

**RBK's Procurement Framework
Equality Impact Assessment – Initial Screening
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An Initial Assessment was carried out of the impact of RBK's Procurement Framework on:

1) Customers – equality of service delivery

- RBK's Procurement Framework says the right things, but
- The Framework in itself does not do enough to protect the interests of disadvantaged groups according to anti-discrimination legislation and the Equality standard for Local Government
- There is a need for more robust procedures and guidance at Stage 1 of the Procurement Process (Identify Need) so that:
 - officers procuring goods, services or works have a greater awareness of ethical issues and the potential impact on minority groups
 - officers are required to carry out an initial screening, in accordance with the principles of legislation and the Equality Standard, in consultation with officers who have specialist knowledge of relevant issues
 - officers are required, as part of this process, to evaluate the risk of disadvantage for specified minority groups, in a proportionate way by taking account of the resource and operational implications for RBK
 - the results of this initial screening and evaluation of risk, together with input from specialist officers, will safeguard the interests of minority groups in line with legislation and the Equality Standard through the design of the Specification of Requirements in the Invitation to Tender and the design of the Supplier Evaluation Criteria

2) Staff (RBK and contractor staff) – equality of employment opportunities

- RBK's Procurement Framework says the right things
- RBK has a role in interpreting legal requirements to suppliers and promoting equalities good practice, and
- RBK has good, clear monitoring guidance in place, which puts it in a better position to support and influence its supplier partners, but

- The Procurement Framework in itself does not protect the interests of supplier staff according to anti-discrimination legislation and the Equality Standard
- There is a need to monitor compliance in a way which is proportionate to the size and resources of the supplier

3) Suppliers – equality of access to RBK contracts for SMEs, BMEs and the Voluntary Sector

- RBK has a role in interpreting legal requirements to suppliers and promoting equalities good practice
- The Procurement Framework has opened up the market to smaller, minority businesses and the voluntary sector and RBK is discussing ways of encouraging them to do business with the Council through a number of targeted events
- In view of the resource implications for both RBK and SMEs, BMEs and the voluntary sector, more use could be made of corporate lists of preferred suppliers in order to rationalise the Council's approach to ensuring that minority interests and good equalities practice are adequately protected

Conclusion

- RBK's Procurement Framework does in principle require officers to have regard to the potential ethical impact of any procurement activity on minority groups
- However, the Framework lacks the more robust procedures and detailed guidance, in line with anti-discrimination legislation and the Equality Standard for local government, which requires officers responsible for procurement activity to put these ethical policies into practice

Recommendation

That RBK's Procurement Framework is subjected to a full Equality Impact Assessment with a view to establishing processes and guidance for:

1. Initial screening and evaluation of risk, through input from specialist officers, to safeguard the interests of minority groups, in line with anti-discrimination legislation and the Equality Standard for Local Government, through the design of the Specification in the Invitation to Tender and the Supplier Evaluation Criteria
2. Monitoring compliance in a way that is proportionate to the size and resources of suppliers
3. Making more use of corporate lists of preferred suppliers in order to ensure that minority interests and good equalities practice is upheld and seen to be upheld.