Collecting customer equality monitoring information

Your responsibilities as an officer and a provider of services

Equalities and Engagement Team

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1.1 Introduction

The services we provide in Sheffield City Council have a significant effect on the quality of life of people in Sheffield. Our services provide care, education, housing, environmental, parks and leisure services and key life opportunities; they help to keep people safe and secure and build stronger communities and develop personal independence. What we do affects people today and future generations.

It is because of the significance and impact of what we do, that we need to know who is benefitting from our services and which groups are missing out.

For many services we can see from a customer's home address the level of take-up across the city. However, we know a lot less about whether certain age groups, disabled people or people from a specific ethnic community etc are accessing services that would help them and how decisions we make may impact on them.

1.2 Our responsibilities

This guidance outlines what we should be doing and also how we deliver on our commitments to provide services in a fair and equal way to all our customers, and to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

All staff need to understand:

- what their responsibilities are when collecting and handling personal information about customers.
- why we do it, the restrictions on how and when we collect it and how and when we dispose of it.

This guide includes information about the standards and protections we need to apply in order to ensure that we only ask what is necessary, and we use it sensitively and keep it secure.

There is a separate leaflet available for members of the public at www.sheffield.gov.uk/equality.

1.3 Understanding our customers

Monitoring who contacts us and recording their customer/ equality information lets us analyse how well we are meeting our commitments to different groups of customers. You may need to ask supplementary questions based on this.

Research such as the Census 2021 data provides a profile of Sheffield's demographic information that enables us to compare who actually requests and receives services against this.

1.4 Using information to personalise access and service provision

Analysing information gathered helps us to:

- Identify and consult groups that do not access our services
- Understand why services do not meet their needs
- Improve delivery of services, making it easier for all groups of customers to access services

For example, we have used customer information to:

- Write easier to understand information for people with learning disabilities or literacy problems
- Adapt buildings so they are accessible for people with impaired mobility
- Increase the number of services that can be accessed 24 hours a day online for those who find it difficult to contact us during office hours or visit our offices

1.5 Legal requirements

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) applies to all organisations that provide a service to the public. It also applies to anyone who sells goods or provides facilities and applies to our services, whether or not a charge is made for them.

The duty requires public bodies to understand the needs of their customers and demonstrate fairness in the design of policies and the delivery of services.

As a public authority we must pay due regard to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Practising equality of opportunity involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages
- Taking steps to meet differing needs
- Encouraging people to participate in public life/activity where participation is disproportionately low

Fostering good relations means:

- Tackling prejudice
- Promoting understanding
- Meeting the needs of disabled people in making reasonable adjustments

Compliance with the duties may involve treating some people more favourably than others.
The nine protected characteristics (pc) are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership status* (relates to work only) so the law protects everyone.

The Specific Duties require public bodies to set equality objectives, publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the General Duty and publish information relating to our employees and people impacted by our policies such as customers and publish pay gap information. Monitoring information will help enable us to meet these Duties. For more information visit our www.sheffield.gov.uk/equality.

1.6 Why we collect equality monitoring information

We collect EDI information as our practice should be evidence based, rather than subjective. Managers have to balance the sometimes-conflicting interests of different groups in communities and the workforce in an open and respectful way which simultaneously recognises that not all requests can be accommodated. Decisions about EDI should be rooted in evidence as far as possible and be context-specific, rather than be based on abstract theories.

The following is taken from the recent independent panel on D&I at work which notes that: "Gathering evidence on diversity and inclusion metrics confers many benefits. It allows organisations to identify context-specific problems within their own organisation, rather than assuming that society-wide inequalities are present. It also allows employers to target interventions proportionately to address problems, while reducing the use of resources on addressing inconsequential or absent issues."

Evidence suggests that some organisations' approaches can be driven by pre-existing notions, assumptions, and pressures rather than empirical evidence. We need to understand our customers to ensure we are basing decisions on evidence in Sheffield.

Data collection, reporting, and transparency has been powerful, the power of reporting disparities within our workforce and customers and transparency is very important; and helps in identifying actions that have started to make a difference. Many agree that large organisations can do more than small and medium enterprises with the data they have and use, and that small organisations would benefit proportionately more from transparent guidance on what data to collect, and a comparative evidence tool.

To find out more about the Equality Act 2010 visit the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) website Homepage | EHRC (equalityhumanrights.com)

This guidance relates to customers and not employees. For information on employees see the Council's latest Workforce Data Report www.sheffield.gov.uk/equality

2.0 Getting Started

2.1 What and when to monitor
Equalities monitoring should only be undertaken where you are confident that you can gather useful information that will be acted upon. Customers should not be asked for personal information unless the information is going to be used to improve service delivery and make services more inclusive and accessible.

Therefore, it is important to understand the difference between:

- what you are going to record to help you understand who uses your services to help monitor whether the needs of groups of customers are being met
- and personal information that you need to collect to meet the individual customers and provide a personalised service or /access to service

For example:

- For equality monitoring, it may be sufficient to know that the customer is disabled or has a hearing impairment
- For service delivery purposes you would need to know how it is best to contact them and what arrangements may be needed to access and receive a service

Equality monitoring Information should be collected (and stored) separately from the personal information recorded to identify individuals' service needs.

