



Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea – the very best of Scotland

**Multi-Equality
Impact Assessment
Toolkit**

MEIA Form

Name of Policy: Corporate Communications Strategy

Date of Assessment: 19th May 2008

Before commencing with the Multi-Equalities Impact Assessment (MEIA), please make reference to the MEIA Guidance Notes, which will give guidance on each of the sections included.

Section One: Function / Policy Details*

(Page 4 of the Guidance Notes)

1.1

Name of Function / Policy	Corporate Communications Strategy
Lead Service / Partnership	Chief Executive Service Corporate Communications
Policy Officer (Name / Position)	Kate Bond Head of Corporate Communications
Impact Assessment Team (Names / Positions)	Kate Bond – Head of Communications Neil Moir – Communications Team Leader Lynne Strachan – Consultation Co-ordinator

*Policy could be formal or informal and may include strategy, project or practice.

1.2 Is this function / policy...

New? (✓)	Existing? (✓)
✓	

1.3 What are the main aims of the policy?	To enhance, support and promote the reputation of Aberdeenshire Council by:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating awareness of the Council's Vision • Promoting the Council as a professional, helpful and responsive organisation • Creating understanding of our policies and activities • Encouraging public interest and participation in our work • Promoting Aberdeenshire as "the very best of Scotland"
1.4 Who are the main target groups / beneficiaries?	The Council All residents in Aberdeenshire Council employees Councillors The Council's partners MSPs, MPs and MEPs Business in Aberdeenshire The Council's suppliers The media
1.5 What are the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council will communicate in an accurate, timely

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intended outcomes of the policy?	<p>and appropriate way that meets its own needs and those of its citizens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• citizens are well informed on matters relevant to them• citizens have an appropriate mechanism to communicate their views, feelings, opinions etc to the council in a way that influences, and is seen to influence, council decision making• Encourage greater participation by citizens in local issues• Actively engage young people in local democracy• Maximise the Council's relationships with community councils, residents groups and community safety groups• Promote, enhance and protect the council's reputation to secure maximum benefits for the council and the area
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Section 2: Information Gathering

(Page 5 of the Guidance Notes)

2.1 Gathering information and evidence used to assist the impact assessment process

Information / Evidence	✓relevant box	List details (source, date, scale etc.)
* Community consultation		Feedback from residents sourced through Citizens Panel October 2007. Resident surveys – September 2005 Employee surveys – September 2006 Feedback from the media – July – September 2007 Employee Focus groups – August 2007
Research (including websites & legislation)		Scrutiny and Audit Review - November 2004 SAC No 4 IDeA Peer Review – June 2005 Public PR – Best Value Communications Working Group Scottish Local Authority benchmarking exercise Chartered Institute of Public Relations LG Communications
Officer knowledge and experience		Kaizen Blitzes – ELL communications, libraries, Single Status Feedback from directors, area managers and councillors. Communication team away days
Equalities monitoring data		Translation of key documents sourced from policy officer (equalities) Translation data based on 2001 census

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		<p>Statistical information requested from GREC on diversity of minority ethnic groups (or communities) in Aberdeenshire</p> <p>Download information acquired on Living and Working in North-East Scotland</p>
Service user feedback (including complaints)		Feedback sourced from consultation groups which addressed the strategy
Partner user feedback		Meetings held with Heads of Communications at Grampian Police, NHS Grampian and Aberdeen City Council
Other		

Section 3: Assessing the Impacts

(Page 6 of the Guidance Notes)

What likely impacts or issues do the function / policy have for different people and communities in the following group(s)?

3.1 Identify and describe any likely positive, negative or neutral impacts.

Equality Target Group	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact
Race	<p>Taking account of ethnic diversity to tailor translation of core documents to ensure access for all.</p> <p>Ensure that images of communities used in Council publications are reflective of the local population.</p>		

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Gender			The strategy has been designed for all target audiences and therefore makes no distinction positively or negatively on gender.
Disability	Information accessible from a range of venues and online. Information available in large print, on tape or in braille on request. Written in plain language.		
Age	This strategy has been designed to have a positive impact on age eg information needs of children, young and older people		
Religion & Belief			The strategy has been designed for all target audiences and therefore makes no distinction positively or negatively on religion.
Sexual Orientation			The strategy has been designed for all target audiences and therefore makes no distinction positively or negatively on sexual orientation.

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Other groups (please specify)			
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(If no impact has been identified, and this is justifiable, please go to 5.1)

3.2 Have any cross cutting issues been identified?

The cross cutting issues you should consider for the purpose of this MEIA are employees, health, access (including rural isolation), low income, unemployed, homeless and carers, or any other relevant issue(s).

Specific communications activities are planned to ensure that employees receive the information they need.

Due to the sparsity of housing in certain rural areas of Aberdeenshire, some households may find access to information from the council limited.

There is some reliance on electronic media which may create difficulties for some people in accessing council information who are not office-based.

Section 4: Recommendations and Actions

(Page 7 of the Guidance Notes)

4.1 As a result of this assessment, consultation, research and available evidence collected, state whether there will need to be any changes made / planned to the function / policy. Please clearly detail practical actions you would take to reduce or remove any identified adverse / negative impact.

(Please ensure that recommendations and actions are SMART)

Recommendation	Action	Who	When	Expected Outcome
Ask for feedback from disabled groups	Send strategy to employee disability forum and ask for feedback/comments	Consultation co-ordinator	End of May 2008	The strategy is user-friendly?
Rural housing – access to information	Information will be issued along with council tax bills every two years. Information to be placed in the	Head of Comms Head of	a-z issued in Feb 2008 From	Increased awareness of council services and how to access them

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	weekly papers on a regular basis	Comms	Sept 2008	
Ensure that there is not an over-reliance on electronic media	Ensure that a range of communications channels are used	Head of Comms	On-going	Good access to information across different channels

4.2 Detail any adverse impact that cannot be resolved, and justify the recommendation to continue with the policy.

Detail	Justification
None identified	

Section 5: Performance Monitoring and Reporting

(Page 7 of the Guidance Notes)

5.1 Please explain **how** monitoring will be undertaken, **when** it will take place and **who** is responsible for undertaking it, making reference to any equalities action plans / service plans.

Action plan prepared to monitor the work undertaken on the Communications Strategy which will be reviewed annually. On-going actions will be identified in the service plan and in the strategic priorities.

Reporting lines into Policy & Resources Committee and also Scrutiny and Audit.

On-going monitoring to take place through team away days.

The MEIA will be monitored on an on-going basis and reviewed annually.

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Section 6: Publishing the Results of the Assessment

(Page 8 of the Guidance Notes)

Prior to publication, the following signatures are required:

1. Head of Service or
Service Representative

Signed: Kate Bond Name: Kate Bond Date: 1st July 2008

2. Quality Assured by
(QA of the process followed is required by a MEIA trained officer)

Signed: Carol Simmonds Name: Carol Simmonds...Date: 17th July 2008

Please email the completed MEIA to the Policy Officer (Equalities), Chief Executive.