

# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Name of the service, policy or function being assessed: Blackpool Domestic Abuse Partnership – Domestic Abuse Strategy.

Directorate Housing and Social Services

Date Impact Assessment completed 13<sup>th</sup> September 2006


Is this a policy or function? Policy  Function

Is this a new or existing policy or function? New  Existing

**Names and roles of the people carrying out the Impact Assessment:**

*(Explain why the members of the impact assessment team were selected i.e. the knowledge and experience they bring to the process also identify lead contact).*

1. Karen Smith – Assistant Director, Housing Needs Division.  
Lead. Chair of Domestic Abuse Strategy Group.
2. Fred Bridges – Manager, Supporting Independence Service.
3. Andrea Maskill – Domestic Abuse Policy Coordinator.
4. Susan Walsh – Housing Options Manager

<b>Service Head</b>	Karen Smith
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2006

Once you have filled in this document please send a copy to the Faith Equality and Diversity Team.

## SECTION 1

### AIMS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

#### Identifying the aims of the policy<sup>1</sup>

*What is the policy?*

*What is the aim, objective, or purpose of the policy?*

Domestic Abuse Strategy.

To provide a strategic direction for the Blackpool Domestic Abuse Partnership.

To reduce the prevalence, tolerance and impact of domestic abuse using a multi-agency collaborative approach.

To ensure that the children and adults of Blackpool experiencing domestic abuse have access to quality provision of services appropriate to their individual needs.

#### Rationale behind the policy and its delivery

*(Please state the underlying policy objectives that underpin this service and what they are trying to achieve).*

*Are there associated objectives of the policy? If so, what are they?*

No

*What outcomes do we want to achieve from this policy?*

Aims

- To provide children and young people with the knowledge and skills to build relationships based on respect and mutual understanding.
- To increase safe choices for women, men and children experiencing domestic abuse.
- To hold abusers accountable for their behaviour.
- To tackle the tolerance, perception and lack of knowledge of domestic abuse.

*What factors could contribute/detract from the outcomes?*

New legislation and policy directives from Government.

Specific budget allocation.

Cohesive partnership working.

Specialist Domestic Violence Court roll-out.

Consultation outcomes from Domestic Violence Homicide Reviews.

Implementation of MARACS (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences)

In all cases, these could be contributions or detractions, depending on specific factors.

#### Who is affected by the policy? Who is intended to benefit from it and how?

<sup>1</sup> Please note the term 'Policy' is used for simplicity. The broad term can also refer to a function or a service.

*Who are the main stakeholders in relation to this policy?*

Survivors & people at risk of domestic abuse

- Ensuring that appropriate services are in place, that information and support is available when needed, and that services are working together.

Council

Police

Criminal Justice Sector

Crown Prosecution Service

Her Majesty's Court Service

Primary Care Trust

Probation Service

Voluntary and Community Sector

NHS Hospitals Trust

- Ensuring appropriate services are in place, reducing duplication, maximizing resources, and services are working together to ensure people do not fall through the net. Ensuring staff providing services are adequately trained and supported to respond to the issues that present.

*What outcomes would other stakeholders want from this policy?*

As above – as it is a multi-agency strategy.

*Are there any groups, which might be expected to benefit from the intended outcomes but which do not?*

Currently, a number of the groups expected to benefit, do not do so. This is part of the rationale behind the strategy – to ensure access for everyone who needs it to the services and information they need.

**Promotion of good relations between different communities**

*(How does the policy or function contribute to better Community Cohesion?)*

*How do you promote good relations between different communities you serve based on mutual understanding and respect?*

Awareness raising of the impact of domestic abuse across all sectors of the community.

*What opportunities are there for positive cross-cultural contact between these communities to take place e.g. between younger and older people, or between people of different religious faiths?*

Training

Awareness raising

Support Network

Focus Groups

Survivor support group

**(Specifically identify the relevance of the aims of the policy to the equality target groups and the Council's duty to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups).**

Aims

- To provide children and young people with the knowledge and skills to build relationships

based on respect and mutual understanding.

- To increase safe choices for women, men and children experiencing domestic abuse.
- To hold abusers accountable for their behaviour.
- To tackle the tolerance, perception and lack of knowledge of domestic abuse.

This is specifically about developing services and information aimed at ensuring that every survivor or person at risk of domestic abuse receives the support and information they need, regardless of their equality target group.

### **Policy Priorities:**

(How does the policy fit in with the council's wider aims? Include Corporate and Local Strategic Partnership Priorities)

How does the policy relate to other policies and practices within the council?

