

GET's Approach to Equality & Diversity for 2015/16

GET understands that Equality and Diversity (E&D) should be embedded into the directorate's business and project activity, in order to fulfil KCC's corporate E&D objectives. As KCC moves towards becoming a strategic commissioning authority, GET will embed Equality and Diversity into every aspect of the Commissioning Framework so that understanding customers' E&D needs and planning the necessary responses becomes an integral part of putting the customer at the heart of our service delivery. Therefore GET will adopt the following approach:

What will we focus on? The Directorate Business Plan

We will use the priorities and projects detailed in GET's 2015/16 business plan as our focus for working towards KCC's E&D objectives. The Customer Service Review is one such project within the business plan that is key to embedding E&D within our business, and as such it will include the following E&D-focused activity:

- A review of the communications channels used and information provided (internally and externally) to identify if it is accessible, usable and follows KCC accessible information guidelines.
- Identifying appropriate customer intelligence required to inform service design and delivery for customers and potential customers with protected characteristics.
- Determine if the services being examined within the Review cater appropriately to needs of people with protected characteristics, including learning from customer feedback.

The Review focuses on selected services within GET but its recommendations and actions will have an impact across the directorate.

How will we focus on it? The Commissioning Framework

We will ensure that the appropriate activity takes place to ensure Equality and Diversity issues are considered, planned for and implemented as an integral part of the Analyse, Plan, Do and Review cycle, not in addition to it. Guidance is currently being developed to assist commissioners, project managers and service deliverers to set out the type of E&D activity they should consider at each stage of the commissioning cycle (Appendix A).

How will we know we're making a difference? The GET Equality Group

The directorate's Equality Group will take a proactive role in overseeing GET's progress towards meeting KCC's corporate objectives and embedding E&D activity in its business. It has increased the frequency of its meetings to six-weekly. During the meetings, the group will call in selected priority projects listed in the business plan and consider how the project is incorporating E&D into project analysis, planning, delivery and review. As part of this, they will call in Equality Impact Assessments, and challenge if necessary to ensure they are robust and that they sufficiently assess impact of proposed commissioning or service changes on the customer groups with protected characteristics. Through these six-weekly meetings, the GET Equalities Group will build the evidence needed to demonstrate progress against KCC's corporate E&D objectives through the Annual Equality & Diversity Report for our Cabinet Committees.

In order to facilitate our approach, we will:

- Undertake Equality Impact Assessments for our major projects, policy changes and our service review/redesign/transition activities and share, and where required address, the findings to ensure that none of the nine protected characteristics are adversely affected or that sufficient mitigation has been provided.
- Maintain appropriately trained staff to ensure we meet our Equalities duties efficiently and effectively – this will include making sure that staff have the understanding and skills to carry out EIAs and know how to successfully identify and analyse data to inform the EIA process. As a minimum, all staff will undertake the appropriate E&D e-learning modules, and we will explore additional learning and development opportunities to strengthen the above-mentioned skills.

APPENDIX A

Suggestions for how we can ensure that we consider equality throughout the commissioning cycle

(In development by Akua Agyepong, Olivia Crill & Karla Phillips)

Commissioning Framework	Questions	Tools	Activity/Outputs
Analyse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At a population level, what do we know about current and future users of this service? What are the protected characteristics of current and future service users? What are the behaviours of different resident groups and how does this affect how they use the service? How are residents with different protected characteristics likely to be impacted by the service proposed? Have you used this analysis to inform the development of the Equalities Impact Assessment (screening and full assessment if necessary)? 	<p>EqIA – Screening</p> <p>EqIA – Assessment/ analysis</p> <p>Population data</p> <p>Service data</p> <p>Existing business plans</p> <p>Project proposals</p> <p>Existing service impact assessments</p>	<p>Adverse impact for protected characteristics are identified or discounted.</p> <p>Cost implications identified</p> <p>Opportunity for innovation</p> <p>Potential groups to engage are identified</p> <p>Evidence of due regard duty for decision making and service delivery</p> <p>Evaluation framework agreed</p>
Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What actions have come out of your analysis and who will be responsible? How does the design of the service need to be adjusted to reduce any negative impact on groups with protected characteristics? How will you ensure that you are involving people who will be affected by your proposals in the design of the service? What opportunities are there for increasing social value to all residents, in particular groups with protected characteristics? What will be the responsibility of the service provider to design and deliver the service to reduce any negative impacts? Are these plans reflected in the development of the Equalities Impact Assessment? 	<p>EQIA – Assessment/ Analysis</p> <p>EQIA- Action Plan</p> <p>Project plan framework</p>	<p>Activity to address direct indirect discrimination addressed</p> <p>Opportunities to advance are identified</p> <p>Opportunities to foster good relations are identified</p> <p>Performance criteria for delivery of equality elements is identified</p> <p>Evidence of due regard duty for decision making and service delivery</p>

<p>Do</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you considered how you will ensure that service users involved in the procurement process are representative? • Can you identify any industry standards that are relevant to this service which require the provider to fulfil equality outcomes? • How should performance measures of the service/contract be designed to ensure that quality outcomes are delivered at the point of delivery? • Deliver service • Collect relevant equality information which will support the review process 	<p>EqIA actions/ activity put into place/ implemented</p> <p>KCC Equality Policy framework</p>	<p>Evidence of due regard duty for decision making and service delivery</p>
<p>Review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What information do we have about the equality outcomes being achieved and usage of the service by different customer groups? • What do service users tell us about the impact of the service/s commissioned based on protected characteristics? • How are we ensuring that equality considerations are part of our future commissioning plans and decisions? • What evidence have we collected which will inform our future commissioning activity • Are our senior officers requiring evidence of equality analysis throughout the commissioning cycle? 	<p>EqIA – Action Plan</p> <p>Project plan framework</p> <p>Performance management framework</p>	<p>Services are judged against Performance criteria</p> <p>Evidence of impact and outcomes</p> <p>Evidence of due regard duty for decision making and service delivery</p>