

Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit (January 2021)

Section 1: Your details

EIA lead Officer: Julie Horman

Email address: juliehorman@wirral.gov.uk

Head of Section: Matt Bennett

Chief Officer: Paul Satoor

Directorate: Finance

Date: 12th February 2024

Section 2: What Council proposal is being assessed?

Aligned to the Council Plan that was updated and agreed by Council in December 2023. The Council's vision is: Working Together to Promote Fairness and Opportunity for People and Communities, the underpinning enabling theme is Efficient, effective and accessible Council. As part of budget savings proposed to Council in February 2024, the Enabling Services Review is a major piece of work that continues to focus on transformational change and building a strong corporate core – laying out a path for creating a more effective organisation.

The proposal is an extension of the current Enabling Services programme to review all enabling (back office) services across the whole organisation to identify economies of scale and opportunities for greater centralisation of these services.

This is a developing proposal. This initial, overarching assessment may be reviewed and amended as the project progresses and any impacts become known to enable continuing compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty.

Section 2a: Will this EIA be submitted to a Committee meeting?

Yes / No **If 'yes' please state which meeting and what date**

Budget Council 26th Feb 2024

Hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published on the Council's website

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

Section 3: Does the proposal have the potential to affect..... (please tick relevant boxes)

- Services**
- The workforce**
- Communities**
- Other** (please state e.g.: Partners, Private Sector, Voluntary & Community Sector)

If you have ticked one or more of above, please go to section 4.

- None** (please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 4:

Could the proposal have a positive or negative impact on any protected groups (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation)?

You may also want to consider socio-economic status of individuals. We encourage services to consider the impact on those who serve and who have served in the armed forces and their families, in accordance with the Armed Forces Covenant

Please list in the table below and include actions required to mitigate any potential negative impact.

| Which group(s) of people could be affected | Potential positive or negative impact | Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact | Lead person | Timescale | Resource implications |
|--|--|--|---------------|-----------|--|
| ALL | Positive – Efficient redirection of resource to improve service delivery. | | Matt Bennett | Ongoing | Training and support during transition. |
| ALL | Negative – Existing communication channels may cease meaning customers use wrong channel or no longer know how to access services. | Plan for each service to be developed/implemented during design including detail Equality Impact Assessment. (EIA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear signposting to services. • Redirection to correct channel. | Jason Gooding | Ongoing | Costs associated with communication/additional staff time to redirect enquiries. |
| ALL | Positive – Some service provision migrated to digital solutions. Services available 24/7 | | Jason Gooding | Ongoing | Costs of migration to |

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| | online. Reducing face to face contact freeing up time to spend on most vulnerable residents. | | | | new technology. Training for staff & residents. |
| ALL | Negative - Some service provision migrated to digital solutions. Self-service can be inaccessible and harder to use. If there are any faults or problems, residents may struggle to access services. | Plan for each service to be developed/implemented during design including detailed EIA. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disaster recovery plan for online outage – to be implemented. Alternative provision for residents who don't have access to digital solutions. Continued support via libraries/partners for most vulnerable. | Pete Moulton | Ongoing | Extension of current Disaster Recovery provision. |
| WORKFORCE | Approx. 1400 staff in-scope of Enabling Services Review (ESR) Positive Change – Head of Profession Model, providing clear direction and support for individuals and teams and opportunities to broaden skill set and experience. | | Matt Bennett | Ongoing | Training required during transition. |
| WORKFORCE | Approx. 1400 staff in-scope of ESR. Negative Change – Some staff may struggle to adapt to new role, processes, technology, and leadership. | Ensure appropriate timelines are factored into support employees with any new learning or development requirements. | HR & OD AD | Ongoing | Training needs to be identified. |

