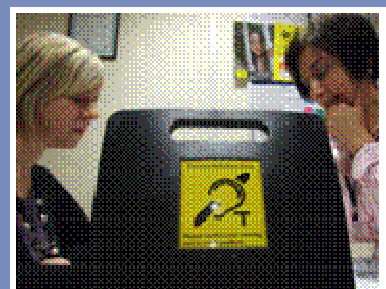


Epping Forest District Council

Equality Monitoring Policy and Guidance 2012



Contents



1. Introduction	3
2. What is equality monitoring?	4
3. How is it relevant to our services?	4-5
4. The Council's approach to equality monitoring	6
5. What we monitor	6-12
6. Additional monitoring	13
7. Equality Monitoring form	14-16
8. Which activities do we monitor?	16-17
9. When monitoring should take place	18
10. Planning and preparation	19
11. The Equality Monitoring path	20
12. Equality monitoring planning exercise: Example	21-22
13. Complying with the Data Protection Act	23
14. Responsibility	24
15. More information	24-25
16. Contact us about equality...	25

1. Introduction

The Council is committed to delivering equality for its service users and employees and therefore equality is an integral part of its work. Ensuring that we consider the needs of everyone who uses the Council's services or whom the authority employs, requires that we use information about our customers when planning and delivering services.

Whilst some information about our residents is available through statistical information or research by the government or other organisations, to help us to properly know the Council's customers and ensure that they are considered equally according to their needs, we need to gather additional data about our service users and potential customers, and use that data when making decisions about and providing services.

The Council has a history of monitoring the ethnicity, gender, disability, and age of our service users, and has had an Equality Monitoring Policy and Guidance in place since 2008.

The introduction of the Equality Act 2010 placed additional responsibilities on local authorities and thereby increased the relevance of equality monitoring data to our service planning and provision. The Act also extended the range of protected characteristics to:

age / disability / gender reassignment / marriage and civil partnership / pregnancy and maternity / race / religion or belief / sex / sexual orientation

These statutory developments together with best practice and the Council's equality ambitions, require that the Equality Monitoring Policy and guidance is reviewed. This policy therefore, replaces previous equality monitoring policies and guidance and should be read alongside the Council's Equality Policy 2011, the Equality in Employment Policy 2011, the Equality Scheme 2012-2016, and the Council's Equality Objectives for 2012-2016.

This Equality Monitoring Policy and Guidance sets out the Council's approach to equality monitoring to ensure that it:

- complies with legal requirements
- is proportionate and efficient
- is undertaken in a consistent way throughout the Council and to a high standard
- is integrated into service planning and improvement and the development and evaluation of policies
- produces useful information which is actually used to improve services and inform policy and decision making

It includes:

- guidance on what, when and how to monitor
- guidance on data use, sharing and protection

2. What is equality monitoring?

Equality monitoring is the collection, storage, analysis and use of data about the characteristics of the Council's residents, service users and employees or potential employees, to measure its equality performance and effectiveness. The results may show how the Council can improve or where resources should be targeted.

Equality monitoring is critical for the successful implementation of equality policies. Without monitoring, the adoption of any equality policy remains aspirational. Monitoring is a way of checking how well policies, procedures and practices are working, It can, therefore, be linked to policy development, implementation and evaluation.

3. How is it relevant to our services?

Legal relevance of equality monitoring

The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, and in the exercise of its functions, must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

'Advance equality of opportunity' means:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people
- encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

The broad purpose of this general equality duty is to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the day-to-day business of public authorities and to know how a function can affect different groups in different ways. It requires equality to be considered in decision making, in policy design, and in the delivery of services.

In order to comply with this duty and take the steps necessary to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics we need to know who our customers are in terms of the protected characteristics they have. Furthermore services which fully meet the needs of users are likely to be more cost effective and lead to greater customer satisfaction.

How is it relevant to our services? continued

Relevance of equality monitoring to employment

Equality monitoring of the Council's workforce and recruitment and selection activities can help to identify barriers to recruitment or career progression. It can provide evidence of the fairness and accessibility of the Council's recruitment, selection, and training practices and ensure working practices and environments do not discriminate against any particular group of employees.

