

BCP Equality Impact Assessment Template

Executive Summary and Conclusions

Once the Equality Impact Assessment Template has been completed, please summarise the key findings here. Please send a copy of your final document to the Policy and Performance Team.

As a response to the Covid 19 pandemic, the Council has changed the way it works and engages with customers and the community. The proposal to maintain the momentum of flexible modern ways of working across the BCP Council estate and repurpose council buildings overall appears to offer more positive than negative outcomes for protected characteristics.

Customer access points will still be available for face to face contact for those that choose to access council services this way but in more central and accessible sites in Poole and Christchurch.

Most Council staff are already working differently and have adapted to flexible and remote ways of working.

Modern and more accessible ways of working will make BCP Council a more accessible and open employer. Most staff will have seen a reduction in travel to work time and costs and there is likely to have been a positive impact for people with limited access to public transport. Generally staff have had more options about how they fulfil their duties which promotes BCP Council as an employer of choice.

However, there are some potential negative impacts for staff that the Council should commit to addressing through its Workforce Strategy as the impact on individuals is better understood. Learning from the staff survey and Accommodation Occupancy Diagnostic tool will help inform this. This equality impact assessment should continue to be reviewed and updated in light of further feedback.

In summary:

- Online working and learning does not suit all ages and over a 3rd of BCP Employees in the three main offices are over the age 55.
- Some staff may not have access to a suitable, safe workspace outside of an office environment and no access to space to have confidential discussions.
- The pace of change and working with new technology may have impact on people's health and wellbeing as there is an increased risk of loneliness and poor mental health
- It may present some staff with safeguarding issues, for example domestic violence, and greater frequencies in home working may increase risks to affected employees, particularly women

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Part 1 - The Project	
Policy/Service under development/review:	Estates and Accommodation Strategy
Service Unit:	Organisational Development
Service Lead:	Julian Osgathorpe
Equality Impact Assessment Team:	Sarah Ray- Dene Julian Osgathorpe Matti Raudsepp Joelle Price Bridget West Sam Johnson Vicky Edmonds Graeme Smith
Date assessment started:	19/05/20
Date assessment completed:	
What are the aims/objectives of the policy/service?	<p>To maintain the momentum of flexible modern ways of working across the BCP Council estate and repurpose council buildings.</p> <p>To consolidate the Council's office footprint and reduce the impact of climate change through the ways people use and access council buildings and services.</p> <p>During the current climate, significant strides have been made towards different ways of working. The proposal is to embrace these changes and</p>

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Part 1 - The Project

	<p>to outline what can be achieved through a reassessed accommodation & estates programme.</p> <p>The report to Cabinet in Feb '20 set out the current Estates context, the options for achieving a single council hub and the evaluation criteria to be applied to the options, and the recommended way forward for the delivery of a single BCP Council Civic and administrative hub.</p>
What outcomes will be achieved with the new or changed policy/service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible ways of working which will benefit all staff • Protection of vulnerable members of staff and customers with more effective adoption of social distancing guidance • Reduction in the council's carbon footprint • Financial savings which will enable the more efficient delivery of public services • Safe and accessible buildings, kit and equipment • Relocation of customer access points in Poole and Christchurch to more accessible central locations
Are there any associated services, policies or procedures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Access Strategy – being developed • Digital Strategy – being developed • Medium Term Financial Strategy • Asset Management Plan • Employee Pay & Reward (terms & Conditions) – being developed • BCP Council Travel Plan – being developed • Corporate Strategy • Climate strategy • People Strategy • Health and Safety Policy • Lone working procedures • Corporate Safeguarding policy

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Part 1 - The Project

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational Design Programme
Please list the main people, or groups, that this policy/service is designed to benefit, and any other stakeholders involved:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCP Staff, agency workers, Councillors and Contractors • Customers, residents, visitors with improved and more central customer contact centres. • Community groups
With consideration for their clients, please list any other organisations, statutory, voluntary or community that the policy/service/process will affect:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade unions • Citizens Advice Bureau and their customers • Public Health • Community and voluntary sector groups and third parties who use the Town Hall for their meetings and events

