

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Before completing this EqIA please ensure you have read the EqIA Guidance Notes

Title	Customer Services restructure/organisational change		
Date assessment started:	13/01/2020	Version No:	2
		Date of completion:	13/02/2020

Type of Strategy, Policy, Project or Service:

Is this Equality Impact Assessment (please put a cross in the relevant box)

Existing:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Changing, update or revision:	<input type="checkbox"/>
New or proposed: X	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other (please explain):	<input type="checkbox"/>

Is this Equality Impact Assessment (please put a cross in the relevant box)

Internal: X	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	External: X	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Both:	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Report Created By:

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Step 1: Aims

What are the aims of your strategy, policy, project or service?
Proposals for this change process will set out a converged organisational structure for Customer Services.
What is the background or context to the proposal?
Customer Services currently has teams operating from South Walks House, County Hall and the Dorset History Centre in Dorchester, Commercial Road in Weymouth, Mountfield House in Bridport, Westport House in Wareham and Allenview House in Wimborne. The Customer Services structure currently reflects the legacy district, borough and county structures that have several different operating models, roles, grades of roles and purposes that need to be converged to establish a single service/structure. This will enable:

- Establishing a consistent customer experience
- To balance next year's budget and contribute to required savings across Dorset Council
- Better alignment of capacity/working patterns to meet demand to avoid additional costs being incurred to maintain performance standards
- Recognising that greater flexibility is required in where and how resources are deployed across the County.
- The requirement for additional capacity to be embedded within the structure reflecting arrangements post disaggregation of Christchurch and East Dorset councils.
- The requirement for additional capacity to be embedded within the structure reflecting Dorset History Centre reception capacity is not currently sufficient to meet opening hours.
- The need to establish a more defined career progression journey through Customer Services.
- In time and in a well-managed approach, that the focus of roles will change as the Council completes both transitional and transformational activity.

At the same time we will be aligning the opening hours of core customer services locations (face to face reception areas and contact centres) across the county, again reflecting that legacy councils open/closed at varying times. (See appendix A for the current opening hours)

Having reviewed considerable customer contact data the proposal is to move to hours of Monday to Friday 8:30 am until 17:00 pm. These hours reflect a considerable drop in customer demand after 17:00 pm and the disproportionate cost in retaining officers during this period when considering the volume of demand. In addition to 'face to face' locations, this also applies other customer access channels such as telephony, email and webchat.

The closing time also aligns with out of hours operations.

In considering the future opening and closing times, contact has been made with a number of local authorities including Wiltshire Council, Hertfordshire County Council and Cornwall Council. All these councils have a similar demography and geographical spread to Dorset Council.

Outside existing opening hours customers can access information on-line and for emergency situation they will be able to contact services through the Council's 'out of hours' provision.

In terms of roles, we currently have 29 part-time contract out of 66 post which is equivalent to 44%.

The proposed structure looks to create 28 part-time contracts out of 61 posts which is equivalent to 46% of available roles.

This sees a percentage increase in part-time roles.

Below is the timetable for the proposal:

Task	Dates
Consultation commences.	13 January 2020
Consultation ends.	26 February 2020
Structure finalised.	09 March 2020
Expression of interest forms submitted by.	10 to 24 March 2020
Selection for new posts by.	30 March to 14 April 2020
Appointments confirmed.	14 April 2020
Redundancy notice served.	Week commencing 13 April 2020
Commencing new posts.	01 May 2020
Employees to leave the organisation.	12 July 2020

Step 2: Intelligence and Communication

What data, information, evidence and research was used in this EqIA and how has it been used to inform the decision-making process?

Customer demand/data to understand when and how our customers interact/engage with Customer Services teams has been gathered from systems such as our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and contact centre telephony. (See Appendix B)

This data has informed our required resource modelling to understand how our current rota's and capacity align to the current demand that we receive.

Review of other local authority opening hours to understand options/best fit for Dorset given financial constraints.

What data do you already have about your service users, or the people your proposal will have an impact on?

