

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Customer Service Transformation Programme



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

STAGE I: What is being assessed and by whom?

What is being assessed - including a brief description of aims and objectives?

An area that has been identified as needing significant change to help realise these goals is the way that the Council interacts with customers. To address this change requirement the Customer Service Strategy 2015 - 2018 has been developed with a vision that 'the services delivered by the council across all contact channels will be efficient / cost effective in meeting customer demands whilst seeking opportunities to exceed customer expectations'.

The Customer Service Strategy sets out the direction and actions to achieve the goal of improving:

- The way the Council serves its customers
- The way customers can interact with the Council
- The customer experience for those interacting with the Council
- Job satisfaction for staff enabling and empowering them to provide excellent customer service
- Service efficiencies

The Strategy presents the reasons why change is necessary, which can be summarised as:

- Inconsistent customer service standards across departments.
- A failure to adapt to changes in technology (e.g. the growth in mobile computing)
- The failure to capitalise on the national trend of customers to self-serve, meaning people are still mainly using more costly channels like face to face and telephone to interact with the authority.
- A failure to use existing self-service channels to their full potential e.g. not integrating these systems with back office systems.

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- A failure to promote self-service options effectively to its customers.
- A tendency for services to exist in silos and not share information about customers with each other. This can result in customers needing to contact different services within the authority separately to relate the same information (e.g. a change in address).

The Strategy's three aims are outlined as:

1. To improve understanding of the Council's customers
2. To improve the way the Council serves their customers
3. To improve the way that the Council listens and responds to customers.

The Strategy uses a categorisation of interactions as either:

- Simple - a straight forward easy transaction
- Assisted - where the customer wants some guidance or to be shown how to navigate the transaction but will in time learn to do it themselves
- Complex - where the transaction is complicated, has many parts or is an emotionally charged transaction that needs additional face to face support.

This categorisation of interactions will assist the council in achieving channel shift. To achieve this channel shift will require that the Council's staff are trained in dealing with customers in a new way and they will need to be enabled to do this through the use of technology. The Council will also have to educate and support its customers to use these new channels through marketing with targeted campaigns, and provide support through the change.

Responsible Officer	Ross Johnston
Department and Service	Transformation and Change Directorate (Customer and Service Transformation Programme)
Date of Assessment	29.10.2014

STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact

Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)	Any adverse impact?	Actions	Timescale and who is responsible?
Age	<p>The customer service improvements developed will be available and apply to all customers irrespective of age.</p> <p>The 2011 Census data % of Population is: -</p> <p>0-4 years – 6%</p> <p>5-9 years - 5%</p> <p>10-14 - 5%</p> <p>15-19 - 7%</p> <p>20-24 - 10%</p> <p>25-29 - 7%</p> <p>30-34 - 6%</p> <p>35-39 - 6%</p> <p>40-44 - 7%</p> <p>45-49 - 7%</p> <p>50-54 - 6%</p> <p>55-59 - 5%</p> <p>60-64 - 6%</p> <p>65-69 - 5%</p> <p>70-74 - 4%</p> <p>75-79 - 3%</p> <p>80-84 - 2%</p> <p>85+ - 3%</p> <p>From our surveys of customer contacts for the year 2013 we know that:</p> <p>19 and under – 177</p> <p>20 – 29 – 335</p> <p>30 – 39 - 474</p>	<p>Our engagement with customers suggests that younger customers may prefer to communicate with the Council using mobile technology. Similarly we have found from this work that older people may be reluctant to use new technology. For this reason the council have adopted a principle of service delivery as ‘digital by preference’ and not ‘digital by default’.</p> <p>A potential positive impact for this group will be more services offered online and in more convenient locations, with staff providing assistance for simple and assisted transactions.</p>	<p>Improve our understanding of customers’ needs by developing customer insight functions and processes.</p> <p>*1 Opportunities to deliver services via community locations and in more convenient community based locations will be explored.</p> <p>*2 We will seek opportunities to improve access to services online by developing mobile apps and improvements to the council’s web provision for customers based on their needs and requirements.</p> <p>*3 Self-service facilities</p>	<p>Customer and Service Transformation Programme Manager</p> <p>2015 - 2018</p>

