

Equality impact assessment (EIA) form: evidencing paying due regard to protected characteristics

Income and Debt Management strategy

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যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are public documents. EIAs accompanying reports going to County Councillors for decisions are published with the committee papers on our website and are available in hard copy at the relevant meeting. To help people to find completed EIAs we also publish them in the Equality and Diversity section of our website. This will help people to see for themselves how we have paid due regard in order to meet statutory requirements.

Name of Directorate and Service Area	Central Finance
Lead Officer and contact details	Cath Ritchie
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the EIA	Katherine Edge Finance programme manager
How will you pay due regard? e.g. working group, individual officer	Project team

When did the due regard process start?

Definition phase: March 2017 – ongoing.
Updated EIA January 2018.

Section 1. Please describe briefly what this EIA is about. (e.g. are you starting a new service, changing how you do something, stopping doing something?)

This EIA relates to the changing strategic approach for NYCC management of income and debt. There is no cessation of services but a strategic push towards more streamlined and cost effective methodology.

Section 2. Why is this being proposed? What are the aims? What does the authority hope to achieve by it? (e.g. to save money, meet increased demand, do things in a better way.)

The project is generated by a need to manage debt better and improve payments in order to improve the financial arrangements for NYCC. Streamlining processes for debt and income will decrease the costs associated with processing them. This includes mitigating the risk of writing off debt and maximising income revenue by supporting upfront payments. It will also prepare us to meet the demands of a modern society by enabling online and other modern methods for payments. Further to this, the project aims for the customer experience to be enhanced by ensuring more transparent and logical processes.

Section 3. What will change? What will be different for customers and/or staff?

Standard operating models and an encompassing strategy will be generated in order to enhance and streamline NYCC's offer to customers. They offer the chance for NYCC to be easy to transact with meaning the customer can be clear on what is expected of them and by when and also what they can expect from NYCC. An integral part of the change process will be a modernisation of payment methodology. There is a risk of contention here if customers have a preference for traditional methods or inclination towards the conventional and we recognise that some customers will not be able to take up these modern methods of payment so we will retain alternative traditional methods for those that need them. Payment methodology relates to: the implementation of an automated/paperless DD solution; an organisation portal to compliment the customer portal to enable online payments; and an improved telephony payment option.

The strategy will be rolled out to the organisation, with services picked up under some current live projects such as Licensing. Others will be part of new projects which will be introduced as the implementation plan is fully developed in-line with Directorate and Customer Programme forward plans and priorities.

Section 4. Involvement and consultation (What involvement and consultation has been done regarding the proposal and what are the results? What consultation will be needed and how will it be done?)

Income and debt management spans all directorates and many types of customer. Customers include; Health and Adult Service service users, external companies purchasing licenses, internal customers raising invoices, internal teams processing the invoices/managing debt and customers wanting to book and pay for training course.

As part of defining what and how the project should deliver, a series of workshops have been completed. The purpose of these was to hear the users voice in the decision making process.

Section 5. What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?

The aim of the project is to reduce overall operating costs, reduce debt and maximise income. The strategy will include a plan on how this will be delivered and rolled out across the organisation. Some cashable benefits will be realised but predominantly this project will be an enabler for a wider raft of changes across the organisation. The project aims to achieve £50,000 savings for finance and enable a further £50,000 across the organisation in the 18/19 financial year.

Section 6. How will this proposal affect people with protected characteristics?	No impact	Make things better	Make things worse	Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.
Age	x			The areas of the business will engage with their customers to aid effective and appropriate roll out. Therefore the impacts on customer will be assessed and mitigated at this time. There is no push for a 100% shift to one payment channel and there will be other options available to suit the customers where required. (there will be an expectation for some customers to embrace new ways of paying such as online but this will only when it is deemed appropriate for the customer in question e.g. large utility companies.)
Disability	x			
Sex (Gender)	x			
Race	x			
Gender reassignment	x			
Sexual orientation	x			
Religion or belief	x			
Pregnancy or maternity	x			
Marriage or civil partnership	x			

Section 7. How will this proposal affect people who...	No impact	Make things better	Make things worse	Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.
..live in a rural area?		x	x	

				Access to the internet may be impeded by rurality and income. However online services can also improve customer access to facilities. Customer engagement will improve insight into the true impact.
...have a low income?		x	x	

Section 8. Will the proposal affect anyone more because of a combination of protected characteristics? (e.g. older women or young gay men) **State what you think the effect may be and why, providing evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.**

Online payments may affect older people in rurality with lower income (i.e. without good internet connection) more. These vulnerable customers will be accounted for in broader planning and different ways to pay will be available.

Section 9. Next steps to address the anticipated impact. Select one of the following options and explain why this has been chosen. (Remember: we have an anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people can access services and work for us)	Tick option chosen
1. No adverse impact - no major change needed to the proposal. There is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact identified.	x
2. Adverse impact - adjust the proposal - The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We will change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, or we will achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people.	
3. Adverse impact - continue the proposal - The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We cannot change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, nor can we achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people. (There must be compelling reasons for continuing with proposals which will have the most adverse impacts. Get advice from Legal Services)	
4. Actual or potential unlawful discrimination - stop and remove the proposal – The EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination. It must be stopped.	
Explanation of why option has been chosen. (Include any advice given by Legal Services.)	
The strategic approach will not directly cause any adverse impact for customers. The implementation of changes will be done by service areas where contextual assessment of impact will be made.	

Section 10. If the proposal is to be implemented how will you find out how it is really affecting people? (How will you monitor and review the changes?)

Ongoing review and oversight for the changes will be tasked to an appropriate business owner once the project closes and hands over to business as usual. There is likely to be an operational group developed to aid ongoing communication and the amelioration of risks/issues. A business intelligence dashboard will be in place and used to support oversight and change management. This will also enable the ability to highlight areas for concerns.

A post implementation review for the project will also be carried out.

Section 11. Action plan. List any actions you need to take which have been identified in this EIA, including post implementation review to find out how the outcomes have been achieved in practice and what impacts there have actually been on people with protected characteristics.

Action	Lead	By when	Progress	Monitoring arrangements
Post implementation review.	Cath Ritchie	Estimated project timescales are to deliver the strategy and implementation plan over 2018/2019 financial year. A PIR will therefore be planned for May 2019.	The strategy is completed in outline and broad consensus on its detail is reached. Implementation planning is underway. The strategy has been introduced to each directorate leadership team and Customer.	To be monitored under project planning and milestones.
Income and debt management operation working group.	John Raine	Estimated project timescales are to deliver the strategy and implementation plan over 2018/2019 financial year. Therefore the working group will be set up towards the end of this time in order to take over from the project governance.	Agreement has been reached on the need for this group with finance agreeing to take the lead.	To be monitored under project planning and milestones.
BI Dashboard	John Kelly	1 st Iteration by February 2018	Due for demonstration at January Board meeting.	Currently managed under a work package for the project.

Section 12. Summary Summarise the findings of your EIA, including impacts, recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

The strategy itself will not have a direct impact on customers in terms of our citizens or organisations using services. Changes will be supported at a service level. Strategic management is required and this is planned in alongside review and the provision of BI information to support.

Section 13. Sign off section

This full EIA was completed by:

Name: Cath Ritchie

Job title: Project Manager

Directorate: CS

Signature: Cath Ritchie

Completion date: 4/1/2018

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature): Karen Iveson

Date: 15/1/2018