This strategy is designed to link in to the delivery of some of the aims and objectives of key policies, for example:

- Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Every Child Matters
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy
- Homelessness Strategy
- Local policy priorities included in the Community Plan
- Supporting People Strategy
- Teenage Pregnancy and Young Parenthood Strategy

What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?

Changes in the priorities relevant to the above policies; changes in Government policy or legislation; changes in local policy or priorities. Changes to financial support for delivery of the strategy.

How do these outcomes meet or hinder other policies, values or objectives of the council?

No other policies have been identified that these outcomes would hinder. They are generally consistent with the stated priorities of the agencies in the town, based on the outcome of widespread consultation.

### **How the policy is implemented**

*(How is, or will, the policy be put into practice and who is, or will be, responsible for it?)*

*Who defines or defined the policy?*

The Blackpool Domestic Abuse Partnership

*Who implements the policy?*

Domestic Abuse Strategy Group  
Domestic Abuse Forum  
Domestic Abuse Violence Reduction Group  
Domestic Abuse Policy Coordinator

*How does the council interface with other bodies in relation to the implementation of this policy?*

Through the partnership.

*Is the service provided solely by the Department or in conjunction with another department, agency or contractor?*

Through the partnership.

*If external parties are involved then what are the measures in place to ensure that they comply with the Council's Equal Opportunities policy?*

Existing partnership arrangements are already in place; all involved agencies have similar requirements with regard to Equal Opportunities policies. Any of the partners would raise any unresolved issues directly through the Chair of the Strategy Group.

## SECTION 2 CONSIDERATION OF DATA AND RESEARCH

List all examples of quantitative and qualitative data available that will enable the impact assessment to be undertaken (include information where appropriate from other directorates, Census 2001 etc.)

- LGB Consultation evaluation report.
- Child Protection Data
- Fylde Coast Women's Aid data
- Supporting People data
- Young Women's Consultation Report
- Police data
- National Data
- Survivor Consultation Report
- Census
- Vulnerable Adult Report
- Women's Aid data
- National Research

### Equalities profile of users or beneficiaries

(Use the Council's approved diversity monitoring categories<sup>2</sup> and provide data by target group of users or beneficiaries to determine whether the service user profile reflects the local population or relevant target group or if there is over or under representation of these groups)

01/04/05 – 31/03/06

#### Blackpool Advocacy:

Gender: Male = 286	Female = 449
Disability: Yes = 91	No = 644
Ethnicity: White = 732	Black or Black British = 3

#### Fylde Coast Women's Aid:

Ethnicity: White British = 43	White Irish = 7
Any other White background = 9	
Disability: Yes = 4	No = 55

#### Connexions:

Gender: Male = 1510	Female = 1469
Disability: Yes = 537	No = 2442
Ethnicity: White British = 2574	White Irish = 9
Any other White background = 21	White & Black Caribbean = 8
White & Black African = 2	White & Asian = 6
Any other Mixed background = 6	Indian = 6
Pakistani = 6	Bangladeshi = 2
Other Asian or British Asian background = 6	
Caribbean = 5	African = 2
Other Black or Black British background = 5	
Chinese = 7	Other ethnic group = 4
Unknown = 310	

#### Alcohol Dependency Service:

Gender: Male = 6	Female = 13
Disability: Yes = 0	No = 19
Ethnicity: White British = 19	
Religion: Christian = 9	No religion = 6
Not known = 4	
Sexual Orientation: Heterosexual = 13	Gay = 1
Bisexual = 1	Not known = 4

<sup>2</sup> Diversity monitoring categories are available from the Human Resources team 01253 477069

**Windmill Housing:**

Gender: Male = 61	Female = 80
Disability: Yes = 10	No = 54
Not known = 77	
Ethnicity: White British = 71	Not known = 70

**Equalities profile of staff**

*(Indicate profile by target groups and assess relevance to policy aims and objectives e.g. Workforce to Reflect the Community. Identify staff responsible for delivering the service including where they are not directly employed by the council).*

01/04/05 – 31/03/06

**Victim Support:**

Gender: Male = Staff 1, Volunteers 7	Female = Staff 5, Volunteers 24
Disability: Yes = Staff 1, Volunteers 2	
Ethnicity: White British = Staff 6, Volunteers 31	

**Connexions:**

Gender: Male = 11	Female = 24
Disability: Yes = 1	No = 34
Ethnicity: White = 34	Indian = 1

**Blackpool Council:**

Gender: Male = 6	Female = 2	
Disability: Yes = 2	No = 6	
Ethnicity: White British = 7	Other White background = 1	
Religion: Christian = 4	None = 3	Declined = 1
Sexual Orientation: Heterosexual = 7	Bisexual = 1	

**Probation:**

Gender: Male = 18	Female = 45	
Disability: Yes = 10	No = 53	
Ethnicity: White British = 56	White Irish = 1	White other = 1
Asian or Asian British = 2	Other = 1	Refusal = 2

EDMS Research project will highlight profile of council staff knowledge and understanding, awareness and training needs. Due to report April 2007.