Relevance of equality monitoring to Council policy

Equality monitoring is part of the evidence-base to inform policy and service development. Together with the results of equality analysis from Customer Impact Assessment, equality monitoring statistical data provides the basis for the consideration of equality implications and which is included in reports to the Council's Members as part of the Council's decision making processes.

Relevance of equality monitoring to service delivery

Equality monitoring can:

- provide evidence of gaps in service provision or under representation
- help to identify objectives, targets and outcomes for service provision
- provide evidence to demonstrate how services are meeting their equality duties
- help to shape and target services to deliver efficiency and value for money

The systematic collection and analysis of information is needed if decisions about changes to, reductions in, or withdrawal of services are to be justified. Monitoring can reveal inefficiencies in service delivery and highlight opportunities for improvement. In this way it can help justify actions and measure the impact of changes.

Relevance of equality monitoring to procurement, commissioning and de-commissioning

The Council retains its responsibility for equality when its public functions are contracted to other organisations. Indeed those whom we contract to deliver services on our behalf assume the Council's equality duties. Where relevant and in proportion to the subject matter of the contract, equality monitoring may need to be incorporated into the various stages of the procurement process as part of the equality considerations necessary to comply with the Council's equality duties.



4. The Council's approach to equality monitoring

The Council's approach to equality monitoring

Whilst statutory guidance for public bodies recommends all functions and services undertake equality monitoring, it is not necessary, practical or useful to monitor all equality groups or services all the time. In addition, different approaches to equality monitoring are needed for:

- recruitment and employee management
- customer satisfaction surveys
- personalised service interaction
- consultation and engagement activities

What we monitor is aligned with the protected characteristics identified by the Equality Act 2010. Therefore the characteristics listed under 5. What we monitor (below), are the minimum which should be considered for collection, subject to relevance to the work of the individual service area.

The importance of relevance to equality monitoring

Equality monitoring data will only be sought in relation to services and activities which are relevant to equality. This will ensure we comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 by only gathering that data for which we have a specific purpose. Using a targeted approach will also help to ensure efficiency by avoiding resources being channelled into unnecessary or excessive data collection activity.

Services and activities relevant to equality have been identified through a screening process undertaken as part of the Customer Impact Assessment system of equality analysis. For more information see *Which activities do we monitor?* on page 16

5. What we monitor

Age

The population is ageing, with the 2015 age projections showing a increase in the higher age bands and a relatively significant decrease in the age range of 35-44.

What we need to know to help us plan:

- what age band our customers fall into

The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from *adverse* discrimination for service users on the grounds of age. Therefore the legislation will not affect services for older people where age-based treatment is justified or beneficial, for example, free bus passes. The law will only stop age discrimination where it has negative or harmful consequences

What we monitor continued

Age continued

Age at the point of contacting the Council will be collected under the following age bands:

- 16 – 19
- 20 – 25
- 26 – 35
- 36 – 45
- 46 – 55
- 56 – 65
- 66 – 75
- 76 – 85
- 86+
- Prefer not to say



Some people may not wish to provide this information therefore the option of 'Prefer not to say' should always be included.

Disability

The 2001 census showed 30% of households in the district as reporting having at least one person with a limiting long-term illness, health problem or disability which limited their daily activities or the work they can do, including problems due to old age.

What we need to know to help us plan:

- if our customers have a disability
- if so, what type of disability they have

A person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental Impairment, and
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities

These words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months
- 'normal day-to-day activities' includes everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping

What we monitor continued

Disability continued

The categories of disability to be used are as follows:

Category	Examples
Physical	arthritis significantly affecting one's life'; repetitive strain disorders, chronic back problem
Sensory	sight impairment (but not if corrected by spectacles), hearing impairment, speech impairment
Learning	Down's syndrome, Autism or Aspergers
Mental Health	schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, clinical depression
Other	cancer, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, heart/circulation complaints, Crohn's disease, multiple sclerosis, severe facial disfigurement
Prefer not to say	

Some people may not wish to provide this information therefore the option of 'Prefer not to say' should always be included.



Please see pages 14-16 for our standard Equality Monitoring Form which includes required data protection statements to ensure fair data processing

Race or ethnicity

The district has one of the highest number of Black and Multi Ethnic (BME) (which is defined as anything other than white British) residents in Essex. It is estimated that over 10% of the residents of the district belong to BME groups. The district also has one of the largest traveller populations in Essex, (almost 15% of the total for the county).