Part 2 – Supporting Evidence¹

Please list and/or link to below any recent & relevant consultation & engagement that can be used to demonstrate a clear understanding of those with a legitimate interest in the policy/service/process and the relevant findings:

Employee First Data:

Payroll data from Employee First shows that across the authority almost 7% of the workforce on the payroll are 65 or over, rising to 9% in the main offices. This increases to 30% and 33% respectively when including those 55 and over. Those under 25 make up 5.5% of the total workforce falling to under 3% in the main offices.

68% of the workforce identifies as female with that figure falling to 66% in the main offices.

¹ This could include: service monitoring reports, research, customer satisfaction surveys & feedback, workforce monitoring, staff surveys, opinions and information from trade unions, previous completed EIAs (including those of other organisations) feedback from focus groups & individuals or organisations representing the interests of key target groups or similar.

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Part 2 – Supporting Evidence¹

3% of the workforce is identified as having some form of disability with similar figures for the main offices.

A Staff survey of working arrangements implemented during Covid 19 is currently being undertaken which will help understand the impacts on staff and inform the strategy

Accommodation Occupancy Diagnostic tool is being completed by service managers to understand office accommodation needs
Staff parking permit data from the existing Bournemouth Town Hall site will be used to help understand mobility issues and parking demand.

Customer Data:

Limited data available on footfall at the main offices so further work needs to be undertaken to establish if there are wider access issues if customer access points are changed. However, 11,500 customers visited the Poole Civic offices between April 19 and March 2020. Of those, approximately 270 people attended to discuss disability related issues.

A better understanding of channel shift will also help determine if there are wider negative impacts. An example is improving the digital offer combined with moving to an appointment based operation. Revenues & Benefits service reduced customer drop in footfall by approximately 70% on Poole site from 13,656 customers in 2016/17 to 4,021 customers in 2019/2020 (not included March 2020 due to office closure).

[Wider population data](#), [ward profile data](#) and the [State of BCP report](#) are here:

More detailed community and economic impact assessments are currently being prepared. This will help us better understand the full impact of Covid 19 on people's health and financial wellbeing, on the business community and in the workplace.

If there is insufficient consultation or engagement information please explain in the Action plan what further consultation will be undertaken, who with and how.

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Part 2 – Supporting Evidence¹

Please list or link to any relevant research, census and other evidence or information that is available and relevant to this EIA:

- [Tableau dashboard workforce profile](#)
- [BCP Diversity Data](#)
- Refuge have reported a 66% increase in calls and enquiries to the national domestic abuse helplines since lockdown began. <https://www.refuge.org.uk/refuge-reports-further-increase-in-demand-for-its-national-domestic-abuse-helpline-services-during-lockdown/>

Please list below any service user/employee monitoring data available and relevant to this policy/service/process and what it shows in relation to any Protected Characteristic:

If there is insufficient research and monitoring data, please explain in the Action plan what information will be gathered:

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Part 3 – Assessing the Impact by Equality Characteristic

Use the evidence to determine to the impacts, positive or negative for each Equality Characteristic listed below. Listing negative impacts will help protect the organisation from potential litigation in the future, it does not mean the policy cannot continue.

Click here for more guidance on how to understand the impact of the service/policy/procedure against each characteristic.

If the impact is not known please explain in the Action plan what steps will be taken to find out.

	Actual or potential positive outcome	Actual or potential negative outcome
1. Age ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer access points in more accessible central locations • Modern and more accessible ways of working will make BCP Council a more accessible and open employer • Reduction in travel to work time and costs • Positive impact on people with limited access to public transport • Flexible working hours allows good work life balance • BCP council becomes an employer of choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online working and learning doesn't suit all ages • Young people may not have access to suitable workspace outside of an office environment. • Pace of change and working with new technology may have impact on people's health and wellbeing. • Increased loneliness and poor mental health • Lack of space to have confidential discussions
2. Disability ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer access points in more accessible central locations • Modern and more accessible ways of working will make BCP Council a more accessible and open employer • Reduction in travel to work time and costs • Positive impact on people with limited access to public transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated workstation set up at work may not be the same at home or in new shared spaces • Some people may be more at risk if lone working/working from home • Bournemouth Town Hall is compliant with the Equality Act but access is not always easy for those with limited mobility • Increased loneliness and poor mental health • Lack of space to have confidential discussions

² Under this characteristic, The Equality Act only applies to those over 18.

