

**Chesterfield Borough Council**

**Equality Impact Assessment - Full Assessment Form**

Service Area: Business Transformation  
Section: Communications and Marketing  
Lead Officer: John Fern

Title of the policy, project, service, function or strategy the preliminary EIA is being produced for: External Communications Strategy

Is the policy, project, service, function or strategy:

- Existing
- Changed
- New/Proposed

**STEP 1 – MAKE SURE YOU HAVE CLEAR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

What is the aim of the policy, project, service, function or strategy?

The strategy sets out the communications and marketing objectives of the council with the aim of making it easier for the public to know what services we provide and how to contact and engage with us. It seeks to provide flexible forms of communication that allow customers to interact more at a time and in a way to suit them. It is also about the council presenting itself in a consistent way with communications messages that are accessible to the wider community.

Who is the policy, project, service, function or strategy going to benefit and how?

The strategy is designed to benefit the public and businesses within the borough by providing a framework for clear and accessible communication.

## What outcomes do you want to achieve?

- To adopt a digital first approach to communications that seeks to increase the number of people accessing information and talking to the council through digital communication channels (eg website, social media, email, e-newsletters, video).
- To build and maintain our brand, including a clear visual corporate identity, so that tax payers can clearly see the delivery of services they are paying for.
- To ensure our brand is applied consistently and in a coordinated way across the council and its services
- To improve the user experience of our website, including ensuring it is suitable to be viewed on mobile or tablet devices.
- To increase the number of people using our website and social media channels to obtain information and to carry out transactions
- To deliver pro-active media relations and public relations that inform the public about our vision, priorities, services and success in delivering them.
- To develop alternative channels to communicate messages
- Seek commercial opportunities from the council's brand and sub brands

## What barriers exist for both the Council and the groups/people with protected characteristics to enable these outcomes to be achieved?

Barriers potentially exist due to people with protected characteristics not necessarily being aware of the support available to meet their specific communication needs eg translating a document.

This requires constant awareness of equalities issues by all staff involved in communication processes to take every opportunity to highlight the support available.

## **STEP 2 – COLLECTING YOUR INFORMATION**

What existing data sources do you have to assess the impact of the policy, project, service, function or strategy?

- Are You Being Served? resident survey
- Website analytics data
- Social media analytics data
- Media monitoring data
- Feedback from councillors and staff from customer service interactions

**STEP 3 – FURTHER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

Please list any additional engagement activities undertaken to complete this EIA e.g. met with the Equalities Advisory Group, local BME groups, Employee representatives etc. Could you also please summarise the main findings.

Date	Engagement Activity	Main findings
11 Dec 2014	Equality and Diversity Forum	

**STEP 4 – WHAT’S THE IMPACT?**

Is there an impact (positive or negative) on some groups/people with protected characteristics in the community? (think about race, disability, age, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation and other socially excluded communities or groups). You may also need to think about sub groups within each equalities group or protected characteristics e.g. older women, younger men, disabled women etc.

Please describe the potential impacts both positive and negative and any action we are able to take to reduce negative impacts or enhance the positive impacts.

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<b>Group or Protected Characteristic</b>	<b>Positive impacts</b>	<b>Negative impacts</b>	<b>Action</b>
Age – including older people and younger people.	Introducing a wider range of communication channels to offer more choice to people in different age groups. Although no one age group exclusively uses a particular communications channel some are more likely to be used by certain age groups eg Newspaper readership is significantly higher among older audiences than young or middle aged people.	Assumptions could be made about how a particular age group will wish to communicate with the council and this needs to be avoided.	<p>Promote the new opportunities to different age groups to increase their take-up of opportunities.</p> <p>Ensuring the focus on a digital first approach is backed up by paper based options, and the ability to request materials in other formats and languages (eg audio, large print).</p>
Disabled people – physical, mental and sensory including learning disabled people and people living with HIV/Aids and cancer.	<p>Improvements to the website will significantly enhance the experience for people with sight impairments using screen readers.</p> <p>The use of video and audio, will provide an additional format for receiving information. The council will also continue to provide information in alternative formats on request, for example easy read and large print.</p>		Work with user groups to test improvements, particularly those to the website.
Gender – men, women and transgender.	General improvements to communication channels audiences in the borough, making messages clearer and offering more opportunities to express views		Develop new communication channels and build on existing ones to offer greater flexibility to communicate with the council in ways more suited to the individual

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Marital status including civil partnership.	As above		As above
Pregnant women and people on maternity/paternity. Also consider breastfeeding mothers.	As above		As above
Sexual Orientation – Heterosexual, Lesbian, gay men and bi-sexual people.	As above		As above
Ethnic Groups	The council will continue to provide information in alternative languages on request.		As above
Religions and Beliefs including those with no religion and/or beliefs.	As above		As above
Other groups e.g. those experiencing deprivation and/or health inequalities.	Offering multiple communication channels so there is one that suits an individual's circumstances		Ensuring we publicise no or low cost opportunities to communicate with the council eg free internet access in libraries

From the information gathered above does the policy, project, service, function or strategy directly or indirectly discriminate against any particular group or protected characteristic?

Yes

No

If yes what action can be taken to stop the discrimination?

Please see table above.

## **STEP 5 – RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISION MAKING**

How has the EIA helped to shape the policy, project, service, function or strategy or affected the recommendation or decision?

It has reaffirmed our commitment to provide communications in alternative formats requested by the public and to ensure we are offering as wide a range of potential communication channels as possible.

How are you going to monitor the policy, project, service, function or strategy, how often and who will be responsible?

The Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum will continue to monitor the strategy following on from their involvement in its development.

It will also be monitored through service plans and through the evaluation gained from the next two resident surveys.

## **STEP 6 – KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND PUBLICATION**

Appendix 6: Equality impact assessment

Please note the draft EIA should be reviewed by the appropriate Head of Service/Service Manager and the Policy Service before WBR, Lead Member, Cabinet, Council reports are produced.

Reviewed by Head of Service/Service Manager

Name: John Fern

Date: 3/11/14

Reviewed by Policy Service

Name: Katy Marshall

Date: 3/11/14

Final version of the EIA sent to the Policy Service

Decision information sent to the Policy Service