Protected characteristics data for all colleagues within the scope of this change management process is included in Step 3: Assessment under each protected characteristic. Employees are encouraged to provide equality monitoring data, but they are not obliged to do so. It should be noted that for some protected characteristics we are unable to provide data, due to not being collected or it being so small there is risk of identifying.

Customer demand at regular intervals throughout working days, although we are not able to provide equality data on who are customers are. A breakdown of the Dorset population can be found on [Dorset Insight](#)

Resource capacity/availability throughout working days.

Performance data across Customer Services teams.

What engagement or consultation has taken place as part of this EqIA?

The following engagement has been undertaken as part of the preparation of proposals and has subsequently formed the core insight upon which the EqIA has been completed:

- Customer insight: to understand what works well, what doesn't and what we could review in order to improve customer experience. This was completed through the Peoples Panel.
- Employee engagement: we met with over 60 colleagues from across customer services to understand what works well, what doesn't work well and opportunities moving forwards
- Peers within the local government family – Cornwall Council and Hertfordshire County due to similar demography and geographical spread and to Dorset Council. and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council as the delivery of Customer Services in Wimborne is currently covered by both Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole council.
- Discussions with service areas we provide services with/on behalf of to understand any changes on their horizon that would have an impact on customer services
- Discussions to reflect the wider adopted design principles within proposals
- General development of the proposals: Service leadership team, Portfolio holder and Executive Director
- Financial modelling – Financial Services colleagues.

Is further information needed to help inform this proposal?

Customer Services enters formal Change Management arrangements as part of consultation on 13/01/2020. Any feedback that is raised as part of that process will be considered.

How will the outcome of consultation be fed back to those who you consulted with

Colleagues will have the opportunity to request an individual meeting with leadership team members during the consultation process and they will also be able to raise questions during the consultation period and responses will be provided.

The Leadership Team will make sure that anyone on long term absence for any reason is contacted and offered a number of briefing options.

At the end of the formal consultation process the Leadership Team will review consultation feedback and will consider any necessary changes. The final proposals will be published and this information will be made available.

Step 3: Assessment

Who does the service, strategy, policy, project or change impact?

- If your strategy, policy, project or service contains options you may wish to consider providing an assessment for each option. Please cut and paste the template accordingly.

For each protected characteristic please choose from the following options:

- Please note in some cases more than one impact may apply – in this case please state all relevant options and explain in the 'Please provide details' box.

Positive Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive impact on a large proportion of protected characteristic groups • Significant positive impact on a small proportion of protect characteristics group
Negative Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disproportionate impact on a large proportion of protected characteristic groups • Significant disproportionate impact on a small proportion of protected characteristic groups.
Neutral Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change/ no assessed significant impact of protected characteristic groups
Unclear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough data/evidence has been collected to make an informed decision.

Age:	<i>Neutral impact.</i>
What age bracket does this affect?	20 to 24 – 7 employees 25 to 39 – 18 employees 40 to 49 – 7 employees 50 to 59 – 18 employees 60 to 64 – 5 employees 65+ - 2 employees Total 57 employees
Please provide details:	The proposal for customer services presents employment opportunities for all employees, regardless of age. All employees will be treated in a fair and non-discriminatory way.

Disability:	<i>Unclear impact.</i>
Does this affect a specific disability group?	None identified at present.
Please provide details:	Disabled – 4% Not disabled – 46% Not declared – 45% Unknown – 5% <p>The number of people who have declared a disability is 4%, although this number may higher due to people not declaring. N.B. A % has been used as we do not want to risk identifying employees. Employees will have opportunities in the consultation period to share any equality data. Employee data does not identify any specific disability characteristics for any of the individuals identified as 'disabled'.</p> <p>The proposal seeks to change some working arrangement in terms of hours of contracts and working days of the week to meet customer led demand.</p> <p>This may impact employees that have a defined working pattern to manage their disability – any specific queries that are</p>

	<p>raised during the consultation period will be discussed fully with the individual and reasonable adjustments will be offered where they can be.</p> <p>As part of the consultation period the Leadership Team will make sure that briefing materials are made available in variety of formats on request and will offer a face to face briefing for anyone who is unable to attend, for any reason the planned consultation meetings.</p> <p>The meetings will be held in locations with access for those with a disability and a hearing loop is available on request.</p> <p>We will respond to anything specific declared during the Change Management process.</p>
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Gender Reassignment & Gender Identity:	<i>Unclear impact.</i>
Please provide details:	No impact identified at present, however Dorset Council does not currently collect data on employees for this category and neither is there census data available in relation to this category.

