

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

The Public Sector Equality Duty which is set out in the Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race (this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (this includes lack of belief), gender and sexual orientation.

The purpose of carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment is to assess the impact of a change to services or policy on people with protected characteristics and to demonstrate that the Council has considered the aims of the Equality Duty.

The Equality Duty must be complied with before and at the time that a change to services or particular policy is under consideration or decision is taken. A public body cannot satisfy the Equality Duty by justifying a decision after it has been taken.

Please write in Plain English as this document, once approved, will be published on the Council's website.

Title	
A Competency Framework for Nottinghamshire County Council Employees	
Date	28/10/2011
Lead Officer for this assessment	Lucy Cole – Programme Officer, Improvement Programme
List of other officers/organisations involved in the assessment	Jill Turner – Project Manager, Improvement Programme

1a	What is being considered and why? Explain rationale behind proposal and other options considered, if applicable.
<p>Nottinghamshire County Council is implementing a competency framework to sit alongside the EPDR process. With many and varied job roles and professional/technical disciplines defining a single set of work behaviours is very challenging – so the focus falls on those common or core skills that all staff need to work successfully.</p> <p>By setting out these core skills and behaviours and building them into the performance management system means that the organisation will be better able to achieve its goals through managing what is done and how it is done in a fair and consistent way.</p> <p>The summary of the core skills and behaviours needed for everyone at each level within an organisation is called a competency framework.</p> <p>This framework sits alongside the codes of conduct the professional standards that an individual may need to adhere to as part of their qualifications or specialist area.</p>	

The benefits of having a consistent competency framework include:

- Having a standardised approach to meeting the priorities of the Council by expressing these as a set of common skills or behaviours
- Being able to recruit those who possess the skills and attributes needed by the organisation's services
- Establishing a framework on which to improve an individual's ability to move round the organisation more freely to develop their career
- Having standards for all staff irrespective of which department they work in.

2a	What is the profile of your current staff by age group, disability, gender, race and ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation?
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The current profile of the NCC workforce in relation to the protected characteristics is:

Age:

16-25: 5.53%
26-35: 18.48%
36-45: 29.51%
46-55: 29.94%
56-65: 15.56%
Over 65: 0.97%

Disability:

Disabled: 2.5%
Non-disabled: 97.5%

Gender:

Female – 78.2%
Male – 21.8%

Race and ethnicity:

White British – 94.8%
Black and Minority Ethnic (BaME) – 5.2%

Religion or belief

No figures available due to low disclosure rates.

Sexual Orientation

No figures available due to low disclosure rates.

2b	Give details of how the proposal will affect staff.
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All staff will be required to undergo a competency assessment. The 8 core competencies apply to all staff and all staff will be assessed against these by their line manager. The requirements for each competency differ for each tier within the organisation. The competency assessment will form part of the EPDR process, staff will discuss with their manager to what level they feel they meet the competency. A final decision will be made by the manager. Each score will identify potential learning and development opportunities for staff – to aid development where the employee is meeting or exceeding the competency

and to support staff to meet the required level where they are assessed as doing so.

The competency framework will aid managers in performance management and support employees to measure their performance and aid development and progression targeted to the appropriate area/competency.

2c Even if the proposal applies to everyone equally, could it have a disproportionate, adverse or negative impact on staff with protected characteristics. If so how?

Age:

Will the proposal have an adverse or negative impact on different age groups?

No. The competency framework will be applied equally to all employees regardless of their age. An employee's age will not limit them from meeting the competencies.

Disability:

Will the proposal have a negative impact on staff with a disability or on staff who are associated with someone who has a disability?

The use of the competency framework may have a negative impact on some employees with a disability. For those employees with a mental health issue, learning disability or on the autistic spectrum, their ability to meet the competencies may at points be impaired.

For those staff with a visual impairment, there may be difficulties in meeting some of the competencies e.g. IT competency – keyboard skills etc.

These have been considered and mitigation has been outlined in section 3a.

Gender:

Will the proposal have a negative impact on different genders, pregnant women or breastfeeding mothers, people who have reassigned their gender and have a different gender identity to the one they were born with?

No. The competency framework will be applied equally to all employees regardless of their gender. An employee's gender will not limit them from meeting the competencies.