**Evidence of Complaints against the service on grounds of discrimination**

*(Is there any evidence of complaints either from customers or staff (Grievance) as to the delivery of the service, or its operation, on the equality target groups?)*

There have been no reported complaints against services on grounds of discrimination. However, below are some issues raised at the Blackpool Domestic Abuse LGB Consultation events on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2006:

- LGB services for domestic abuse are only advertised on the 'gay scene' i.e. bars/clubs etc. This should be made broader
- There are no male Support Workers in the refuge in Blackpool – could this compound/change children's perceptions of men?
- There is no dedicated LGB Support Worker within the domestic abuse services in Blackpool to understand the differences in LGB relationships
- There is currently nowhere for gay men fleeing domestic abuse to go, other than the Homelessness service at Blackpool Council.
- Domestic abuse and LGB stereotypes need to be broken
- Police are now more approachable than a few years ago within the LGB community – but there is still room for improvement!

- It is good that LGB domestic abuse is now recognised by the police but it is still not recorded as LGB specific domestic abuse.

### **Barriers**

*(What are the potential or known barriers to participation for the different equality target groups?)*

- Exceptionally difficult to engage with women from particular cultural groups.
- Potential difficulties for some people with disabilities, for example in recognising abuse, expressing needs, etc.
- For some older adults, issues with recognition of domestic abuse problems.
- Some heterosexual men abused by women are reluctant to self –identify.

### **Recent consultation exercises carried out**

*(Detail consultation with relevant interest groups, other public bodies, voluntary organisations, community groups, trade unions, focus groups and other groups, surveys and questionnaires undertaken etc. Focus in particular on the findings of views expressed by the equality target groups)*

LGB Community  
Survivors  
Young Women  
Young People  
Stakeholders

The above consultations are summarised within the Blackpool Domestic Abuse Partnership Strategy. Full reports for each consultation are available via the Domestic Abuse Team on:  
[Lynsay.spittal@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:Lynsay.spittal@blackpool.gov.uk)

### **Identify areas where more information may be needed and the action taken to obtain this data.**

*(You will need to consider data that is monitored but not reported, data that could be monitored but is not currently collected and data that is not currently monitored and would be impossibly/extremely difficult to collect).*

#### **Gaps in information:**

This forms a key strand of the strategy in recognition that information gathering, collation and analysis and reporting is under-developed.

#### **Action needed:**

*(Include short-term measures to be taken to provide a baseline where no or little information is available)*

See Strategy

## SECTION 3

### ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

#### Race – testing of disproportionate or adverse impact

Identify the effect of the policy on different **race** groups from information available above.

There is little reliable information to offer a view. Work on data collection and use will be designed to redress this issue. Work to improve the information provision and types of services provided will take the needs of the BME population into account.

How is the race target group reflected in the take up of the service?

See above

From the evidence above does the policy affect, or have the potential to affect, racial groups differently and if so do any of the differences amount to adverse impact or unlawful discrimination?

This is about assuring equity for all groups who experience or are at risk of domestic abuse.

If there is an adverse impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one racial group or for another legitimate reason?

N/a

Could the policy discriminate, directly or indirectly and if so is it justifiable under legislation?

No

*(Include information on adverse impact between different racial groups)*

#### Gender – testing of disproportionate or adverse impact

Identify the effect of the policy on **gender** groups from information available above.

This strategy is almost certainly going to impact on more women than men, because national evidence is that domestic abuse affects 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men. In addition, some services are designed exclusively for women (for example Women's Aid refuge service and floating support). However, this effect will also be the subject of focus in the strategy to ensure equity wherever practicable for men.

How are the gender groups reflected in the take up of the service?

Differentially, depending on the service (see above). Specific information development is the subject of the Strategy delivery.

From the evidence above does the policy affect, or have the potential to affect, gender groups differently and if so do any of the differences amount to adverse impact or unlawful discrimination?

Yes. See above

If there is an adverse impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one gender group or for another legitimate reason?

Partly. Some services are designed specifically for women. However, the strategy will consider how to deliver equivalent services, where they are needed, for men.

Could the policy discriminate, directly or indirectly and if so is it justifiable under legislation?  
Yes, see above.

## Disability – testing of disproportionate or adverse impact

Identify the effect of the policy on the **disability** strand from information available above.