You should not ask people for their names or identifiable personal information etc on the same form as equality monitoring information unless it's about service needs.

It is important that customers understand the reason why they are being asked for the information, they know what it will be used for and understand that the data will be stored confidentially and destroyed when appropriate see guidance on storage of personal information.

Judgement may need to be applied as to when it is appropriate to collect personal information. You can ask the Equality and Engagement or Information Management Team for advice as required. (see contacts).

For guidance that explains the relationship between the public sector equality duty (PSED) and data protection law see The public sector equality duty and data protection | EHRC (equalityhumanrights.com)

2.2 What to consider and plan for

You should annually assess the customer insight data you hold and where there are gaps as part of service planning and as a result; (**See Appendix 1 – Sheffield City Council customer equality monitoring form**).

- Decide on what information is a priority for monitoring to fill gaps in specific areas customer insight. (**See section 8 – Examples of what you might measure**).

- Decide if you want to do a one-off monitoring survey of customer insight or collect regular information that will be held against a customer account, if that's available and agreed.

- Check that the skills and resources needed to collect and analyse the data are available.

- Communicate a clear explanation of what the services will need to monitor and why, in a way that will be understood by staff and customers.

- Demonstrate good practice in Information Management complying with Council procedures.

- Be responsible for ensuring the information is collated and used as planned.

- Communicate to staff what they need to do and what the various areas of personal information mean (**See Section 6 Protected characteristics**). Also explain customers' right to refuse to answer questions and the circumstances when personal information should not be recorded.

- Collect and review feedback from staff on their experience of collecting the data and ensure that they receive the outcomes of the monitoring exercise.

2.3 Choice of contact method

Monitoring can be undertaken in a variety of different ways and at different points in your interaction with customers. Examples include:

Online engagement platforms

We have increased our migration to working online, equality monitoring information is regularly asked as part of online consultations and engagement initiatives.

Have Your Say Sheffield is the Council's digital engagement platform and the way we engage online with the public. It is available for all Council staff to use and has a number of tools available for you to use to carry out digital engagement, such as interactive maps, surveys,

forums, polls and more, so you'll be able to choose the best engagement method for your project. Council officers can find out more about Have Your Say Sheffield on the [intranet.](#)

Written or online surveys
Anonymous surveys, which are sent to customers to ask about their satisfaction with a service is one of the most effective ways of capturing monitoring information. It can often have the highest rate of completion and return as it gives customers the opportunity to express their views on the service received.

Customer IT systems
When the Council's customer portal is operating there will be the facility to record equality information against customer records. The system could provide a significant resource to extract customer insight information. However, this information will need to be kept stored confidentially, and only accessed by authorised staff.

Face to face
Confidentiality is often an issue when asking equality monitoring questions in public offices. Customers should never be asked monitoring questions if they are in an environment where their responses will be overheard by other customers or staff. It may be more suitable to ask customers to fill in a form themselves and place the completed form in a sealed envelope or response box and if the survey can be anonymous this increases completion rates.

Over the phone
Service teams can conduct telephone surveys and record customer information as part of this process, or you can procure a service to do this for you. Again, you need to ensure when asking that the customer is able to talk freely, without being overheard.

3.0 Using the Data

3.1 Making use of the data and where to find comparative data
Our website provides a wide range of statistics and information about Sheffield that could be useful in setting targets or looking for comparisons in monitoring. We have city profiles, neighbourhood profiles, information on health, education, economy and housing etc. This includes:

- [Annual equalities report](#)
- [Workforce data report (staff)](#)
- [Census 2021 data](#)
- [Sheffield Communities Reports | Sheffield City Council](#)
- [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#)
- [Sheffield Census 2021 data](#)
- [Sheffield Local Insight](#)
- [Family Resources Survey](#)

If using [Sheffield Local Insight](#) please go to the Sheffield page and search for reports and data, there you will find the following categories to select from:

- Reports on neighbourhoods, LACs and data on population and migration
- Deprivation and low-income indicators
- Crime
- Demographics
- Older people's indicators
- Access and Transport
- Children and education
- Unemployment

- Wider worklessness
- Jobs
- Business
- Living environment
- housing
- Health
- Fuel poverty
- Energy consumption
- Community
- Digital

3.2 Suggested ways to use the analysed data

Use your customer data to help within any **Equality Impact Assessment** as we need to be able to demonstrate what has happened as a result of service or policy changes and have identified risks or benefits to specific customer groups.

At a time of significant change in service provision and eligibility it is important to understand the effect of decisions on different customers. Where specific concerns are raised about the impact of a change then those need to be followed through and the impact assessed over a period of time.

Use your data to identify which groups you should be consulting with as part of any policy or serviced change.