Race:

Will the proposal have a negative impact on staff of different races, ethnicity, colour or nationality?

No. The competency framework will be applied equally to all employees regardless of their race. An employee's race will not limit them from meeting the competencies.

The Chair of the Corporate Black Workers' Group was consulted who commented that 'Proportionally more BME staff groups are subject to competency and/or disciplinary procedures within the Authority. It might therefore be prudent to include some form of monitoring to assess the impact of the competency framework for BME staff (and potentially other groups).'

Religion or Belief:

Will the proposal have a negative impact on staff who practice a religion or belief or no belief?

No. The competency framework will be applied equally to all employees regardless of their religion or belief. An employee's religion or belief will not limit them from meeting the competencies.

Sexual Orientation:

Will the proposal have a negative impact on lesbian, gay or bisexual staff?

No. The competency framework will be applied equally to all employees regardless of their sexual orientation. An employee's sexual orientation will not limit them from meeting the competencies.

2d	Are there any positive impacts on staff with the above protected characteristics?
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The competency framework will benefit all staff regardless of any protected characteristics, allowing a structured development process for all staff to meet and exceed the standards required by the organisation and improving an individual's ability to move round the organisation more freely to develop their career.

3a	In terms of any disproportionate, negative or adverse impact that the proposal may have on a protected staff group, what steps (if any) could be taken to reduce that impact for each group identified.
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For those staff outlined in the disability section above, the guidance provided with the competency framework clearly states that managers should take into consideration any disability which may affect the employee's ability to meet the competencies. As such, reasonable adjustments should be made. The competencies should be considered in line with the parameters in which the employee operates e.g. for an employee with a visual impairment who utilise specialist IT equipment, the IT competency will be assessed against the individual's ability to utilise the IT equipment that they have rather than a standardised suite of tools and equipment.

The guidance on this is clear and staff and managers are able to seek advice from the organisation's HR department. Manager's briefings will also take place in which this will also be stressed.

To ensure that there are no negative impacts on staff from any of the protected characteristics, the use of the competency framework will be monitored across all staff, including those with protected characteristics to monitor that there are no differential impacts.

The competency framework has been primarily designed to operate on the intranet. Paper copies will also be made available by managers for staff who do not have access to a computer. Managers will be asked to discuss with their teams during team briefings to ensure all staff are able to discuss the competency framework, understand it and have the opportunity to raise any issues.

The competency framework will be reviewed after approximately 12 months to ensure that it is being applied fairly and consistently. Feedback will be sought from managers and staff about the process. This will include disabled staff, their managers and HR to check that there is no adverse impact and the managers' guidance is being followed with regards to making reasonable adjustments.

The competency framework will be made available to staff from 14 November 2011; the formal launch when use of the framework will become compulsory for all EPDRs will take place on 1 February 2012. This will enable a review period between the informal and formal

launch for changes to be made in line with feedback received.	
3b	If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible, please explain why they are not possible.
N/A	

4	Evidence Sources: Give details of how you have engaged with staff on the proposals and steps to avoid any disproportionate impact on a protected group and how you have used any feedback to influence your decision.
<p>Sent to the Disabled Workers group for consultation. Comments received from the group stated that it was happy with the framework and guidance providing those in Senior Practitioner positions and above understand the notion of 'reasonable adjustments'. The guidance states that managers should consult their departmental HR advisor where unsure or requiring further guidance relating to 'reasonable adjustments'.</p> <p>Comments were also sought from the Corporate Black Workers' Group; these comments are included within the body of section 2C – Race.</p> <p>Consultation with Trade Unions has taken place. They do not support the implementation of the competency framework in principle.</p>	

5	Decision Log – (detail how Elected Members and/or Senior Managers have been involved in the decision process (give dates of key meetings and decisions made))
<p>Directors Business Meeting – March 2011; Reviewed the Competency framework Corporate Leadership Team – August 2011; Approved the Competency framework and guidance.</p>	

6a	Date of Next Review:
	September 2012.
6b	If review is not required, explain why.
N/A	

7a	Approved by: Marje Toward, Service Director, Human Resources & Customer Service
7b	Approval date: 23 January 2012