

# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

## Customer Service Transformation Programme

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION



**PLYMOUTH**  
CITY COUNCIL

### STAGE I: What is being assessed and by whom?

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

The Customer Service Transformation Programme is addressing the following identified issues;

- Current customer service standards are inconsistent and need improvement
- Service availability perceived to be poor
- Little customer understanding is available to support and commercialise business plans
- Limited visibility from customer/front office perspective into service delivery
- Limited cross service integration meaning customers have to tell each service they use, of their changed circumstances 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).
- A tendency for services to exist in silos and not share information about customers with each other.
- Customers and partners excluded from service design
- 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.
- A failure to promote self-service options effectively to its customers.

Solutions to addressing these issues are ;

- Corporate service standards co-defined with customers and implemented as part of standard performance management
- Internet and app development allowing customers 24 hour availability to key services
- Customer insight and analytic capability created within Co-operative Centre of Operations
- Migrate services to the customer and channel blueprint with a single customer services function

(for calls and face to face delivery) sharing information across services and channels – co-designed

## STAGE I: What is being assessed and by whom?

- with staff and customers

The Customer Transformation 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 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. That the Council will educate and support our customers to use these new channels through marketing with targeted campaigns, and provide support through the change.

- Services better tuned to customer needs (citizens, businesses, visitors, staff)
- Better decisions for local needs due to improved intelligence & engagement
- Improved customer satisfaction: more involvement, better targeted services
- Reduced overhead costs and complexity of operations

Where any changes to structures or service delivery arrangements lead to redundancies, we will ensure

	<p>that staff are not unfairly selected for redundancy e.g. on bases of them having a particular protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>We have clear policies and procedures in place to ensure that staff sharing protected characteristics are not unfairly discriminated against. The CST programme may adapt processes to promote consistency and integration but will ensure that this does not result in unfair discrimination.</p>
Responsible Officer	Peter Honeywell
Department and Service	Transformation and Change Directorate (Customer and Service Transformation Programme)
Date of Assessment	

<b>STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact</b>				
<b>Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)</b>	<b>Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)</b>	<b>Any adverse impact?</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescale and who is responsible?</b>
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>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</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</p>	<p>Customer and Service Transformation Programme Manager</p> <p>2015 - 2018</p>

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	50-54 - 6% 55-59 - 5% 60-64 - 6% 65-69 - 5% 70-74 - 4% 75-79 - 3% 80-84 - 2% 85+ - 3%  From our surveys of customer contacts for the year 2013 we know that: 19 and under – 177 20 – 29 – 335 30 – 39 - 474 40 – 49 – 690 50 – 59 – 859 60 – 69 – 972 70 – 79 – 695 80 and over – 347 prefer not to say – 257	offered online and in more convenient locations, with staff providing assistance for simple and assisted transactions.	customers based on their needs and requirements.  *3 Self-service facilities 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.  30,000 people in Plymouth will have some form of Mental Health issue.  0.8% (2118) of those registered with a GP are listed on the	People with physical and mental health disabilities such as hearing loops, sight, wheelchair access, mobility scooter users, difficulty with 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.	As above *1,*2,*3,*4,*5  The new 1st stop shop customer services location will be fully compliant with the Equality Act disability access requirements.  Customers representing disability groups have been consulted with, to ensure that the 1st stop shop is	Customer and Service Transformation Programme Manager  2015 - 2018

<b>STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact</b>				
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	<p>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</p> <p>No – 2379</p> <p>Prefer not to say - 458</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. Online transactions will be facilitated through our read speaker software</p>	<p>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 fully trained in dealing with mental health and learning disability needs.</p>	
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</p>	<p>No adverse impact is anticipated.</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</p>	<p>As above *1,*2,*3,*4,*5</p> <p>Monitor and review as necessary and appropriate.</p>	<p>Customer and Service Transformation Programme Manager 2015 - 2018</p> <p>Person in charge (Business as usual) 2015 - 2018</p>

<b>STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact</b>				
<b>Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)</b>	<b>Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)</b>	<b>Any adverse impact?</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescale and who is responsible?</b>
	<p>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            Christian – 2,558            Hindu – 45            Jewish – 27            Muslim – 69            Sikh – 23            None – 815            Other – 336            Prefer not to say - 478</p>	<p>locations convenient to their needs e.g. at times around religious events or commitments.</p>		
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>There could be an impact on women who access our services with young children.</p>	<p>As above *1,*2,*3,*4,*5</p> <p>Provision and availability of facilities e.g. baby</p>	<p>POD Programme Manager – pre Nov 2014</p> <p>Customer and Service Transformation</p>

