information required, such as focus groups or interviews. The Council’s Consultation Toolkit provides more information on the types of consultation and engagement methods available.

In most cases it is not desirable for the length and number of monitoring questions to be greater than the main body of the survey questionnaire. There will be exceptions to this rule if, for example, the questions being asked were crucial to service planning or policy development. An example of this might be where options are being presented to individuals on budget or service priorities.

Finally, it is about tailoring your monitoring so it is fit for purpose. As a minimum questions should be asked about gender, age, disability and ethnicity. Questions should also be asked about religion or belief and sexual orientation if it is relevant to collect this data. In some cases the country of birth should also be recorded. The questions to ask will be determined by the purpose of the consultation and what the results will be used to inform.

Acting on the results of equality monitoring:

It is essential that where information is gathered, it is analysed, and that the analysis is used to inform policy development or to improve practice.

It will be important for further investigation and/or consultation to be undertaken to try to establish why if the data collected reveals that:

- a service is not being used equitably by the whole community; or
- there is under-representation of a particular group in a consultation exercise or responses to a survey.

Equality monitoring is part of all fundamental performance reviews, service planning and reporting processes. Service areas will need to report quarterly on how they are embedding equality objectives and performance indicators in service plans.

For further information or advice please contact:

Jo Miller
Research Manager
Tel: 0116 305 7341
Email: jomiller@leics.gov.uk

Andy Brown
Team leader – Performance &
Improvement
Tel: 0116 305 6096
Email: abrown@leics.gov.uk

Sally Edwards
Policy Manager – Equality &
Diversity
Tel: 0116 305 7446
Email: saedwards@leics.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Short Version - About you - Example

Gender

Q1 Are you male or female?

Male

Female.....

Age

Q2 What was your age on your last birthday? Please write in below:

Health, illness and disability

Q3a Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity?

Yes

No.....

Ethnicity

Q4 What is your ethnic group? Please tick one box only

White

Mixed (e.g. White and Asian).....

Asian or Asian British.....

Black or Black British.....

Other ethnic group.....

Standard Version - About you - Example

Gender

Q1 Are you male or female?

Male

Female.....

Age

Q2 What was your age on your last birthday? Please write in below:

OR

Q2 How old are you? (Example summary of standard Census age breaks - see the question menu for full list of bandings)

Under 16.....

16-19

20-29

30-44

45-59

60-74

75 and over.....

Health, illness and disability

Q3a Do you have any of the following long-standing conditions? Please include problems which are due to old age. Please tick all boxes that apply.

Deafness or severe hearing impairment

Blindness or severe visual impairment

A condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, lifting or carrying

A learning difficulty.....

A long-standing psychological or emotional condition

Other, including any long-standing illness

No, I do not have a long-standing condition.....

Q3b Does a long-standing health problem or disability mean you have substantial difficulties doing day-to-day activities? Please include problems which are due to old age.

Yes

No.....

Ethnicity, Identity and Religion

Q4 What is your ethnic group? Please choose one section from a) to e) and then tick one box only to show your ethnic group
(Simpler version without space to write in - less time consuming to process)

a) White

English.....

Other British

Irish.....

Any other White background

b) Mixed

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any other Mixed background

c) Asian or Asian British

Indian.....

Pakistani.....

Bangladeshi.....

Chinese

Any other Asian background

d) Black or Black British

Caribbean.....

African

Any other Black background.....

e) Other Ethnic Group

Arab.....

Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller

Any other

Q5 What is your religion? Please tick one box only

None

Christian (all denominations)

Buddhist.....

Hindu

Jewish.....

Muslim

Sikh

Any other religion.....

Detailed Version - About you - Example

Gender

Q1 Are you male or female?

Male

Female.....

Age

Q2 What was your age on your last birthday? Please write in below:

Health, illness and disability

Q3a Do you have any of the following long-standing conditions? Please include problems which are due to old age. Please tick all boxes that apply.

Deafness or severe hearing impairment

Blindness or severe visual impairment

A condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, lifting or carrying

A learning difficulty.....

A long-standing psychological or emotional condition

Other, including any long-standing illness

No, I do not have a long-standing condition.....

Q3b Does a long-standing health problem or disability mean you have substantial difficulties doing day-to-day activities? Please include problems which are due to old age.

Yes

No.....

Ethnicity, Identity and Religion

Q4 **What is your ethnic group?** Please choose one section from a) to e) and then tick one box only to show your ethnic group
(Leave space to write in 'other' if you anticipate you will get any useful additional info)

a) White

- English.....
- Other British
- Irish.....
- Any other White background
(please tick and specify below).....

b) Mixed

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other Mixed background
(please tick and specify below).....

c) Asian or Asian British

- Indian.....
- Pakistani.....
- Bangladeshi.....
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background
(please tick and specify below).....

d) Black or Black British

- Caribbean.....
- African
- Any other Black background
(please tick and specify below).....

e) Other Ethnic Group

- Arab.....
- Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller
- Any other (please tick and specify
below).....

Q5 What is your country of birth?