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	40 – 49 – 690 50 – 59 – 859 60 – 69 – 972 70 – 79 – 695 80 and over – 347 prefer not to say – 257		will be supported by fully trained staff to assist customers unfamiliar with technology. *4 Develop in consultation with customers a customer charter / service standards so that we understand and deliver services in line with customers' needs and expectations. *5 Ensure all consultation on future improvements and service designs; locations are accessible to all and encourage responses from all groups.	
Disability	The customer service improvements developed will be available and apply to all customers irrespective of disability.	People with physical and mental health disabilities such as hearing loops, sight, wheelchair access, mobility scooter users, difficulty with	*1 *2 *3 *4	Customer and Service Transformation Programme Manager 2015 - 2018

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Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)	Any adverse impact?	Actions	Timescale and who is responsible?
	<p>30,000 people in Plymouth will have some form of Mental Health issue.</p> <p>0.8% (2118) of those registered with a GP are listed on the mental health register.</p> <p>A total of 31,164 people declared themselves as having a long-term health problem or disability in the 2011 Census.</p> <p>1,224 adults currently registered with a GP in Plymouth have some form of a Learning Disability</p> <p>From our surveys of customer contacts for the year 2013 we know that people accessing services with a disability was:</p> <p>Yes – 1533 No – 2379 Prefer not to say - 458</p>	<p>walking, size, mental health such as ability to communicate, read, write etc. are regular users of face-to-face facilities and may be adversely impacted by changes to layout and service offerings.</p> <p>A potential positive impact for this group is that services will be offered online and in more convenient locations, with staff providing assistance for simple and assisted transactions.</p>	<p>*5</p> <p>The new 1st stop shop customer services location will be fully compliant with the Equalities Act.</p> <p>Customers representing disability groups have been consulted with to ensure that the 1st stop shop is disability friendly and meets their needs.</p> <p>Face to Face customers visiting the 1st Stop Shop with disabilities will receive better facilities than the Civic Centre with better laid out facilities in a more central city centre location.</p> <p>Meet and greet staff to be</p>	

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Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)	Any adverse impact?	Actions	Timescale and who is responsible?
			fully trained in dealing with mental health and learning disability needs.	
Faith, Religion or Belief	<p>The customer service improvements developed will be available and apply to all customers irrespective of their faith, belief or religion.</p> <p>Data shows that 32.9% of the Plymouth population stated they had no religion.</p> <p>Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish and Sikh combined totalled less than 1%.</p> <p>0.5% of the population had a current religion that was not Christian, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, or Sikh such as Paganism or Spiritualism.</p> <p>From our surveys of customer contacts for the year 2013 we know that people accessing services with a faith, religion or belief was:</p> <p>Buddhist – 183</p> <p>Christian – 2,558</p>	<p>There will be no adverse impacts as Plymouth City Council does not discriminate on the basis of faith, religion or belief.</p> <p>A positive impact will be the availability of simple service interactions 24 / 7 enabling customers to access and request services at times and locations convenient to their needs e.g. at times around religious events or commitments.</p>	<p>*1</p> <p>*2</p> <p>*3</p> <p>*4</p> <p>*5</p> <p>Monitor and review.</p>	<p>Customer and Service Transformation Programme Manager</p> <p>2015 - 2018</p> <p>Person in charge (Business as usual)</p> <p>2015 - 2018</p>

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Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)	Any adverse impact?	Actions	Timescale and who is responsible?
	Hindu – 45 Jewish – 27 Muslim – 69 Sikh – 23 None – 815 Other – 336 Prefer not to say - 478			
Gender - including marriage, pregnancy and maternity	<p>The customer service improvements developed will be available and apply to all customers irrespective of gender.</p> <p>Citywide data shows that overall 50.6% of our population are women; this reflects the national figure of 50.8%</p> <p>From our surveys of customer contacts for the year 2013 we know that people accessing services based on gender was:</p> <p>Female – 2631 Male – 1938</p>	There could be an impact on females who access our services with young children.	Provision and availability of facilities e.g. baby change/breast feeding in new 1 st stop shop location on ground floor. *1 *2 *3 *4 *5 Monitor and review.	POD Programme Manager – pre Nov 2014 Customer and Service Transformation Programme Manager 2015 - 2018 Person in charge

