Full Equality Impact Assessments

Department: Customer Services   **Section:** CSU

Name of policy / function / service being assessed: Customer Contact

Date of Assessment: January 2019

Name of Officer completing assessment: Marybeth Quaintmere

What is a full Equality Impact Assessment?

A full Equality Impact Assessment considers equality and diversity issues in more detail and looks at ways to respond to issues identified in a preliminary assessment.

When is a full assessment required?

A full Equality Impact Assessment is required where it has been identified that there are concerns that an area of the council's work (function / policy / service) could have a negative impact on one of the six main diversity groups. These are:

- *Age*
- *Disability*
- *Race*
- *Gender*
- *Sexual orientation*
- *Religion / belief*

The full assessment is a more detailed questionnaire, which asks you to think about these issues in more detail.

This includes reviewing information you may already have about the diversity group gathered through consultation and asks you to consider other information or further consultation that might be needed.

The questionnaire then asks you to consider making changes to the function / policy / service, which will in future, help to minimise the negative impact on the affected diversity group. You will need to give details of the proposed changes, identify a lead officer, timescale and consider potential resource implications.

Why do we have to do this?

We have a legal duty to carry out Equality Impact Assessments and this is enforceable by law. We have to give particular focus to the diversity areas of race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion and faith.

The assessment helps us to understand how the way we provide our services can affect different people and prioritise areas where we need to make improvements.

RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL

Full Equality Impact Assessment

What information do you have about the groups that you have selected from your preliminary impact assessment?

Notes: *Use this section to explain in more detail why the function / strategy / policy is likely to have a medium or high impact on the diversity groups.*

Group	Negative Impact
Disability	We have looked to reduce any negative impact as stated below. Access requirements were addressed during the build process. We carry out surveys / questionnaires where we record customers disability (if they wish to tell us). We have not received feedback where there has been issues regarding service delivery relating to this group of people. We have a member of staff who can use British Sign Language, allowing hearing impaired / deaf customers to communicate with us. Hearing loops are found in the reception and interview rooms. We gain customer feedback via a customer survey on all sent Customer Service emails. We record customer disabilities (if they wish to tell us). we have not received feedback where there has been issues regarding to this group of people. We have no structure in place where we gain feedback on service delivery via telephony transactions. So this is unknown. We have a variety of online services and customers can access online payments, services and report issues. We therefore believe that people's disability does not effects the way in which they receive our services so deem the impact low.
Age	We carry out surveys / questionnaires where we ask customers to say which age bracket they fall into (via walk in /

	email and internet access). We therefore can see that we offer services across all ages. We have had no feedback where age has affected the service delivery. Although no feedback has been obtained via telephony transactions. We therefore believe that age does not affect the way in which we deliver the service, and so the impact is deemed very low.
Race	We use a translation company called The Big Word. Posters advertising the service (in many different languages) are found in the reception area. It could be possible that ethnic minority customers may not see them and therefore not know how to obtain information in other languages Information is not readily available in other languages or formats on site / immediately. However, the role of the triage is to assess customer needs / requirements, so this would be picked up at this point. We are able to call on a variety of languages from available staff should we need to. As some customers may prefer to be seen by a male or female advisor we are able to accommodate this. Although for walk in customers this has not been raised as an issue. We therefore believe that race does not affect the way in which we deliver our service, and so the impact deemed is very low.

What consultation has taken place or will take place with each of the identified groups?

Notes: In many cases, you will not have a lot of information and further consultation is needed. Please contact a member of the Diversity Group before starting any consultation. The team can access information available corporately and will know if any other research has already been carried out.

If there is evidence, consider if it is reliable, relevant and detailed enough. Given the importance of the function /policy / service, consider if more research is needed. Is further consultation or research likely to give you a different answer? Make sure the consultation represents the audience and equality groups that you have indentified.

Consultation should focus on agreeing how to reduce negative effects and increase positive effects by making changes to the function / policy /service.

Disability –The design of the reception and interview rooms were designed to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Since June 2018, we had 10% of face-to-face customers with a disability. Of these, no one felt they had any difficulty in accessing Council services due to their disability.

