



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

**Multi-Equality
Impact Assessment
Toolkit**

Stage 2: Partial MEIA

Stage 2: Partial Multi-Equality Impact Assessment

A Partial Impact Assessment will be appropriate if the screening process identified low relevance to equalities and will build on the initial assessment. In most cases it is likely that a partial MEIA will be sufficient, although for some policies it may highlight the need for further investigation, which would require you to move to a full MEIA.

The partial MEIA is based mainly on what information you already have/ what you already know in relation to the policy which may be in the form of gathered data or previous consultation. This stage does however, prompt you to engage in informal consultation where there is little information available, to enable you to further substantiate the conclusions reached.

By undertaking a partial MEIA you will assess the positive and negative impacts on different groups. You will also identify the risks associated with the policy in relation to differential impact and weigh these against the benefits that the policy may have.

Should the partial MEIA point to a real concern about the policy in terms of differential impact, which is echoed by the views of the experts/relevant groups, then it will be necessary to undertake a full EIA.

The following sections outline each stage of the Partial MEIA in more detail and should be referred to when completing the proforma at Appendix A. All sections must be completed.

Section 1: Function / Policy Details

The first step of the assessment process is to identify what the policy is designed to achieve. This will help you to identify the needs of affected groups or people. It will also help you identify who may be affected by the policy.

Question/Heading	Description
Name of function / policy	Provide the name of the policy, strategy, project, funding, initiative etc that requires an Impact Assessment.
Policy Officer	This is the person who is responsible for developing or reviewing the policy.
Lead Service / Partnership	This will be the Service / Partnership that takes primary responsibility for the MEIA. For a partnership function / policy the need to undertake the MEIA remains.
Impact Assessment Team	This is the group of people carrying out the impact assessment relative to the policy.
Is this function / policy new or existing?	This will indicate to the team whether the MEIA is part of the development process, review process or a retrospective MEIA.
Why is this being assessed?	A brief description outlining why the policy is being impact assessed.
What are the main aims of the policy?	Give a brief summary outlining the aims of the policy. The aims may include reference to other documents such as the Service plan, Community Plans or legislative requirements.
Who are the main target groups / beneficiaries?	Identify the people or groups that may be affected by the policy. For example, the main target groups/beneficiaries of free school meals will be school pupils, parents and guardians.
What are the intended outcomes of the policy?	Provide a summary of what the policy intends to achieve.

Section 2: Equality Target Groups & Cross Cutting Issues

2.1 You should identify the groups for which the policy could have a differential impact. This should be as identified at the screening stage.

2.2 Cross cutting issues - The MEIA process allows us to consider the relationship between belonging to an equality target group and the effect of wider cross cutting issues, which is helpful when assessing positive and negative impacts.

The following cross cutting issues have been identified as being important in Aberdeenshire and should be considered as part of the MEIA process. However, it is also important to note that the MEIA does allow individual project teams and officers to identify additional cross cutting issues that are relevant to their specific function or policy.

Cross cutting issues:

- Employees
- Health problems
- Access (including rural isolation and geographic location)
- Low income
- Literacy difficulties
- Unemployed
- Homelessness
- Carers/caring responsibilities
- Drug and Alcohol users

When assessing positive impacts, considering the wider cross cutting issues involved allows us to identify more easily those people who will benefit most from the policy.

Similarly, when assessing negative impacts, identifying any cross cutting issues will allow officers completing the MEIA to pin point more accurately those people who could be particularly affected by any negative impacts that the policy may have. This is important because cross cutting issues can act to heighten any potential disadvantages that any equality target groups or individuals may experience.

The effect of cross cutting issues on negative impacts should be thought of as layers which have a compounding effect on each other making a person increasingly more vulnerable to discrimination.

Section 3: Impact

3.1 Based on the evidence/ information available, officer knowledge and any previous consultations you should identify positive and negative impacts that the policy may have on any of the effected equality target group(s). You should provide details of the impact and a summary of the evidence that has led you to reach this decision. When identifying the positive and negative impact you should consider the potential for the policy to affect access and experience of services, such as transport, health care, social services, housing services, education etc.

3.2 Considering the differential impact(s) identified at 3.1, you should detail any risks associated with introducing/ amending the policy. You may wish to consider whether the policy could discriminate, lead to negative groups relations or result in access difficulties etc.

3.3 Considering the differential impact(s) identified at 3.1, you should detail any benefits associated with introducing/ amending the policy. You may wish to consider whether the policy will promote equality of opportunity, improve group relations, improve access issues, overcome negative impact associated with another policy etc.

3.4 Dependant on the differential impacts identified and the associated risks, you may need to seek input from experts and/or relevant groups. You should detail who could be contacted to provide comment on the issues identified, how you intend to gather their input and when.

