



# Equality Impact Assessment Record Form

## Customer Services Strategy

## Equality Impact Assessments

---

Directorate	Service	Person responsible for the assessment	Date assessment completed
Information	Customer Service	Estelle Bawden	October 2009
<b>Title of the policy being assessed</b>	Customer Services Strategy		
<b>The status of the policy</b>	Draft – July 2007		
<b>1. What are the aims, objectives and purposes of the policy?</b>	<p>To provide framework for Customer Service at North Norfolk District Council built around our customers needs.</p> <p>Our vision is to “build a strong reputation for excellent customer service, developed from best business practice and evidenced by high level of customer satisfaction, increased compliments and reduced complaints. Our reputation will be driven by trust, borne out of good customer experiences”.</p> <p>To achieve our vision our aims are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address known customer service issues first and then go further in meeting needs.</li> <li>• Optimise the choice of channels available to anyone wishing to access services or information provided by North Norfolk District Council.</li> <li>• Make those channels available at times that meet the needs of our customers.</li> <li>• Make services as accessible as possible for our customers, in addition to which the Council will look to have representation in each of the market towns in the district.</li> <li>• Provide a service that will be consistent, co-ordinated and proactive. Employees involved with customer service interactions will be able to identify if the customer needs extra help or advice, will sort out problems and take appropriate responsibility for them. Employees will be trained to an appropriate standard both in terms of technical knowledge to fulfil there</li> </ul>		

	<p>role and customer care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empower remote and mobile workers to help customers to access services and information beyond the purpose of their original interaction.</li> <li>• Make sure that services are responsive and accountable to all customers by regular reporting and consultation as part of our performance and risk framework.</li> <li>• Consult our customers and use the feedback to inform the service we provide to ensure it is relevant.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Does the policy support other objectives of the council?</b></p>	<p>It supports Corporate values detailed within the Corporate Plan, Changing Gear –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Focus – an organisation looking outside</li> <li>• Equality and Diversity</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> <li>• Continuous improvements</li> <li>• Valuing staff</li> </ul> <p>It also supports the Corporate objective detailed within the Corporate Plan, Changing Gear - “We all deliver first class resource management to provide excellent services and the best outcomes for the District”</p> <p>Part of the Standard and Charter are also picked up within the Community Consultation and Community Empowerment Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening to the customer</li> </ul> <p>Part of the Standard and Charter also supports the Communications Strategy –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping you informed</li> <li>• Access to Information</li> </ul> <p>The Equality Impact Assessment that will be carried out by the Property Services Team will provide the understanding in regards to the environment of the Council Offices and will need to be read in conjunction with this assessment.</p>

<p>3. Who is intended to benefit from the policy, and in what way?</p>	<p>The following groups or people are intended to benefit from the policy:</p> <p><b>Customers</b> – All our customers will have choice and availability when accessing information, this will enable our customers to fully utilise our services.</p> <p><b>Staff</b> – The strategy will provide an understanding throughout the organisation of how everyone will contribute towards the delivery of the vision of Customer Services. This will encourage a culture that is more adaptable and responsive to change.</p> <p><b>Organisation</b> – It provides us with clear direction on how we are going to achieve our vision for customer services and ultimately will build a strong reputation for excellent customer services evidenced by high levels of customer satisfaction.</p>			
<p>4. What outcomes are anticipated from the policy being in place?</p>	<p>The organisation will be working in the most efficient and effective way, whilst meeting the needs and expectations of our customers.</p>			
<p>5. Identify and select your assessment team.</p>	<p><b>Name</b></p>		<p><b>Role</b></p>	<p><b>Responsibilities</b></p>
<p>6. What data have you gathered for this assessment? How have you analysed this data?</p>	<p><b>Source and Age of Data</b></p>	<p><b>Owner</b></p>	<p><b>Findings</b></p>	<p><b>Data Gaps</b></p>
	<p>1. <u>Customer volumes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Telephony</b> – Data collected from December 2008 via BT Contact Centre 6 software.</li> </ul>	<p>All owned by Customer Services Manager</p>	<p><b>Telephony</b> - A wealth of management information including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of Customer contacts by service by 15</li> </ul>	<p><b>Telephony</b> – detailed data available for the last four months only. Further detailed analysis required to ensure that these performances are</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Face-to-face</b> - Data collected manually on a sampling basis for Customer Services reception points.</li> <li>• <b>Email Contact</b> - Data collected manually from April 2009 for Customer Services emails.</li> </ul>		<p>minute intervals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average answer times</li> <li>• Maximum answer times</li> <li>• Agent information</li> </ul> <p><b>Face-to-face</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of customer contacts by service</li> <li>• Average Customer waiting time</li> </ul> <p><b>Email Contact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of customer contacts by service</li> </ul>	<p>measured, understood and maintained.</p> <p><b>Face-to-face</b> - Information provided reflects a sample period only.</p> <p><b>Email Contact</b> - We can only identify the emails that are sent through to the Contact us email address from April 2009 further information is required from other departments to provide a detail understanding of email contacts.</p>
	2.Customer Satisfaction Survey		Satisfaction survey only launched by	Customer satisfaction consultation/survey