There is little reliable information to offer a view. Work on data collection and use will be designed to redress this issue. Work to improve the information provision and types of services provided will take the needs of disabled people into account. Refuge places are wheelchair accessible. All developments via the strategy will take into account physical access, communication / information needs and need for advocacy.

How are disabled people reflected in the take up of the service?

See above

From the evidence above does the policy affect, or have the potential to affect, disability groups differently and if so do any of the differences amount to adverse impact or unlawful discrimination?

No evidence on which to base a view.

If there is an adverse impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for another legitimate reason?

Could the policy discriminate, directly or indirectly and if so is it justifiable under legislation?

It could, for example, with regard to service developments where physical access or communication method is a factor. Whether justifiable would depend on the individual circumstances; however the strategy is designed to improve equity of provision and meet individual needs wherever practicable.

## Age – testing of disproportionate or adverse impact

Identify the effect of the policy on different **age** groups from information available above.

This is about assuring equity. Issues around older adults and young people will be explored as part of the delivery of the strategy.

How are young and old people reflected in the take up of the service?

Insufficient information to form a view other than, for older people, there can be more stigma attached to domestic abuse and a greater degree of acceptance or apparent acceptance of abusive situations. Factors that generally impede younger people from accessing services are likely to be as great or greater in impact in this area of work.

From the evidence above does the policy affect, or have the potential to affect, age groups differently and if so do any of the differences amount to adverse impact or unlawful discrimination?

Young people under 18 are not covered under the specific legislation, therefore abuse is classed under law as child abuse, not domestic abuse. Children and Young People's Services are members

of the Strategy Group. The area where the distinction is greatest is with the Police and their response.

Potentially, young people could fall between services – if the Police decide not to prosecute, young people could be without any service or support at all. This will be a focus of the strategy.

If there is an adverse impact, can be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for another legitimate reason?

No

Could the policy discriminate, directly or indirectly, and if so is it justifiable under legislation?  
See above

### Lesbian, gay bisexual – testing of disproportionate or adverse impact

Identify the effect of the policy on **lesbian, gay and bisexual** (LGB) groups from information available above.

This is about assuring equity in a situation that is currently inequitable in parts.

How are LGB groups reflected in the take up of the service?

There is no provision *specifically* aimed at LGB groups. In consultation, people asked for joint refuge provision for Lesbians and Gay Men, specific counselling relating to issues they experience, and staff understanding of domestic abuse within a Lesbian or Gay relationship.

From the evidence above does the policy affect, or have the potential to affect LGB groups differently and if so do any of the differences amount to adverse impact or unlawful discrimination?

No

If there is an adverse impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for another legitimate reason?

N/a

Could the policy discriminate, directly or indirectly and if so is it justifiable under legislation?

It could, but this is a specific focus of the Strategy.

### Religion/Belief – testing of disproportionate or adverse impact

Identify the effect of the policy on different **religious/belief** groups from information available above.

Information is under-developed in this area and is the subject of delivery of the strategy. It is known that in some faith groups, views of domestic abuse are different. 'Honour-based' killings, female genital mutilation, for example are now classed as domestic abuse. Some of these issues are faith-based; some cultural.

This strategy will take these issues into account in delivering equity.

How are the religious/belief groups reflected in the take up of the service?

No information on which to form a view

From the evidence above does the policy affect, or have the potential to affect, religious or belief groups differently and if so do any of the differences amount to adverse impact or unlawful discrimination?

No information on which to form a view

If there is an adverse impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for another legitimate reason?

No information on which to form a view

Could the policy discriminate, directly or indirectly, and if so is it justifiable under legislation?

It could. It would not be justifiable. The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that it does not.

## Health Impact – testing of disproportionate or adverse impact

Identify the effect of the policy on physical or mental **health** of service users and the wider community from any information that is available. (This might include an increased risk to health for some groups in the community, which although not intended, may have still occurred. The impact on health might include: increased mental stress, greater risk of accident or injury, reduced opportunities to have a quality diet, reduced opportunity for physical exercise, or greater incidence of diseases such as heart disease and diabetes. )

Developments under this Strategy are designed specifically to improve the physical and/or mental health of survivors or people at risk of domestic abuse.

From the evidence above does the policy affect, or have the potential to affect the health of groups differently? If so, which groups and how does the impact occur?

No

## Additional groups which may experience a disproportionate or adverse impact

Identify if there are groups, other than those already considered, that may be adversely affected by the policy?

Anyone with a temporary, restricted or unlawful immigration status could be adversely affected. They would be less likely to seek assistance and the options available to them would be more limited.

