

Appendix 3

Durham County Council – Altogether Better equality impact assessment form

NB: Equality impact assessment is a legal requirement for all strategies plans, functions, policies, procedures and services. We are also legally required to publish our assessments. You can find help and prompts on completing the assessment in the guidance from page 7 onwards.

Section one: Description and initial screening

Section overview: this section provides an audit trail.

Service/team or section: **Customer Relations, Policy and Performance**

Lead Officer: Mary Readman

Start date: 19th November 2012

Subject of the Impact Assessment: (please also include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate)

Background

- 1 With the creation of the new Unitary Council, the 'customer first' ethos became a cornerstone of the new Council's approach focusing on putting the customer's needs at the forefront of the council's work by improving customer service and joining up service areas.
- 2 The existing Customer First Strategy was developed and adopted in 2010. Its aim was to transform the way that customers access our services and the services themselves so that they are modern, efficient, effective and customer focussed. The action plan focussed on identifying and understanding the needs of our current and potential customers, measuring levels of customer satisfaction, creating a customer focussed culture within the Council, making services accessible to all and to provide high quality services to the Council's customers.

Objectives

- 3 The refresh of the Customer First Strategy is designed to build on the previous version, learning from both the successes and challenges to date. The revised strategy is intended to set the direction of travel for customer contact, engagement and feedback for the next four years with the continued aim of transforming the way that customers access our services whilst still meeting our financial targets.
- 4 There are a number of key drivers for the development and delivery of the Customer First Strategy, these include the increasing financial challenges faced by the Council, a number of significant policy and legislation changes by central government and the changing nature of the communications environment in which the Council operates, increased digital access and awareness and the associated change in customer expectations.
- 5 Whilst the Customer First Strategy is designed to deliver consistent customer interaction across the whole council, the Customer Services team need to be at the forefront of its delivery, with a central role in delivering a joined up approach, service integration and customer routing.
- 6 The revised Customer First Strategy will have an overarching vision “to deliver customer services which provide value for money, flexibility and choice whilst placing our customers at the heart of everything we do” and three overarching outcomes:
 - i) Efficient and Effective Access Channels
 - ii) Responsive and Customer Focussed Services
 - iii) Treating People Fairly

Who are the main stakeholders: General public / Employees / Elected Members / Partners/

Is a copy of the subject attached? / No

If not, where could it be viewed? Forward Plan

Initial screening

Prompts to help you:

Who is affected by it? Who is intended to benefit and how? Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups? Is it likely to affect relations between different communities or groups, for example if it is thought to favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others? Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality?

Any proposals to review or change Customer Access Points are likely to impact on customers across all protected characteristics. At this stage the impact is unclear but there is potential for both negative and positive impacts. The most likely impacts will be in relation to age and disability. A full impact assessment will be carried out as proposals develop

Is there an actual/potential negative or positive impact on specific groups within these headings?

Indicate :Y = Yes, N = No, ?=Unsure

Gender ?	Disability ?	Age ?	Race/ethnicity ?	Religion or belief ?	Sexual orientation ?
-------------	-----------------	----------	---------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------

How will this support our commitment to promote equality and meet our legal responsibilities?

Reminder of our legal duties:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination & harassment
- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting good relations between people from different groups
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people and taking account of someone's disability, even where that involves treating them more favourably than other people
- Involving people, particularly disabled people, in public life and decision making

What evidence do you have to support your findings?

Decision: Proceed to full impact assessment No

Date: 19th

November 2012

If you have answered 'No' you need to pass the completed form for approval & sign off.

Section two: Identifying impacts and evidence- Equality and Diversity

Section overview: this section identifies whether there are any impacts on equality/diversity/cohesion, what evidence is available to support the conclusion and what further action is needed.

	Identify the impact : does this increase differences or does it aim to reduce gaps for particular groups?	Explain your conclusion, including relevant evidence and consultation you have considered.	What further action is required? (Include in Sect. 3 action plan)
Gender			
Age			
Disability			
Race/Ethnicity			
Religion or belief			
Sexual orientation			

How will this promote positive relationships between different communities?

--

Section three: Review and Conclusion

Summary: please provide a brief overview, including impact, changes, improvements and any gaps in evidence.			
Action to be taken	Officer responsible	Target Date	In which plan will this action appear
When will this assessment be reviewed?	Date: 5 th December 2012		
Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?	A full assessment will be carried out as the proposals develop		
Lead officer - sign off: Mary Readman			Date: 20 th November 2012
Service equality representative - sign off:			Date: 20 th November 2012

Please email your completed Impact Assessment to the Equality team - equalities@durham.gov.uk.