Using Equalities/customer monitoring is an important tool in improving services, but it is a means to an end, not an end in itself. It is essential that action is taken following the analysis of the data and changes are made to improve services. Use your customer data to **help set targets**, these should be:

- validated by the analysis of the data
- achievable, so that expectations are not raised too high
- realistic, so that they are capable of changing the service
- time-bound, so that it is something which needs to be reached by a certain point in time

Gain further insight into customers' needs and preferences, analysis of customer information may show the need for further consultation and involvement with members from a particular community or type of customer.

Identifying variation in take up or awareness of services does not automatically suggest an answer to the problem. Monitoring provides a focus for consultation of these customers, helping understand better why variations occur and to involve them in the design of more accessible service provision.

Targets are an indication of what type of service you are aiming to deliver. Performance indicators are about what is currently being delivered.

For example, if equalities monitoring indicates that a service may not be attracting women or men, when a difference is not expected, then a target could be to increase female or male usage of the service by an appropriate percentage.

4.0 Summary of Guidance

- Equality monitoring information is important as legislation imposes specific duties and obligations on services to demonstrate that we are advancing equality, eliminating discrimination and fostering good relations for all protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

- Anyone recording customers' personal information needs to understand that this is different from collecting information about an individual's personal needs or circumstances as part of service eligibility or assessment process.

- You should have a plan of how you are going to report on the recorded information.

- You need to check the relevance of asking about the specific items of personal information, take account of the nature of your service and what data you already have.

- Your plan needs to identify the most appropriate method of obtaining the information.

- You need to ensure that what you do complies with our Data protection and Information Security rules about collecting, storing, reporting and the deletion of personal information.

- You should be able to show at the end of a period of time how the information you have collected has been used to improve access, develop services, reduce discrimination or advance equality.

- If you are asking for a title or a prefix please add a gender-neutral options, however, a title question itself is optional and may be the best option.
- This guidance does not focus on responsibilities for monitoring your workforce, but the questions are similar.

- Customers can choose not to answer.

5.0   Understanding terminology and categories of personal information

This section seeks to clarify some of the terminology around equalities information and help understand definitions of terms such as disability or ethnicity etc.

We have used definitions cited in legislation or what nationally recognised agencies recommend as appropriate wording. It is important that staff recording personal information understand, sufficiently, what these categories are asking about, so that they feel confident to explain them to members of the public.

5.1 Terminology

Collecting equality monitoring information on an individual's sexual orientation, ethnicity (race), religion and national identity can be complex because of the subjective and multifaceted nature of the concepts. It is therefore important we use a consistent set of measures such as those developed by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). ONS categories allow organisations and services to compare and contrast data locally and nationally to ensure they are upholding the principles of the general duty, as described above.

Therefore, there is a legal requirement for relevant public bodies to report on how they are meeting their obligations under the Equality Act. Sheffield City Council does this through compiling and publishing a range of reports including the Annual Equality Report, the Workforce Data Report and other functions including publishing Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs).

If individuals choose their own preferred terms, rather than those defined by ONS, the council would be unable to report effectively on whether it was successfully discharging the general duty. SCC prefers to use ONS terminology because it is recognised as an authoritative source, allowing comparative data sets to be analysed. *Discussions about terminology are historical, long standing and highly emotive. When completing any equality monitoring information, it is essential to highlight two potential key distinctions. There is a difference between the terminology devised by the ONS and set out in the Equality Act and used by local authorities to monitor service delivery/workforce issues and how people choose to identify themselves personally.

Sheffield City Council's equality monitoring is aligned to both ONS and Harmonised Standards, but to ensure inclusivity SCC also include additional categories to reflect changes in Sheffield's demographics. For example, Yemeni and Somali have been included as options under 'Other ethnic group' and 'Black or Black British,' respectively. This has been the result of extensive consultation and is underpinned by evidence-based research. ONS regularly undertake consultations on a range of different issues and feedback can be given via their website.

Also, where respondents feel they do not personally identify with a category list within a protected characteristic, there is the option to select 'other' and self-identify, where appropriate. The use of equality monitoring to discharge the PSED is underpinned by law and subsequent case law. Importantly, however, respondents can choose to answer all, some or none of the questions; the completion of equality monitoring is voluntary not mandatory.

It is also important to note that we should not ask for, collect and store personal data that we are not intending to use. However, based on evidence, we need to consider where data is needed to make accurate decisions to discharge our equality duties.

*For further information please see Sheffield Race Equality Commission, *An Independent Commission into Racism and Racial Disparities in Sheffield*, June 2022 (page 22).

6.0 Protected characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination on the basis of their protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (inc nationality, ethnicity and colour)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- marriage or civil partnership* (only relates to work discrimination)

In Sheffield we also monitor other groups which are not protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act, but the Council has agreed we need to understand the impact of our decisions upon people who are Care Experienced, unpaid carers, veterans, financial inclusion and poverty and our voluntary community and faith sector for example.

At the end of the guidance there is a suggested list that can be used by all services as a standard template to record customer insight information. The standard template ensures consistency in what we record and that we use the same wording in the questions. We always should add another or other to questions so people can self-describe as appropriate, except with age. You may also want to add prefer not to say however with this option when you are doing your analysis all who ticked this must be super nummary or missing data to any findings by definition and taken out of calculations.

