

Equalities Impact Assessment for Customer Service Strategy

Service/Policy	HR/ Customer Services	Section: Customer Services	Person responsible for the assessment	Judith Fear & Lee Gallagher	
Name of the Policy/Service to be assessed	Customer Service Strategy	Date of Assessment	22/1/08	Is this a new or existing policy/service?	Existing
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/service		<p>This strategy sets out how we will focus on what customers need and require. It also looks at appropriate ways of meeting those needs and requirements. The strategy directs how we manage our relationships with our customers.</p> <p>The council is committed to being a customer-friendly organisation and believe that the people who work in, live in or visit Hertsmere should expect high-quality service</p>			
2. Are there any associated objectives of the policy/service, please explain		<p>The council customer service strategy aims to deliver quality services that people need/require and continuously improve them. We also aim to develop and maintain worthwhile partnerships, locally and nationally.</p>			
3. Who is intended to benefit from the policy/service and in what way		<p>People who work in, live in, visit or contact Hertsmere as well as partner organisations and other stakeholders</p>			
4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy/service?		<p>The benefits of putting this into place include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistent customer service that puts the customers' needs first; • consistency in delivering services; • equal access to services for everyone; and • more efficient services. <p>We aim to develop and deliver services that are high quality, accessible; and meet the customers' needs/requirements. When a customer contacts us, we will make sure they receive a high-quality service. The council will seek to take account of customer feedback in service development and review.</p>			

5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources – funding, staffing, accommodation and technology. • Colleagues across the organisation whose cooperation is needed to achieve the outcomes of the customer service strategy. • Consistent opening times throughout the council. • Customer Service training • Top level commitment and strategic ownership 		
6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy/service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers • Staff • Business • Partners/ stakeholders • People who work in, live in, visit or contact Hertsmere 	7. Who implements the policy/service and who is responsible for the policy/service?	Implements; Head of Service & Operations Manager Responsible; Portfolio Holder & Senior Management Team

	Y/N	Concern	Evidence to Support Yes/No Assessment
8. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on people due to their age	Y	There is a concern that the strategy may have a differential impact on older people with mobility difficulties.	Based on complaints data the strategy could impact negatively on older people (50+) if not properly implemented.
	Y	We need to ensure that access channels meet the needs/ requirements of diverse age groups	We serve diverse age groups but there is no evidence to show we are meeting the needs of diverse age groups.
9. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to disability	Y	Some disabled people could have difficulties accessing services e.g. advocacy for some disabled people.	We don't have evidence to support that we do meet the needs of people with diverse impairments e.g. people with severe mental health issues and learning difficulties
	Y	The strategy could have a differential impact on some disabled people with language and communication difficulties	For example people with speech impairment, learning difficulties, reading and writing difficulties may have issues using some facilities.
10. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact due to gender reassignment	Y	If the strategy is not properly implemented it could affect more women than men. This is because more women visit/contact the council.	Analysis of returned complaints from May to October 2006 showed that 75% of respondents were female.
11. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on people due to their marital status (but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)			

12. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on people due to pregnancy and maternity			
13. Are there concerns that the policy / service could have a differential impact on racial groups?	Y	People with language / communication needs	Evidence from use of language line. Translation requests.
	Y	Dealing with racial incidents during visits	Observation of racial incidents in reception area.
	Y	Not identifying the needs of customers from diverse racial groups	Information on the needs and requirements of different ethnic minority groups is not available. This could lead to not meeting the diverse needs of the community.
14. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on people due to their religion/ belief?	N		
15. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on people due to their sex			
16. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on people due to sexual orientation	N		
17. Are there concerns that the policy could have a differential impact on people due to them having dependants/caring responsibilities?	Y Y	We currently don't offer crèche facilities Opening hours may not be suitable for people who care for dependants or have caring responsibilities	
18. Are there concerns that the policy / service could have a differential impact on people due to their offending past?	N		

19. Could the differential impact identified in 8-18 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy / service	Y	Language and communication for some disabled people and some ethnic minority groups	<p>The potential for adverse impact in relation to language and communication for some disabled people and some ethnic minority groups does not actually mean there is adverse impact on the equality groups.</p> <p>The council takes proactive steps to prevent discrimination and ensure no group is disadvantaged. For example, the council offers translation facilities, uses Language line and interpreters, offers to produce information in alternative formats including Braille, and makes other reasonable adjustments for disabled people.</p>		
20. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason	N				
21. Should the policy proceed to a partial impact assessment?	N	There is not enough evidence to support or prove the concerns	22. If Yes, is there enough evidence to proceed to a full EqIA?		
			23. Date on which Partial or Full impact assessment to be completed by		

Signed (Completing officer) _____

Signed (Lead Officer)) _____