

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCRUTINY PROGRAMME BOARD

28 FEBRUARY 2012

SUBJECT:	EQUALITY AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	<i>DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT</i>
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This summary report (Appendix 1) is at the request of members at the last Scrutiny Programme Board held on 4 January 2012. The report summarises the CfPS Policy Briefing 'Equality Impact Assessments.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are requested to note the report.

3.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

3.1 As part of the Equality Duty 2010 and further The Public Sector Equality Duty which came into full force in April 2011, the Council has a legal requirement to give due regard to the impact of its policies and decisions on people who share protected characteristics (race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion / belief, gender re-assignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity).

3.2 As part of the Independent Corporate Governance Review report, AKA highlighted 'shortfalls in the way the Council evaluated the impact of its policies both prior to execution and in response to evidence about the impact'. Subsequently the report identified 'Equalities' as an area for improvement.

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

4.1 As outlined in 3.2 above.

4.2 The Council failing to meet legal requirements.

4.3 The Council open to reputational risk.

4.4 The Council open to legal challenge.

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 None

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

7.1 None

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

8.1 None

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 By not formally adopting Equality Impact Assessments as the Council's process for giving due regard to the impact of its policies and decisions, the Council is open to legal challenge.

9.2 The Council constitution will need reviewing to take account of the new legislation.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 As part of the Equality Duty 2010, which came into full force in April 2011, the Council has a legal requirement to give due regard to the impact of its policies and decisions on people who share protected characteristics (race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion / belief, gender re-assignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity).

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Equality Impact Assessments can and should inform planning and community safety policies and decisions.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Summary report on CfPS Policy Briefing 'Equality Impact Assessment'

APPENDIX 2

Equality Impact Toolkit (new version February 2012)