What we need to know to help us plan:

- which ethnic or racial group do our customers most closely identify with

What we monitor continued

Race or ethnicity continued:

We will use the following racial or ethnic groups:

White

English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British Irish

Gypsy or Irish Traveller

Any other White background

Mixed / multiple ethnic groups

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background

Asian / Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Chinese

Sikh

Any other Asian background

Black / African / Caribbean / Black British

African

Caribbean

Any other Black / African / Caribbean background

Other ethnic groups

Arab

Any other ethnic group

Prefer not to say

Under the Equality Act 2010 race means colour, and nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.

Some people may not wish to provide this information therefore the option of 'Prefer not to say' should always be included

These racial and ethnic groups are in line with the Census 2011; and case law which states Sikh is a race.



What is the difference between race and ethnicity?

Whilst race and ethnicity share an ideology of common ancestry, race is associated with biology whilst ethnicity is associated with culture. Whilst you can only have one race, it is possible to have more than one ethnic affiliations. For example a person born in Korea to Korean parents but brought up by adoptive Italian parents in Italy and Ireland would be racially Asian, but could identify ethnically as Italian and/or Irish.

As ethnic and racial identities have changed considerably throughout history and commonly people do not see great distinctions between race and ethnicity in daily life, both terms have been included to offer the broadest range of expression of cultural identity.

What we monitor continued

Faith or belief

The 2001 Census indicated that our residents have a range of faiths including Christianity 72%, Judaism 3%, Islam 1%, Hinduism 1%, and Buddhism 0.5%. The Census also showed 14% of our residents as having no religion and a further 7% as not having stated their religion.

What we need to know to help us plan:

- which religion or belief our customers hold even if they are not currently practising

Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief and should in general affect your life choices or the way you live.

The following religions and beliefs will be used to collect data:

Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant, and all other Christian denominations)

Buddhist

Hindu

Jewish

Muslim

Quaker

Baha'i

Any other faith or religious belief

No faith or religious belief

Prefer not to say

Some people may not wish to provide this information therefore the option of 'Prefer not to say' should always be included.

Sikh is a race and would be gathered under race / ethnicity.

A person's religion or belief is personal and some people may be surprised and possibly offended at being asked. All employees should be aware that this information is being sought from our customers and be able to answer queries professionally about why we are collecting the data, to explain that there is no obligation to supply the data, and to be able to explain how the data will be managed



Please see pages 14-16 for our standard Equality Monitoring Form which includes required data protection statements to ensure fair data processing.

What we monitor continued



Sex

Based on 2008 figures, 51.25% of the population of the district are female and 48.75% are male.

What we need to know to help us plan:

- what sex our customers are

We will collect data under the following headings:

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

Some people may not wish to provide this information therefore the option of 'Prefer not to say' should always be included.

Sex may also be referred to as gender.

What we need to know to help us plan:

- whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex, or to both sexes

We will collect data under the following headings:

- Heterosexual
- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bi-sexual
- Prefer not to say

Some people may not wish to provide this information therefore the option of 'Prefer not to say' should always be included.

A person's sexual orientation is personal and sensitive information and people may be surprised and possibly offended at being asked. All employees should be aware that this information is being sought from our customers and be able to answer queries professionally about why we are collecting the data, to explain that there is no obligation to supply the data, and to be able to explain how the data will be managed.

Because of the sensitivity of this data careful consideration should be given and planning undertaken, as to how, when and from whom this data is sought.

Sexual orientation

Statistics concerning sexual orientation are not available locally. However ONS statistics place adults identifying as lesbian, gay or bi-sexual at 1-2% of the adult population (ONS Measuring Sexual Identity: An Evaluation Report 2010).



What we monitor continued

Transgender

What we need to know to help us plan:

- if our customers identify as transgender

We will collect data under the following headings

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

Transgender people are those who identify their gender to be different from their physical sex at birth. Under the Gender Recognition Act 2004 it is possible to be legally recognised as one gender whilst having the physical characteristics of another. The term transsexual is usually used to describe a person who intends to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment.