			<p>customer services early October 2009. Findings have not been identified as yet. Other departments carry out satisfaction surveys but the results need to be shared.</p>	<p>required (to understand needs and expectations). This will include information on the six streams which will allow analysis to take place under the equality requirements. (Launched Early Oct 2009). Will enable Customer satisfaction levels to be measured. Details of other outcomes from departmental customer satisfaction surveys. Data gap identified is the lack of understanding if survey has any detrimental impact on any of the equality streams this has been identified in our action plan.</p>
	3. Compliments, Complaints and Suggestion procedure	Customer Services – Complaints Champion	Only commenced with a centralised log from August 2009. Trend analysis will be	Detailed trend analysis of the Compliments, complaints and Suggestions process.

			<p>available early November 2009 with the first report on trends – this will help provide an insight to the customer journey.</p>	<p>First Traunch available early November 2009. Monitoring form included on CCS Form.</p>
	<p>4 NI14 (avoidable contacts) Data collected from on a sampling basis. Avoidable contact is where a transaction has little or no value to either the customer or the organisation i.e. The customer is seeking unnecessary clarification due to poor communication.</p>	<p>Customer Services Manager</p>	<p>For the year 2008/09 our avoidable contact was 28.6%. This was broken down into five different reasons and is shown as a percentage of the total avoidable contacts.  A: 30% - The customer is seeking unnecessary clarification due to poor communication. i.e. unable to understand an application form  B: 12% - The contact is caused by poor signposting or poor call transfer to council services i.e. wrong department  C. 24% - There is repeat contact with the customer/provision of</p>	<p>Indepth analysis to enable improvement to service provision.</p>

			information i.e. incorrect or insufficient information given out initially D. 15% - Progress chasing i.e. chasing a benefit claim E. 19% - Service failure i.e. bin not emptied	
	5 Census Figures (2001)	Office for National Statistics	Background information on equality groups in the local area	The census did not collect data on sexual orientation
	6 Norfolk County Council Equality impact assessment tool	Norfolk County Council	Figures on sexual orientation in Norfolk	This is for Norfolk, rather than the North Norfolk district, but was the only information available.
	7 Corporate Plan – Changing Gear (2008)	NNDC	Corporate aims and values	n/a
	8 Staff Survey – Employee Survey 2008	NNDC	No clear questions or information provided regarding the Customer Services Strategy.	No clear Staff consultation on Customer Services Strategy. Questions to be included in next survey 2010.  Additional staff training requirements.

				<p>Include within induction as staff not aware of the clear expectation of the organisation.</p>
<p><b>7. Who are the main stakeholders of this policy?</b></p>	<p><b>Community</b></p>		<p><b>Staff/Members</b></p>	<p><b>Partners</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customers</li> <li>• Constituents</li> <li>• Businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees</li> <li>• Management</li> <li>• Members</li> <li>• Trade Unions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Councils</li> <li>• Parish Councils</li> <li>• Local Area Partnerships</li> <li>• Community Groups</li> </ul>	
<p><b>8. Are there any concerns that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to race and ethnicity?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?</b></p>		
		<p>The Customer Services Strategy applies equally to all customers and staff regardless of their race and/or ethnicity. This will ensure that the Customer Services Strategy should not have a differential impact based on race or ethnic origin.</p> <p>As at the Census in 2001 it is determined that 97.81% of our customer base is White British. Customer satisfaction survey that will be carried out in 2009 will provide us with limited information to make a more informed determination.</p> <p>However we can demonstrate that we have a system in place to help with race and ethnicity - if English is not the first language – Intran provides an</p>		

