

Below is a summary of the new documents for letting and monitoring of Equalities and Diversity in all Council procurement activity:

**Integrating Equality and Diversity into Procurement**

In accordance with The Corporate Equality Policy and Strategy

**1. Guidance for Procurement Officers:**

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## 2. Guidance for Contractors and Suppliers

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	Templates for Contractors
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7.	Sample Harassment Complaints Procedure (for businesses with more resources)

### 4. Frequently Asked Questions

#### 1. Why do I or my company need to take equality into account?

Suppliers providing services to, or on behalf of Wirral Council must carry out their duties in accordance with legislation governing race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation & religion. Failure to comply with the Integrating Equality into Procurement policy could make the Authority, and in some cases, individuals, liable to legal action and prevent suppliers from being allowed to tender for Wirral Council services and works.

#### 2. What questions will I or my company be asked?

The questions detailed in the Equalities Questionnaire will be asked at the pre-qualification stage, when external providers are invited to provide relevant details with regard to their approach to equality and diversity issues.

#### 3. Do I or my company have to answer all the questions?

At the pre-qualification stage the contract will have been deemed of high, medium or low relevance to equality. If the contract is deemed low you will only be required to complete Section A of the Equalities Questionnaire. If the contract is deemed of a medium or high relevance to equality you will be required to complete both Section A and Section B of the Equalities Questionnaire. It will be important to try and answer all the questions.

#### 4. We do not have a written equality policy. Does this mean we cannot be included in the tendering process?

Wirral Council's approach is to strongly encourage potential suppliers to demonstrate a commitment to equalities. We recognise that a small firm may not have written equality policies, and other companies who may have formal policies may not refer to it in recruitment processes. This will not automatically exclude them from selection.

**5. How will this affect the contract clauses?**

Wirral Council's contract clauses undergo a regular review to ensure they remain consistent with legislation. A standard clause on equality has been included in all contracts for many years. This approach will not change.

A copy of the standard clause covering equality can be found in the Comprehensive Equality Policy section of Wirral Council's website at [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)

**6. How will this framework affect the contracts' whose value equals or exceeds the European Union contract thresholds?**

If the value of the contract exceeds EU thresholds, EU directives stipulate the questions that can be asked at pre-qualification stage. However, the Authority will make explicit in the OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union) notices for contracts that the successful contractor will be required to comply with additional questions pertaining to equality.

**7. Why, if a contract is over £1 million, does it have to be considered of high relevance to equality?**

Spending £1 million on a particular contract is a significant amount of financial resources for Wirral Council to commit. Wirral Council is keen to ensure that any contract with significant financial implications for a service, function or project that affects the Borough does not discriminate against particular sections of the community, either through the nature of the project or through erroneous employment practices. Setting a financial limit is also consistent with other equality assessments and practices within the Council.