The Equality Act 2010 does not make a distinction between transgender and transsexual. It includes all those people who identify with a gender different from their physical sex at birth, whether or not they are under medical supervision, under the one term of gender reassignment and protects those people from unlawful discrimination. Good practice as recommended by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission, is that Councils recognise transgender people as well as those who are transsexual in their policies and procedures.

Transgender people are often the target of harassment, discrimination and victimisation and best practice has indicated the transgender community are reluctant to provide data on the transgender history of customers and employees. Instead the transgender community prefer that work is undertaken to generally improve conditions for transgender people. It is likely therefore that this data will not be captured by an equality monitoring exercise alone. The Council will support this equality monitoring data process with engagement with the transgender community to achieve best possible equality monitoring data.

Some people may not wish to provide this information therefore a third option of 'Prefer not to say' should always be included

It is an offence under equality legislation to reveal the transgender history of someone without their consent



6. Additional monitoring

Some services may have statutory responsibilities or find it useful to collect additional data to that previously listed. Such data could help to identify, quantify, and address specific causes of disadvantage and / or exclusion.

Additional monitoring could include the following other protected groups under the Equality Act 2010:

Pregnancy and maternity

What we need to know to help us plan:

- if our customers are pregnant or have given birth within the last 26 weeks

Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding

We will collect data under the following headings:

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

Marriage and civil partnership

What we need to know to help us plan:

- if our customers are married or in a civil partnership

Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can have their relationships recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters

We will collect data under the following headings:

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

Our equality responsibility in relation to marriage or civil partnership extends to the elimination of discrimination only



Other additional monitoring could include:

Refugees

Access to public transport

Language

If someone is a carer

Post code

7. Equality Monitoring Form

The Council seeks to provide services equally and fairly to all its residents and customers. Collecting, analysing and using equality information helps us to see how our policies and activities are effecting the various sections of our communities. In employment and in service provision equality information helps us to identify existing inequalities and where new inequalities may be developing, and take action to tackle them.

- Providing this information is voluntary
- The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential
- The information you provide is anonymous
- Providing us with this information will not affect the service or job opportunities you receive from the Council either positively or negatively

Please provide the following information:

1. **What is your sex?:** Male Female Prefer not to say

2. **Do you identify as transgender?** (over 18yrs only)
 Yes No Prefer not to say

3. **Which age band are you?**

16-19 <input type="checkbox"/>	20-25 <input type="checkbox"/>
26-35 <input type="checkbox"/>	36-45 <input type="checkbox"/>
46-55 <input type="checkbox"/>	56-65 <input type="checkbox"/>
66-75 <input type="checkbox"/>	76-85 <input type="checkbox"/>
86+ <input type="checkbox"/>	
Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>	

4. **What is your sexual orientation?**

Heterosexual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lesbian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bi - sexual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. **Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?**

Yes, limited a lot Yes, limited a little No

If yes, please indicate your disability type:

Physical	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sensory	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental health	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Equality Monitoring Form continued

6. What is your religion? (please tick one)

- No religion
- Christian (including all Christian denominations)
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Quaker
- Baha'i
- Any other faith or religious belief, write in.....
- Prefer not to say

7. Which ethnic or racial group do you most closely identify with (please tick one)

- A. White
 - English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
 - Irish
 - Gypsy or Irish Traveller
 - Any other White background, write in
- B. Mixed / multiple ethnic groups
 - White and Black Caribbean
 - White and Black African
 - White and Asian
 - Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background, write in.....
- C. Asian / Asian British
 - Indian
 - Pakistani
 - Bangladeshi
 - Chinese
 - Sikh
 - Any other Asian background, write in.....
- D. Black / African / Caribbean / Black British
 - African
 - Caribbean
 - Any other Black / African / Caribbean background, write in.....
- E. Other ethnic group
 - Arab
 - Any other ethnic group, write in.....
- F. Prefer not to say
 - Prefer not to say

Equality Monitoring Form continued

8. What is your main language? (please tick one)

- English
- Other, write in.....