Although there are no reliable statistics on disability, the following data may give some context:
- The 2011 Census indicated that 12,435 people in Rushmoor indicated that they had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activities a little and a lot (13.3% of the population)
- In Rushmoor there were 2,681 people claiming ESA (4.2% of the working age population) in May 2018
- In Rushmoor there were 2,151 people claiming Disability Living Allowance (2.2% of the population) in May 2018
- The Family Resources Survey 2016/17 by the Department for Work and Pensions, indicates that:
    - 22% of people reported a disability
    - 19% of working age reported a disability
    - 45% of State Pension age adults reported a disability
      https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-resources-survey-financial-year-201617

We have staff within the authority who speak a variety of languages.

Age - Through customer service satisfaction surveys via face-to-face and email and on line surveys, we ask residents/customers for their age range, so we can see that we are engaging with customers of all ages, and we are without intent, disadvantaging anyone.

Race - Completing daily customer service satisfaction questionnaires and the web surveys. We ask residents for their nationality. So we can see that we have offered services across varying nationalities. These results ensure that we are without intent, disadvantaging anyone.

Available data suggests that approximately 10% of Rushmoor's population are Nepalese. It was apparent that due to the language barrier, service delivery was affected. We are able to call on a Nepali speaker which has addressed this for face-to-face transactions. We have large posters with other languages showing, so customers can 'point' to show us what language they need. Then using The Big Word we can communicate through a translator.
We know older members of the Nepalese community choose to contact us very little by telephone; however, Nepali speakers are available
We felt that we have in place the quickest turn around on information that needs to be translated / made into larger print etc. as we can. As this has not been raised as an issue to us.
As we have both male and female advisors we have not been made aware that there have been any issues due to customers religious beliefs or culture, gaining service.

Who was consulted and/or what research material was used?

Notes: You need to understand the views of the people who are likely to be affected by changes to the function / service / policy. You should consider the best way to reach the affected groups identified in the preliminary assessment.

Customer Satisfaction surveys both face-to-face & email and website feedback surveys are completed / received – gaining customer's feedback allow us to respond immediately.

What was the outcome of the consultation?

Notes: Once you have gathered the information, assessed the effects and got views through consultation, you can decide on a way forward. Consider any negative effects and whether they can be justified. You should also think about potential conflicts with the council's legal or statutory duties, strategic aims or local commitments and needs. If you are unsure about anything, please contact a member of the Diversity Group.

Following feedback, we feel at this time that we are meeting customer's needs. Particularly with the improvement to the website and staff availability this will support more customers with varying needs.

What changes do you propose to make because of research and / or consultation?
Notes: Please include timescales and details of the people responsible for implementing actions and timescale.

Negative Impact	Changes Proposed	Lead Officer	Timescale	Will this	Resource implicatio	Comments

				remove negative impact Yes/No	ns	
Disability: • Gain feedback across all access channels.	We aim to offer customer satisfaction survey feedback across the telephony channel. Currently cover face to face, internet and email At this time we do not believe there are any outstanding areas of concern.	Marybeth Quaintmere	Summer 2019	Yes	Managed within the unit.	
Age: • As above	At this time we do not believe there are any outstanding areas of concern. Continue to use feedback	Marybeth Quaintmere		Yes	Managed within the unit	
Race: • As above • Dealing with the influx of the Nepalese community into the Borough	At this time we do not believe there are any outstanding areas of concern. Continue to use feedback	Marybeth Quaintmere		Yes	Managed within the unit	

What monitoring / evaluation / review systems have been put in place?

Surveys – Feedback – review and action (where possible).
Review as and when there are changes in the way services are delivered.

When will it be reviewed?

As per action plan.

Completed by: Lesley Lambert

Role: Customer Service Team Leader

Date: February 2019

I am satisfied that a full Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of

The services provided within the customer service unit.

We understand that the Council requires this Equality Impact Assessment and we take responsibility for its completion and quality.

Countersigned by:
Customer Service Manager: Marybeth Quaintmere

Date: February 2019

Review Date: February 2020