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	<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</p> <p>Male – 1938</p> <p>Prefer not to say - 330</p>		<p>change/breast feeding in new 1<sup>st</sup> stop shop location on ground floor.</p> <p>Monitor and review.</p>	<p>Programme Manager 2015 - 2018</p> <p>Person in charge (Business as usual) 2015 - 2018</p>
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>No adverse impact us anticipated.</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 and confidentially.</p>	<p>As above *1,*2,*3,*4,*5</p> <p>Monitor and review as necessary and appropriate.</p>	<p>Customer and Service Transformation Programme Manager 2015 - 2018</p> <p>Person in charge (Business as usual) 2015 - 2018</p>
Race	<p>The customer service improvements developed will be available and apply to all customers irrespective of race.</p>	<p>No adverse impact anticipated.</p> <p>A positive impact will be the availability of simple service interactions 24 / 7 enabling</p>	<p>As above *1,*2,*3,*4,*5</p> <p>We will continue to meet customer language needs through our online</p>	<p>Customer and Service Transformation Programme Manager 2015 - 2018</p>

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	<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>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>	customers to access and request services at times and locations convenient to their needs.	<p>translation services and through Translate Plymouth our language service provider.</p> <p>Monitor and review as necessary</p>	<p>Person in charge (Business as usual)</p> <p>2015 - 2018</p>
Sexual Orientation -including Civil	The customer service	No adverse impacts anticipated.	As above *1,*2,*3,*4,*5	Customer and Service




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?
Partnership	<p>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. 12,500 people aged over 16 in Plymouth are LGB.</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 and confidentially.</p>	<p>Monitor and review as necessary</p>	<p>Transformation Programme Manager 2015 - 2018</p> <p>Person in charge (Business as usual) 2015 - 2018</p>

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><b>Accessibility</b> - Locations and times which meet our customers' needs</p> <p><b>Relevant</b> - Services that are fit for purpose, joined up and minimise potential barriers</p> <p><b>Inclusive</b> - All customers are treated equally and fairly and customer feedback is acted upon</p> <p><b>Quality and Efficiency</b> - Reliable, flexible and responsive services which are continuously improved and delivered</p>	<p>Assistant Director for Customer Service</p>

<b>STAGE 3: Are there any implications for the following? If so, please record 'Actions' to be taken</b>		
<b>Local Priorities</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Timescale and who is responsible?</b>
	<p>cost effectively</p> <p><b>Empowered and Effective Staff</b> - Ensuring our workforce has the appropriate skills, tools, and authority to effectively deliver quality services.</p>	
Good relations between different communities (community cohesion).	Development of community based service delivery will enhance community cohesion and social capital.	Customer and Service Transformation Programme Manager
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

<b>STAGE 4: The Principles of Fairness</b>	
<b>Principles</b>	<b>Comment</b>
People should be able to access opportunity whatever their circumstances	Improved way of working will ensure access to services regardless of anyone's circumstances
The city should give priority to those in greatest need when it allocates resources	<p>The changes being made will prioritise those in greatest need who will gain a more enhanced service such as First Stop Shop compared to those who have the ability to access services themselves for example by using I.T. services.</p> <p>I.T. services will also provide confidently where necessary.</p>
Things that make the biggest difference to people's lives should get priority when deciding where resources go	Good council services can and do make a difference and we are therefore giving them priority in terms of resources

The way things are done in the city matters just as much as what is done	We consult and involve our customers and staff in all the changes we are making to ensure what we do is best service provision from all stakeholder's perspective
Unfairness which takes time to remove needs policies for the long term	As one part of the overall Transformation Programme of work we will work jointly to ensure fairness and equality are central to how we work
Preventing inequalities is more effective than trying to eliminate them	We will consistently work to ensure our policies and practice deliver services that comply with Equality Act and Human Rights Act
Services should be provided 'with' people, not 'for' them	As above consultation and engagement
The needs of future and current generations should be balanced when making decisions.	We are taking into consideration how all ages and generations access council services and making available face to face and technology based services as appropriate.

<b>STAGE 4: Publication</b>			
Director, Assistant Director/Head of Service approving EIA.	 Faye Batchelor-Hambleton <b>Assistant Director for Customer Service</b>	Date	19/12/2014