

Equality Impact Assessment : Screening Pro Forma

Section	Business Systems	Officer responsible for the screening/scoping	Steve Wragge-Morley		
Name of Policy to be assessed	Customer Service Centre	Date of Assessment	23/06/2010	Is this a proposed new or existing policy/procedure/practice?	New practice
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/procedure/practice?	The proposal is to develop a Customer Services Centre to manage a significant proportion of public facing telephone, face-to-face and electronic contacts across the Council. This will be the first corporate solution to this service requirement. The service will provide customer service across all service channels including face to face, by telephone, electronically and promote the use of self service by the public. Initially it will be restricted to a small number of services but will be developed to include all Council services.				
2. Are there any associated or specific objectives of the policy/procedure/practice? Please explain.	The aim is to utilise and modify existing capability to provide a Customer Service Centre that gives accessible, easy-to-use and consistent service to telephone callers, on-line services and visitors to the Council. Officers consider our current provision can be developed without dramatic change or significant investment. This will achieve our objectives without turmoil and also support ongoing Customer Service Excellence Standard work currently under way across the Council.				
3. Who is intended to benefit from this policy and in what way?	All members of the public who contact the Council. The public will benefit from a more consistent service supplied to an agreed set of customer service standards which will comply with the requirements of Customer Service Excellence. The combined approach will also reduce the overall cost of the service and increase the flexibility of response – for example to deal with peaks in demand.				
4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy/procedures/practice?	A consistent, cost effective, single point of contact to provide high quality customer services.				

<p>5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?</p>	<p>Risks identified include set up difficulties and transition of activities to the new service e.g. not having appropriately skilled and trained staff in post by the launch date, customers not aware of changes, calls taking longer to resolve until staff are up to speed which may cause delays to customers in the early stages. The proposed service will contribute to the Council's resilience in the event of a business recovery.</p>		
<p>6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?</p>	<p>All public facing customer service employees, councillors, the public, Business Systems staff (who will run the service).</p>	<p>7. Who implements the policy, and who is responsible for the policy?</p>	<p>A project group has been set up to implement the new service which will then be run by Business Systems.</p>
<p>8. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact on racial groups?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>No differential impact identified at this stage.</p> <p><u>Customers:</u> The customer service standards are being reviewed by Corporate Development in advance of the new service being established. These standards should ensure that there is no differential impact. The standards will ensure customers of different ethnic backgrounds or those whose first language is not English are able to access services and information. Access to services such as language line, interpreters will continue.</p> <p><u>Employees:</u> It is not possible to identify which staff are going to be affected by the changes so unable to look at the equality profile of those affected. Any redundancies or redeployments associated with the setting up and development of the CS Centre will be managed in line with the Redundancy Policy & Procedure which have been equality impact assessed to ensure fairness. Any recruitment (internal or external) will be done in line with Recruitment & Selection handbook which itself has been equality impact assessed.</p>

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<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>The new service will offer greater consistency of approach to customer services and will therefore improve equalities in customer services. The focus of the new service will be on the customer and the quality of service provided will be measured.</p>	
<p>9. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to gender?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p> <p>No differential impact identified at this stage.</p> <p><u>Customers:</u> Accessible to customers of either gender. The new service should enable more attention to be given to the best opening hours for the customers. This can in part be addressed by flexible staffing arrangements.</p> <p><u>Employees:</u></p> <p>Consideration will be given to opening times and the impact on those employees with caring responsibilities (who are predominantly female) who may be redeployed or recruited into the CS Centre. Not known at this stage which staff members will be affected so cannot comment on the equality profile of those it affects. Not known what the opening times/working times will be at this stage. May be an impact on those redeployed if there is a change in days of work, working times for those with childcare responsibilities/arrangements.</p> <p>Any redundancies or redeployments associated with the setting up and development of the CS Centre will be managed in line with the Redundancy Policy & Procedure which have been equality impact assessed to ensure fairness. Any recruitment (internal or external) will be done in line with Recruitment & Selection handbook which itself has been equality impact assessed.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>The new service will offer greater consistency of approach to customer services and will therefore improve equalities in customer services. The focus of the new service will be on the customer and the quality of service provided will be measured.</p>	