9. What is the first part of your postcode? (for example, CM16)

10. Please enter today's date.....

Thank you for helping us to improve our services by providing this information

For more information on why we collect personal information on our residents and customers contact the Performance Improvement Unit: telephone 01992 564042 or

Email equality@eppingforestdc.gov.uk or website www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/equality

Epping Forest District Council
www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk



8. Which activities do we monitor?

Services and activities judged to be of relevance to the Council's equality duties should be considered for monitoring. In general when deciding whether or not to monitor a service for equality, the following questions are relevant:

- Does the activity impact on people?
If 'yes', then consider monitoring
- Do you already know the equality profile of the activity users or can you obtain the information from elsewhere?
If 'no', then consider monitoring
- Can you demonstrate that the activity planning and delivery are equitable without equality information?
If 'no', then consider monitoring

See Section 11, The Equality Monitoring Path (page 20), for more guidance on the equality monitoring process.

Which activities do we monitor? continued

The following should be monitored as far as is reasonably practicable:

- take up or non - take up of services
- applications for services, services allocated, and those refused services
- litigation against the Council
- customer complaints - Step 1 and above, and customer compliments
- impact or outcomes of service provision
- whether information about services or proposed changes to services reaches and is understood by different groups
- customer satisfaction with services, and
- employment statistics: recruitment, promotion, discipline cases, training etc.

Equality monitoring data could be useful, for example:

- to identify the equality profile of those the Council is involved in legal action with for example, housing evictions, or breaches of planning regulation, to ensure the equality of Council policies and practices
- to determine who is using the Council's reception desks in order to identify the need for information to be provided in other languages, or to determine opening hours, or demand for private or fully accessible interview facilities
- to determine the equality profile, disaggregated by characteristic, of those in breach of any regulation, including inadvertently, to determine the need for increased provision of guidance or information
- to identify which equality groups applicants for licences fall into against those to whom licences are granted, for example, taxi drivers licences or premises licences, to ensure the system does not discriminate against any group
- to ensure that no sectors of the community or groups representing people with a shared characteristic are under-represented in our grant funding provision
- to provide data to support recommendations to decision making bodies, for example, to fill a vacant post, or for funding to undertake outreach work to promote take up of services, or to increase provision for disabled access
- to inform a proportionate response to vocal or persistent pressure for services or resources
- to identify who is not using your service, and to help identify why they are not, and plan positive campaigns to reach them
- to benchmark equality performance and show improvements year on year
- to find out how many people with a protected characteristic apply for jobs with the Council, are shortlisted, recruited or promoted, to ensure recruitment and development processes do not discriminate against those with a protected characteristic
- to determine whether disciplinary action is disproportionately taken against employees with a particular protected characteristic
- to determine whether any protected characteristic group is over-represented as users of the Dignity at Work service

9. When monitoring should take place

Equality monitoring should be integrated into existing processes, preferably via established application and assessment activities. For example, a service routinely monitoring customer satisfaction, such as Housing Repairs, could include an equality monitoring form with the customer satisfaction card, taking care to include a separate envelope for the return of the equality monitoring form to ensure confidentiality.

The frequency and timing of monitoring will depend on the nature of the service or activity itself. For example, to monitor the equality profile of applicants for jobs with the Council against those appointed, monitoring would be done at the application and appointment stages of a time specific recruitment exercise.

Consideration should be given as to the point in the interaction with the customer that the monitoring exercise would be most likely to generate useful information. Undertaking the monitoring exercise at an early stage of an application for services may be more likely to result in information being provided, than after the service has been delivered and possibly forgotten about.

Directors are responsible for determining the frequency and timing of equality monitoring activities for their services.

Frequency

- a 'one-off' time limited snapshot exercise
- an ongoing and continuous process with regular review
- periodically (monthly, quarterly, annually, occasionally)

Methods

- via a form sent out with application forms / or following a verbal, email or written contact
- as part of ongoing customer satisfaction monitoring for example, a card left following a visit
- at the point of contact, for example, a form provided during an interview or personal enquiry or during a consultation exercise

Confidentiality

- the form should not contain the name and address of the customer
- the post code and service the contact was concerning should be included so long as it doesn't identify the respondent
- a pre-paid envelope should be included

More information:

The following organisations have useful information on equality monitoring:

