

Equality Analysis Report

Title of activity / Budget Proposal title and number Bedford Borough 2020 Transformation Programme – Digital Operating Model	Committee meeting (decision maker) and date Executive – 22 February 2017
Service area Chief Executive (but programme will cover all Council directorates and service areas)	Lead officer Philip Simpkins, Chief Executive
Approved by Management Team	Date of approval
<p>Description of activity:</p> <p>At its meeting of 7 July 2016 the Executive approved the Council's Business Transformation Programme to address the significant financial pressures facing the authority; this was presented as the 'Case for Change'. This programme has been given the title 'Bedford Borough 2020 (BB2020)'.</p> <p>This programme, in summary, means designing and implementing a new sustainable operating model for the Council. After the completion of a detailed assessment exercise the focus moved to the 'design phase' which sought to update the 'Case for Change' for moving all transactional services, wherever possible, to a digital platform. This would be facilitated by improved technology, supporting re-designed processes across the Council and changes to the way in which the authority's staff are organised and resourced – with a particular focus on services being better aligned to support residents, business and other stakeholders. Other elements of BB2020 cover service cost recovery and strategic sourcing.</p> <p>The Executive is now being asked to consider the move to implementation of the Council's new digital operating model which will be phased over the next three years.</p>	

Relevance Test

1. The outcomes of the activity directly and significantly impact on people, e.g. service users, employees, voluntary and community sector groups.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The activity could / does affect one or more protected equality groups.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The activity could / does affect protected equality groups differently.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. One or more protected equality groups could be disadvantaged, adversely affected or are at risk of discrimination as a result of the activity.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The activity relates to an area where there are known inequalities.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The activity sets out proposals for significant changes to services, policies etc. and / or significantly affects how services are delivered.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. The activity relates to one or more of the three aims of the Council's equality duty.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. The activity relates to the Council's Corporate Plan objectives, is a significant activity and / or presents a high risk to the Council's public reputation.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. An equality analysis of this activity is required.	Yes	X	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
This activity has no relevance to Bedford Borough Council's duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; to advance equality of opportunity; and to foster good relations. An equality analysis is not needed.				<input type="checkbox"/>
Explanation why equality analysis is not needed				

Scope of equality analysis

Who is / will be impacted by the activity's aims and outcomes?	As this is a major transformation programme, taking place over a three-year implementation period, it is expected to have a significant impact across the organisation. The programme will impact on the Council's residents, stakeholders (local businesses, other public sector bodies and third sector organisations) and all staff groups.
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	<p>At this stage it is viewed that the changes the Council is proposing will have a positive impact on the experience of residents and organisations interacting with the authority. This is due services being more accessible and streamlined, providing automated digital service which are open at all times.</p>
<p>Which particular protected equality groups are likely / will be affected?</p>	<p>As a major transformation programme which is expected to change all aspects of the Council's service delivery and staff interactions, it is expected that this will impact on all protected equality groups.</p> <p>During the design phase, concerns around access for people who are less able or less willing to use digital means were raised. The design of the digital elements of the operating model has taken this into account and there will remain alternative access channels – e.g. assisted digital, face-to-face and telephony for service users. Moreover the principles by which this programme was designed included 'Digital Self-Service' which recognised that meeting accessibility standards and equality duties would be an integral part of the new operating model.</p> <p>At the start of the programme a number of 'digital principles' were developed and agreed by the Council's elected members and senior leadership. The principles were used to build the new design. Of specific interest to this equality analysis are the following:</p> <p><u>Traditional Channels (post, telephony and face-to-face)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a common digital entry point for residents to access our services • Used to assist and support residents with digital transactions – provide same level service as online • Accessed after a triage with digital channels promoted first <p><u>Specific channels</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain face to face services for digital support, complex assessments and emergencies • Provide outreach services for residents that need support <p>(Taken from the <i>Digital Operating Model: Design Phase</i>, February 2017)</p> <p>There has also been a recognition that certain service users, their carers or family members, will still need to report 'safeguarding' matters. A direct route to specialist agents (e.g. a safeguarding hub) will remain for such cases. This is described in the design documentation as follows:</p>

