

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration. In all appropriate instances we will need to carry out an equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment.

This form:

- can be used to prompt discussion when carrying out your impact assessment
- should be completed either during the assessment process or following completion of the assessment
- should include a brief explanation where a section is not applicable

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| Directorate: Resources | Service area: Revenues and Benefits |
| Lead person: Sanjeev Bali | Contact number: 0113 247 5115 |
| Date of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment: 11th March 2011 | |

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| 1. Title: Translation of council tax bills at annual billing |
| Is this a: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| Is this: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New/ proposed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Already exists and is being reviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Is changing |
| (Please tick one of the above) |

2. Members of the assessment team:

| Name | Organisation | Role on assessment team e.g. service user, manager of service, specialist |
|----------------|---------------------|--|
| Sanjeev Bali | LRBS | Specialist |
| Steve Blighton | LRBS | Manager |
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| 3. Summary of strategy, policy, service or function that was assessed: |
| On an annual basis the council creates new council tax bills for all liable people for the start of the new financial year in April. A number of liable people have informed the council that their main language is not English and have specified another language they would like their bill sent to them in. To deliver some form of efficiency the large proportion of translations will be managed through a mail merge process – these languages are Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Polish and Czech. A number of bills will also be dispatched in Braille, large print and tape where the customer has indicated that this is how they would like to receive their bill. Those other customers who have indicated they wish their bill in an alternative language will have their bill in English but with a language insert that signposts the bill payer to a contact point where they can arrange for queries on their bill to be answered. |

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| 4. Scope of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment (complete - 4a. if you are assessing a strategy, policy or plan and 4b. if you are assessing a service, function or event) |
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| 4a. Strategy, policy or plan (please tick the appropriate box below) | |
| The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes and the supporting guidance | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A specific section within the strategy, policy or plan | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Please provide detail: | |

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| 4b. Service, function, event please tick the appropriate box below | |
| The whole service (including service provision and employment) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A specific part of the service (including service provision or employment or a specific section of the service) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Procuring of a service (by contract or grant) (please see equality assurance in procurement) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Please provide detail: The specific function of the service is within the Council Tax unit and relates to the annual billing process with regard to customers who have requested their bill in a format other than English text. | |

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| <p>5. Fact finding – what do we already know</p> <p>Make a note here of all information you will be using to carry out this assessment. This could include: previous consultation, involvement, research, results from perception surveys, equality monitoring and customer/ staff feedback.</p> <p>(priority should be given to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration related information)</p> <p>We already dispatch in excess of 200,000 housing and council tax benefit notifications with the proposed language insert signposting customers to areas where they have language difficulties if they require assistance with these letters.</p> <p>Customers who may have language issues but have not notified the council that they wish their bill in an alternative format do not receive any information about where they can go for advice and assistance in their main language or a format that is easier for them to understand. The council tax booklet does also include information about contacting the council – this however is only in one language English.</p> <p>This new process mirrors that used within the Benefit service which has not highlighted any specific issues with regard to access to the service.</p> <p>This process relates only to the annual billing process and bills produced throughout the year on a daily basis will continue to be produced in an alternative format wherever possible where this has been requested by the bill payer. This process will be reviewed in the light of any enquiries that are received as a result of the annual billing process.</p> |
| <p>Are there any gaps in equality and diversity information</p> <p>Please provide detail:</p> <p>Data is held on the Academy database relating to a code that indicates a specific language or format.</p> |
| <p>Action required:</p> <p>None.</p> |

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| <p>6. Wider involvement – have you involved groups of people who are most likely to be affected or interested</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No </p> <p>Please provide detail:</p> |
| <p>Action required:</p> <p>The service will review any comments made by customers as a result of this new process. <i>The contact inserts issued give the contact centre telephone number for further assistance. The Contact Centre Performance & Relationship Manager, Steve Carter and Council Tax Sector Head, Liz Bailey have since been contacted to see if there has been any response to the change. They have confirmed that there have been no concerns or comments raised by customers.</i></p> |

7. Who may be affected by this activity?

please tick all relevant and significant equality characteristics, stakeholders and barriers that apply to your strategy, policy, service or function

Equality characteristics

Age

Carers

Disability

Gender reassignment

Race

**Religion
or Belief**

Sex (male or female)

Sexual orientation

Other

(for example – marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background, education or skills level)

Please specify:

Stakeholders

Services users

Employees

Trade Unions

Partners

Members

Suppliers

Other please specify

Potential barriers.

Built environment

Location of premises and services

**Information
and communication**

Customer care

Timing

Stereotypes and assumptions

Cost

Consultation and involvement

specific barriers to the strategy, policy, services or function

Please specify

8. Positive and negative impact

Think about what you are assessing (scope), the fact finding information, the potential positive and negative impact on equality characteristics, stakeholders and the effect of the barriers

8a. Positive impact:

Action required:

8b. Negative impact:

The customer will not receive the documents translated as they have in previous years although they will receive a language insert that signposts them somewhere they are able to get assistance.

Action required:

The contact inserts issued give the contact centre telephone number for further assistance. The Contact Centre Performance & Relationship Manager, Steve Carter and Council Tax Section Head, Liz Bailey have since been contacted to see if there has been any response to the change. They have confirmed that there have been no concerns or comments raised by customers.

9. Will this activity promote strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities identified?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

The changed process maintains that current position between customers and their access to Council services.

Action required:

10. Does this activity bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other (e.g. in schools, neighbourhood, workplace)?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Action required:

11. Could this activity be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Action required:

12. Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration action plan

(insert all your actions from your assessment here, set timescales, measures and identify a lead person for each action)

| Action | Timescale | Measure | Lead person |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
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13. Governance, ownership and approval

State here who has approved the actions and outcomes from the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment

| Name | Job Title | Date |
|-------------|---------------|------|
| Steve Carey | Chief Officer | |

14. Monitoring progress for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration actions (please tick)

As part of Service Planning performance monitoring

As part of Project monitoring

Update report will be agreed and provided to the appropriate board
Please specify which board

Other (please specify) – Report back to Management Team meeting.

15. Publishing

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| Date sent to Equality Team | 26.07.2011 |
| Date published | 26th July 2011 |