The Equality and Human Rights Commission see www.equalityhumanrights.com

The lesbian, gay, bi-sexual charity Stonewall see www.stonewall.org.uk

10. Planning and preparation

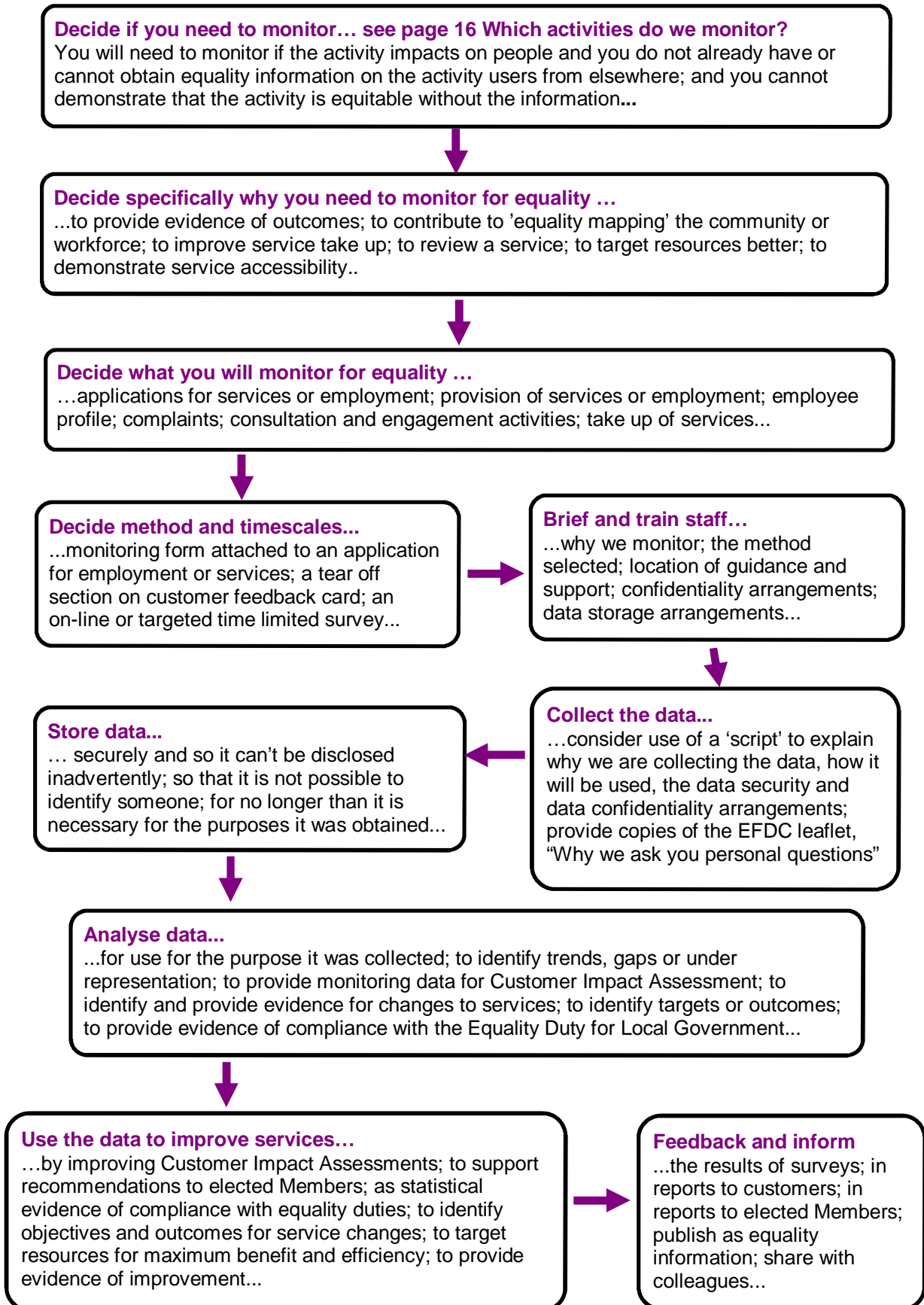
Planning is essential for successful equality monitoring activities. A good level of understanding of the purpose and value of equality monitoring by all those involved is necessary to make sure confidentiality is safeguarded, and questions about why monitoring is necessary can be addressed in a confident, informed and professional manner. Before implementing monitoring the following criteria should be considered:

