

Equality Impact Assessment

Service Area	Corporate & Community Services
Policy/Service being assessed	Channel Strategy & Action Plan
Is this is a new or existing policy/service?	A new Strategy
If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	
EIA Review team – List of members	Karen Warren, Catherine Bick, Susie Drummond
Date of this assessment	February 2012
Signature of completing officer (to be signed after the EIA has been completed)	Susie Drummond
Name and signature of Head of Service (to be signed after the EIA has been completed)	Susie Drummond

A copy of this Equality Impact Assessment Report including relevant data and information should be saved in the Equality and Diversity Folder on the shared drive.

Form A1

INITIAL SCREENING FOR STRATEGIES/POLICIES/FUNCTIONS FOR EQUALITIES RELEVANCE TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AND PROMOTE EQUALITY



High relevance/priority



Medium relevance/priority



Low or no relevance/ priority

Note:

1. Tick coloured boxes appropriately, and depending on degree of relevance to each of the equality strands
2. Summaries of the legislation/guidance should be used to assist this screening process

DEPARTMENT:	Relevance/Risk to Equalities																							
State the Function/Policy /Service/Strategy being assessed:	Gender			Race			Disability			Sexual Orientation			Religion/Belief			Age			Socio- economic			Priority status For EIA		
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Form A2**Equality Impact Assessment**
Please Explain

<u>Stage 1 – Scoping and Defining</u>			
(1) What are the aims and objectives of policy/service?	By setting out the overarching principles and supporting service areas to use customer data, we can improve the efficiency of and access to services.		
(2) How does the policy/service fit with the council's wider objectives?	The Channel Strategy ensures that we deliver services to customers in an effective and efficient way, while ensuring there are a variety of options for customers. This fits in with the Fit For the Future drivers of making savings, improving customer services and changing the culture, which in turn meets the Council's vision.		
(3) What are the expected outcomes of the policy/service?	The outcome of the strategy is that the Council will be clear on the principles to be used when considering channels to deliver services to customers & that the action plan will be delivered bringing effective & efficient services.		
Who is intended to benefit from the policy/service and in what way?	All customers should benefit, as all channels will be impacted. Ensuring that channels from the web and twitter to face to face are delivering the right services in the right way will benefit customers.		
(4) Does this policy/service have the potential to directly or indirectly discriminate against any particular group?	RACE YES/NO	AGE YES/NO	GENDER YES/NO
Please identify all groups that are affected and briefly explain why	RELIGION/BELIEF YES/NO	DISABILITY YES/NO	SEXUAL ORIENTATION YES/NO
	Other – please specify: Socio –economic		

<p>(5) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service?</p>	<p>No – The Channel Strategy explicitly includes an Accessibility strategy and a Digital Inclusion strategy as well as committing to keeping face to face and telephone services. This ensures consideration is given to all groups. There is a drive to move services online where possible. However, all services will be accessible via at least one other channel so those with no access to or difficulties with online channels will still be able to access services.</p> <p>We currently have a number of options to ensure our services are accessible. Staff are trained in the use of Plain English in all our communications. A translation and interpretation service is available for all channels. All of our documents can be converted to large print or Braille. The WDC website has achieved accessibility accreditations set against international guidelines since 2006. The website text size is easily changed and there is software to convert to “read aloud” any words selected on screen (BrowseAloud).</p>
<p>(6) How does the policy/service contribute to promotion of equality?</p>	<p>By being clear on the principles, it should contribute to the consideration of equality issues as part of the day to day work of service areas.</p> <p>There is also an accessibility strategy. This refers to the ease or difficulty that a citizen may experience whilst using different electronic access channels to obtain services from the authority. For example, someone with hearing difficulties may find the telephone unusable and may prefer to communicate through email. Equally a customer who does not have English as their first language may not be able to access any contact channel without appropriate translation services.</p>
<p>(7) Does the policy/service have the potential to promote good relations between groups?</p>	<p>By ensuring all groups have access to the same services and information, there is a good basis for groups to be involved.</p>
<p><u>Stage 2 - Information Gathering</u></p>	
<p>(1) What type and range of evidence or information have you used to help you make a judgement about the policy or service?</p>	<p>The range of evidence used to assist in making a judgement is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Channel Strategy - Customer Service data (showing demand and preferences) - Mosaic data

(2) What consultation/ information has been used?	The following information was used to assist with the final outcome: 1) Results from previous Residents Surveys/Citizens Panel 2) Simalto results
What new consultation, if any, do you need to undertake?	None.
<u>Stage 3 – Making a Judgement</u>	
(1) From your data and consultations is there any adverse or negative impact identified for any particular group?	Potentially a move of services to online channels could have a negative effect on those with disabilities, older customers and those suffering socio-economic deprivation. However, the Channel Strategy addresses this risk by ensuring that services need to have services on at least one other channel, and by stating that service areas should review the needs of their customers when selecting channels. It is also explicitly stated that we will continue to have face to face services, which are traditionally more valued by older customers and those suffering deprivation. This should minimise the impact on those groups.
Is there any evidence of needs not being met? e.g. language or physical access barriers; lack of appropriate resources or facilities	No evidence of this. There is evidence that the translation service is used. There is no evidence of lack of appropriate resources.
(2) If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?	The adverse impact is minimal due to the content of the strategy, including the Accessibility of Contact and Digital Inclusion strategies.

(3) What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact?	As detailed in the Strategy and Action plan, there are a number of actions related to the Accessibility of Contact and Digital Inclusion strategies. There are a number of actions related to improving the face to face and telephone services.
(4) Is there any positive impact? Does it promote equality of opportunity between different groups and actively address discrimination?	The consideration of equalities issues and the inclusion there of actively address discrimination e.g. accessibility of contact strategies, digital inclusion strategies
<u>Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review & Monitoring</u>	
If No Further Action is required then go to – Review & Monitoring (1) Action Planning – Specify any changes or improvements which can be made to the service or policy to mitigate or eradicate negative or adverse impact on specific groups, including resource implications.	No Further action required
(2) Review and Monitoring State how and when you will monitor policy and EIA Action Plan	As the Channel Strategy Action plan is implemented, it would be helpful to do consultation with representatives of protected groups. The Channel Strategy will be reviewed annually.

Once complete please save a copy of this EIA into the central drive **L:/Equalities & Diversity/EIA/2010/relevant service area**
Please annotate your policy with the following statement:

‘An Equality Impact Assessment on this policy was undertaken on (February 2012) and will be reviewed on (February 2013)’.