Age

The Equality Act defines Age as 'a person belonging to a particular age (for example 32-year-olds) or range of ages (for example 18- to 30-year-olds).'

Age groups can be quite wide (for example, 'people under 50' or 'under 18s'). They can also be quite specific (for example, 'people in their mid-40s'). Terms such as 'young person' and 'youth' or 'elderly' and 'pensioner' can also indicate an age group.

Legislation prevents discrimination in employment and in the provision of goods and services. This does not mean that we can't provide age specific services. However, there are varying levels of awareness and take up of council services by different age groups and monitoring this is one way of ensuring services are accessible. This is not solely about barriers that older people have in accessing services; it applies to younger people and other specific age groups for different services.

Please add a further under 16 age categories if required but do not add sexual orientation or gender reassignment for under 16. See these sections for further detail.

The age bands we have used are based on Census information [How life has changed in Sheffield: Census 2021 (ons.gov.uk)](#)

Disability

Sheffield City Council advocates the use of the social model as it makes disability an everyday matter for all. All staff hold a responsibility for creating an accessible environment; therefore language and behaviour is expected to promote the social model. However, as this guidance centres on the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010, we have used the legal definition throughout.

The Equality Act defines Disability as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial (more than minor) and long-term (more than a year) adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

For some conditions, it can be less than a year. For cancer, MS and HIV, you are considered disabled from diagnosis. It is always important to check. Conditions can also be fluctuating or recuring and there are rules for these. Some things are explicitly excluded so see [guidance](#) on disability as required.

By monitoring initial contact from and take up of services by disabled people with particular impairments we can compare this against local and national data and calculate what percentage of local people we are reaching. Analysing the feedback from customers with a particular impairment helps you better understand their experience, needs and preferences. This learning informs the design of more accessible services or provides the basis for further discussion with involvement of disabled people in the process or service redesign.

The categories we have used are quite general groupings and as with other questions an individual may fit more than one of the headings. It is for the people answering to state which best describes the nature of their impairment.

It is important to remember that not all impairments are readily identifiable. While some impairments, particularly visible ones, are easier to identify, there are many which are not so immediately obvious, for example some mental health conditions and learning disabilities.

We consulted various disability groups on the terminology and categories in this section and also used definitions and terminology used in legislation and national data sets including Impairment harmonised standards.

Gender Reassignment (Trans)

Gender reassignment is a protected characteristic in the Equality Act. Trans/transgender people feel that their gender identity does not match their sex at birth. A person can define as trans where they undergo, or propose to undergo, a process for the purpose of reassigning their gender. You do not need to have undergone any medical treatment or surgery and you can be at any stage in the transition process, from proposing to reassign or, undergoing a process of reassignment, or having completed it.

Gender Identity

Gender identity refers to how some people's sense of how they feel about their gender, whether male, female or another category such as non-binary. This may or may not be the same as their sex registered at birth. Not all people share a belief in gender identity but some people feel this is very important to them, so we record this to be inclusive, but gender reassignment is the protected characteristic not identity.

A non-binary person is someone who does not identify with the binary categories of a man or woman

A trans man is someone who was registered female at birth, but now identifies as a man.

A trans woman is someone who was registered male at birth, but now identifies as a woman.

Asking about gender reassignment or a gender identity can be a sensitive area. You need to have identified a clear purpose for how you are going to use the information when you decide to include 'trans' monitoring. Anxiety about this scenario may also inhibit people from identifying themselves. Also, some people may not understand the question or may not want to answer for a variety of reasons.

The number of trans residents in Sheffield is relatively small about 0.6% of the population so there is an increased risk that individuals could be identified. This could jeopardise the privacy and safety of people (including those who are not trans but might be perceived to be).

Trans equality monitoring should not generally be used on surveys for customers under the age of 18. Questions on trans identity and gender reassignment should only take place if it is anonymous and kept confidential.

However, there may be occasions where a younger person's service or equivalent which gives support and advice on issues relating to gender identity or reassignment needs to undertake monitoring on this protected characteristic. Where this is the case, it is important this monitoring is used to focus specifically on developing its service delivery. This will need to be undertaken

in line with the service's safeguarding protocols and within the law on the Gender Recognition Act.

Remember that many trans people (especially those who have the protection of legal gender recognition) may not wish to be identified as having a trans history. Any process which leads to their identification could lead to prosecution under Section 22 of the Gender Recognition Act 2004 or via the Data Protection Act 1998.

Note sexual orientation and gender reassignment are different protected characteristics so should be asked about separately. See ONS and EHRC. Gender identity, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

Race

The Equality Act describes race as**,** 'a race is a group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship) ethnicity or national origins. A racial group can be made up of more than one distinct racial group, such as Black British.'

We monitor ethnicity and the categories have been chosen because they are the ones used in the Census, therefore enabling us to compare with national and regional data. The groups included in our list are based on the profile of the population of Sheffield.