*For example those in poverty may be adversely impacted by the policy and it might be useful to consider them as a separate group in the light of the Council's overall policy objectives.*

## Additional factors which may influence disproportionate or adverse impact

### Management Arrangements

*(How is the Service managed, are there any management arrangements which may have a disproportionate impact on the equality target groups?)*

No. This is a multi agency strategy.

**What is the custom and practice in the provision or allocation of this service?**

*(Could these have a disproportionate impact on the equality target groups?)*

Some services (by design) are for women only.

**The Process of Service Delivery**

*(In particular look at the arrangements for the service being provided).*

Not applicable

**Operation Times**

*(When is the service provided; are there seasonal issues; are there barriers to the service based on the time and delivery of the service which may affect the target groups?)*

The subject of consideration in delivery of the strategy.

**Methods of communication to the public and internally**

*(What methods do you use to communicate this service? Include review and assessment of methods, media, translations, interpretation etc. bearing in mind the extent to which these media forms are accessible to all sections of the community)*

Externally

Blackpool Evening Gazette  
Citizen  
Blackpool Brief  
Blackpool Council Website  
PCT Website  
Lancashire Constabulary Website  
HMCS Website  
All Council premises  
All PCT premises  
All NHS premises  
All Police premises  
Council for Voluntary Service  
Citizens Advice Bureau  
Radio Wave  
Rock FM  
Blackpool Transport  
Licensed premises  
Blackpool and Fylde College  
Community and Voluntary Sector premises  
FCWA Helpline

Internally

Intranet  
Domestic Abuse Groups  
Staff Training  
Posters and leaflets  
Attendance at Team meetings, and other partnership meetings e.g. Local Safeguarding Children Board and Local Public Service Board.

**Awareness of Service by Local People**

*(Assessment of the extent to which local people are aware of the service based on available data. What measures do you undertake to reach traditionally excluded communities?)*  
*Awareness raising and publication of a service directory are a specific part of the strategy.*

Ensure that information is available in all public premises.  
Carers Board Information.  
School notice boards.  
Customer First Centre.  
Age Concern.  
Specific events e.g. International Women's Day.

**Evidence of disproportionate or adverse impact**

*(Is there any evidence or view that suggests that different equality, or other, target groups in the community have either a disproportionately high or low take up/impact of/from this service/function?)*

yes  no

*If yes, what and why (State below)*

National research and data available.  
Survivor and young women and young people consultation.  
Evidence from Stakeholder Consultation.  
Anecdotal evidence from practitioners.

Men – unable to access refuge provision from LGB Consultation and no provision currently available.  
Women with substance misuse and mental health issues.  
Children and Young People – evidence from consultation – lack of provision.  
Services for children and young people – evidence from Child Protection Case Conferences and staff from Family Support Services.

## SECTION 4

### MEASURES TO MITIGATE DISPROPORTIONATE OR ADVERSE IMPACT

**Specify measures that can be taken to remove or minimise the disproportionate impact or adverse effect identified at the end of Section 3. If none were identified in Section 3, identify how disproportionate impact or adverse effect could be avoided in the future. (Consider measures to mitigate any adverse impact and better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity).**

*Ensure that impacts on the equality target groups is a specific part of every service development, with actions for removing or limiting adverse impacts.*

*Maintain and develop/expand the collection, assessment and publication of data*

## SECTION 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

<b>Does the policy comply with equalities legislation, including the duty to promote race equality?</b> Take into account your findings from the impact assessment and consultations and explain how the policy was decided upon its intended effects and its benefits.)
yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/>
However there are a number of areas that require attention to reduce / limit the potential for adverse impact.
<b>What are the main areas requiring further attention?</b>
Public / agency information Service delivery Service Development Data
<b>Summary of recommendations for improvement</b>
1. Culture change: Awareness, information, consultation and preventive work to take into account issues specific to equality target groups. 2. Implementation of legislation and policy: ensuring this is equitable and geared to individual needs wherever practicable. 3. Support: Ensuring services are developed taking into account specific requirements of particular groups. 4. Recording, monitoring and reviewing of data to be comprehensive, relevant and proportionate.
<b>How will the results of the IA feed into the performance planning process?</b>
They will be part of the consultation on the Strategy and be part of the monitoring of the Strategy delivery.

### Future Monitoring and Consultation

<b>How and when will the policy be monitored?</b>
At the bi-monthly Domestic Abuse Strategy Group.

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<b>Suggested consultation for the future.</b> (Identify areas for future consultation and any barriers to participation in consultation with proposals to overcome these).



## SECTION 6 – ACTION PLAN

Recommendation	Key activity	Progress milestones	Officer Responsible	Progress
See main Domestic Abuse Strategy				