- Why you are conducting monitoring
- The service or activity to be monitored
- What you need to know about your customers
- Who will collect the information, when, how, from whom, and for how long
- How the data is to be collected, analysed and stored - manually or electronically?
- Appropriate data protection safeguards for fair processing are built into the system
- Who is responsible for reporting the findings of the equality monitoring
- What format the reports should take and their purpose
- How the data will be used to improve service planning or provision
- Confidentiality and data protection requirements including how concerns about confidentiality will be addressed
- How to explain the purpose and importance of monitoring to employees and service users
- How to deal with any potential prejudice and concerns arising from monitoring of religion and belief, sexual orientation or transgender, or race or ethnicity
- How the data will be benchmarked against that available locally or nationally
- How reliable the data will be (expect a lower response rate to religion and belief, sexual orientation, and transgender monitoring)

See page 21 for an example of the planning process in relation to a Housing Allocations service



11. The Equality Monitoring path...



12. Equality Monitoring planning exercise: Example

Activity: Housing Allocations system

Why are you conducting monitoring?

To ensure the system for allocating properties is working equally and that all those eligible for housing under priority Band 1 can access it equally

What is the subject to be monitored

The applicants in Band 1 to whom allocations are made, for comparison against all those in Band 1

The policy context

Housing Allocations Policy

What do you need to know about your customers to help you plan and deliver your service?

The profile of the people in Band 1 who have been allocated properties, for comparison against the profile of all those in Band 1

Who is to collect the information, how, from whom, and when?

Who - Housing Allocations team

How - by interrogating the computer system / monitoring form

From whom - those in Band 1 allocated properties

When - January to April 2012

Who is to analyse the data?

Housing Allocations team

How will the data be stored – manually or electronically?

Information entered onto computer system and forms stored securely until disaggregation complete. Hard copies stored securely in locked drawer and disposed of once review complete.

Confidentiality and data protection requirements incorporated into the system including how concerns about confidentiality will be addressed

- forms sent out will not contain names and addresses
- form includes the following information:
 - that the data will be used to improve services
 - that providing the data is optional
 - that the data will be treated confidentially
- return envelope included
- returned forms to be secured in locked drawer
- allocations staff to be trained to respond to enquiries

Continued over

Equality Monitoring planning exercise: Example continued

How the data will be used to improve service planning or provision

To inform Housing Allocations Policy review

To ensure the Housing Allocations system is working as intended

How and when to explain the purpose and importance of monitoring to employees and service users

Employees:

- briefings at staff meetings
- provided with the Equality Monitoring Policy and Guidance
- provided with 'What's it got to do with you?', Stonewall booklet

Service users:

- allocations staff trained to respond to enquiries
- refer to website page on equality monitoring

How to deal with any potential prejudice and concerns arising from monitoring of religion and belief or sexual orientation

Employees reminded of Council equality policies and commitment during training. Seek guidance/support from Performance Improvement Unit

How the data will be benchmarked against that available locally or nationally

- ONS statistics
- Housemark

How reliable do you expect the data to be? (Expect a lower response rate to religion and belief, sexual orientation, and transgender monitoring)

Expected to be reliable but not necessarily complete and the return rate may be low. Once tenants have their property they are likely to be less motivated to return paperwork not directly related to their property.

However the return rate can be accurately calculated as number sent out will be known.

Who is responsible for reporting the findings of the equality monitoring?

Housing Options Manager

What purpose and format the reports should take

Written report to Housing Scrutiny Panel to secure agreement and support for changes to the Housing Allocations system if monitoring indicates under-representation by any protected characteristic in properties allocated.

Signed.....

Date.....

13. Complying with the Data Protection Act

The Council has a legitimate basis for collecting and processing personal data about its customers and service users. Data protection legislation exists to protect individuals against the misuse of their personal data which can be held on both manual and computerised records.

Personal data

Information the Council collects on its customers is classed as 'personal data' under the Data Protection Act. Personal data means data relating to a living individual who can be identified from that data, or partially from that data and from other data the Council may hold or is likely to hold. Personal data also includes any expression of opinion about the individual, or any indication of the intentions of the Council or any other person in respect of the individual.

