

Screening/Scoping Pro Forma

Section	Revenues		Officer responsible for the screening/scoping	Donna Stacey		
Name of Policy to be assessed	Fraud Investigations		Date of Assessment	26/09/2008	Is this a proposed new or existing policy/procedure/practice?	Existing
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/procedure/practice?			Investigate, prosecute & caution those that perpetuate benefit fraud and ensure overpaid benefit is promptly recovered.			
2. Are there any associated or specific objectives of the policy/procedure/practice? Please explain.			To prevent, detect & prosecute fraudulent benefit applications. Advertise prosecution policy Achieve government targets			
3. Who is intended to benefit from this policy and in what way?			Residents within the borough to keep future C/tax or UBR increases to a minimum & equality to all & therefore ensuring costs of services provided by the borough can be met.			
4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy/procedures/practice?			Reduce fraud within the borough Achieve sanctions target Increase in income by identifying fraud overpayments			
5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?			Reluctance of residents to report benefit fraud			
6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?		Residents & taxpayers DWP, Councillors, Staff, Magistrates & County Court, Police Authority & other outside agencies such as Inland Revenue		7. Who implements the policy, and who is responsible for the policy?		This is a statutory service which is required by Central Government & actioned by the Borough in accordance with legislation
8. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact on racial groups?			<input type="checkbox"/>	N	Please explain: Fraud is committed by all racial groups and investigations are carried out using the methods irrespective of race	
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			However, if claimant is clearly unable to communicate in English an interpreter is arranged. The race of investigators is in line with the percentage of the borough's population			
9. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to gender?			<input type="checkbox"/>	N	Claimant is investigated in the same manner whether male or female.	
What existing evidence (either presumed or			Team consists of male & female officers and used where appropriate.			

otherwise) do you have for this?		
10. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to disability?	N	It is considered if someone has a mental illness, and if it is evident, it is ensured that an appropriate adult is present with them while being interviewed.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		It is also asked at start of every interview if they are on any medication that could impair their understanding. Interviews can also be arranged at alternative location that is convenient for the interviewee.
11. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?	N	Not asked and is irrelevant to the investigation.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		This information is not requested and is only revealed during the course of the interview if the claimant chooses to disclose it.
12. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to their age?	N	Under 18's and elderly are treated slightly differently.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		Any claimant between the ages of 16 to 18 are only interviewed if an appropriate adult is also present. The same also applies to the elderly if they are vulnerable to ensure they or a representative have a full understanding of the proceedings.
13. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to their religious belief?	N	Religious beliefs are taken in account when conducting interviews.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		A female fraud officer is always predominantly used where it would possibly be against the religious views to use a male officer.
14. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them having dependants/caring responsibilities?	N	The claimants caring responsibilities are taken into account when arranging and conducting the interviews.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		Interviews can be arranged at a mutually convenient time and place.

otherwise) do you have for this?		
15. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them have an offending past?	Y	An offending past would affect the decision to prosecute or not, in particular if the claimant had been convicted of a similar offence previously.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		This is a legal requirement as the prosecution policy is evidence based and conducted in line with public interest.
16. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them being Transgender or transsexual?	N	Not asked & is irrelevant to the investigation.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?		This is something that would only be revealed during the course of the interview and only if the claimant chooses to reveal this information.
17. Could the differential impact identified in 8-16 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy/procedure/practice?	N	Please explain
18. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason?	N	Please explain for each heading (questions 8-16) on a separate piece of paper.
Business improvement 19. Is there any concern that there are unmet needs in relation to any of the above groups?	N	Please explain
		Please explain

<p>20. Does differential impact or unmet need cut across the equality strands (e.g. elder BME groups)?</p>	<p>N</p>	
<p>21. If yes, should the full EIA be conducted jointly with another service area/contractor/partner/agency?</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Please explain</p>
<p>22. Is there a missed opportunity to improve your business in relation to any of the policies, procedures or practices to promote racial, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief equality?</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>The policy is approved by the elected members, in accordance with legislation. It is not a service that can be geared to any one group as this could be seen as discrimination. The operation of the policy is conducted in line with PACE (Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984) Confidential Fraud reporting line is promoted on the Benefits literature and annually with the Council Tax bills. There are also close links with the national promotions undertaken by the Department of Work & Pensions. These close links usually ensure any fraud investigated by one sector is passed others were legislation allows.</p>

			Yes	No
24. If No, are there any changes required to the policy to improve it around the equality agenda?		<i>Consider equality monitoring of applicants to ensure that there is not a disproportionate number from a particular equality strand(s) who are the subject of fraud investigation.</i>		

Signed
(completing officer)

Date September 2008

Signed
(Head of Section)

Date

Countersigned
(Hr representative)

Date September 2008