		<p>Interpreting/translation service which will ensure that our customers are not unduly discriminated against. Customers can also bring in an advocate to support them when dealing with this local authority.</p> <p>We are unaware of any complaints regarding a negative impact in relation to race and ethnicity.</p> <p>Longer term engagement with differing groups needed to improve our understanding.</p> <p>An ongoing monitoring system needs to be established to ensure that we are capturing, monitoring and reviewing this information to provide a consistent and equitable approach to all equality and diversity streams. See Action Plan</p>
<p><b>9. Are there any concerns that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to gender?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?</b></p> <p>The Customer Services Strategy applies equally to all customers and staff regardless of their gender. This will ensure that the Customer Services Strategy should not have a differential impact based on their gender.</p> <p>As at the Population statistics in 2007 (from <a href="http://norfolkinsight.org.uk">norfolkinsight.org.uk</a>) it had been determined that 52% of all customers were women and 48% men. We do not have any statistics that relate to customers that are transgender.</p> <p>However we can provide customers with tailored services if required – e.g. if a female customer only wants to talk to a female staff member.</p> <p>We are unaware of any complaints regarding a negative impact in relation to gender.</p> <p>Longer term engagement with differing groups needed to improve our</p>

		<p>understanding. An ongoing monitoring system needs to be established to ensure that we are capturing, monitoring and reviewing this information to provide a consistent and equitable approach to all equality and diversity streams.</p> <p>See Action Plan</p>
<p><b>10.Are there any concerns that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to disability?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?</b></p> <p>The Customer Services Strategy applies equally to all customers and staff regardless of their disability. However in some premises the physicality of setup and the furniture layout is not acceptable for disabled access. (see action plan for details of the review of the area that will take place)</p> <p>The Customer Services Strategy should not have a differential impact based on customer's disability.</p> <p>However we can demonstrate that we have a system in place to help customers who are deaf (Intran-Deaf connexions) and have visual impairments (large print documents and Braille – on request). We also have a hearing loop and mini-com system available for our customers, if required. The offices are equipped with disabled facilities which include toilets and some signs have the inclusion of Braille.</p> <p>It has been determined that Norfolk is higher than the national average in terms of customers with disabilities (22%).</p> <p>The ability for the customer to bring in an advocate to assist them is openly welcomed and accommodated by this authority.</p> <p>Longer term engagement with differing groups needed to improve our understanding.</p>

		<p>An ongoing monitoring system needs to be established to ensure that we are capturing, monitoring and reviewing this information to provide a consistent and equitable approach to all equality and diversity streams. See Action Plan</p>
<p><b>11.Are there any concerns that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to age?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?</b></p> <p>The Customer Services Strategy applies equally to all customers and staff regardless of their age. This will ensure that the Customer Services Strategy should not have a differential impact based on age.</p> <p>As at the Census 2001 it is determined that 13% of our customers are over the age of 65 and that we are ranked first in the Norfolk region and fifth nationally on the proportion of retired people in the population. It is not easily identifiable of where our other customers fall in regards to age.</p> <p>We are unable to provide any clear awareness of how certain age groups are contacted and dealt with e.g. how are our younger customers engaged with and responded to and this has been highlighted in our action plan.</p> <p>We are unaware of any complaints regarding a negative impact in relation to age.</p> <p>Longer term engagement with differing groups needed to improve our understanding.</p> <p>An ongoing monitoring system needs to be established to ensure that we are capturing, monitoring and reviewing this information to provide a consistent and equitable approach to all equality and diversity streams. See Action Plan</p>
<p><b>12.Are there any concerns</b></p>		<p><b>What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support</b></p>

<p>that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to religion/belief?</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>this?</b></p> <p>The Customer Services Strategy applies equally to all customers and staff regardless of their religion or beliefs. This will ensure that the Customer Services Strategy should not have a differential impact based on either religion of beliefs.</p> <p>As at the Census 2001 it is determined that 78% of all customers are of Christian beliefs, with a further 21% described as either no religious beliefs or not stated. In regards to other religions/beliefs we can identify that 1% is made up of Buddhist/Hindu/Jewish/Muslim/Sikh/Other religions (not named).</p> <p>However we do need to be mindful of the needs of certain customers on the grounds of religion and beliefs and therefore services can be tailored to ensure that customers are treated sensitively and equitably e.g. if their religion requires females to discuss issues with the same sex we will try to ensure that this does happen (or ensure that a female member of staff is present). We can also utilise the Intran service if English is not the customers' first language.</p> <p>We are unaware of any complaints regarding a negative impact in relation to religion/beliefs.</p> <p>Longer term engagement with differing groups needed to improve our understanding.</p> <p>An ongoing monitoring system needs to be established to ensure that we are capturing, monitoring and reviewing this information to provide a consistent and equitable approach to all equality and diversity streams. See Action Plan</p>
<p>13.Are there any concerns</p>	<p><b>Potentially Yes</b></p>	<p><b>What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support</b></p>

