

Budget Proposals 2014/15 and 2015/16: Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) – EIA - DRAFT

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Business Unit:	Customer Services	Directorate:	Information Services
Executive Lead(s):	Derek Mills	Date:	13/06/2014

The council and its partners are facing a significant challenge in the savings it needs to make over the next couple of years. This Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been developed as a tool to enable business units to fully consider the impact of their proposals on the community. As a council we need to ensure that we are able to deliver the savings that we need to make while mitigating against any negative or adverse impacts on particular groups across our communities.

This EIA will evidence that the Council have fully considered the impact of the proposed changes and has carried out appropriate consultation on those changes with the key stakeholders. This EIA and the evidence provided within it will allow Councillors to make informed decisions as part of the decision-making process regarding the council's budget.

Executive Lead / Head Sign off:

Executive Lead(s)	Derek Mills	Executive Head:	Bob Clark
Date:		Date:	

Summary from Overall Budget Proposals:

Proposals - Outline	Savings for 2014/15 and 2015/16		Implementation Cost <i>Include brief outline + year incurred</i>	Delivery <i>When will this proposal realise income / savings</i>	Risks / impact of proposals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Potential risks</i> ▪ <i>Impact on community</i> ▪ <i>Knock on impact to other agencies</i> ▪ <i>If statutory service please state relevant legislation section and Act together with any statutory guidance issued.</i> 	Type of decision		
	Income £ 000's	Budget reduction £ 000's				Internal	Minor	Major
Close Brixham and Torquay Connections Offices and centralise the "Connections" service in Paignton Library And Information Centre		2015/16 £102k	There will be additional costs associated with this proposal (to be researched).	01/04/2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The location within PLAIC needs to be able to accommodate a significant increase in footfall ▪ Age UK would no longer be able to use the meeting room in Torquay Connections and would have to make alternative arrangements ▪ There is a need to ensure that the Main Reception at Torquay Town Hall does not become a face to face enquiry point ▪ Customers that currently use Brixham & Torquay Connections would either have to travel to Paignton or make use of the alternative facilities. ▪ Appointments may have to continue to be facilitated in Torquay due to meeting room space & staff travel costs to PLAIC 			X

Section 1: Purpose of the proposal/strategy/decision

No	Question	Details
1.	<p>Clearly set out the proposal and what is the intended outcome.</p>	<p>Customer Services currently manages four face to face offices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Torquay Connections located at Town Hall Torquay ▪ Paignton Connections located within Paignton Library and Information Centre ▪ Brixham Connections located with Brixham Library ▪ Main Reception located at the Town Hall <p>The proposal is to close two of the Connections Offices in Torquay & Brixham and centralise the Connections face to face service in PLAIC.</p> <p>The intended outcome is that Customer Services will have one centralised face to face office within Torbay (excluding Main Reception). At the same time the operating model of the Connections service will be reviewed and amended to provide customers with a variety of contact channels within the one remaining office.</p>
2.	<p>Who is intended to benefit / who will be affected?</p>	<p>Negative impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Customers that currently use the Torquay or Brixham office will no longer be offered a face to face service by Customer Services. (Provision will be made for customers in Torquay & Brixham to contact Customer Services using alternative channels) ▪ The remaining office may experience high customer demand if other contact channels are not effective. ▪ Potential increase in complaints eg waiting times, quality of service ▪ The operating model in PLAIC will be significantly different to the current operating model, this may cause some customer confusion until the new way of working becomes familiar with our customers. ▪ Potential increase in transport costs for some customers travelling to remaining location, although this may be mitigated by implementing increased online transactions. ▪ All back office service areas will need to be consulted if it is identified that face to face enquiries are dealt with in the offices

No	Question	Details
		<p>that are closing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Negative public perception <p>Positive impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The level of savings identified will allow for additional staff to be transferred to the remaining office and call centre in addition to realising benefits ▪ Streamlining of service attributing to savings target ▪ Torquay Connections could generate income for Torbay Council ▪ The central office will have a security presence. (Currently a member of the Security Team is present at the Torquay Office only) ▪ Saving of Qmatic (customer queuing system) annual licence. Currently used in Torquay Connections (£4,800) ▪ An increase in channel shift - a percentage of face to face customers will choose to contact using the telephone or website rather than travel to the central Connections office ▪ Opportunity to re-engineer customer contact and ensure that it is future proof ▪ Reduction in below the line accommodation costs (2013/14 Torquay Connections 45k, Paignton Connections 18k, Brixham Connections nil) ▪ Improved scheduling of resource (staff) and increased flexibility ▪ Consistency of service

Section 2: Equalities, Consultation and Engagement

Torbay Council has a moral obligation as well as a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, promote good relations and advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.