- England
- Wales.....
- Scotland.....
- Northern Ireland.....
- Republic of Ireland.....
- Elsewhere (please tick and write in the current name of the country below)

Q6 What is your religion? Please tick one box only

- None
- Christian (all denominations)
- Buddhist.....
- Hindu
- Jewish.....
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Any other religion (please tick and write in below).....

Sexual Orientation

Many people face discrimination because of their sexual orientation and for this reason we have decided to ask this monitoring question. You do not have to answer it but we would be grateful if you could tick the box next to the category which describes your sexual orientation:

Q7 What is your sexual orientation

- Bi-sexual.....
- Gay
- Heterosexual
- Lesbian.....
- Other (please tick and specify below).....

Appendix 2 - 'Menu' of Equalities Monitoring Questions

Gender Choose one of the options below:

Q1 What is your sex?

Male

OR

Female.....

Q2 Are you male or female?

Male

Female.....

Age Choose one of the options below:

Q3 What was your age on your last birthday? Please write in below:

OR

Q4 What is your date of birth? Please write in below:

(Useful for example if surveying school children to determine year group - more difficult to input and analyse so avoid unless necessary)

OR

Q5 How old are you?

(Standard Census age breaks - summarise to fit the research purpose)

0-4.....

5-7.....

8-9.....

10-14.....

15.....

16-17.....

18-19.....

20-24.....

25-29.....

30-44.....

45-59.....

60-64.....

65-74.....

75-84.....

85-89.....

90 and over....

How old are you? (Example summary of standard Census age breaks)

Under 16

16-19.....

20-29.....

30-44.....

45-59.....

60-74.....

75 and over....

Health, illness and disability Choose one of the options below:

Q6 The Disability Act (1995) defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Yes

No.....

OR

Q7a Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity?

Yes

No.....

Q7b If yes, does this illness or disability limit your activities in any way?

Yes

No.....

Note: Always use parts (a) and (b) together

OR

Q8a Do you have any of the following long-standing conditions? Please include problems which are due to old age. Please tick all boxes that apply.

Deafness or severe hearing impairment

Blindness or severe visual impairment

A condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, lifting or carrying.....

A learning difficulty.....

A long-standing psychological or emotional condition

Other, including any long-standing illness

No, I do not have a long-standing condition.....

Q8b Does a long-standing health problem or disability mean you have substantial difficulties doing day-to-day activities? Please include problems which are due to old age.

Yes

No.....

Note: Always use parts (a) and (b) together

Ethnicity

Choose one of the options below:

Q9 **What is your ethnic group?** Please choose one section from a) to e) and then tick one box only to show your ethnic group
(Leave space to write in 'other' if you anticipate you will get any useful additional info)

a) White

English.....

Other British

Irish.....

Any other White background
(please tick and specify below).....

b) Mixed

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any other Mixed background
(please tick and specify below).....

c) Asian or Asian British

Indian.....

Pakistani.....

Bangladeshi.....

Chinese

Any other Asian background
(please tick and specify below).....

d) Black or Black British

Caribbean.....

African

Any other Black background
(please tick and specify below).....

e) Other Ethnic Group

Arab.....

Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller

Any other (please tick and specify
below).....

OR

Q10 **What is your ethnic group?** Please choose one section from a) to e) and then tick one box only to show your ethnic group
(Simpler version without space to write in - less time consuming to process)

a) White

- English.....
- Other British
- Irish.....
- Any other White background

d) Black or Black British

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other Black background.....

b) Mixed

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other Mixed background

e) Other Ethnic Group

- Arab.....
- Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller
- Any other

c) Asian or Asian British

- Indian.....
- Pakistani.....
- Bangladeshi.....
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background

OR

Q11 **What is your ethnic group?** Please tick one box only
(Simplest coded version)

- White
- Mixed
- Asian or Asian British.....
- Black or Black British.....
- Other ethnic group.....

OR

Q12 **How would you describe your ethnicity? Please write in below**
(Open-ended - code to categories in Q10 as near as possible - avoid using if possible as difficult to interpret, however it can be useful if for your research purpose you think the coded versions above are too restrictive)

Country of Birth

Q13 What is your country of birth?

(This question may be useful for exploring views from respondents from migrant communities especially from Europe who may not be identified by an ethnicity question alone)

- England
- Wales.....
- Scotland.....
- Northern Ireland.....
- Republic of Ireland.....
- Elsewhere (please tick and write in the current name of the country below) ..

Religion

Q14 What is your religion? Please tick one box only

- None
- Christian (all denominations)
- Buddhist.....
- Hindu
- Jewish.....
- Muslim
- Sikh.....
- Any other religion (please tick and write in below).....

Sexual Orientation

Many people face discrimination because of their sexual orientation and for this reason we have decided to ask this monitoring question. You do not have to answer it but we would be grateful if you could tick the box next to the category which describes your sexual orientation:

Q15 What is your sexual orientation

- Bi-sexual.....
- Gay.....
- Heterosexual
- Lesbian.....
- Other (please tick and specify below).....