

Colchester Borough Council

Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy to be assessed:

- Internal Communications Strategy 2019 - 21 (on the intranet)

NB: 'Policy' is meant broadly to mean policy, strategy, service, function, activity or decision.

1. What is the main purpose of the strategy?

- To outline the various messages and communications channels for employee communications
- To provide a framework for employee communications and frequency

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

- Organisationally wide communications between management and staff, officers and councillors within the Council
- On and offline communication with Council employees

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so what are they?

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

- Staff – Officers and Councillors

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

- Increased internal communications and employee engagement
- Ease of access to information – self-serve

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below:

- Yes Service areas should be responsible for intranet content, and managers for helping distribute key messages

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations¹ which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff?

Staff Survey

If so provide details and include a link to the document or source where available.

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'² and those who do not³
- (c) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not⁴

Not all policies help us to meet the 'general duty', but most do.

¹ Click on [surveys or consultations](#) for more information. The Council's surveys and consultations include 'equality monitoring information' to help us identify any particular concerns or views expressed by any particular group or 'protected characteristic'. It can also help us to assess how representative of our customers the respondent group is. Local Data on the Protected Characteristics is available [on this page](#) of the Hub.

² The Equality Act's 'protected characteristics' include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

³ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

⁴ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to meet the 'general duty':

The policy helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation' in the following way(s):

- None Identified

The policy helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s):

- Access of information by all – Office 365 based comms/intranet

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s):

- Facilitate cross service working and knowledge share

9. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Age	Older people (60+)		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
Disability	Physical				

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
	Sensory	Yes	All material available online		No specific impact identified
	Learning		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
	Mental health issues		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
	Other – <i>specify</i>		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
Ethnicity ⁵	White		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
	Black		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
	Chinese		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
	Mixed Ethnic Origin		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
	Gypsies/ Travellers		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
	Other – <i>please state</i>		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
Language	English not first language	Yes	All material available online		No specific impact identified
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
Sex	Men		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
	Women		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
Gender	Transgender/ Transsexual		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified

⁵ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian (Asian or Asian British), African, Caribbean, Other Black (Black or Black British), White and Black African, White and Asian, White and Black Caribbean (Mixed), British, Irish, Other White (White), Chinese, Other (Other Ethnic Group).

Reassignment ⁶					
Sexual	Bisexual,		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified
'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Orientation	Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian				
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership		No specific impact identified		No specific impact identified

10. If you have identified any negative impacts (above) how can they be minimised or removed?

(This is a key section: Please deal with each negative impact noted above in turn.)

- Not applicable

11. Could the policy discriminate⁷ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly⁸?

⁶ The protected characteristic of gender reassignment is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as “a person proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.” This is a personal process that may involve medical interventions such as counselling, psychotherapy, hormone therapy or surgery, but does not have to. NB: It is generally held that transgender people disguise their features or clothing to resemble their preferred sex, whereas transsexual people wish to change their body to completely resemble their preferred sex.

⁷ The Council has a general duty to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their 'protected characteristic' whether on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity; religion or belief; sex (gender), sexual orientation, or marriage and civil partnership. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would nevertheless disadvantage people on the grounds of their 'protected characteristic'.

⁸ If you answer 'yes' to question 11 (above) you will need to complete this section *and* go on to complete Section 2 in order to conduct a full Equality Impact Assessment.

(Please read the footnotes below before completing this section.)

- No

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

12. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
No negative impacts have been identified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	Sign off screening and finish.
Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

13. Name and job title of person completing this form:

- Rachel Mason, Internal Communications Officer

14. Date of completion:

- 19 November 2019

15. Date for update or review of this screening:

- 19 November 2021

If you have now signed off this screening form, Section Two is not required and you should remove Section Two from this document, along with these two paragraphs in italics. Please send a copy to the relevant Head of Service and the Equality and Safeguarding Officer. You also need to arrange for it to be published on the Council's website [here](#) – under the relevant service area heading.

If you have identified any negative impact which has not been minimised or removed, or if there is insufficient evidence - you must complete Section Two, Full Impact Assessment. The policy, service or strategy should not be implemented until the Full Impact Assessment has been completed and approved as it is could be discriminatory.