³ Consider any reasonable adjustments that may need to be made to ensure fair access.

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	Actual or potential positive outcome	Actual or potential negative outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive impact on those with a mobility impairment • More likely to keep disabled people in employment • More options about how you fulfil duties • BCP council becomes an employer of choice 	
3. Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern and more accessible ways of working will make BCP Council a more accessible and open employer • Reduction in travel to work time and costs • Positive impact on people with limited access to public transport • Flexible working hours allows good work life balance • BCP Council becomes an employer of choice • For women - opportunities for flexible working hours could help reduce costs of childcare because predominantly childcare responsibilities fall to women and single parent families are headed up by women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding issues (domestic violence) - women are more likely to be victims of domestic violence, and greater frequencies in home working may increase risks to affected employees • Increased loneliness and poor mental health • Lack of space for confidential discussions

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	Actual or potential positive outcome	Actual or potential negative outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For women – could allow more options to increase their working hours or take up employment which suits their family commitments. 	
4. Gender reassignment ⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modern and more accessible ways of working will make BCP Council a more accessible and open employer Reduction in travel to work time and costs Positive impact on people with limited access to public transport. More options about how you fulfil duties BCP council becomes an employer of choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of space to have confidential discussions Increased loneliness and poor mental health
5. Pregnancy and Maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer access points in more accessible central locations Opportunities for flexible working hours could help reduce costs of childcare because predominantly childcare responsibilities fall to women and predominantly single parent families are headed up by women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of space to have confidential discussions Increased loneliness and poor mental health

⁴ Transgender refers people have a gender identity or gender expression that differs to the sex assigned at birth.

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	Actual or potential positive outcome	Actual or potential negative outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May support with mobility concerns in the later stages of pregnancy • May support with tiredness and fatigue during pregnancy 	
6. Marriage and Civil Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer access points in more accessible central locations • Modern and more accessible ways of working will make BCP Council a more accessible and open employer • Reduction in travel to work time and costs • Positive impact on people with limited access to public transport. • More options about how you fulfil duties • BCP council becomes an employer of choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of space to have confidential discussions • Increased loneliness and poor mental health
7. Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer access points in more accessible central locations • Modern and more accessible ways of working will make BCP Council a more accessible and open employer. • Reduction in travel to work time and costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online working/learning doesn't suit everyone – English not first language • Lack of space to have confidential discussions • Increased loneliness and poor mental health

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	Actual or potential positive outcome	Actual or potential negative outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive impact on people with limited access to public transport. More options about how you fulfil duties BCP council becomes an employer of choice 	
8. Religion or Belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer access points in more accessible central locations Modern and more accessible ways of working will make BCP Council a more accessible and open employer Reduction in travel to work time and costs Positive impact on people with limited access to public transport. More options about how you fulfil duties BCP council becomes an employer of choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to consider contemplation room as an option for staff on site Lack of space to have confidential discussions Increased loneliness and poor mental health
9. Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modern and more accessible ways of working will make BCP Council a more accessible and open employer Reduction in travel to work time and costs Positive impact on people with limited access to public transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of space to have confidential discussions Increased loneliness and poor mental health

