

Title of proposed EIA	Customer Service Strategy - A set of themes and proposals to improve the services we provide to Birmingham residents.
Reference No	EQUA771
EA is in support of	New Strategy
Review Frequency	Annually
Date of first review	14/11/2022
Directorate	Digital and Customer Services
Division	Customer Services
Service Area	
Responsible Officer(s)	☐ Nathan Thomas
Quality Control Officer(s)	☐ Omar Khan
Accountable Officer(s)	☐ Wendy X Griffiths
Purpose of proposal	To improve services provided to the citizens of Birmingham by introducing new proposals and technologies and develop a customer focused service.
Data sources	Survey(s); Consultation Results; Interviews; relevant reports/strategies; Statistical Database (please specify); relevant research
Please include any other sources of data	
ASSESS THE IMPACT AGAINST THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS	
Protected characteristic: Age	Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community
Age details:	The strategy wants to improve the service for customers including those who are most vulnerable by being ensuring our points of contact are better prepared resulting in reducing the effort needed to access our services. Even though we encourage customers to self-service, the existing traditional channels like telephone and face-to-face will remain available and be better prepared to assist those who rely these methods of contact. By reducing the points of contact we want to simplify access for all our customers, especially those who are older by making it easier for them to contact us. The other benefit of doing this lowers the risk of confusion or frustration by being passed through multiple lines of enquiry or navigating a few webpages just to find the services they need. They will also be encouraged to support us in transforming our customer services by joining the customer services panels to have their say. To support the customer services strategy, we published an online survey asking customers what they think about the services provided to Birmingham residents and do they support the strategy and its proposals. We have 1530 responses in total and of this 1400 (91.5%) agreed BCC needs to change and improve the services it provides to Birmingham residents. To help support this protected characteristic we asked residents to provide their age by selecting an age bracket on the survey. This evidence supports the strategy by demonstrating the views and support from residents of all ages. The breakdown is as follows. We had 1530 responses in total and 1400 (91.5%) agreed BCC needs to change and improve the services it provides to Birmingham residents. Below is the breakdown of responses by Age bracket who took part in the survey.

Row Labels	Count of Age - age
14 years or under	3
15-17	1
18-19	4
20-24	~

20-24	8
25-29	32
30-34	57
35-39	99
40-44	119
45-49	128
50-54	179
55-59	217
60-64	180
65-69	176
70-74	147
75-79	91
80-84	32
85+	16
Prefer not to say	41
Grand Total	1530

Protected characteristic: Disability

Disability details:

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

The strategy may impact some customers with disabilities by moving a number of services online, it does make it clear residents will continue to access these services through existing channels that are already provided and there are no plans to remove them. However, it does understand the need to improve how services are accessed by customers, including those with disabilities. The strategy intends to improve this by adopting foundational principles like redesigning our service delivery to help us intervene earlier when we know our customers need specialist support. Another principle is creating a customer centric culture where the customer service is owned by everyone to reflect how important citizens are to us. Where services are not provided or not having problems accessing due to a disability, we will act upon it by learning from complaints and increasing how we capture and measure feedback from citizens. One of the 'fix the basics' pledges within the strategy is to review all council service providing websites to make sure they cater for all customers accessibility needs by December 2021.

Protected characteristic: Sex

Gender details:

Not Applicable

Even though there's nothing in the strategy directly impacting this protected characteristic to ensure all customers are engaged on the strategy we captured information from based on different gender types who took part in the customer satisfaction survey to help support it and its proposals.

Based on the results of the survey, we had a total of 1530 responses broken down by the following genders.

Female 759

Male 697

Prefer not to say 58

Non- binary 3

Not answered 13

Protected characteristics: Gender Reassignment

Gender reassignment details:

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

The customer services strategy does not impact this protected characteristic but to ensure we engage any citizens who have undergone gender reassignment, we asked all citizens taking part in the customer satisfaction survey what gender do they identify as. This is to evidence customers from all over Birmingham who are part of any protected characteristic can have their say and contribute in supporting the strategy. Most of the responses (1503) preferred not to provide an answer but the important point is we gave them the opportunity to state what they prefer to be known as.

Protected characteristics: Marriage and Civil Partnership

Marriage and civil partnership details:

Not Applicable

Not applicable

Protected characteristics: Pregnancy and Maternity

Pregnancy and maternity details:

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Even though this protected characteristic isn't impacted specifically within the strategy, the proposed improvements and themes stated will benefit them when implemented. Reducing the time needed to access our services and making it easier for all customers will improve the wellbeing of all Birmingham residents.

