

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

20 January 2015

Report of the Director of Public Health

**HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENTS
(Health and Communities)**

1. Purpose of report

To seek approval to pilot the inclusion of Health Impact Assessment (HIA) screening into the Council's procedures for carrying out Equality Impact Analysis (EIA).

2. Information and analysis

The Council has a duty to have due regard for the need to advance equality of opportunity, eradicate unlawful discrimination and harassment, and promote good community and other relations when carrying out its everyday functions, including when consulting on policy changes and spending decisions. The Council has had an agreed process and set of guidance in place for over 10 years to enable it to carry out these duties which have been kept under regular revision.

The Cabinet approved the piloting of HIAs across the Council on 10 September 2013. To date one assessment has been carried out (HS2) and two more are currently underway (children's centres review and public transport review). The aim of HIAs is to identify factors that will have a significant impact on health and to use evidence to maximise health gains and mitigate any negative impacts. HIA defines health in a holistic way which acknowledges the wider influences on health, such as income, education and employment status as well as lifestyles and genetics.

In many ways, the processes of EIA and HIA have much in common and could have some overlaps. The consideration of equality implications is a legal duty and so the EIA process will need to have primacy the completion of a detailed HIA does however require specific Public Health expertise, and at present it would be inappropriate to expect officers without this expertise to carry out detailed work. The scale of work surrounding a HIA also means that it is only possible to complete a small number each year.

How Health Impact Assessments work

There are five stages in the HIA process, as summarised below:

Screening

The first stage of HIA is known as 'screening'. Screening is a systematic process using a tool or questionnaire. The screening stage is a quick assessment of the potential health effects of a policy and is used to identify policies that need a full HIA. The screening stage can also be used as a rapid HIA for some policies and programmes. For example Kent County Council uses the Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment screening tool to assess the potential impact on health inequalities for all policies.

Scoping

This stage sets out the scope of the HIA, including the depth of the assessment, i.e. desk-top; rapid; or comprehensive. Other issues considered at this stage are the membership of the steering group overseeing the HIA, the geographical boundary, the types and methods of data collection, and the type of report required. Data may include demographic and health profiles of the community affected, literature reviews of the evidence, expert informants and the views of the stakeholders and communities affected by the policy.

Appraisal

Appraisal of the evidence collected is the third step. This is done using an appraisal tool which identifies the health impacts, (both determinants and outcomes), whether the impacts are positive or negative, the scale of the impacts (e.g. size of population and severity of effect), the likelihood of the impact (e.g. definite, possible or speculative) and the latency of the impacts (e.g. short, medium or long term).

Recommendations

At the fourth stage the steering group develops and records the recommendations of the HIA. These aim to maximise the positive health impacts of the policy or programme and minimise or mitigate the negative impacts.

Implementation

Following the completion of the assessment, action is taken to implement the recommendations, perhaps by procuring a service which better reflects the needs of communities, or which has altered priorities or funding.

Conclusion

One of the key questions is how best to engage the Council and its departments in considering the health impacts of policies, services and the proposals being brought forward to achieve budget cuts.

Following discussions over both processes between officers in Public Health and Policy and Research it is proposed that the most appropriate way forward would be to pilot the inclusion of the screening stage of HIAs when officers are

carrying out EIA. This could help inform how best to engage departments in the process of HIAs and test out whether both processes can be more integrated.

An initial HIA checklist has been developed and tested on a range of issues across all Derbyshire County Council departments.

The testing process resulted in a number of revisions to the checklist (detailed in Appendix 1) and the final version is now ready to be piloted as part of an integrated EIA. Training and support will be provided to colleagues as they embark on their EIA/HIAs. A report outlining the lessons learnt from the pilot will be produced in June 2015, when a decision can be made on how to go forward.

Policies, programmes, projects and service reviews that score high on the HIA screening checklist will be considered for more in-depth analysis by the Public Health team. The Council has already approved two full health impact assessments will be undertaken each year. The screening process embedded in the EIA is a systematic way of identifying and prioritising those.

3. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered; financial, legal, equality, human resources, environment, health, property and transport have all been considered in preparing this paper.

4. Background Papers

None

5. Key Decision

No

6. Call-in

Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No

7. Officer Recommendations

1. That approval is given for the pilot to run to June 2015 in which the screening stage of HIAs is done at the same time and as part of the process for EIA.
2. That the corporate EIA Guidance and Form be supplemented with the information in Appendix 1, for the pilot.

Elaine Michel
Director of Public Health

Health Impact Assessments

Health impact assessment (HIA) is a systematic consideration of the likely health consequences of implementing a proposal, policy, plan, programme or project on different population groups, by reference to the identified determinants of health i.e. lifestyle, socio-economic factors, access, mental well-being, environment, sustainability

What are the benefits of HIA?

- To identify positive and negative health impacts of a proposal on different population groups and potential mitigation of adverse impacts where appropriate.
- To maximise positive health benefits and minimise negative health outcomes
- To reduce inequalities between the most and least deprived communities
- To develop a number of recommendations that will support decision making
- To appraise the potential impact of different options

When is the best time to do an HIA?

- At an early ideas stage in order to generate a proposal that will ideally improve or at least mitigate any potential adverse impact on health.
- When there are some clear plans to assess
- When recommendations and changes can be integrated into the final plans

Screening: Should I do an HIA?

Screening is the first stage in the process that involves deciding whether an HIA should be conducted on a proposal. Examples of things that you may do an HIA on include:

- Developing an important new Policy
- As part of business or service plan development/ review
- Making changes to how services are delivered or priorities within service eligibility
- Designing a new major capital expenditure scheme
- In relation to proposals to cut funding or services

Use the screening checklist to indicate whether there are potentially significant health based impacts (positive or negative), missed opportunities or scope for reducing health inequalities. This should give you a better idea as to whether the proposal would benefit from HIA.

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST: To the best of your knowledge:

POTENTIAL HEALTH IMPACTS ON THE POPULATION OF DERBYSHIRE (I.e. not just but including the protected groups for EIA). Please identify any particular health impact on protected groups as part of this exercise.	[*] Yes + or -	No	Not sure	Mitigation?
Will health be directly affected?				
OR				
Will health be indirectly affected?				
Social and economic factors - Will the conditions in which people live be affected? eg education, poverty, housing				
Environment - Will the environments in which people live/ work be affected? eg built environment/environmental hazards				
Mental well-being - Will people's sense of control, social inclusion, emotional well-being or motivation be affected?				
Access to services - Will access to services be affected?				
Lifestyle - Will health-related lifestyles be affected? eg diet, physical activity, smoking.				
Sustainable future (green environment) – Any effect on sustainability?				
Is a significant proportion of the population affected by the initiative? <i>eg over 25%</i>				
Are there community concerns about potential health impacts?				
Is this likely to increase health inequalities and/or disproportionately affect vulnerable groups?				
Is the cost of the initiative high (<i>over £100,000</i>)? OR will it save money?				
Is the initiative a high priority/important for the organisation/partnership?				
Is there potential to change the proposal?				
TOTAL				

Please contact Richard Keeton, Senior Public Health Manager, if you have answered Yes to 7 or more of these questions, who can give you advice on what to do next.

Please note that the Public Health Team will be responsible for leading Health Impact Assessments, and you will not be expected to carry out this work without their involvement and expertise.

Any adverse impact on protected groups identified will need to be incorporated with the EIA and appropriate liaison should take place to ensure that this happens

If the number of negative impacts is more than 7 (50%) please refer to Richard Keeton in Public Health for advice.

**This column will be explained in the documentation. The column is ascertaining a) if there is likely to be an impact on health and b) if that impact is positive or negative.*