The Data Protection Act requires that personal data is processed (used) fairly and lawfully so that the interests of the individual whose data is being processed are protected. This places a number of conditions upon the Council when collecting and processing personal data:

To comply with the Data Protection Act the following statements must be included in any monitoring documentation:

- A statement informing the person completing the form that the provision of some or all data is voluntary and is not a condition of receiving the service, benefit or job in question
- An explanation as to why the Council is carrying out equality monitoring, and what the information will be used for, and
- A statement to the effect that the information collected will be treated in confidence and access to it/use of it will be restricted to the purposes for which it was collected

Equality monitoring carried out on behalf of the Council

If equality monitoring is carried out by an external organisation on our behalf, for example as part of a survey, this must be acknowledged to the person being asked to provide the information.

Anyone carrying out equality monitoring on behalf of the Council must be registered with the Information Commissioners Office as a data processor.

For more information about Data Protection contact the Performance Improvement Unit.



14. Responsibility

The Executive and Scrutiny functions, and other bodies of elected Members
Members have overall responsibility for the commission and use of equality monitoring data. Any data presented to elected Members will be in an anonymous format and will not permit the identification of an individual.

Management Board

Management Board is responsible for the commissioning, receiving and analysis of equality monitoring data, and for the provision of appropriate equality monitoring training. Any data presented to Management Board will be in an anonymous format and will not permit the identification of an individual.

Directors and senior managers

These members of staff will be responsible for the proper collection, storage, analysis, and use of equality monitoring data in accordance with this policy.

Employees

All employees engaged in the collection of equality monitoring information and equality monitoring activities, are required to do so according to this policy and guidance.

Data Quality Strategy

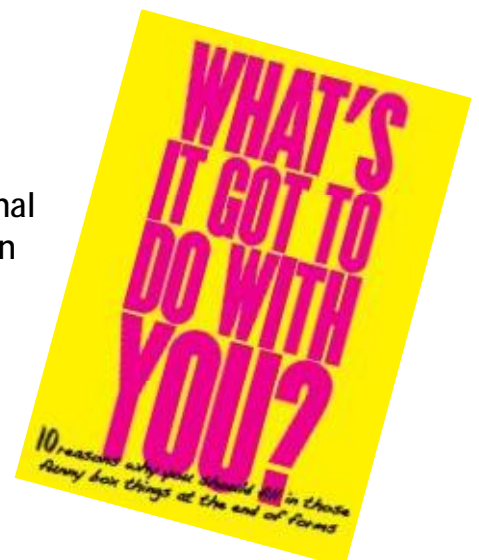
Where relevant all data collected under the provisions of this policy must comply with the Council's Data Quality Strategy.

Review of Equality Monitoring Policy and Guidance

The Corporate Equality Working Group will review this Policy every 2 years to ensure that it is consistent with current legislation, and provides a guiding framework for equality monitoring activities.

15. More information

The Council recognises that equality monitoring data is personal information. There is no obligation to provide this information but it will help us to plan and assess our services. For more information on why organisations like the Council ask for this data, see this leaflet produced by Stonewall which you can download using the link below or by visiting www.stonewall.org.uk/what_we_do/2583.asp
[What's it got to do with you?](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/what_we_do/2583.asp)



More information continued

Easy Read Information about equality monitoring

Stonewall have an easy read version of their leaflet, What's it got to do with you? which you can either download using the link below or by visiting www.stonewall.org.uk/what_we_do/2583.asp

[Stonewall's easy read What's it got to do with you?](#)

Easy Read Information about the Equality Act

The Government Equalities Office have an easy read guide to the Equality Act: which you can either download using the link below or by visiting www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities/equality-act-publications/equality-act-guidance/

[Easy read guide to the Equality Act](#)

If you would like a copy of this Equality Monitoring Policy and Guidance in any other format, for example in large print or another language, please contact Epping Forest District Council on 01992 564042 or email equality@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

16. Contact us about equality...

For more information about the Equality Monitoring Policy and Guidance or any aspect of the Council's equality work contact:



The Performance Improvement Unit,
Epping Forest District Council,
Civic Offices, 323 High Street,
Epping, Essex, CM16 4BZ



[www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/
equality](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/equality)



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