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	Prefer not to say - 330			(Business as usual) 2015 - 2018
Gender Reassignment	<p>The customer service improvements developed will be available and apply to all customers irrespective of gender reassignment.</p> <p>National figures (ONS 2013) indicate that up to 10,000 people have gone through this process, with 23 known cases in Plymouth.</p>	<p>There will be no adverse impacts as Plymouth City Council does not discriminate on the basis of transgender.</p> <p>A positive impact will be the availability of simple service interactions 24 / 7 enabling customers to access and request services at times and locations convenient to their needs.</p>	<p>*1</p> <p>*2</p> <p>*3</p> <p>*4</p> <p>*5</p> <p>Monitor and review if necessary</p>	<p>Customer and Service Transformation Programme Manager</p> <p>2015 - 2018</p> <p>Person in charge (Business as usual)</p> <p>2015 - 2018</p>
Race	<p>The customer service improvements developed will be available and apply to all customers irrespective of race.</p> <p>92.9% of Plymouth's population is White British</p> <p>7.1% are Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) with White Other (2.7%), Chinese (0.5%) and Other Asian (0.5%) the most common.</p> <p>The Council has 4.1% BME employees across its workforce.</p>	<p>There will be no adverse impacts as Plymouth City Council does not discriminate on the basis of race.</p> <p>A positive impact will be the availability of simple service interactions 24 / 7 enabling customers to access and request services at times and locations convenient to their needs.</p>	<p>*1</p> <p>*2</p> <p>*3</p> <p>*4</p> <p>*5</p> <p>Monitor and review if necessary</p>	<p>Customer and Service Transformation Programme Manager</p> <p>2015 - 2018</p> <p>Person in charge (Business as usual)</p> <p>2015 - 2018</p>

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	<p>We have a rapidly rising BME population which has doubled since the 2001 census</p> <p>From our surveys of customer contacts for the year 2013 we know that people accessing services based on race / ethnicity was:</p> <p>Asian or Asian British – 71 Black or Black British – 47 Mixed – 90 N/A – 157 White – 4170 Prefer not to say - 378</p>			
Sexual Orientation -including Civil Partnership	<p>The customer service improvements developed will be available and apply to all customers irrespective of sexual orientation.</p> <p>There is no precise local data on numbers of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) people in Plymouth, but it is nationally estimated at between 5 – 7%. This would mean that approx.</p>	<p>There will be no adverse impacts as Plymouth City Council does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation.</p> <p>A positive impact will be the availability of simple service interactions 24 / 7 enabling customers to access and request services at times and locations convenient to their</p>	<p>*1 *2 *3 *4 *5</p> <p>Monitor and review if necessary</p>	<p>Customer and Service Transformation Programme Manager 2015 - 2018</p>

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Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)	Any adverse impact?	Actions	Timescale and who is responsible?
	12,500 people aged over 16 in Plymouth are LGB.	needs.		Person in charge (Business as usual) 2015 - 2018

STAGE 3: Are there any implications for the following? If so, please record 'Actions' to be taken		
Local Priorities	Implications	Timescale and who is responsible?
Reduce the inequality gap, particularly in health between communities.	<p>The customer service strategy 2015 – 2018 will promote equality by providing customer service improvements across five themes:</p> <p>Accessibility - Locations and times which meet our customers' needs</p> <p>Relevant - Services that are fit for purpose, joined up and minimise potential barriers</p> <p>Inclusive - All customers are treated equally and fairly and customer feedback is acted upon</p> <p>Quality and Efficiency - Reliable, flexible and responsive services which are continuously improved and delivered cost effectively</p> <p>Empowered and Effective Staff - Ensuring our workforce that has the appropriate skills, tools, and authority to effectively deliver quality services.</p>	Assistant Director for Customer Service
Good relations between different communities (community	Development of community based service delivery will enhance community cohesion and social capital.	Customer and Service Transformation Programme Manager

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Local Priorities	Implications	Timescale and who is responsible?
cohesion).		
Human Rights	<p>Plymouth City Council recognises (Article 14) the Human Rights Act – The right to receive Equal Treatment and prohibits discrimination including sex, race, religion and economic and social status in conjunction with the Equalities Act which includes age and disability.</p> <p>All staff and service users will be treated fairly and their human rights will be respected.</p> <p>No adverse impact on human rights has been identified.</p>	Ongoing

STAGE 4: Publication			
Director, Assistant Director/Head of Service approving EIA.	Faye Batchelor-Hambleton Assistant Director for Customer Service	Date	30 October 2014