



**Devon & Cornwall Police  
Equality Impact Assessment**

<b>Function area: Alliance Operations Department</b>	
<b>Policy/Working Practice Title &amp; Number</b>	<b>D259 Welfare Checks Policy</b>
<b>Name of Business Lead</b>	<b>Head of CMCU &amp; Head of Alliance Operations Dept.</b>
<b>Name of person carrying out EIA</b>	<b>Equality &amp; Diversity Officer, Force HQ</b>
<b>Version &amp; date</b>	<b>Policy version 01/04/16 EIA date 08/03/2016</b>
<b>Associated Documents / Working Practices</b>	<b>n/a</b>

**Equality Impact Initial Screening**

<b>1. Significance &amp; Impact:</b> The relevance for equality depends on the nature and extent of the impact not just the numbers of people affected.	
Do the proposals affect service users, employees or the wider community?	Yes
Do the proposals significantly affect service delivery, business processes or policy?	Yes
Does it involve a significant commitment of resources?	No
Do the proposals relate to an area where there are known inequalities? (e.g. hate crime, domestic abuse, accessibility, recruitment & progression)	Yes
<b>2. What are the main aims, purpose and outcomes of the proposals?</b>	
<p>This policy seeks to reduce demand on police time where calls identified as “welfare checks” come in from other agencies, e.g. doctors, hospitals, mental health agencies, social services. These calls are a considerable, and increasing, demand on resources in recent years and the police are not necessarily the correct responders and may, indeed, delay appropriate intervention or exacerbate a situation if they attend (for example, in some cases of mental ill-health).</p> <p>At present the police attend the majority of these calls but the incidents are frequently outside the police legal and core duty. In the majority of cases the responsibility of these checks or the management of the specific risk or vulnerability falls to other agencies. In the absence of well evidenced and detailed immediate risk to life by the requesting agency, the police are likely to have no role in the above scenarios.</p> <p>The policy draws upon protocols and procedures used by other forces to work with other agencies to ensure calls are diverted appropriately and is a straightforward information-</p>	

giving exercise to other agencies being clear about the police role in “welfare checks”.					
3. <b>Relevance:</b> How does the aim and purpose of the proposals relate to each of the aims of the public sector equality duty?					
a) To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010		By having clear protocols and communication with other agencies in place the police will be able to respond appropriately without putting anyone at greater risk and be able to direct resources accordingly and without discrimination.			
b) To advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups		As above.			
c) To foster good relations between people from different groups.		As above.			
4. Is it likely that the proposals could affect particular protected groups differently?					
Age	Yes	Disability	Yes	Sexual Orientation	Yes
Race	Yes	Sex	Yes	Religion or Belief	Yes
Gender reassignment	Yes	Pregnancy & Maternity	Yes	Marriage or Civil Partnership Status	Yes
Please provide details for each protected group where you have indicated ‘Yes’.					
<p>If calls are diverted and dealt with appropriately, evidence would suggest that there should be a better outcome for many people who have additional needs as a result of being part of a group with a protected characteristic, as their needs will be clearly identified and better met.</p> <p>This is predicated on robust and effective use of tools to correctly identify vulnerability. Currently this includes the use of THRIVE and ViST models.</p> <p>The favoured option includes informing relevant agencies that they will need to pick up practice where they have formally relied on the police doing so. An effective communication channel will need to be identified to ensure the message reaches all those who will need to adapt their policies and/or procedures.</p> <p>Without the above, there is a risk that people with protected characteristics will suffer disproportionately from the measures proposed.</p> <p><u>Disability</u></p> <p>As many of the calls received relate to concerns about a person’s wellbeing, it is likely that disabled people make up a high proportion of this group.</p> <p><u>Mental Ill-health</u></p> <p>As above: people with mental ill-health are likely to be over-represented in the calls. If they are correctly identified, their needs should be better met through this proposal. However, without this and other agencies being able to respond appropriately, then people in the group may be at</p>					