<p>that the policy could have a negative impact with regard to sexual orientation?</p>		<p><b>this?</b></p> <p>The Customer Services Strategy equally to all customers and staff regardless of their sexual orientation. This will ensure that the Customer Services Strategy should not have a differential impact based on sexual orientation.</p> <p>As at the Norfolk County Council EQIA toolkit it has shown that in Norfolk we have 6% of the population that are lesbian, gay or bisexual.</p> <p>We are unaware of any complaints regarding a negative impact in relation to sexual orientation.</p> <p>Longer term engagement with differing groups needed to improve our understanding.</p> <p>An ongoing monitoring system needs to be established to ensure that we are capturing, monitoring and reviewing this information to provide a consistent and equitable approach to all equality and diversity streams. See Action Plan</p>
<p><b>14. Could the negative impact you have identified in questions 8 - 13 lead to the potential for adverse impact if the policy is implemented?</b></p> <p><b>Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p>We have identified that some of the impacts above can be addressed by the contents and outcomes of this strategy – for example Intran (covering both disability and race/ethnicity)</p> <p>The true impact of this strategy is unknown and any true impact is yet to be identified. It is recognised that there may be impacts that have not been anticipated and will be addressed when the strategy is reviewed in 2010.</p> <p>See Action Plan below</p>

<p><b>Or any other reason?</b></p> <p><b>Can the impact be mitigated by existing means?</b></p> <p><b>If yes, what actions will you undertake to mitigate these impacts and revise the policy?</b></p>			
<p><b>Describe the arrangements for reporting and publishing this assessment.</b></p>	<p>This assessment will be reported to the Equality and Diversity Board and will be published on the NNDC external website (<a href="http://www.northnorfolk.org">www.northnorfolk.org</a>).</p>		
<p><b>Has this assessment been undertaken by a minimum of two staff?</b></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><b>Has this assessment been scrutinised by your Directorate Steering Group?</b></p>	<p>No</p>
<p><b>If the policy is new, or requires a decision by Councillors to revise, has this Equality Impact Assessment been included with the report?</b></p>			<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Have any actions identified in this assessment been included in your service equality and diversity plan?</b></p>			<p>Yes</p>
<p><b>Completed by:</b></p>	<p>Estelle Bawden Jane Wisson</p>	<p><b>Signed off by:</b></p>	

## Appendix A – Action Plan

Action	Expected Outcome	Person Responsible	Target Date	√
Review Customer Services Strategy	To provide the organisation with a strategy that is deliverable and reflects the needs of today's society – incorporating customers needs for access 24/7	Estelle Bawden – Customer Services Manager	2010	
Review Access strategy	To provide the organisation with a strategy that is deliverable and reflects the needs of today's society incorporating and promoting changes in customer accessing services (known as channel shifting)	Estelle Bawden – Customer Services Manager	2010	
Set up Consultation focus groups - To understand who can not access our services.	To ensure that we consult with all representatives of our community including hard to reach groups, young people and the business communities. This will provide us with an understanding of the service issues that we face.	Estelle Bawden – Customer Services Manager/Maureen Clarke – Supporting Communities Manager	2010	
Establish a communication strategy (or ensure that within a corporate communication strategy a clear consideration towards customer services information is defined)	To keep the community, public, businesses and hard to reach groups in 'the know'.	Estelle Bawden – Customer Services Manager/Peter Batterick – Communications Manager	2010	
Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions – to identify trends through more in-depth analysis	The analysis will allow us to identify and implement continuous service improvements	Estelle Bawden – Customer Services Manager/Jane	November 2009	

		Wisson – Customer Services Team Leader		
NI14 (avoidable contacts) – to identify trends through more in-depth analysis	The analysis will allow us to identify and implement continuous service improvements	Estelle Bawden – Customer Services Manager	2010	
Customer Satisfaction Survey – to identify trends through more in-depth analysis	The analysis will allow us to identify and implement continuous service improvements	Estelle Bawden – Customer Services Manager	From October 2009	
Develop and implement a Customer Services based training program for the whole organisation.	It will contribute to the successful implementation of the Customer Services Strategy	Estelle Bawden – Customer Services Manager	2010	
Invest in appropriate technology	To optimise access to and the delivery of services.	Estelle Bawden – Customer Services Manager/Helen Mitchell - ICT Manager	tba	
To use the Ten performances management tool to report on the results of all surveys that are completed within the organisation.	To provide the organisation with a clear understanding of customer profiles and journey when dealing with North Norfolk District Council	Helen Thomas – Policy and Performance Team.	2010	
To Review Customer Charter and Standards	To ensure that the Charter and Standards delivery the requirements of the Strategy.	Estelle Bawden – Customer Services Manager		

Produced by  
David Lloyd associates  
In partnership with North Norfolk District Council May 2008