Pregnancy and maternity:	<i>Neutral impact.</i>
Please provide details:	There are currently no colleagues who are away from the service on maternity leave, or who are planning to be away during the consultation and appointment process.

Race and Ethnicity:	<i>Neutral impact.</i>
Please provide details:	<p>White British – 36 employees White & Black Caribbean – 1 employee Black & British Caribbean – 1 employee White other – 1 employee Not declared – 12 employees Prefer not to say – 2 employees Unknown – 4 employees Total – 57 employees</p> <p>The proposal for customer services presents employment opportunities for all employees, regardless of race or ethnicity. All employees will be treated in a fair and non-discriminatory way.</p>

Religion or belief:	<i>Unclear impact.</i>
Please provide details:	We have insufficient data at this present time to analyse this, however, all staff will be treated equally regardless of religion or belief.
Sexual orientation:	<i>Unclear impact.</i>
Please provide details:	We have insufficient data at this present time to analyse this, however, all staff will be treated equally regardless of sexual orientation.
Sex:	<i>Neutral impact.</i>
Please provide details:	<p>Female – 48 employees Male – 9 employees Total – 57</p> <p>The majority of people affected by this proposal are females, Dorset Council does have a higher number of females employed in the council and a higher number in part time roles. The proposal for customer services presents employment opportunities for all employees, regardless of their sex. All employees will be treated in a fair and non-discriminatory way.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership:	<i>Neutral impact.</i>
Please provide details:	Not impact identified at this point in time.
Carers:	<i>Negative impact</i>
Please provide details:	<p>6 employees work less than 20 hours 13 employees work between 20 to 25 hours 9 employees work between 26 to 30 hours 29 employees work 37 hours Total – 57</p> <p>Proposal seeks to change some working arrangements in terms of hours of contracts and working days/hours of the week to meet customer led demand.</p> <p>This may impact employees that have a defined working pattern as part of their carer duties – any specific queries that are raised during the consultation period will be discussed fully with the individual and reasonable adjustments will be offered where they can be.</p> <p>The proposed structure currently has 28 part-time contracts out of 61 posts which is equivalent to 46% of available roles.</p>
Rural isolation:	<i>Neutral impact.</i>
Please provide details:	No impact identified.

Single parent families:	<i>Negative impact</i>
Please provide details:	<p>We do not have this data for employees, the proposal seeks to change some working arrangements in terms of hours of contracts and working days of the week to meet customer led demand.</p> <p>This may impact employees that have a defined working pattern as part of their parenting duties – any specific queries that are raised during the consultation period will be discussed fully with the individual and reasonable adjustments will be offered where they can be.</p>
Poverty (social & economic deprivation):	<i>Positive impact</i>
Please provide details:	The restructure presents opportunities for many employees to secure higher graded roles within the proposed structure.
Military families/veterans:	<i>Neutral impact</i>
Please provide details:	No impact identified.