Protected characteristics: Race

Race details:

Service Users / Stakeholders; Employees; Wider Community

Even though the strategy doesn't impact this protected characteristic the proposals are designed to help staff understand the importance of a customer focused service and to treat customers regardless of their race with the same high-level service and respect. To help embed and support this, there are proposals being put forward within the strategy such as ensuring all staff are fully trained on customer centricity, creating a customer services charter and a customer services centre of excellence.

The programme intends to develop the Customer Service programme Citizen panel that will reflect the diverse community we are lucky to have in Birmingham. The recruitment of the panel will be based on the 2021 Census data to ensure we reflect the proportions of the communities in the panel and in our development and testing of services.

It's important to protect the integrity of the service by making sure information based on race is discussed during training to avoid any negative affect on decision-making and behaviour through the implementation of new systems that could exclude those from a better service and access to data and information.

During the engagement, following the programme presentation at the Asian Alliance Meeting on the 15th September, the Programme manager provided daily updates of the ethnicity breakdown of responses to encourage the members to share internally with colleagues and friends and family to ensure we increased the representation in survey responses.

Even though ethnicity is something that can either be displayed or hidden race can't, but it doesn't mean there's no similarities between them. When co-producing the customer satisfaction survey, it was recommended we captured ethnicity details from those taking part instead of race as it's more understood by the public. The results of the survey based on ethnicity is as follows.

Asian or Asian British 210

Black African, Black Caribbean or Black British - 97

Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - 55

mixed or multiple ethnic groups - 33

Other ethnic group - 22

White 1142

Protected characteristics: Religion or Beliefs

Not Applicable

Religion or beliefs details:

Not applicable

Protected characteristics: Sexual Orientation

Not Applicable

Sexual orientation details:

There's nothing in the strategy that directly impacts this characteristic but as part of the customer engagement satisfaction survey there is supporting evidence to demonstrate we engaged citizens who consider themselves part of this characteristic. A total of 1530 citizens took part in the survey and provided the following results.

Row Labels	Count of What gender do you identify as? - sex
Female	759
Male	697
Non-binary	3
Not Answered	13
Prefer not to say	58
Grand Total	1530

Socio-economic impacts

N/A

Please indicate any actions arising from completing this screening exercise.

N/A

Please indicate whether a full impact assessment is recommended

YES

What data has been collected to facilitate the assessment of this policy/proposal?

Service requests data, contact centre call volumes, complaints data, website information relating to existing online digital forms. Gov metric feedback data and the BMG Birmingham City Residents Survey 2020.

Consultation analysis

We engaged all customers and BCC staff to take part in customer services engagement satisfaction survey and the results indicate 91.5% of all responses agreed BCC needs to change and improve the services it currently provides to its customers.

Adverse impact on any people with protected characteristics.

N/A

Could the policy/proposal be modified to reduce or eliminate any adverse impact?

N/A

How will the effect(s) of this policy/proposal on equality be monitored?

Through existing customer feedback channels, measuring the volume of complaints relating to services with a focus on any of those that have undergone changes as part of the strategy. The creation of the customer services panel.

What data is required in the future?

Are there any adverse impacts on any particular group(s)

No

If yes, please explain your reasons for going ahead.

Initial equality impact assessment of your proposal

Consulted People or Groups

Asian alliance, Black workers forum, citizens panel, neighbourhood offices. Neighbourhood forum.

Informed People or Groups

BCC staff, Social media sites and platforms, leisure centre managers and staff, schools,

Summary and evidence of findings from your EIA

The findings indicate the strategy has a wide-reaching impact on the customers of Birmingham City Council and will benefit all residents and the wider community. By ensuring the customer and their experience in using services is better the new focus we can improve the lives of

using our services being tne key rocus, we can improve tne iives or everyone within Birmingham and make them proud to be a part of their local community. The results of the customer satisfaction survey show Birmingham residents in support of what the strategy aims to deliver with 91.5% of the response BCC needs to change and improves the services it provides to Birmingham residents.

QUALITY CONTORL SECTION

Submit to the Quality Control Officer for reviewing? No

Quality Control Officer comments

Decision by Quality Control Officer

Submit draft to Accountable Officer? No

Decision by Accountable Officer

Date approved / rejected by the Accountable Officer

Reasons for approval or rejection

Please print and save a PDF copy for your records Yes

Julie Bach

Person or Group

Content Type: Item

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