<p>10. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to disability?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>No significant differential impact identified at this stage.</p> <p><u>Customers:</u> The customer service standards are being reviewed by Corporate Development in advance of the new service being established. These standards should ensure that there is no differential impact. This will ensure customers with a disability will have equal access to services and information.</p> <p>The new service will be located at Millmead on the ground floor and attention will be given to providing the best access for customers and staff within the constraints of the buildings and available budget. As the service is developed other receptions will be closed and access will improve for users of those services based on upper floors or for example at Bedford Road Car Park. The website will be the system of choice for electronic service provision and the new website complies with all current access standards.</p> <p><u>Employees:</u> Not possible to comment on exactly what adjustments may be required for individual staff members but any reasonable adjustments under the DDA would be carried out on a case by case basis. This could include specialist telephony equipment, large VDU screens, specialist chairs etc.</p> <p>Not possible to say which staff are going to be affected by the changes so unable to look at the equality profile of those affected. Any redundancies or redeployments associated with the setting up and development of the CS Centre will be managed in line with the Redundancy Policy & Procedure which have been equality impact assessed to ensure fairness. Any recruitment (internal or external) will be done in line with Recruitment & Selection handbook which itself has been equality impact assessed.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or</p>	<p>The new service aims to improve accessibility by changes to the face to face arrangements</p>		

<p>otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>(all to ground floor) and increasing the availability of electronic services on a new web site with best in class accessibility.</p>	
<p>11. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p> <p>No differential impact identified at this stage.</p> <p><u>Customers:</u> The CS Centre is available to all regardless of sexual orientation.</p> <p><u>Employees:</u> Not possible to say which staff are going to be affected by the changes so unable to look at the equality profile of those affected. Any potential redundancies or redeployments associated with the setting up and development of the CS Centre will be managed in line with the Redundancy Policy & Procedure which have been equality impact assessed to ensure fairness. Any recruitment (internal or external) will be done in line with Recruitment & Selection handbook which itself has been equality impact assessed.</p>
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<p>12. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to their age?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p> <p>No differential impact identified at this stage.</p> <p><u>Customers:</u> The CS Centre is available to customers of all ages. For issues that may affect older customers with mobility problems, deafness, visual impairment etc see 'Disability' section.</p> <p><u>Employees:</u> Not possible to say which staff are going to be affected by the changes so unable to look at the equality profile of those affected. Any redundancies or redeployments associated with the setting up and development of the CS Centre will be managed in line with the Redundancy Policy & Procedure which have been equality impact assessed to ensure fairness. Any recruitment (internal or external) will be done in</p>

			line with Recruitment & Selection handbook which itself has been equality impact assessed. Redeployment (of existing employees into CS Centre posts) may apply to all ages, and selection will be based on relevant skills not experience not age or length of service.
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<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>The new service will offer greater consistency of approach to customer services and will therefore improve equalities in customer services. The focus of the new service will be on the customer and the quality of service provided will be measured.</p>	
<p>13. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to their religious belief?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p> <p>No differential impact identified at this stage.</p> <p><u>Customers:</u> CS Centre is available to all customers.</p> <p><u>Employees:</u> The Council will aim to provide time and facilities for religious observance for new and existing employees wherever it is reasonable and practical.</p> <p>Not possible to say which staff are going to be affected by the changes so unable to look at the equality profile of those affected. Any redundancies or redeployments associated with the setting up and development of the CS Centre will be managed in line with the Redundancy Policy & Procedure which have been equality impact assessed to ensure fairness. Any recruitment (internal or external) will be done in line with Recruitment & Selection handbook which itself has been equality impact assessed.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>The new service will offer greater consistency of approach to customer services and will therefore improve equalities in customer services. The focus of the new service will be on the customer and the quality of service provided will be measured.</p>	