3.5 Having gathered input from experts and/or relevant groups you should detail their views on the issues identified.

3.6 You should now consider all of the evidence available and the conclusions you have reached in assessing differential impact. You must weigh up the associated risks against the policy benefits. As you undertake this review, you should be able to identify whether any additional information/ evidence is required in order to fully assess the true impact on an equality target group and reach an accurate conclusion.

3.7 Based on your decision at 3.6 indicate whether it is necessary to undertake a full MEIA. Where it is felt that additional information is required and that the differential impacts cause real concern it is recommended that a full MEIA be undertaken.

Section 4: Publication

It is a legal requirement to make the results of the MEIA available to the public, and as a minimum standard, it must be available on the Aberdeenshire Council website.

Prior to publication, the MEIA form must be signed off following completion of all other sections. Two signatures are required:

Head of Service or Service Representative

The Head of Service has knowledge of the subject and responsibility within the Service to ensure that the content is of an acceptable standard, and that the actions are SMART.

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Timebound

Quality Assurance

A 'buddy' should be identified from a pool of existing MEIA Lead Officers to quality assure the process of MEIA (each Council service has a MEIA Lead Officer). As a result the 'buddy' should be fully trained on MEIA and external to the Service.

The 'buddy' should be satisfied that the process has been followed according to the guidance, and that all available evidence has been considered in reaching the decisions. As part of the Quality assurance process the 'buddy' will complete the proforma at Appendix B. This will document the process and provide detail of any amendments recommended.

Once signed by both signatories, the Policy author should email the completed MEIA form to the Policy Officer (Equalities), Chief Executive for publication.



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**Multi-Equality
Impact Assessment**

Partial MEIA Form

Name of Policy: Aberdeenshire Community Transport Initiative
(ACTI) grant funding - reduction in funding from April 2012
Date of Assessment: 27/02/12

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

Section 1: Function / Policy Details

Name of Function / Policy	Aberdeenshire Community Transport Initiative (ACTI) grant funding to community groups – reduction in funding from April 2012
Lead Service / Partnership	Infrastructure Services (PTU)
Policy Officer (Name / Position)	Marion Mackay, Principal Officer (DRT, Fares & Ticketing)
Impact Assessment Team (Names / Positions)	Marion Mackay, Principal Officer Heather Dey, Senior Transport Officer

Is this function / policy...

New? (✓)	Existing? (✓)
	x

What are the main aims of the policy?	The ACTI grant funding supports community groups in providing local transport such as dial-a-bus services, volunteer car schemes, or minibuses available for hire to community groups. The decision was taken in February 2011 to reduce the budget in order to address the reduced funding available to the Council.
Who are the main target groups / beneficiaries?	Older people People with disabilities People without access to suitable alternative transport (either private or public) Young people
What are the intended outcomes of the policy?	Residents can access services, e.g. shopping or medical appointments, that they would otherwise have difficulty in accessing. (Community transport groups would be unable to provide such services without grant funding).

Section 2: Equality Target Groups & Cross Cutting Issues

2.1 Identify which equality target groups there are concerns that the policy could have a differential impact.

Equality Strand	Equality Target Group	Please tick
Race	Includes skin colour, nationality, ethnic origin and national origin. For example English, Black/white, Gypsy Travellers and migrant workers.	
Disability	Disabled: substantial, adverse and long-term physical or mental impairments such as physical mobility difficulties, hearing & visual impairment, learning difficulties, mental illness, diabetes, HIV, epilepsy, cancer, etc.	x
Gender	Women, men, girls, boys or transsexuals/ transgender	
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian, gay, bisexual	
Belief	Religious beliefs or other philosophical beliefs similar to a religion/no religion.	
Age	Older people and young people, children	x

2.2 Are there any cross cutting issues to consider?

Possible cross cutting issues you should consider for the purpose of this MEIA are employees, health problems, access (including rural isolation), low income, unemployed, literacy difficulties, homelessness and caring responsibilities, or any other relevant issue(s).

Access (including rural isolation)

Section 3: Assessing the Impacts

3.1 What are the potential differential impacts for the equality target group(s) and what evidence is there to suggest this?

Positive Impact	Negative Impact
<p>The availability of grant funding enables groups to provide transport services to local residents so they can access services and facilities that they might not otherwise be able to access. The community transport groups seek to assist older people and people with disabilities.</p> <p>The reduction in funding will not benefit any users.</p>	<p>As the groups aim to assist older people and people with disabilities, any potential reduction in services could impact on individuals within these groups who use the community transport services provided by the groups.</p>

3.2 Given the differential impact(s) identified, what are the risks associated with introducing/ amending the policy?

Given that grants are provided for up to 75% of scheme costs, the reduction in grant has the potential to lead to a reduction or withdrawal of services unless community transport grants can adapt to the proposed financial changes by a range of measures such as alternative fundraising or operating efficiency measures.

