

Equality Impact Assessment

Purpose of the Equality Impact Assessment process:

The Equality Act (2010) introduced the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) requiring public bodies to give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Consideration must be given to the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act (2010). Assessments should consider relevant evidence relating to persons with protected characteristics in relation to assessments of potential impact.

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is to ensure that policies, functions, plans or decisions (hereafter referred to as 'policy/ decision') do not create unnecessary barriers for people protected under the Act. Where negative impacts are identified these should be eliminated or minimised, and opportunities for positive impact should be maximised. An EIA is not required for a decision in relation to an individual.

Screening is a short exercise to determine whether a policy/ decision is relevant to equalities, and if so, whether a full EIA should be conducted.

Section 1: Equality Impact Assessment Screening

| | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Title and description of the policy/ decision: | Customer Care Policy | | |
| Job title of the person(s) undertaking the assessment: | Lisa Lewis, Corporate Manager Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement | | |
| Council service: | Corporate | | |
| Date of assessment: | 13/12/2023 | | |
| What are the aims, purposes, objectives and proposed outcomes of the policy/ decision? | | | |
| The aim of the policy is to set out the standards and approach to customer service/service delivery of Mid Devon District Council (MDDC). | | | |
| Who may be affected by the policy/ decision? | All residents | | |
| How have stakeholders been involved in the development of the policy/ decision? E.g. a consultation exercise | The policy is a pre-existing policy which has been reviewed. The policy has been minimally amended and will proceed through Corporate Management, Community PDG and ultimately Cabinet. | | |
| Will there be scope for prompt, independent reviews and appeals against decisions arising from the policy/ decision? | N/A | | |
| To which part(s) of the Public Sector Equality Duties is the policy/ decision relevant: | | | |
| | Yes | No | Details |
| 1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The policy states our intention to provide excellent customer service and the standards which customers should expect from us. |
| 2. Advance equality of opportunity | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| 3. Foster good relations between different groups | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |

Which of the protected characteristics is the policy/ decision relevant to?

Tick and briefly describe any likely equalities impact (positive, negative, or neutral)

| Characteristic | Positive | Negative | Neutral | Comments |
|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Sex | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Age | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Religion or Belief | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Race | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Sexual Orientation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Gender reassignment | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |

| Characteristic | Positive | Negative | Neutral | Comments |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Pregnancy/ maternity | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Marriage and Civil partnership* | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |

*Applies only to Employment and the duty to give regard to the elimination of discrimination.

Decision by Corporate Manager to recommend this policy/ decision for an Equality Impact Assessment?

Yes

If the answer is “Yes”, please continue to the Section 2 and complete the Equality Impact Assessment. If the answer is “No”, please give a brief reason here.

EIA Screening Complete

Section 2: Equality Impact Assessment

Evidence and Consultation

What existing sources of information have you gathered to help identify how people covered by the protected characteristics may be affected by this policy/ decision? E.g. consultations, national or local data and/or research, complaints or customer feedback. Please identify any gaps in the available information that might make it difficult to form an opinion about the effect of the policy on different groups.

It is appropriate to review equalities impact of any new policy or revised policy as appropriate in line with the recently revised and agreed EIA form.

The Customer Care policy reflects council standards of general good practice around customer service. It is therefore the author's opinion that it should be assessed as 'neutral' in the context of protected characteristics.

Existing policies cover MDDC's responsibilities around protected characteristics. The following policies have been reviewed recently, or are shortly due to be reviewed within the coming months by officers and committee(s) and have been referred to in the context of the Customer Care policy to ensure that this policy remains relevant and presents best practice.

Single Equalities Scheme – agreed 2023

The Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy is due for review imminently and a member briefing on the subject was delivered to members on 6 December 2023.

The Complaints and Feedback policy is due to be reviewed 2024.

Please complete this table for all the Protected Characteristics. If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be justified or where possible mitigated either to reduce or remove them. (Please add rows where needed)

| Potential Impacts/ Issues Identified/ Opportunities identified | Mitigation required (action) or Justification | Lead Officer and target completion date | What is the expected outcome from the action? |
|--|---|---|---|
| Sex | | | |
| | N/A | | |
| Age | | | |
| | N/A | | |
| Disability | | | |
| | N/A | | |
| Religion or Belief | | | |
| | N/A | | |
| Race | | | |
| | N/A | | |
| Sexual Orientation | | | |
| | N/A | | |
| Gender Reassignment | | | |

| | | | |
|---|-----|--|--|
| | N/A | | |
| Pregnancy/ maternity | | | |
| | N/A | | |
| Marriage and Civil partnership (Applies only to Employment and the duty to give regard to the elimination of discrimination) | | | |
| | N/A | | |

Please provide details of arrangements to monitor and review the policy/ decision and any mitigating actions or actions to promote equality:

Please state where the EIA will be published (e.g. on the Mid Devon District Council website): MDDC website

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Equality Impact Assessment Sign off

For completion by Corporate Manager

Are you prepared to agree and sign off the EIA?

Yes **No**

If "No", provide details of why and next steps:

Name: Lisa Lewis

Job Title: Corporate Manager for Digital Transformation & Customer Engagement

Date: 14/12/2023