



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Partial Assessment Form

Policy, practice, function or project assessed	Customer Contact Strategic Review
Lead Officer	Paul Knight
Team	Paul Knight, Richard May, Jackie Sayers
Start date of assessment	24 June 2011
Completion of assessment	28 June 2011

Please use this form to record your findings in relation to the assessment of an existing policy, function, service or practice. **A.**

POLICY, PRACTICE, FUNCTION OR PROJECT TO BE ASSESSED

A1. Please describe what are the main aims, objectives, purpose and intended outcomes of the policy or function?

The report and recommendations of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee provide a strategic steer for the development of a revised customer contact framework for the Council

A2. Is this policy or function associated with any other Council policy or priority?

Yes – the proposals form part of the Council's emerging Customer Access Strategy and are brought forward in pursuance of Council Action A1 in respect of improving customer service.

A3. Who are the intended beneficiaries/stakeholders of the policy or function? How many people are affected and from what sections of the community?

All customers wishing to contact the Council. Research into current channel usage, carried out in November 2010, identified annually around 16,000 visits to the offices, 550,000 'phone calls and 350,000 web hits, from all sectors of the community.

A4. Is the policy/function corporate and far-reaching?

Yes – the recommendations are of fundamental importance to the Council's contact with its customers, and therefore to providing efficient, effective and high quality customer service.

A5. Are you expecting to make any significant change to the policy or service in the near future? If so, please give details.

Yes – these recommendations will lead to the development of a revised strategy and framework for customer contact following the expiry of the current contractual arrangement with Cambridgeshire County Council in December 2012.

A6. Is this a new or existing policy or function?

Existing.

B. EVIDENCE/ DATA and CONSULTATION

It is important to consider all information that is available in determining whether the policy or function could have a differential impact. Please attach examples of monitoring information, research or consultation reports.

B1. What monitoring or other information do you have about relevant target groups, which will show the impact of the policy or function?

The Council collects monitoring information relating to the profile of visitors to its reception; in addition, the report and recommendations were informed by consultation into customers' preferred methods of contacting the Council, available to view in the [report of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee](#).

B2. Have you compared the data you have with the equality profile of the local population? What does it show?

Equalities monitoring information is reviewed on an ongoing basis to identify links and divergences from the equality profile of the district. Our research and consultation has confirmed that there are significant harder-to-reach customer segments for whom new technologies and web contact may not be the most appropriate, therefore the preferred option will be developed to accommodate their specific needs e.g. face-to-face, telephone, home visits.

B3. Have you identified any improvements or other changes that could be made from monitoring the data?

Yes – as above, the recommendations seek channel shift to take into account an increased customer desire for a 'One Stop' approach to contacting us; however, within this model we need to be conscious that there are customer segments for whom other forms of contact will be more appropriate.

B4. Have you consulted or involved external stakeholders about the policy or function? If so, what were their views?

Details of the consultation are set out in the [report of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee](#).

B5. Have you undertaken any consultation with staff to assess their perception of any impacts of the policy or function? If so, what has been learnt from them?

Details of the outcomes from a staff focus group are set out in the [report of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee](#).

B6. Please provide information about any other consultation, research, or involvement undertaken in relation to this impact assessment.

Review of current channel usage – see Section A3 above.

C1. IMPACT OF THE POLICY OR FUNCTION

Assess the potential impact on each of the following protected characteristics. The impact could be negative, positive or neutral. If you assess a negative impact for any of the groups then you will need to assess whether that impact is low, medium or high. Refer to the evidence you use.

DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT

Nature of Impact
(Positive, Neutral, Adverse)

Extent of Impact (Low, Medium, High)

AGE: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different age groups.

Positive

- Provision of play equipment for young children whilst their parents are being served at SCDC Reception;
- Reception review will incorporate provision for breast feeding facilities;
- Provision of appropriate access channels for older people, whom our research shows have lower levels of internet access.

DISABILITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on disabled people.	Neutral	
The Council's preferred option will include scope to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of customers with disabilities, whilst the Council's offices are fully accessible for all customers.		
GENDER REASSIGNMENT: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people that have changed gender identity.	Neutral	
The Council's preferred option for customer contact will provide a high-quality first point of contact for customers, regardless of their gender.		
MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people who are married or in a civil partnership.	Neutral	
The Council's preferred option for customer contact will provide a high-quality first point of contact for customers, regardless of their gender. Literature associated with the revised customer contact model will refer to civil partnerships and marriage where appropriate.		
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on pregnant or maternal mothers and those women who wish to breastfeed.	Positive	
The Reception review will incorporate provision for breast feeding facilities.		
RACE: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different ethnic groups, including national origins, colour and nationality.	Neutral	
The Council's preferred option will include scope to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of customers from specific ethnic groups and backgrounds, for example through the provision of translation and interpretation services where appropriate.		

RELIGION/BELIEF: Identify the potential impact the policy or function on different religious/faith groups.	Neutral	
The Council's preferred option for customer contact will provide a high-quality first point of contact for customers, regardless of their religion/faith group.		
SEX: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on men and women.	Neutral	
The Council's preferred option for customer contact will provide a high-quality first point of contact for customers, regardless of their sex.		
SEXUAL ORIENTATION: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on lesbian, gay men, bisexual or heterosexual people.	Neutral	
The Council's preferred option for customer contact will provide a high-quality first point of contact for customers, regardless of their sexual orientation.		
OTHER CHARACTERISTIC SPECIFIC TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE – RURALITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people who are rurally isolated.	Neutral	
The Council's location may be difficult to reach for customers in outlying areas, especially in the south-east of the district, which are furthest away. The Council has transport information available at its offices and a regular bus service to Cambridge stopping immediately outside the premises during peak hours (8-10am and 4-7pm); however, further research is required to establish if there are customer groups who are excluded from visiting due to rural isolation.		

PLEASE NOTE: Following completion of the section above, if the nature of the impact is adverse then you may need to proceed to a full equality impact assessment.

C2. Could you minimise or remove any adverse or potential impact that is high, medium or low significance, in advance of a full impact assessment? Explain how.

Not applicable

C3. Does the policy or function actively promote equal opportunities and good community relations? Or could changes be made so that it does so?

Yes

C4. Please provide any further information, qualitative or quantitative that does not fit into the questions but you feel has a likely impact on this assessment.

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D. CONCLUSIONS			
D1. Was there sufficient data to complete the partial assessment?	Yes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
	No?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D2. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have an adverse impact (medium or high impact) on one or more target group?	Yes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
	No?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D3. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have a neutral or positive impact on equalities?	Yes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Yes. We continue to review the lay-out of our premises to ensure that they are fully accessible and cater for customers displaying protected equality characteristics.</p> <p>We will have regard to the requirement to ensure an inclusive approach to customer service during the development of the preferred option for customer contact as part of the emerging Customer Access Strategy.</p>
	No?	<input type="checkbox"/>	

D4. Do you have any other conclusions/outcomes from the partial assessment?

No.

ACTION PLAN for enhancing existing practice

Recommendation/ issue to be addressed	Planned Milestone	Planned completion of milestone (date)	Officer Responsible	Progress
As per project plans for reception and the development of the preferred option for the future of customer contact.				

RESOURCES

Does the above action plan require any additional resources?

N/a

ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING

Please give your plans for monitoring the achievement of the above actions.

Monitoring through SCDC's normal project management framework.

SIGN OFF: The officers below confirm that this partial assessment has been completed in accordance with the Council's guidance

Signature of Lead Officer		Date:
Signature of Corporate Manager or Chief Officer:		Date:

Please retain the original form on your service area and return a copy of the completed form to the Equality & Diversity Officer.