The **Equalities, Consultation and Engagement** section ensures that, as a council, we take into account the Public Sector Equality Duty at an early stage and provide evidence to ensure that we fully consider the impact of our decisions/proposals on the Torbay community.

Evidence, Consultation and Engagement

No	Question	Details
3.	Have you considered the available evidence?	<p>In 2013/14 Customer Services dealt with 88,000 face to face enquires. By centralising at one location and changing the way the service operates the savings identified can be achieved.</p> <p>2013/14 Face to face volumes Torquay Connections – 50,296 Paignton Connections (Including Reception Desk)- 29,515 Brixham Connections – 8,249</p> <p>Many Councils already have only one face to face office. In addition to being the most expensive contact channel to provide there is a national agenda to move towards digital channels of contact. http://digital.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/about/ As well as being cost effective, online transactions enables customers to self serve at a time that is convenient to them.</p>

No	Question	Details
4.	How will consult on the proposal?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public consultation via questionnaire 2. Consultation with current service users through a targeted questionnaire 3. Direct contact with stakeholders 4. Written representation from local and national organisations
5.	Outline the key findings	<p><i>TO BE COMPLETED ONCE CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN: Include feedback on your proposal including where you have consulted on any alternative options. Also include response rates, number of attendees to events / focus groups, outline of specific interest groups consulted. Use bullet points to summarise the key conclusions.</i></p>
6.	What amendments may be required as a result of the consultation?	<p><i>TO BE COMPLETED ONCE CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN: Has feedback from the consultation and engagement process identified any changes required to the proposal? Have you had to alter your decision and look at alternative options?</i></p>

Positive and Negative Equality Impacts *TO BE UPDATED ONCE CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN*

No	Question	Details		
7.	Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups			
		Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact
	Older or younger people	Positive impact on those customers with online capabilities due to increased facilities - 24/7 365 days per week	Anyone who prefers face to face facility and non online users	Neutral impact on people who do not use the face to face offices
	People with caring responsibilities	Positive impact on those customers with online capabilities due to increased facilities - 24/7 365 days per week	Anyone who prefers face to face facility and non online users	Neutral impact on people who do not use the face to face offices
	People with a disability	Positive impact on those customers with online capabilities due to increased facilities - 24/7 365 days per week	Customers with a disability may have difficulty travelling to a central location.	Neutral impact on people who do not use the face to face offices
	Women or men	Positive impact on those customers with online capabilities due to increased facilities - 24/7 365 days per week	Anyone who prefers face to face facility and non online users	Neutral impact on people who do not use the face to face offices
	People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME)	Positive impact on those customers with online capabilities due to increased facilities - 24/7 365 days per week . The website can be translated into 51 different languages using Google translate.	Anyone who prefers face to face facility and non online users	Neutral impact on people who do not use the face to face offices
	Religion or belief (including lack of belief)	Positive impact on those customers with online capabilities due to increased facilities - 24/7 365 days per week	Anyone who prefers face to face facility and non online users	Neutral impact on people who do not use the face to face offices
	People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual	Positive impact on those customers with online capabilities due to increased facilities - 24/7 365 days per week	Anyone who prefers face to face facility and non online users	Neutral impact on people who do not use the face to face offices
	People who are transgendered	Positive impact on those customers with online capabilities due to increased	Anyone who prefers face to face facility and non online users	Neutral impact on people who do not use the face to face offices