Appendix A – Current opening hours

Location	Area	Monday to Thursday	Friday	Saturday
County Hall Reception	Dorchester	08:15 to 17:30	08:15 to 16:30	Closed
Dorset Direct	Dorchester	08:30 to 17:30		Closed
South Walks House	Dorchester	08:30 to 17:00	08:30 to 16:30	Closed
Dorset History Centre	Dorchester	09:30 to 17:00		1st and 3rd of the month – 09:00 to 16:30 2nd and 4th of the month – 09:00 to 13:00
Commercial Road	Weymouth	08:30 to 17:00	08:30 to 16:30	Closed
Mountfield	Bridport	08:30 to 17:00	08:30 to 16:30	Closed
Allenvie House	Wimborne	08:45 to 17:15	08:45 to 16:45	Closed
Westport House	Wareham	08:30 to 17:00	08:30 to 16:30	Closed

Appendix B – Average weekly call demand by half-hour intervals (based on daily statistics over a 7-week rolling period)

	Average daily demand based on a 7-week rolling period					Weekly average
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
08.30-09.00	18	13	14	12	15	14
09.00-09.30	51	39	34	40	40	41
09.30-10.00	58	41	50	51	44	49
10.00-10.30	65	40	47	54	50	51
10.30-11.00	61	48	45	44	52	50
11.00-11.30	57	44	44	53	44	48
11.30-12.00	56	42	41	49	47	47
12.00-12.30	47	39	37	42	40	41
12.30-13.00	45	35	34	39	36	38
13.00-13.30	38	28	26	36	34	32
13.30-14.00	36	33	36	40	34	36
14.00-14.30	38	35	37	47	36	39
14.30-15.00	54	34	43	47	37	43
15.00-15.30	40	32	37	45	35	38
15.30-16.00	40	37	33	46	34	38
16.00-16.30	34	31	31	37	31	33
16.30-17.00	26	14	23	26	19	22
17.00-17.30	10	6	10	8	7	8
Average	774	589	621	717	634	

Step 4: Acton Plan

Provide actions for **positive**, **negative** and **unclear** impacts.

If you have identified any **negative** or **unclear** impacts, describe what adjustments will be made to remove or reduce the impacts, or if this is not possible provide justification for continuing with the proposal.

Issue	Action	Person(s) responsible	Deadline
<p>Negative impact – Protected characteristic groups that this may impact: Disability, Carers, Single parent families.</p> <p>Proposal seeks to change some working arrangement in terms of hours of contracts and working days of the week to meet customer led demand.</p>	<p>We will seek to mediate a mutually beneficial outcome where we can and make reasonable adjustments reflecting critical business requirements.</p> <p>This applies to all employees both declared and non-declared.</p>	<p>Anthony Palumbo – Service Manager for Customer Services</p>	<p>17 April 2020</p>
<p>Positive impact – Protected characteristic groups that this may impact: Poverty (social & economic deprivation).</p> <p>The restructure present opportunities for many employees to secure higher graded roles within the proposed structure.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p> <p>The restructure proposal creates 61 new posts of which 48 are at grades higher than current posts.</p> <p>There are currently 57 people affected by the restructure proposal. Employees will have the opportunity to apply for all new posts.</p>	<p>Anthony Palumbo – Service Manager for Customer Services</p>	<p>17 April 2020</p>
<p>Gender reassignment & gender identity</p>	<p>There is no data available for this category, so the impact is unclear.</p> <p>The recruitment and selection for this service will be undertaken in a fair and non-discriminatory way.</p>	<p>Anthony Palumbo – Service Manager for Customer Services</p>	<p>From 9 March 2020</p>

Notifying customers of the change in opening hours.	External communications on our Dorset Council website as well as in our Face to face locations and on our telephony welcome messages to advise the changes to opening time.	Anthony Palumbo – Service Manager for Customer Services	From 9 March 2020
Changes following Consultation.	EqlA will be updated following the close of Consultation to reflect any changes.	Anthony Palumbo – Service Manager for Customer Services	From 9 March 2020
Recruitment & Selection	There will be a fair recruitment and selection process and employees will submit and expressions of interest form for roles. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that employees with disabilities are not disadvantaged	Anthony Palumbo – Service Manager for Customer Services	By 30 March

Step 5: EqlA Sign Off

Officer completing this EqlA:	Anthony Palumbo	Date:	13/01/20
Equality Lead:	Susan Ward-Rice	Date:	31/02/2020
Directorate Board Chair:	Rick Perry	Date:	31/02/2020