<p>additional risk.</p> <p><u>Age</u></p> <p>Older people may also be disproportionately represented in calls, given that the paper identifies checks on welfare and checks for the taking of medication are one of the key issues. Younger people who are isolated and away from family may also give cause for concern if their whereabouts are unknown.</p> <p><u>Other protected characteristics</u></p> <p>Individuals who identify as having one or more of the protected characteristics, might be more vulnerable in certain circumstances because of that protected characteristic, and therefore the mechanisms (THRIVE/ViST) should be able to identify this in assessing the need for police to be involved.</p>	
<p>5. What are the issues that you have identified and considered in relation to Human Rights? (see Guidance)</p>	
<p>a) What is the potential for interference with an individual's rights?</p>	<p>There is potential interference in the following areas where vulnerability isn't correctly identified or where other agencies haven't put measures in place to pick up where the police have stopped responding to calls:</p> <p>Article 2: Right to Life</p> <p>Article 3: Right not to be tortured or treated in an inhumane or degrading way</p> <p>Article 8: Right to respect for private or family life</p> <p><b>However, currently attending "welfare checks" where the police are not the correct responders may also be judged to be an interference of Article 8.</b></p>
<p>b) What is the legal basis?</p>	<p>Police have a positive duty to protect life under Article 2. This obligation arises where Police know, or ought to know, about a real risk to life and the police would attend.</p>
<p>c) Are the interferences justified?</p>	<p>If screening to identify risk, threat and vulnerability are robustly used, and protocols established with other agencies, the risk to individuals of interference with their rights should be proportionate and justified.</p>
<p>d) Are the interferences proportionate?</p>	<p>See (c) above.</p>
<p>6. Proceed to Equality Analysis? (For complex or long-term project use the EIA Risks &amp; Issues Spreadsheet )</p>	<p>Yes</p>

7. Approved by Business Lead	Name:
	Signature :
	Date:

## Step 2 Equality Analysis - assessing the impact for different groups

8. What information from internal or external reviews or reports is available to help understand the impact for people with different protected characteristics?

Data capture from STORM shows that for 2015 (Oct'14 – Oct'15) there were 13,627 Welfare Concern Logs from Agencies Only.

A snapshot of 3 days of Logs over 19-21 October 2015 revealed a total of 112 Welfare Concern Agency Only Logs.

Each of the dip-sample logs was examined in depth showing the majority related to people with protected characteristics.

The impact of the proposal will favour those characteristics by them having the correct initial responder (whether it be Police or Agency)

9. What are the main findings from consultation?

Hampshire, MetPol and Kent have been consulted. All three Forces state that they had no issues regarding the implementation of the changes with outside agencies, and they have had no “bedding in” issues either. They also state that there was no adverse publicity with media or public.

10. Describe the impact for protected groups and any risks or issues arising from the risk in relation to equality, diversity and human rights? (summary from EIA Risks & Issues spreadsheet or complete below)

Description of risk / issue	Score	Mitigation / Action
a) We are not able to identify how many of the concern for welfare calls are concerning people with protected characteristics and therefore are not able to accurately predict or monitor the impact on the groups.	<b>2</b>	Robust application of the new procedure will ensure that partner agencies are aware of and undertake their statutory obligations. This will ensure that the service user is dealt with by the most appropriate service at the earliest opportunity. All prompt and routine calls will receive a THRIVE assessment. This will provide a live assessment of the risk/harm for each individual call.

b) Mechanisms to identify vulnerability are not robustly used and vulnerable groups with protected characteristics are then adversely impacted upon by the measures proposed.	2	Adherence to THRIVE and management intervention will where possible mitigate this risk. For those service users where Police attendance is required ViST can be used as an assessment of vulnerability.
c) Other agencies do not put in place measures to fully deal with cases that police would have dealt with previously leaving those with protected characteristics are then adversely impacted upon.	1	A pro-active media and communications strategy will be put in place led by the Force Executive. This will be disseminated to key strategic partners to provide clarity on the new working practice.
11. Is there any evidence to indicate that any of the proposals could unlawfully discriminate, directly or indirectly, against people with a protected characteristic? (If yes please provide an explanation in the box below and provide 'objective justification' to support this)		Yes
12. Could the proposals affect relations between different communities or groups; for example be seen as favouring a particular group or denying opportunities to another? (If 'Yes' provide details of proposed mitigation below)		Yes
13. What opportunities are there to promote 'equality of opportunity' or participation in public life by disabled people?	None identified	

### Step 3 Approval & Publication

Equality analysis supports effective decision making by providing evidence of the impact for equality.

Business Leads are required to confirm that a rigorous and robust assessment of the potential impact on Equality, Diversity and Human Rights has been undertaken.

<b>Business Lead</b>	Date: 15/03/2016
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	<p>Name: Chief Superintendent, Head of Alliance Operations Dept.</p> <p>Signature: Chief Superintendent</p>
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**Quality Assurance:** Corporate EDHR will quality assure EIAs for all complex / long term projects and for those policies that have been identified as high relevance / high risk for equality.

<b>Corporate EDHR</b>	<p>Name: Equality &amp; Diversity Officer</p> <p>Date: 14/03/2016</p> <p>Signature: Equality &amp; Diversity Officer</p>
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## Step 4 Version Control

Version	Date	Details of the version
V1.0	08/03/2016	First draft – amended from Project EIA template to satisfy Policy Unit publication requirements.
V2.0	14/03/2016	E&D sign off
V3.0	15/03/2016	Head of Dept. sign off