

## **Equality Impact Assessments - Guidance for services**

We have a legal duty to undertake equality impact assessments for race, disability and gender at the start of any new projects or policies, major changes in service delivery or any potential removal of services. Assessing the equality impact is something that most of us do without thinking about it, for example consideration of how people access any service that we provide or ensuring that certain groups do not face any barriers to what we are providing is often part of our everyday consideration. This thought process must however be documented as we may need to show it as evidence.

There are three possible impacts to consider as part of the assessment:

A positive impact

Where a policy, service or project improves equality of opportunity. For example providing an interpretation service for people where English is not their first language will enable them to understand and use our services

A negative or adverse impact

Where the policy, service or project disadvantages one or more of the equality groups. For example an event held with no induction loop facility would have a negative impact on some attendees with hearing impairments.

A neutral impact

Where a policy, service or project has similar impact upon equality groups whether they belong to an equality group or not.

## How to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment

For each policy or project that you are assessing you should think about all of the strands of equality and consider the areas of:

- **Accessibility**
  - Physical Facility Audit
  - Transport issues
  - Cost
  - Activity (involvement)
  - Equipment
  
- **Staff Training**
  - Disability Awareness
  - Equalities / Diversity
  - Service Specific
  
- **Monitoring**
  - Data Collection
  - Evaluation
  - Feedback and resulting adjustments in service delivery
  
- **Consultation**
  - In accordance with consultation strategy and guidance
  - Various appropriate methods of consultation
  
- **Communication**
  - Link and knowledge exchange with internal equalities team
  - Various methods of communicating where appropriate
  - Plain English
  - Information Distribution
  - In accordance with new Communication Strategy

### Initial questions

Are monitoring stats available? How could monitoring be collected in future?

Any good practice examples available on diversity in this subject area?

What are the main activities of the policy and areas of work that it will involve?

Who are the main beneficiaries of the policy?

List any changes that you may be expecting to make to the policy over the next year

## Documentation of Equality Impact Assessment

Name of Policy, service, project, decision; **Future Customer Services delivery**

**a) Does the policy affect men and women in different ways?**

You should consider any impact both men or women.

	Positive impact	Negative impact	Neutral	Reason
<b>Gender</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The proposed changes will not affect men and women in different ways.

**b) Does the policy affect people from different racial groups?**

You should consider the impact on all racial groups, this includes gypsies and travellers.

	Positive impact	Negative impact	Neutral	Reason
<b>Race</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	It is anticipated that the proposed changes will not affect people from different racial groups.

**c) How will the policy impact on people with disabilities, e.g. if information about Council Tax benefits are not made available in large print or alternative formats, access to such benefits might be denied to people with a visual impairment or learning disability.**

You should consider those with impairments such as mobility, sight, hearing, learning disabilities and mental health issues.

	Positive impact	Negative impact	Neutral	Reason
<b>Disability</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Some vulnerable residents accessing our face to face service could potentially be affected. However, as the current service offer for such residents will continue, no adverse impact is currently anticipated. The proposed changes still enable customers to get help and support from Customer Services Officers who are trained to support customers with disabilities. This includes but is not limited to: printing off documents in large fonts, seeking help for customers via the Royal National Institute for Blind and British Deaf Association, helping with access needs.</p> <p>Additionally there will be improved signage on TV display equipment to allow for signage and messaging which is beneficial to customers with a visual/ hearing impairment. There is also access available to the translation services where required to support residents who require this.</p>

d)

	Positive impact	Negative impact	Neutral	Reason
<b>Any other equality impact (all other Protected Characteristics)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Age: Customers of pensionable age who are unable to access and use online services this proposal seeks to provide additional assistance as required.</p> <p>Disability / long term health conditions: People with mobility difficulties will be supported and provided with seating and / or space for their wheel chair to make them as comfortable as possible.</p> <p>I have considered all other protected characteristics and it appears to me that this would be at best a neutral impact. The other protected characteristics refer to sexual orientation, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion and marriage and civil partnerships.</p>

**Overall impact**  **Low**  **Medium**  **High**

**Actions to be taken as a result of this impact assessment**

- Equalities and diversity monitoring to take place once the Customer Service Centre is re-opened to enable improved analysis in future
- Refresher training for Customer Services Officers to include but not limited to Mental Health Awareness and Disability Awareness. Courses to date have been attended but it is important to refresh skills. All officers have also attended Personal Safety training. As further training needs are identified, appropriate training will be arranged and provided.
- A register to be compiled which records officers who can speak additional languages and be available to assist customers when visiting the Customer Services Centre or when contacting us by telephone.

Any other comments