

HDC Full Equality Impact Assessment Form

Part 1 – AIMS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY/SERVICE PROCEDURE/PRACTICE

1.1 What is being assessed? Name of the service, policy, procedure or practice:
(What is being assessed – service/function, policy, procedure or practice? Is it new or existing?)

Customer Services
All interaction channels (face to face, telephone and website)
Access to buildings including Harborough, Lutterworth and all other service points.
Customer First Strategy

1.2 Officer(s) & Section/Service responsible for completing the assessment:
(Explain why the members of the impact assessment team were selected e.g. the knowledge and experience they bring to the process).

Remko Heezen – Customer Contact Manager. As manager, I have responsibility to ensure that service delivery and access to services are available to all customers requiring our assistance.
Ruth Wilson – Customer Service Advisor
Peter Rowbotham – Head of Customer Services
John Chester – Research and Development Officer
Jake Atkinson – Scrutiny Research & Equalities Officer

1.3 What is the main purpose or aims of the service, policy, procedure or practice?

To deliver a high quality service that suits all citizens and working with partners and to ensure that everyone has access to the facilities needed within local communities without prejudice.

1.4 Who is affected by the service/policy/procedure/practice? Who is it intended to benefit and how?

*Who are the main stakeholders in relation to this policy?
What outcomes would other stakeholders want from this policy?
Are there any groups, which might be expected to benefit from the intended outcomes, but which do not?*

External customers
Council officers
Councillors
Partnerships
Local groups

1.5 Has the service/policy/procedure/practice been promoted or explained to those it might affect directly or indirectly?

Customer Service Standards are published on our website along with the Customer Service Strategy. These are also available in leaflet form from any of the Service Points. Customer Service information is also published in the local press

1.6 How does the service/policy/procedure/practice contribute to better Community Cohesion?

(How do you promote good relations between different communities you serve based on mutual understanding and respect? What opportunities are there for positive cross cultural contact between these communities to take place e.g. between younger and older people, or between people of different religious faiths?).

Effective and accessible Council Customer Services are an integral element of effective community engagement and cohesion. They are also key to us improving public services in our area. We offer services at various locations throughout the district for customers who are unable to travel to Market Harborough
Have your Say meetings also allow people from different groups to have contact and discuss local issues

1.7 How does the service/policy/procedure/practice fit in with the council's wider aims? Include corporate and partnership priorities.

(How does the policy relate to other policies and practices within the council? What factors/forces could contribute /detract from the outcomes? How do these outcomes meet or hinder other policies, values or objectives of the council?)

2010 Vision
Equal Opportunities Policy
Business Plan 2008/09
Community Strategy

1.8 What is the relevance of the aims of the service/policy/procedure/practice to the equality target groups and the Council's duty to eliminate unlawful racial, disability and gender discrimination, and promote equality of opportunity?

Customer Services should be accessible to all groups of people that the Council serves and should be compliant with specific equalities legislation.
The term 'customer' is generic. It embraces citizens, members of the public, service users, clients and complainants; as such if we can achieve the standard we aspire to as a service, then it will go a long way towards ensuring the Council as a whole is meeting its duties

1.9 How is, or will the service/policy/procedure/practice be put into practice and who is, or will be, responsible for it?

(Who defines or defined the policy? Who implements the Policy? How does the council interface with other bodies in relation to the implementation of this policy? Is the service provided solely by the Department/Unit or in conjunction with another department, agency or contractor? If external parties are involved then what are the measures in place to ensure that they comply with the Councils Equal Opportunity Policy?)

The service standards for Customer Services are put into practise by all council staff, however there is a manager and a Head of Service who oversee the Customer Service function.

Part 2 – CONSIDERATION OF DATA AND RESEARCH

To conduct the assessment you will need information about service users and staff that provide the service. This section is to help you identify the sort of information that will be needed to help you assess whether there may be barriers to different equality groups who access your service, policy, procedure or practice.

2.1 List all examples of quantitative and qualitative data or any consultation information available that will enable the impact assessment to be undertaken (include information where appropriate from other directorates/units, Census 2001 etc. Please note that in some cases data may not exist or be available and you may therefore have to undertake additional research.)

Harborough Community Profile 2005
2001 Census
Housing statistics
Homeseach data

2.2 Equalities profile of users or beneficiaries. (Use the Council’s approved diversity monitoring categories and provide data by target group of users or beneficiaries to determine whether the service user profile reflects the local population or relevant target group or if there is over or under representation of these groups.)