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| ALL | <p>Negative – Transition to new ways of working may initially reduce capacity and impact service delivery.</p> <p>Negative – as staff exit the authority, posts will not be filled and this may place undue stress and strain on the workforce in a perception that they will be required to pick up additional work or duties.</p> | <p>Once the number of Full-time equivalent staff is known, an analysis of their equality profile will be undertaken to ensure there are no adverse impacts on a particular groups or groups of people. Any adverse impact on the protected characteristics of this cohort is unintentional.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark current service delivery and closely monitor throughout transition. • May have to target high volume high impact services. <p>In determining whether posts can be deleted and not replaced, each Director will have undertaken an analysis of business need for the service or function. This will be based on a number of factors including, whether the council has to provide the service, whether it is in line with its core priorities, whether there is a better way of providing the service. No posts will be</p> | HR & OD AD | Ongoing | Resource required to monitor and report on performance and impact on staff. |
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| | | deleted if there is a genuine and continuous business need to provide the service or function in the same way as was previously provided. In terms of service redesign, this will be consulted on and communicated in advance of services being changed and the reason for this, and this will generally, but not always to ensure other statutory services that the council has to provide can be protected. | | | |
| WORKFORCE | <p>Negative Early Voluntary Retirement/Voluntary Retirement (EVR) may reduce service knowledge and experience.</p> <p>Negative – the offer of EVRs would affect a particular age group of employees (aged 55 and over).</p> | Ensure that the Council's Redundancy and Redeployment Policy is implemented during the process of offering, and processing EVRs, therefore ensuring that the selection process is based on factors not related to protected characteristics other than age. | HR & OD AD | | |
| WORKFORCE | Negative – stress or anxiety related to change/restructures. | <p>Follow statutory consultation regulations.</p> <p>Direction to existing support available e.g. Employee Services and our Employee Assistance Programme -</p> | HR & OD AD | Ongoing | Increased demand on existing staff support services may require additional |

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| | | monitor demand to ensure service is sustainable. | | | funding – to be monitored. |
| Residents Customers Communities Other (as described above) | Neutral– as services are redesigned this may provide a better experience for residents to engage with the council, mainly through digitalisation as they will be able to interact more quickly and gain faster resolutions. | | Matt Bennett | Ongoing | HR resource required for changes to function, digital resource required to implement new solutions, managers/ Head of Service time required to redesign services |
| Residents Customers Communities Other (as described above) | Neutral – as services are redesigned this may provide a better experience for residents to engage with the council, as they may find that where some non-statutory services are discontinued, more focus and priority can be placed on statutory and priority services and this may result in a better interaction with the council in a faster and more effective manner | | Matt Bennett | Ongoing | Human Resources resource required for changes to function, digital resource required to implement new solutions, managers/Head of Service time required to redesign |

| | | | | | services |
|---|---|---|--------------|---------|----------|
| Residents Customers Communities Other (as described above) | Neutral – services maybe reduced or ceased as a result of less staff and some of the groups listed may not be able to access the same functions, services and/or same level of service than previously able access. | Any service redesign will be as accessible as possible and equality implications will be considered at all stages | Matt Bennett | Ongoing | |

Section 4a: Where and how will the above actions be monitored?

Enabling Services Review Programme Board / Investment and Change Board via regular update.

Section 4b: If you think there is no negative impact, what is your reasoning behind this?

N/A

Section 5: What research / data / information have you used in support of this process?

Reviewed other EIA's. Consultation with stakeholders. Lessons learnt from previous projects and change in the Council.

Individual Managers/Directors will determine whether posts can be deleted from their services given due regard to business need. Legal duties will be consulted as to whether functions are mandatory/statutory in determining whether they can be redesigned, reduced, ceased. When restructures take place managers will assess the design of the new structure based on business need and any intelligence, benchmarking and other information available to make these decisions. Equality implications will be considered and assessed at all stages from service design to delivery.

Section 6: Are you intending to carry out any consultation with regard to this Council proposal?

Yes

If 'yes' please continue to section 7.

If 'no' please state your reason(s) why:

(please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 7: How will consultation take place and by when?

Before the proposal is agreed, as part of the 2024/25 budget consultation process. This closed in January 2024.

HR Statutory consultation with staff affected.

Potential for consultation with residents if service delivery is affected/changed: detail of this will not be known until analysis completed.

Before you complete your consultation, please email your preliminary EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer in order for the Council to ensure it is meeting it's legal publishing requirements. The EIA will need to be published with a note saying we are awaiting outcomes from a consultation exercise.

Once you have completed your consultation, please review your actions in section 4. Then email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing.

Section 8: Have you remembered to:

- a) **Select appropriate directorate hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published** (section 2a)
- b) **Include any potential positive impacts as well as negative impacts?** (section 4)
- c) **Send this EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer?**
- d) **Review section 4 once consultation has taken place and sent your updated EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer for re-publishing?**