The form uses a mixture of terms such as "Welsh"; to "Arab"; "African" "Black"/ "White", "Irish Traveller". As with other questions these may create a situation where an individual could be in more than one category, in which case the person answering should decide how they wish to record this.

We have added a category of "Roma" in the "Race – White" box, even though it is an ethnic group whose roots that extends beyond the boundaries of Europe. See ONS census guidance

Religion and belief

The Equality Act defines religion and belief as 'any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of religious belief. This does not include political beliefs. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.'

Religion and belief can also be a sensitive area to ask about. On our form we use the same categories as used in the Census, however any other religions and faiths can be captured in the "Other (Please state)" section.

For purposes of the equality monitoring form Jewish is an option within the religion and belief section rather than the ethnic origin section as this mirrors the categories within the Census. If an individual describes their ethnic origin as Jewish, this can be recorded in the "Other ethnic groups" section on the monitoring form.

You should never make an assumption about a person's religious background based on race or appearance and when monitoring you should always ensure that the customer is the one who selects the category they feel defines their identity.

More information on religion and belief issues can be found at the Equality and Human Rights Commission website: www.equalityhumanrights.com.Or ONS guidance or updates.

Sex

The Equality Act defines Sex as 'a man or a woman.'

Monitoring is important to make sure that women and men are treated fairly in the provision of goods and services. We can also provide sex specific services where appropriate. As with all characteristics you may decide to look at it as an important factor on its own or also alongside other categories (sex and age or caring responsibility; ethnicity).

If you are asking for a title, such as a prefix please add Mx as a gender- neutral option. However, the title question itself is optional.

Sexual orientation

The Equality Act describes Sexual orientation as, 'whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.' Monitoring sexual orientation is sometimes seen as a sensitive area to ask customers about, however the reasons for monitoring sexuality are the same as for other equality areas. There are a number of key issues to consider in relation to sexual orientation monitoring:

- Generally lesbian women, gay men and bisexual people welcome the inclusion of sexuality monitoring within service planning and delivery. However, some may not feel safe declaring their sexuality. You will need to ensure that information is collected, collated and stored confidentially.

- People of different generations may use different language to define their sexuality. For example, some older people may define themselves as homosexual rather than lesbian or gay and some younger people may prefer to identify as queer/ or questioning etc. There are a variety of ways for people to identify that's may also be offensive to others so we always include 'other' so people can tell us how they prefer to identify.

- It is important to include heterosexual to ensure that all main sexual orientations are covered.

- People carrying out monitoring need to do so appropriately and sensitively.

Sexual orientation monitoring should not generally be asked on surveys of customers under the age of 16, unless it's a younger person's service and relevant. You may which to include an unsure/ questioning response as well as other but there should be a 'another' option.

You may be concerned that people will object to questions on sexual orientation being asked. Sometimes people do object to any type of monitoring but the option not to fill in any of the sections should be made clear and never just said in reference to sexuality.

You should never make an assumption about a person's sexual orientation based on appearance. You should always ensure that the customer is the one who selects the category they feel defines their identity. Please see ONS guidance.

Other recommended equality groups

Care experienced

Care Experienced relates to individuals that are in care or have experience of being in care in the past. Being care experienced means you will have spent time living with foster carers under

local authority care, in residential care (e.g. a children's home), looked after at home under a supervision order, or with relatives or friends, either officially (e.g. a special guardianship order) or informally without local authority support.

Sometimes you will see the term 'care leaver' used. Although this has a slightly different meaning, it is often used interchangeably with 'care experienced.'

Care experienced people face significant barriers that impact them throughout their lives. Despite their resilience, society often does not take their needs into account. Care experienced people often face discrimination and stigma across housing, health, education, relationships, employment and in the criminal justice system. By making care experienced an equality group will provide greater authority to public services, employers, businesses and policy makers to put in place policies and programmes which promote better outcomes for care experienced people.

Monitoring the number of care experienced individuals will allow the council to ensure it is developing services which support those who have experience of being in care.

Caring responsibilities

The Equality Act 2010 extended the definition of direct and indirect discrimination to disability. Therefore, a carer can be discriminated against if the person they care for is affected by a decision or policy.

There is now much more information from national surveys about the number of people providing care and their circumstances. Asking customers about their caring responsibilities increases recognition of carers and from this we can develop a better understanding of what support will enable them to continue to provide care. This applies to universal services not just social care support.

By carers we mean people providing unpaid care for family members or friends. It does not apply to people who are paid to care or who do it in a formal but unpaid capacity for a voluntary organisation.

Childcare

This enables us to gain a better understanding of the needs of people who use our services, better plan service provision around different childcare responsibilities or overcome barriers to accessing services.

How would you describe your national identity?

This question is asked to mirror that asked in the 2021 Census.

The national identity question also increases the public's acceptability of the ethnicity question by allowing respondents to express their identity as British, English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or Other (self-describe).

Language preference

This monitors use of different preferred spoken languages enabling us to predict demand more precisely for specific interpreting services and understand how to reach certain communities more effectively.

This category includes British Sign Language (BSL) for deaf customers, the monitoring of which can help assess need for interpreters who can sign.