All service areas are to commence standardised equality monitoring of key functions during 2008

2.3 Evidence of complaints against the service/policy/procedure/practice on grounds of discrimination. (Is there any evidence of complaints either from customers or staff (grievance) as to the delivery of the service, or its operations, on the equality target groups?)

At present, complaints are not monitored by equality strands, however this will be introduced during 2008 (see action plan)
Those complaints that have been received have been considered within this impact assessment

2.4 What does the consultation/research/data indicate about the negative impact of the service, policy, procedure or practice?

Mystery Shopping highlighted certain issues e.g., service areas were not clean and tidy (could have an impact on disabled customers), no disabled parking, all posters/information are in English, Lutterworth Service Shop and some other Service Shops not DDA compliant.

2.5 What does the consultation/research/data indicate about the positive impact of the service, policy, procedure or practice?

Market Harborough One Stop Shop is DDA compliant, low desks for wheelchair users.
Fleckney Service Shop is also DDA compliant

Part 3 – ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

Now that you have looked at the purpose, etc. of the **service/policy/procedure/practice (part 10 and looked at the data and research you have (part 2)**, this section asks you to **assess the impact, positive and negative of the service/policy/procedure/practice on each of the six strands of diversity covered in the Council’s Equality and Diversity Policy.** A copy of the policy can be found on the council’s website

RACE – testing of disproportional, adverse, neutral or positive impact

<p>a. Identify the effect of this policy on different RACE groups from information available.</p> <p>No monitoring is done at present and there is currently no data to establish the cultural make up of the district although information taken from the ‘Harborough Community Profile 2005’ produced by Leicestershire County Council showed that 4.2% (3257 people) of the population in the Harborough District were of Black and Minority Ethnic origin. The largest BME groups were Other White, Indian and Irish</p>									
<p>b. How is the target race group reflected in the take up of the service.</p> <p>There is currently no data available</p>									
<p>c. From the evidence available does the policy affect, or have the potential to affect, racial groups differently?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>									
<p>d. If yes, do any of the differences amount to:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 20%;"></th> <th style="text-align: center;">Reason/evidence/comment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination?</td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> There is a potential that language could be a barrier and have a negative impact should a customer require a leaflet in another language Signage is in one language. There is no foreign language facility on our website There is no facility for leaflets to be issued in a foreign language There is no promotion/awareness of how to obtain leaflets in a foreign language There is no list available of staff that can converse in a different language </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Neutral impact?</td> <td style="padding: 5px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Positive impact?</td> <td style="padding: 5px;"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Reason/evidence/comment	Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination?	There is a potential that language could be a barrier and have a negative impact should a customer require a leaflet in another language Signage is in one language. There is no foreign language facility on our website There is no facility for leaflets to be issued in a foreign language There is no promotion/awareness of how to obtain leaflets in a foreign language There is no list available of staff that can converse in a different language	Neutral impact?		Positive impact?	
	Reason/evidence/comment								
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination?	There is a potential that language could be a barrier and have a negative impact should a customer require a leaflet in another language Signage is in one language. There is no foreign language facility on our website There is no facility for leaflets to be issued in a foreign language There is no promotion/awareness of how to obtain leaflets in a foreign language There is no list available of staff that can converse in a different language								
Neutral impact?									
Positive impact?									
<p>e. If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one racial group or for another legitimate reason?</p> <p>No</p>									

GENDER – testing of disproportionate, adverse, neutral or positive impact

a. Identify the effect of this policy on different GENDER groups from information available.

No effect identified

b. How are men and women reflected in the take up of the service?

No data available but the service is available to every customer who contacts us

c. From the evidence available does the policy affect, or have the potential to affect, men and women differently?

Yes

No

d. If yes, do any of the differences amount to:

Reason/evidence/comment	
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination?	Lack of communication regarding arrangements for the public who have meetings with the domestic violence outreach worker.
Neutral impact?	
Positive impact?	Baby changing facilities in both gents and ladies toilets There is a room available for private and confidential consultation with the domestic violence outreach worker

e. If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one gender or for another legitimate reason?