	<p>“Whilst nearly all initial contact will go through ‘One Front Door’ it is not appropriate for everything such as emergencies, safeguarding concerns and when professional judgement is required for assessing and screening referrals. This does not mean digital technology cannot be utilised or processes improved. Just that a separate pathway with an emphasis on professional skills and judgement is required.” (Taken from the <i>Digital Operating Model: Design Phase</i>, February 2017)</p> <p>It should be recognised that for many service users there will be no noticeable change in the services they receive or request from the Council.</p> <p>The Council’s staff will also be subject to the changes envisaged through the transformation programme. Any staff placed ‘at risk’ of redundancy will be dealt with by the Council’s policy framework within this area. These policies have been subject to consultation with the authority’s recognised trades unions and separate equality analyses.</p> <p>To support staff groups through this significant transformation programme a Change Management Strategy and Approach have been developed which contain clear training and support opportunities. There is also a robust Communications Plan to ensure communications are targeted and meaningful to all.</p> <p>Moving through the implementation phase will require more detailed equality analyses to be carried out as services are changed for end users and staff.</p>
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Evidence, data, information and consultation

<p>What evidence have you used to analyse the effects on equality?</p>	<p>A key part of this transformation programme was the refresh of the Council’s Corporate Plan 2017-2021 which was agreed by Full Council on 1 February 2017. The goals of the Corporate Plan are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support People 2. Enhance places
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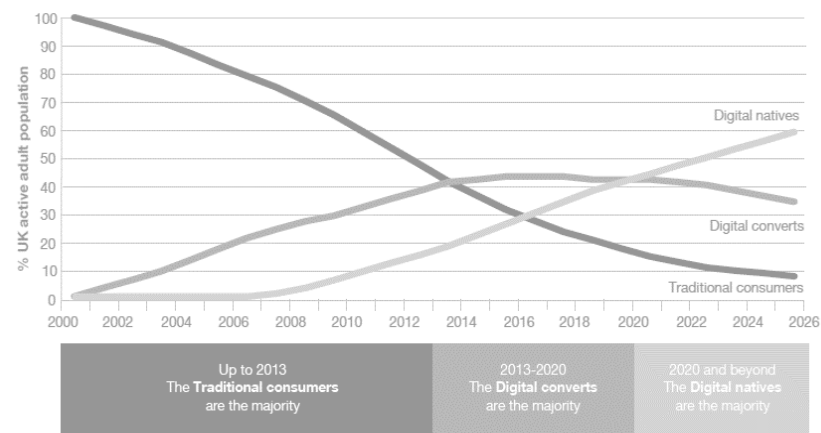
- 3. Create wealth
- 4. Empower communities

The Plan sets the strategic direction for the Council and therefore the overarching goals for this transformation programme and has been subject to a separate equality analysis.

This equality analysis provides a high-level view of the transformation programme. National and local evidence and data sets as follows have been used:

- Census 2011 and Community Profiles (see Local Insight)
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Indices of Deprivation 2015

There are a number of economic and societal trends that impact on how councils can now operate. One of these is the changing digital capabilities of residents and employees. By 2020 ‘digital natives’ are expected to be in the majority shown as follows:



Go ON UK estimate around 20% of adults in the UK lack basic online skills. This includes customers

	<p>that are offline (without access to the internet) and those online with limited digital capability. As well as access, three other key barriers to digital inclusion are motivation, skills and trust. It is acknowledged that roughly 10% of the population will always need support to access digital services, due to severe disabilities or basic literacy. The proposed model will provide 'assisted digital' for such cases with the aim of increasing the numbers able to use the 'digital by default' services unassisted.</p> <p>In developing the operating model and in particular the proposed digital solution the following local data sources were used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mosiac data and resident profiles for Bedford Borough • Channel preference data from the Council's customer contact centre, inbound email, post and 'phone traffic and website analytics • Customer feedback data (consultations and complaints) • Service user data (across all public-facing Council services)
<p>What consultation did you carry out with protected equality groups to identify your activity's effect on equality?</p>	<p>At the start of the design phase consultation was undertaken with residents of Bedford Borough. This was carried out both face-to-face and online and tested current interaction with the Council and willingness to use digital means. The findings of this helped develop the digital elements of the new operating model. No specific equality issues were reported.</p> <p>Staff groups from across the Council were involved in a number of workshops which looked at current service delivery and identifying what elements could be digitised. This exercise highlighted issues around accessibility and safeguarding and ways in which staff could be better supported by technology.</p> <p>Specific consultation will be carried out as different parts of the transformation programme and digital solution are developed; each will be tested out with service users, resident groups and staff as appropriate.</p>
<p>What does this evidence tell you about the different protected</p>	<p>The digital solution being proposed is expected to support communities and enable individuals to become more self-sufficient. At this stage it is expected that this will have positive impacts on a</p>