<p>14. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them having dependants/caring responsibilities?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>No differential impact identified at this stage.</p> <p><u>Customers:</u> Centre is available to all customers.</p> <p><u>Employees:</u> Not possible to say which staff are going to be affected by the changes so unable to look at the equality profile of those affected. Any redundancies or redeployments associated with the setting up and development of the CS Centre will be managed in line with the Redundancy Policy & Procedure which have been equality impact assessed to ensure fairness. Any recruitment (internal or external) will be done in line with Recruitment & Selection handbook which itself has been equality impact assessed.</p> <p>Not known what the opening times/working times will be at this stage. May be an impact on those redeployed if there is a change in days of work, working times for those with childcare responsibilities/arrangements.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>The new service will offer greater consistency of approach to customer services and will therefore improve equalities in customer services. The focus of the new service will be on the customer and the quality of service provided will be measured.</p>		

<p>15. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them have an offending past?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>No differential impact identified at this stage.</p> <p><u>Customers:</u> Centre is available to all customers.</p> <p><u>Employees:</u> Not possible to say which staff are going to be affected by the changes so unable to look at the equality profile of those affected. Any potential redundancies or redeployments associated with the setting up and development of the CS Centre will be managed in line with the Redundancy Policy & Procedure which have been equality impact assessed to ensure fairness. Any recruitment (internal or external) will be done in line with Recruitment & Selection handbook which itself has been equality impact assessed.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>The new service will offer greater consistency of approach to customer services and will therefore improve equalities in customer services. The focus of the new service will be on the customer and the quality of service provided will be measured.</p>		

<p>16. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them being Transgender or transsexual?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>No differential impact identified at this stage.</p> <p><u>Customers:</u> Centre is available to all customers.</p> <p><u>Employees:</u> Not possible to say which staff are going to be affected by the changes so unable to look at the equality profile of those affected. Any redundancies or redeployments associated with the setting up and development of the CS Centre will be managed in line with the Redundancy Policy & Procedure which have been equality impact assessed to ensure fairness. Any recruitment (internal or external) will be done in line with Recruitment & Selection handbook which itself has been equality impact assessed.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>			<p>The new service will offer greater consistency of approach to customer services and will therefore improve equalities in customer services. The focus of the new service will be on the customer and the quality of service provided will be measured.</p>
<p>17. Could the differential impact identified in 8-16 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy/procedure/practice?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>There are minor potential impacts identified associated with disability, gender and caring responsibilities. As more information becomes available and the project progresses, counter measures can be put in place as and where necessary. The EIA will be reviewed on a regular basis (e.g. monthly) as the project develops.</p>
<p>18. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>

<p>Business improvement</p> <p>19. Is there any concern that there are unmet needs in relation to any of the above groups?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Part of the proposal is to address business improvement to public facing services which will improve the equality of those services and the Council as a whole.</p>
<p>20. Does differential impact or unmet need cut across the equality strands (e.g. elder BME groups)?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Any unmet needs are likely to affect different groups in different ways. For example, by putting a new service onto the improved website, it will be possible to provide that service to blind people at home but alternative arrangements may need to be in place for elderly people who choose not to use the web to obtain services.</p>
<p>21. If yes, should the full EIA be conducted jointly with another service area/contractor/partner/agency?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>22. Is there a missed opportunity to improve your business in relation to any of the policies, procedures or practices to promote racial, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief equality?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>This proposal provides opportunities to improve business to all groups.</p>

23. Should the policy proceed to a full equality impact assessment?	¥	N	0 – no possible relevance or adverse impact		0-8 points	low adverse impact,				
			1 – extremely low relevance and adverse impact no need for full EIA		9-17 points	medium adverse				
			2 – relatively low relevance and adverse impact impact, full EIA required		18-24 points	high adverse impact,				
			3 – medium relevance and adverse impact full EIA required							
			4 - relatively high relevance and adverse impact							
			Age	Disability	Gender	Race	Sexuality	Religion	Total	Impact
			0	2	2	0	0	0	4	Low
24. If No, are there any changes required to the policy to improve it around the equality agenda?			As more information becomes available and the project progresses, counter measures can be put in place as and where necessary. The EIA will be reviewed on a regular basis (e.g. monthly) as the project develops. It may therefore be appropriate to conduct a full EIA at a later stage.							

Signed:
(completing officer)

Date 23 June 2010

Signed
(Head of Section)

Date

Countersigned:
(member of Equality Action Group)

Date 29 September 2010