No

DISABILITY – testing of disproportionate, adverse, neutral or positive impact

<p>a. Identify the effect of this policy on Disabled people from information available. Based on research supplied by Vistablind.org there are 398 people in the district that are either blind or partially sighted over the age of 18. Information taken from ‘Harborough Community Profile 2005’ produced by Leicestershire County Council, 13.75% of the population have a limiting long term illness</p>	
<p>b. How are disabled people reflected in the take up of the service?</p> <p>Although there is no data available, there are people with different disabilities who use our services</p>	
<p>c. From the evidence available does the policy affect, or have the potential to affect, disabled people differently?</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>d. If yes, do any of the differences amount to:</p>	
	Reason/evidence/comment
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination?	<p>Access to other service shops could be restrictive/difficult for customers using wheelchairs</p> <p>No information regarding accessibility at the various service shops available on our website</p> <p>Lack of specialist staff training in dealing with disabilities</p> <p>The barrier in the One Stop Shop at Harborough is not ideal for blind customers</p> <p>Lack of information in Braille or large print or audio tape</p>
Neutral impact?	
Positive impact?	<p>This process has highlighted the potential for key staff to be trained in British Sign Language</p> <p>Hearing Loops are installed in the One Stop Shop at Harborough for customers who are hard of hearing.</p> <p>There is also a ramp available to access the building at Market Harborough.</p> <p>Procedures are in place to allow wheelchair/mobility scooters/pushchairs access to the museum.</p> <p>Home visits can be arranged where required</p>
<p>e. If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people or for another legitimate reason?</p> <p>No.</p>	

AGE – testing of disproportionate, adverse, neutral or positive impact

a. Identify the effect of this policy on different AGE groups from information available.

No monitoring is done at present and there is currently no data to establish the cultural make up of the district although information taken from the 'Harborough Community Profile 2005' produced by Leicestershire County Council showed that 18.9% of the population are aged 16 years and under and 18.6% are of pensionable age

b. How are different age groups reflected in the take up of the service?

No data available

c. From the evidence available does the policy affect, or have the potential to affect, age groups differently?

Yes

No

d. If yes, do any of the differences amount to:

	Reason/evidence/comment
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination?	
Neutral impact?	
Positive impact?	

e. If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one age group or for another legitimate reason?

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL and TRANSGENDER – testing of disproportional, adverse, neutral or positive impact

a. Identify the effect of this policy on LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL and TRANSGENDER people from information available.

Civil Partnership not recognised on all forms used by various departments

b. How is this target group reflected in the take up of the service?

No data available

c. From the evidence available does the policy affect, or have the potential to affect, LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL and TRANSGENDER people differently?

Yes

No

d. If yes, do any of the differences amount to:

	Reason/evidence/comment
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination?	Civil Partnerships aren't recognised on all forms that are used throughout the authority
Neutral impact?	
Positive impact?	

e. If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL and TRANSGENDER people or for another legitimate reason?

No

RELIGION/BELIEF – testing of disproportionate, adverse, neutral or positive impact

a. Identify the effect of this policy on different RELIGIOUS/BELIEF groups from information available.

Identified as a possible issue

b. How are the target RELIGIOUS/BELIEF groups reflected in the take up of the service.

No data recorded

c. From the evidence available does the policy affect, or have the potential to affect, RELIGIOUS/BELIEF groups differently?

Yes

No

d. If yes, do any of the differences amount to:

	Reason/evidence/comment
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination?	Cultural sensitivity around gender, e.g. members of certain religious beliefs may only want to be dealt with by a member of the same sex or may not wish to be alone with a member of the opposite sex (e.g. in a confidential interview room)
Neutral impact?	
Positive impact?	

e. If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one RELIGIOUS/BELIEF group or for another legitimate reason?

No

OTHER – Additional groups that may experience impacts - testing of disproportional, adverse, neutral or positive impact

a. Identify the effect of this policy on OTHER GROUPS in the DISTRICT from information available. *(These other groups could include factors such as literacy, health, poverty, marital status etc.)*

Groups with literacy issues

b. How are the target OTHER groups reflected in the take up of the service.

No data available

c. From the evidence available does the policy affect, or have the potential to affect, OTHER groups differently?

Yes

No

d. If yes, do any of the differences amount to:

	Reason/evidence/comment
Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination?	
Neutral impact?	
Positive impact?	Customer Service Staff assist those customers who are unable to read or write

e. If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one OTHER group or for another legitimate reason?

Part 4

MEASURES TO MITIGATE DISPROPORTIONATE OR ADVERSE IMPACT OR IMPROVE ON NEUTRAL OR POSITIVE IMPACTS

4.1 If there is any negative impact on any target equality group identified in Section 3, is the impact intended or legal?

