

# Equalities Monitoring – a guide for people filling in the forms

## Why do we monitor?

The reason why we ask you these questions is so we can:

- Make our council services open to everyone in the city,
- Treat everyone fairly and appropriately when they use our services,
- In consultations, make sure we have views from all parts of our community.

The Equality Act 2010 makes these aims part of our legal duties. Your answers help us to meet the law and help improve our services.

Your answers are completely anonymous and confidential. Information from forms is combined so you cannot be identified.

## We protect your information and keep it safe.

All information is confidential and will only be used under the strict controls of the Data Protection Act 1998.

## What do the questions mean?

### Age:

We ask your age to make sure that we don't stop anyone from using our services because they are too young or old (or think that they are too young or old).

We haven't put age ranges, because different parts of the council use different ones. Simply asking your age is the easiest way to find out who uses the service.

### Gender:

We ask you about your gender, whether you are male or female, to make sure that our services meet the needs of women and men, boys and girls. Then we also ask this question:

#### **Do you identify as the sex you were assigned at birth?**

For many people their body (and whether they were defined as a boy or girl at birth) and their sense of whether they are male or female matches up.

People who are transgender experience that the body they were born into is not the same as their own sense of their sex. Their gender identity is different from the one they were labelled with at birth.

We also add an 'Other' box to the gender choices so that people can define themselves as suits them.

### Ethnic background:

Our ethnic background describes how we think of ourselves. This may be based on many things, for example, our language, culture, ancestry or family history. Ethnic background is not necessarily the same as nationality or country of birth.

It is not possible to list all of the ethnic groups living in Brighton & Hove but we have used the ones listed in the census. Please tick the group which is closest to how you see yourself.

### Sexual orientation:

We ask about sexual orientation because people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual often experience discrimination or find that services do not meet their needs appropriately.

The law means that we must make sure we don't discriminate against people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual.

### Religion or belief:

People with religious or other beliefs may prefer services to be delivered in particular ways (for example not on particular religious holy days, or providing appropriate food for 'meals on wheels').

(please turn over)

We use the faiths listed in the census and covered by the law, which include the main religious groups in the country, people of no religion and people who hold other philosophical beliefs.

### **Disability:**

In law the definition of disability is:

A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

An 'impairment' is an injury, illness or condition that causes a loss or difference of physical or mental function. Disability comes from barriers in society that impact on this impairment.

'Long term' is more than 12 months. 'Day-to-day' activities include getting washed or dressed, reading or writing, household tasks, having a conversation, walking or travelling, and socialising.

#### **Physical impairment**

Mobility: wheelchair user, artificial lower limb(s), walking aids, rheumatism or arthritis etc. or

Physical Co-ordination: manual dexterity, muscular control or

Reduced Physical Capacity: inability to move everyday objects, significant pain and lack of strength, breath, energy or stamina, e.g. asthma, angina or diabetes.

#### **Sensory impairment**

Hearing: Deaf, partially deaf or hard of hearing, or

Vision: blind or fractional/partial sight. Does not include people whose visual problems can be corrected by glasses/contact lenses.

#### **Learning Disability/Difficulties**

This affects your capacity to be taught or to communicate. It can affect the way you listen, speak, write, or reason, e.g. dyslexia.

#### **Long Standing Illness**

Such as cancer, HIV, multiple sclerosis.

#### **Mental health condition**

Substantial and lasting more than a year, eg: severe depression, psychoses etc.

### **Autistic Spectrum Conditions**

This includes Asperger Syndrome.

### **Other Developmental Conditions**

These are conditions present from early life and may affect language, learning, motor functions.

### **Carers:**

A carer spends a significant amount of their time providing unpaid support to family or friends. This could be caring for a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems.

Carers often experience ill-health, mental stress and difficulties with work or education because of their responsibilities.

### **Armed Forces:**

People who are serving or have served in the armed forces may experience a higher prevalence of physical and mental health problems, sometimes as a result of trauma and/or injury. For a number of reasons, people leaving the forces can find it hard to move into civilian life, and to find suitable employment and accommodation.

This includes serving in UK Reserve / Auxiliary Forces.

Families of service personnel may find it harder to access education, health care, employment and other services.

If you would like more information, please ask the person who gave you this form, or contact the Council's Communities, Equality & Third Sector Team on 01273 292301 or email: [equalities@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Remember: it's all confidential and anonymous and helps us to improve services to meet the needs of everyone in the city.