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	Actual or potential positive outcome	Actual or potential negative outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More options about how you fulfil duties • BCP council becomes an employer of choice 	
10. Armed Forces Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer access points in more accessible central locations • • Modern and more accessible ways of working will make BCP Council a more accessible and open employer • Reduction in travel to work time and costs • Positive impact on people with limited access to public transport. • More options about how you fulfil duties • BCP council becomes an employer of choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of space to have confidential discussions • Increased loneliness and poor mental health
11. Any other factors/groups e.g. socio-economic status/carers etc ⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer access points in more accessible central locations • Modern and more accessible ways of working will make BCP Council a more accessible and open employer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some people may have limited access to ICT and limited internet/broadband packages • Maybe an increase personal cost, electricity, heating etc if working from home

⁵ People on low incomes or no income, unemployed, carers, part-time, seasonal workers and shift workers

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Part 3 – Assessing the Impact by Equality Characteristic

Use the evidence to determine the impacts, positive or negative for each Equality Characteristic listed below. Listing negative impacts will help protect the organisation from potential litigation in the future, it does not mean the policy cannot continue. [Click here](#) for more guidance on how to understand the impact of the service/policy/procedure against each characteristic. If the impact is not known please explain in the Action plan what steps will be taken to find out.

	Actual or potential positive outcome	Actual or potential negative outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BCP council becomes an employer of choice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor broadband connectivity may be an issue for some
12. Human Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer access points in more accessible central locations Modern and more accessible ways of working will make BCP Council a more accessible and open employer Reduction in travel to work time and costs Positive impact on people with limited access to public transport. More options and personal choice about how you fulfil duties BCP council becomes an employer of choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We may lose the opportunity to share skills from working in a collective environment.

Any policy which shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination must be stopped, removed or changed.

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Part 4 – Equality Impact Action Plan

Please complete this Action Plan for any negative or unknown impacts identified in the assessment table above.

Issue identified	Action required to reduce impact	Timescale	Responsible officer
Safeguarding issues (domestic violence) - women are more likely to be victims of domestic violence, and greater frequencies in home working may increase risks to affected employees	To provide information to staff on support available. This has already been undertaken and information is available here. https://bcpcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/covid19	Ongoing	HR
Online working and learning doesn't suit all ages or where English is not the first language	This needs to be reflected in the workforce strategy, specifically around training. Consider tailored training.		
Young people may not have access to suitable workspace outside of an office environment.	Consider access to suitable space in the accommodation plans for the central hub.		
Pace of change and working with new technology may have impact on people's health and wellbeing.	Consider in Health and Wellbeing and Health and Safety guidance and training.		
Increased loneliness and poor mental health	Consider in Health and Wellbeing and Health and Safety guidance and training.		

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Part 4 – Equality Impact Action Plan

Please complete this Action Plan for any negative or unknown impacts identified in the assessment table above.

Issue identified	Action required to reduce impact	Timescale	Responsible officer
Lack of space to have confidential discussions	Consider access to suitable space in the accommodation plans for the central hub.		
Dedicated workstation set up at work may not be the same at home or in new shared spaces	Considered in DSE assessments and Health and safety guidance.		
Some people may be more at risk if lone working/working from home	Consider in Health and Safety policy and lone working guidance.		
Bournemouth Town Hall is compliant with the Equality Act but access is not always easy for those with limited mobility	Consider disability access in the accommodation plans for the central hub.		
Need to consider contemplation room as an option for staff on site	Consider in the accommodation plans for the central hub.		
Some people may have limited access to ICT and limited internet/broadband packages	Consider in the accommodation plans for the central hub.		
Maybe an increase personal cost, electricity, heating etc if working from home	Consider in the Employee Pay and Reward (Terms and conditions) Strategy		

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Part 4 – Equality Impact Action Plan

Please complete this Action Plan for any negative or unknown impacts identified in the assessment table above.

Issue identified	Action required to reduce impact	Timescale	Responsible officer
Poor broadband connectivity may be an issue for some	Consider in the accommodation plans for the central hub.		
We may lose the opportunity to share skills from working in a collective environment.	This needs to be reflected in the workforce strategy, specifically around training. Consider tailored training and mentoring.		

Key contacts for further advice and guidance:

Equality & Diversity:

performance@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Consultation & Research:

insight@bcpcouncil.gov.uk