Relationship status

This is only a protected characteristic in relation to employment so is optional for customers. You need to think how this information will enable you to better understand your customer needs and preferences or overcome a barrier to accessing services.

If this question is to be included you should use all of the categories listed on the standard set of monitoring categories form.

Relationship to Sheffield

Our commitment to fairness means that wherever an individual lives in the city they have fair access to our generic services.

Knowing how many people are permanent Sheffield residents and how many are visitors will also inform the planning of future provision.

Postcode

By recording part of a customers' postcode, it is possible to plot geographical variations in service access and take up across Sheffield. It also offers the opportunity to match various customer insight profiles that the Council has developed such as which Local area Committee area you are in.

When using postcode information, it is important to include the first 3 or 4 digits. This is so a locality can be identified without revealing the specific location.

For example: The first 3 or 4 digits would include S8 0 or S10 3.

Residency

The inclusion of residency as a question will enable us to collect information about our new and emerging communities. There have in recent years been increases in the population of migrant workers from Eastern Europe who are moving to Sheffield, as well as asylum seekers and refugees.

If you feel that by collating information on residency it will be beneficial in removing barriers and improving service delivery then this should be included on your equality monitoring.

Knowing how many people are permanent residents and how many are visitors / applying for right to stay will also inform the planning of future provision.

Please note the distinction between an Asylum Seeker, Refugee and Migrant Worker.

Asylum Seeker, Refugee, Migrant?

Although the media use these terms interchangeably, they are not the same. Probably the least ambiguous definitions are those from the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

Asylum Seeker

An asylum-seeker is someone whose request for sanctuary has yet to be processed. Every year, around one million people seek asylum.

People who claim asylum have experienced significant trauma:

• War and conflict
• Enforced conscription to militia groups
• Imprisonment and in some cases torture
• Genocide
• Physical and/or sexual violence and witnessed violence to others
• Traumatic bereavement
• Trafficking

Refugee

People who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country.

Refugees are defined and protected in international law.

The [1951 Refugee Convention](#) is a key legal document and defines a refugee as: "someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion."

Migrant

The term migrant is not defined under international law and is sometimes used differently by different stakeholders. Traditionally, the word 'migrant' has been used to designate people who move by choice rather than to escape conflict or persecution, usually across an international border ('international migrants'), for instance to join family members already abroad, to search for a livelihood, or for a range of other purposes.

UNHCR recommends that people who are likely to be asylum-seekers or refugees are referred to as such, and that the word 'migrant' should not be used as a catchall term to refer to refugees or to people who are likely to need international protection. Doing so can risk undermining access to the specific legal protections that states are obliged to provide to refugees.

Service personnel and their family

Men and women currently serving in the UK Armed Forces, their families and also former servicemen and women will need to access our services and also be linked into support from other agencies.

We need to develop our understanding of the needs and particular circumstances of these groups of customers in accessing council or other services. Service history may also link to other categories of personal information collected on the form such as disability, ethnicity, or caring responsibilities.

We want to ensure that members of the Armed Forces and their families are not disadvantaged in their access to service and support by their contribution to or the effect of their service in the Forces.

Armed forces include: Army, Navy, Air force, and reservists such as members of the Territorial Army who have active service. "Families" means partner, dependent child, parent or sibling where they are supporting or supported by service personnel.

Titles

Asking for a title, a name prefix such as Ms or Dr is optional but if you do choose this question you should always include a gender neutral option such as Mx. This is because some people will prefer not to use a gender specific term and others will identify as non-binary.

Optional monitoring questions

These questions are optional and can be used alongside standard equality monitoring information to improve and understand services for customers or as questions in a survey or other engagement exercise which relate directly to:

- Accommodation
- Employment
- Finance – cost of living
- Socioeconomic analysis

Accommodation status

Accommodation status is an area where social inequality translates to health inequality. It can be seen both as a cause and a consequence to poor physical and mental health resulting in a range of other disparities.

Employment status

We want to better understand the needs of customers in relation to economic activity

We also have a large student population and it's important to understand how the needs in this area impact on service delivery.

Finance – cost of living

This will help to understand the impact of the cost of living crisis on customers accessing council services. It will inform how we develop services to ensure we have a good understanding of our customers' needs and the support we can offer to individuals.

Socioeconomic analysis

Socioeconomic status can have a significant impact on education, for example. Children from lower-income families often have limited access to quality education, resources and support systems. This can lead to lower academic achievement, lower graduation rates and limited opportunities for higher education or career advancement.

For further information on measuring socio-economic background and the four questions recommended to use, please see Simplifying how employers measure socio-economic background: An accompanying report to new guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and Socio-economic background (SEB) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

7. Impact

If you are asking for feedback on a specific policy/ project or service, you may want to ask a supplemental question about expected impact of your characteristic on what you are providing feedback on. You can then use this in any EIA.

Also, if you have a very short feedback survey you may want to ask whether people feel their characteristics are relevant and ask which ones and ask them to provide feedback rather than asking all of the questions. However, only do this if you will not use the data, the monitoring isn't relevant as you already hold the data and you have had agreement to do so.