<p>groups?</p>	<p>number of protected groups (as shown below).</p> <p>The specific equality issues that have been identified as this stage include ensuring continuing access to council services via non-digital means. In addition the maintenance of clear routes for people subject to safeguarding matters, requiring urgent resolution, has been raised. These requirements have been built into the agreed digital principles of the operating model which will inform the 'build' of the digital operating model the council eventually implements.</p>
<p>What further research or data do you need to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known effects of the activity?</p>	<p>Specific consultation will be carried out as different parts of the transformation programme and digital solution are developed; each will be tested out with service user, resident groups and staff as appropriate.</p>

General Equality Duty

<p>Which parts of the general equality duty is the activity relevant to?</p>			
	<p>Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation</p>	<p>Advance equality of opportunity</p>	<p>Foster good relations</p>
<p>Age</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital platform (age – children and adults) • Protecting children at risk of harm or neglect (age – children) • Protecting adults at risk of harm or neglect (age – adults) • Vulnerable adults are safeguarded (age – older people) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital platform and assisted digital support for non-digital users (age – adults) 	
<p>Disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital platform (disability) 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting children at risk of harm or neglect (disability) Protecting adults at risk of harm or neglect (disability) 		
Gender reassignment	None identified		
Pregnancy and maternity	None identified		
Race	None identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital platform offering automatic language translation 	
Religion or belief	None identified		
Sex	None identified		
Sexual orientation	None identified		
Marriage & civil partnership	None identified		

Impact on equality groups

Based on the evidence presented what positive and negative impact will your activity have on equality?				
	Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	Explanation
Age	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	From the inclusion of clear digital principles around accessibility and meeting equality duties and the continuation of existing access channels where required, it is expected that implementation will lead to positive impacts. However as different phases of the implementation are introduced each will be equality assessed to ensure the council's duties in this regard are met.
Disability	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Gender	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

reassignment				
Pregnancy and maternity	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Race	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Religion or belief	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sex	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sexual orientation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Marriage & civil partnership	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other relevant groups	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Commissioned services

What equality measures will be included in Contracts to help meet the three aims of the general equality duty?	N/A
What steps will be taken throughout the commissioning cycle to meet the different needs of protected equality groups?	N/A

Actions

	What will be done?	By who?	By when?	What will be the outcome?
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Actions to lessen negative impact	Service user consultation to assess each element of the operating model	Service Areas and Consultations Team	Incremental - by 2020	Solutions which best meet service users' needs
Actions to increase positive impact				
Actions to develop equality evidence, information and data				
Actions to improve equality in procurement / commissioning	Procedures and regulations in relation to procurement include equality principles	Commercial Hub		Contract Procedure Rules (see in particular rule CO29)
Other relevant actions				

Recommendation

No major change required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Adjustments required	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Justification to continue the activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Stop the activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Summary of analysis

In preparing this report, due consideration has been given to the Borough Council's statutory Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, as set out in Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010.

The equality analysis identified that the proposed implementation of the Council's digital operating model is likely to have a positive impact arising from the principles developed during the 'design phase' and the inclusion of accessibility as key element of the digital principles. As each element of the programme is developed more detailed equality analysis will be undertaken.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring and review Executive will receive regular updates on the progress of the transformation programme	Review date February 2018 and ongoing
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