No

4.2 Specify measures that can be taken to remove or minimise the disproportionate or adverse effect identified in Section 3. If none were identified in Section 3, identify how disproportionate impact or adverse effect could be avoided in future. (Consider measures to mitigate any adverse impact and better achieve the promotion of equal opportunity).

Staff training (as identified with sign language)
Staff awareness
Further Language Line training
Opportunity to get Traveller Liaison Officer to join Team Meetings
Broughton Astley Service Shop moving to ground floor premises
Equality page on the website
Ensuring that language translation services are available on the website
Forms that are used throughout the authority capture relevant data relevant for equality impact assessments

4.3 If there is no evidence that the service/policy/procedure/practice promotes equality, equal opportunities or improves relations within equality target groups, what amendments could be made to achieve this?

Increased awareness
System developments to allow capturing of relevant information in order to monitor equal service delivery
Experian Data

4.4 If A NEUTRAL OR POSITIVE IMPACT has been identified, can that impact be improved upon (continuous improvement)? What are the improvements that can be made? Can they be applied elsewhere in the Council?

4.5 How will any amended service, policy, procedure or practice be implemented, including any necessary training? (Include actions, date for completion, officer(s) responsible and any budget requirements.)

Sign Language Training although there is a cost to this and there is no specific budget set aside for training
By observing staff and obtaining feedback – no cost implications
Ensuring that relevant data is collected and recorded appropriately in accordance with legislation

Part 5 - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

5.1 Does the policy comply with equalities legislation, including the duty to promote race, disability and gender equality? *(Take into account your findings from the impact assessment and consultations and explain how the policy was decided upon its intended effects and its benefits.)*

YES

NO

5.2 What are the main areas requiring further attention?

Data collection e.g., Experian data
Staff training/awareness
CRM development

5.3 Summary of recommendations for improvement.

Look at ways that relevant data can be collected
Training
Website

5.4 What equality monitoring/evaluation/review systems have been set up to carry out regular checks on the effects of the service/policy/procedure/practice? *(Give details.)*

None

5.5 When will the amended service/policy/procedure/practice be reviewed? *(Include dates for completion and officer(s) responsible.)*

Not aware that the policy will be amended to date

Date completed: 13 January 2008

Signed by (Manager): R Heezen

Part 6 - Equality Impact Assessment Improvement Plan

The table below should be completed using the information from the Equality Impact Assessment to produce an action plan for the implementation of proposals to:

1. Lower the negative impact? **And/Or**
2. Ensure that the negative impact is legal under anti-discriminatory law? **And/Or**
3. Provide an opportunity to promote equality, equal opportunity and improve relations within equality target groups? i.e. increase the positive impact

Please ensure that you update your service/business plan with the equality objectives/targets and actions identified below.

Area of negative impact	Changes proposed	Lead Officer	Timescale	Resource implication	Comments
All signage is in English	Establish what the cultural makeup is of the district to establish what languages are most commonly used. Signs can then be displayed in relevant languages. Leaflets and areas on HDC's website can then also be translated accordingly				
Communicating with non English speaking customers	A list to be produced detailing those staff who can converse in a 2 nd language or encouragement for staff to learn another language				

Language skills	This could become part of a desirable feature on future job descriptions				
Staff awareness	Relevant training or awareness sessions to be held for all staff				
Communicating with deaf people	A list to be produced detailing those staff who are able to converse using sign language				
Fixture and fittings in the One Stop Shop	When future furniture is changed, we need to ensure that disability issues are fully considered as some of the current fixture and fittings (barrier in the One Stop Shop) are not suitable for blind customers				
Data Capture	Systems need to be developed to allow the capture of relevant equality information so that there is a record of how individuals want to receive information, e.g. audio tape, Braille, specific language, etc				

Part 7 - Equality Impact Assessment: Summary Report

The results of equality impact assessments must be published. Please complete this summary, which will be used to publish the results of your impact assessment on the authority's web site and return it to your authority's nominated "equality" officer.

Date of Assessment:	
Completing Officer's Title/Position: Customer Contact Manager, Customer Services	
Officer's Name: Mr Remko Heezen	
Service, Policy, Procedure, or Practice that was Impact Assessed: Customer Services	
Summary of findings: See attached	
Summary of Recommendations and Key Points of Action Plan: See action plan	
Groups that this policy will impact upon:	
Race	Yes
Gender	No
Sexual Orientation	Yes
Age	No
Disability	Yes
Religion or Belief	Yes
Other	Yes