8. Examples of what you might measure

Ongoing contact
This measures people's experience, over a period of time, of using our services. It shows how different groups are treated at different stages of a process, e.g. from first contact through to the final service/ outcome they receive.

An example of where this method may be used might be in processing housing applications to find out if:

- there is a difference in outcomes of applications for different customers
- there is a difference in the perception of service delivery for different groups
- all groups are accessing the service equally
- any action that has been taken to improve the service is working

Occasional one-off contact
This looks at what happens when the customer contacts us. An example of where this method may be used is in the processing of planning applications to find out if:

- there are any particular groups that are using the service more than others
- all groups are accessing the service equally
- there are differences in the outcomes of applications for different groups
- there is a difference in the perception of the service for different groups

Take up, use of and drop out of services
This can help to assess and allocate the resources needed in the future, and to develop service delivery methods that meet the needs of different groups. An example of where this method may be used is in library or Children's Centre to find out if:

- there are differences in the frequency of usage by different equalities groups
- there are differences in the ways that different groups use services
- Services that are delivered are meeting the needs of the communities they serve
- there is anything you can do to increase usage by those groups that don't use the service

Satisfaction, complaints and other feedback
Most satisfaction surveys are anonymous, so it makes it easier to ask personal information and is helpful to see the profile of who is responding. When handling and analysing the returned information you need to ensure that individuals are not identified by comments etc. Using this method services may want to find out if:

- there are differences in the satisfaction levels or complaint rates for different groups customer with different needs or circumstances

- there are particular areas of their service that cause a problem for particular groups of customers
- there is an underlying cause or barrier that means that certain customers are receiving a better service than others and
- whether or not different customers have different expectations of the service

Procurement and management of services delivered under contract

Monitoring procurement and contract performance enables you to ensure that services delivered through contracted partners achieve the outcomes that we seek from directly delivered services.

9. Contacts

If you require any further information or wish to give feedback on this document, please contact the Equalities and Engagement Team equalitiesandengagement@sheffield.gov.uk

Tell Us About You

Sheffield City Council uses equality monitoring to ensure it is providing services that are inclusive while highlighting any gaps in delivery. Equality monitoring involves asking people to share information about themselves. This can be in relation to services for customers, or as questions in a survey or other engagement exercise.

If you do not wish to answer a question you can leave it blank.

Age
☐ 16-19 ☐ 20-24 ☐ 25-34
☐ 35-49 ☐ 50-64 ☐ 65-74
☐ 75-84 ☐ 85+

Sex
☐ Female ☐ Male
☐ Other (please state below)

_____

How would you describe your national identity?*
☐ British ☐ Northern Irish
☐ English ☐ Scottish
☐ Welsh
☐ Other (please state below)

_____

Ethnicity

White
☐ English/Welsh/Scottish/British/Northern Irish
☐ Irish
☐ Gypsy/Irish Traveller
☐ Roma
☐ Other White background (please state below)

_____

Asian or Asian British
☐ Indian ☐ Pakistani
☐ Bangladeshi ☐ Chinese
☐ Other Asian background (please state below)

_____

Black or Black British
☐ Caribbean
☐ Somali
☐ African other
☐ Other Black background (please state below)

_____

Other ethnic group
☐ Yemeni
☐ Other Arab
☐ Other ethnic group (please state below)
_____

Mixed/multiple heritage
☐ White and Black Caribbean
☐ White and Black African
☐ White and Asian
☐ Other mixed background (please state below)
_____

Sexual orientation
☐ Bisexual
☐ Gay/lesbian woman
☐ Gay man
☐ Heterosexual/straight
☐ Other (please state below)
_____

Trans status / gender identity
Do you identify as Trans?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes – how do you identify?
☐ Female   ☐ Male ☐Non-binary
☐ Other (please state below)
_____

Religion/belief
☐ No religion
☐ Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)
☐ Buddhist
☐ Hindu
☐ Jewish
☐ Muslim
☐ Sikh
☐ Other (please state below)
_____

Caring responsibilities*
A carer is anyone who provides unpaid care by looking after or giving help or support to family members (including a disabled child), friends, neighbours or others because of long-term physical or mental ill health / disability, or problems related to old age. It does not include parents of non-disabled children.

Are you an unpaid carer?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Care experienced*
Care Experienced relates to people that are in care or have experience of being in care at any time.

Have you been in care?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

Disability
A disability is an impairment that has (or is likely to have) a substantial (more than minor), adverse, long-term (more than a year) effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. See guidance for more detail.

For some conditions, it can be less than a year. For cancer, HIV and MS, you are considered disabled from diagnosis. It is always important to check.

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?
☐ Yes ☐ No

If you have answered 'yes', please select the box (es) below that best describe your impairment(s). The purpose of this question is to establish the types of impairment(s) you experience currently as a result of your health condition or illness. Please consider if you are affected in any of these areas while receiving any treatment or medication or using any devices to help you such as a hearing aid. Please select all that apply.