In the case of Buchan DACB, residents may be unable to travel to access services or they may have fewer opportunities to travel should the group be unable to cope with the revised funding arrangements.

3.3 What are the benefits associated with introducing/ amending the policy?

There are no benefits to users in reducing grant funding and it places community groups under pressure to review their operations to try to minimise the impact on users.

3.4 Are there any experts and/or relevant groups that you can approach to explore their views on the issues? If yes, please list the groups and detail how their views will be obtained.

The community transport groups who receive grants:

- (i) groups were initially advised of the 10% (£40k) reduction in budget at the Aberdeenshire Community Transport Forum meeting on 28 Feb 2011 to give them as much notice as possible
- (ii) discussions were held with groups on an individual basis in summer 2011

- with the aim of seeking ways to minimise the overall effect on users of reducing support to groups
- (iii) groups were encouraged to speak to officers to discuss potential difficulties with the revised arrangements in advance of submitting grant applications
 - (iv) Aberdeenshire Community Transport Forum meetings were held on 28 July and 17 November, providing groups with further opportunity to discuss the issue.

3.5 What are the views of the experts and/or relevant groups?

With the exception of Buchan DACB, all of the community transport groups that are funded under ACTI have identified that they anticipate being able to cope with the reduction in grant funding to minimise the impact on users. Groups have introduced efficiency savings and/or anticipate an increase in fundraising from elsewhere in order to reduce their ACTI grant requirements.

Buchan DACB has stated that a reduction in grant funding may result in the withdrawal of, or a reduction in, their Alternative Patient Transport Service as detailed in their documents entitled (i) "Impact of cut on DACB services" and (ii) "APT Figures April to Oct 11".

3.6 Taking into account all of the above, please clearly state the risks associated with the policy, weighed against the benefits of the policy, and whether any additional information/ evidence is required.

Grants are awarded for up to 75% of project costs for the community groups so any reduction in funding will have a potentially adverse effect. However, six of the seven groups in receipt of ACTI funding have indicated that they have been able to adapt to the changes with minimal impact on users.

Buchan DACB has advised that their APT service may be reduced or withdrawn if they cannot cover the shortfall in grant funding. Council officers will offer further assistance to the group in submitting bids for alternative funding, and in assessing potential efficiency savings and income generation.

3.7 As a result is a full Multi-Equality Impact Assessment necessary?

Yes

No

Section 4: Publishing the Results of the Assessment

Prior to publication, the MEIA need to be agreed and signed off by your Head of Service and Quality Assured by an MEIA Lead officer.

1. Head of Service or Service Representative

Signed: Name:...EWAN WALLACE Date: 1/2/2012

2. Quality Assurance

Signed:..... Name:..... Date:.....

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

Multi-Equalities Impact Assessment Partial MEIA Quality Assurance Form

The quality assurance role is to ensure that the **process** of impact assessment has been followed, as detailed in the Partial MEIA Guidance Notes.

Quality Assurance should be undertaken by a 'buddy' who has been trained in MEIA. The 'buddy' should not be from the assessing Service, or a member of the MEIA team.

A copy of the completed Partial MEIA form must be made available, and questions may be asked of the policy author, to clarify any areas if necessary.

Name of policy: **Aberdeenshire Community Transport Initiative (ACTI) grant funding - reduction in funding from April 2012**

Service of MEIA: **Infrastructure Service**

Section 1: Function / Policy Details

1. Are you satisfied with the MEIA team membership?
(Number and relevance) YES NO
2. Are you satisfied with the **outcome** of the policy / function?
(The 'effect' or 'result' of the policy / function) YES NO

Section 2: Equality Target groups

1. Are you satisfied that all 6 strands have been considered?
(race, gender, disability etc) YES NO
2. Are you satisfied that any cross cutting issues have been explored? (Health, unemployment etc) YES NO

Section 3: Assessing the Impacts

1. Are you satisfied that consideration has been given to the potential differential impact and associated risks/benefits? YES NO
2. Are you satisfied that expert views have been sought and considered where necessary? YES NO
3. Are you satisfied with the decision as to whether a full MEIA is required? YES NO

Additional information

Please detail below any points for clarification and recommended actions.

Point for clarification/ Recommendation	Action	When	Who

Signed by officer completing QA: _____

Print name: _CAROL SIMMONDS

Service: _____

Date of QA: _1____/ _2____/ _2012