No	Question	Details		
		facilities - 24/7 365 days per week		
	People who are in a marriage or civil partnership	Positive impact on those customers with online capabilities due to increased facilities - 24/7 365 days per week	Anyone who prefers face to face facility and non online users	Neutral impact on people who do not use the face to face offices
	Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave	Positive impact on those customers with online capabilities due to increased facilities - 24/7 365 days per week	Anyone who prefers face to face facility and non online users	Neutral impact on people who do not use the face to face offices
	Socio-economic impacts (Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)	Positive impact on those customers with online capabilities due to increased facilities - 24/7 365 days per week	Anyone who prefers face to face facility and non online users	Neutral impact on people who do not use the face to face offices
	Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)	Positive impact on those customers with online capabilities due to increased facilities - 24/7 365 days per week	Anyone who prefers face to face facility and non online users	Neutral impact on people who do not use the face to face offices
8a.	Cumulative Impacts – Council wide (proposed changes elsewhere which might worsen the impacts identified above)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced funding of Supporting People. The impact of the reduction of the funding for Supporting People is unknown. Potentially, there may be an increase in demand for some services areas eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing - potential increase in homelessness or increase in homeless prevention work ○ Debt Advice - potential increase in debts such as Council Tax and rent arrears due to increased waiting lists and fewer resources to assist with budgeting 		
8b.	Cumulative Impacts – Other public services (proposed changes elsewhere which might worsen the impacts identified above)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of Welfare Reform - The introduction of Universal Credit and further welfare reform has yet to be clarified both in terms of implementation and procedure within Torbay. 		

Section 3: Mitigating action *TO BE UPDATED ONCE CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN*

No	Action	Details
9.	Summarise any negative impacts and how these will be managed?	<p data-bbox="562 177 2154 240"><i>Outline each negative impacts identified relating to equalities in question 7 and how each impact will be managed / monitored so that they are reduced / eliminated or mitigated. What ways can the negative impact be minimised?</i></p> <p data-bbox="562 284 2096 347">There is a potential impact of closing Torquay and Brixham Connections and centralising in Paignton on the following groups that currently use these offices:</p> <ol data-bbox="607 392 1637 528" style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Older or younger people 2. People with caring responsibilities 3. People with a disability 4. Socio-economic impacts (including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation) <p data-bbox="562 571 1778 603">To mitigate the impact on these groups the following actions are being explored as part of the project:</p> <ul data-bbox="607 646 2154 1177" style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Installation of non chargeable telephones lines to enable customers to continue to contact Torbay Council. These could be located either in the Libraries or at other suitable locations. The consultation process with stakeholders will identify potential locations. ▪ Installation of self service pods for customers to use at the locations identified. This would enable customers that we able to use a computer to contact Torbay Council via the website. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The format of the website is currently being reviewed with a view to improve the customer experience, readability, accessibility and access by mobile devices plus a review of current content. ▪ The number of online transactions is also being increased to improve self service and allow greater customer interaction with more council services 24/7. ▪ Web chat is also being explored. This would be an additional service that would be dealt with by the Customer Service Team. This would allow Customer Services to support customers to self serve by signposting to the appropriate web page or answer simple queries. ▪ Identify services that are or could be delivered by the Library Service in Brixham and Torquay. ▪ Explore how the number of documents required to be scanned could be reduced. In addition, consider alternative methods of providing documentation.

Section 4: Monitoring *TO BE UPDATED ONCE CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN*

No	Action	Details
10.	Outline plans to monitor the actual impact of your proposals	<i>The full impact of decisions will only be known once it is introduced. Identify arrangements for reviewing the actual impact of proposals once they have been implemented, including dates and methods.</i>

Section 5: Recommended course of action – *TO BE COMPLETED WHEN ALL SECTIONS COMPLETE AND EIA FINALISED*

No	Action	Outcome	Tick ✓	Reasons/justification for recommended action
11.	State a recommended course of action <i>Clearly identify an option and justify reasons for this decision. The following four outcomes are possible from an assessment (and more than one may apply to a single proposal). Please select from the 4 outcomes and justify the reasons for your decision</i>	Outcome 1: No major change required - EIA has not identified any potential for adverse impact in relation to equalities and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken		
		Outcome 2: Adjustments to remove barriers – Action to remove the barriers identified in relation to equalities have been taken or actions identified to better promote equality		
		Outcome 3: Continue with proposal - Despite having identified some <u>potential</u> for adverse impact / missed opportunities in relation to equalities or to promote equality. Full justification required, especially in relation to equalities, in line with the duty to have ‘due regard’.		
		Outcome 4: Stop and rethink – EIA has identified actual or potential unlawful discrimination in relation to equalities or adverse impact has been identified		