☐ Hearing (for example deafness or partial hearing)
☐ Learning or understanding or concentrating (dyslexia, dyscalculia)
☐ Dexterity (for example lifting and carrying objects, using a keyboard)
☐ Communication (Full or partial loss of voice or difficulty speaking)
☐ Memory (for example a form of dementia, trauma or progressive condition)
☐ Mental health (for example depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder)
☐ Mobility (for example walking short distances or climbing stairs)
☐ Socially or behaviourally (for example associated with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) which includes Asperger's, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD))
☐ Stamina or breathing or fatigue (for example Fibromyalgia, cardiovascular disease, ME)
☐ Vision (for example blindness or partial sight)
☐ None of the above
☐ Other condition (Long-term illness or health condition, eg cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, arthritis, chronic asthma) (please state below)
_____

Relationship to Sheffield*
☐ I live in Sheffield
☐ I work but do not live in Sheffield
☐ I visit Sheffield for leisure reasons only

Service personnel and their families*
Are you currently serving or a veteran in the UK Armed Forces?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you a member of a serviceperson's immediate family?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you a reservist or in part time service such as in the Territorial Army?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Postcode*
(First 3 or 4 digits, eg S8 0, S10 3)

_____

Optional Monitoring Questions

These questions are optional and can be used alongside standard equality monitoring to improve and understand services for customers or as questions in a survey or other engagement exercise which relate directly to:

- Accommodation
- Employment
- Finance – cost of living
- Socioeconomic analysis

Accommodation status
☐ Home owned outright
☐ Home owned with mortgage or loan
☐ Part owns and part rents (shared ownership)
☐ Rented – housing association, housing co-operative, charitable trust, registered social landlord
☐ Rented – council or local authority
☐ Rented – private landlord or letting agency
☐ Rented – employer of a household member
☐ Rented – relative or friend of a household member
☐ Other (please state below)

_____

Employment status – select all that apply ie a student may work FT or PT
☐ Full-time employment
☐ Part-time employment
☐ Self-employed
☐ Unemployed
☐ Jobseeker
☐ Retired
☐ Student
☐ Other (please state below)

_____

Finance
This question is designed to understand the impact of the current cost of living crisis on customers accessing council services. It will help inform how we develop services to ensure we have a good understanding of our customers' needs and the support we can offer to individuals. I would describe my financial situation currently as:

☐ I am unable to make ends meet
☐ I am struggling to make ends meet
☐ I am just about managing financially
☐ I am coping okay financially
☐ I am comfortable financially
☐ Prefer not to say

Socio-economic background

This question should be used in consultation and engagement activities which seek to assess the progress in improving and promoting socio-economic diversity and inclusion initiatives. When undertaking socio-economic analysis, it is recommended the question focusing on parental occupation is used, however, there are four different options to choose from. Please see below.

Question 1: Parental occupation

What was the occupation of your main household earner when you were aged 14?

☐ Modern professional and traditional professional occupations such as: teacher, nurse, physiotherapist, social worker, musician, police officer (sergeant or above), software designer, accountant, solicitor, medical practitioner, scientist, civil or mechanical engineer.

☐ Senior, middle or junior managers or administrators such as: finance manager, chief executive, large business owner, office manager, retail manager, bank manager, restaurant manager, warehouse manager.

☐ Clerical and intermediate occupations such as: secretary, personal assistant, call centre agent, clerical worker, nursery nurse.

☐ technical and craft occupations such as: motor mechanic, plumber, printer, electrician, gardener, train driver.

☐ Routine, semi-routine manual and service occupations such as: postal worker, machine operative, security guard, caretaker, farm worker, catering assistant, sales assistant, HGV driver, cleaner, porter, packer, labourer, waiter or waitress, bar staff.

☐ Long-term unemployed (claimed Jobseeker's Allowance or earlier unemployment benefit for more than a year).

☐ Small business owners who employed less than 25 people such as: corner shop owners, small plumbing companies, retail shop owner, single restaurant or cafe owner, taxi owner, garage owner.

☐ Other such as: retired, this question does not apply to me, I don't know (please state below)
_____

Question 2: Type of school attended

Which type of school did you attend for the most time between the ages of 11 and 16?

☐ a state-run or state-funded school
☐ independent or fee-paying school
☐ independent or fee-paying school, where I received a bursary covering 90% or more of my tuition
☐ attended school outside the UK
☐ I do not know
☐ prefer not to say
☐ Other (please state below)
_____

Question 3: Free school meal eligibility

If you finished school after 1980, were you eligible for free school meals at any point during your school years?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not applicable (finished school before 1980 or went to school overseas)
☐ I do not know
☐ Prefer not to say
☐ Other (please state below)

_____

Question 4: Highest parental qualification

Did either of your parents attend university by the time you were 18

☐ No, neither of my parents attended university
☐ Yes, one or both of my parents attended university
☐ Do not know or not sure
☐ Prefer not to say
☐ Other (please state below)

_____

*These questions are not protected characteristics defined under the Equality Act 2010 but are key areas where the Council has agreed it needs to understand the impact of its decisions on customers.