



EQUALITY/COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

ROCHDALE
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH
COUNCIL

1. What is the name of the savings proposal and its current status?
CC115 - Review of staffing in Revenues and Benefits and Customer Access
2. Which Service is responsible for this proposal?
Customers and Communities
3. Does this proposal impact on other services or other service savings proposals and if so, have you discussed this proposal with the Service Directors from those other services?
<p>This proposal has a potential impact on the Council's revenue (because it incorporates NNDR and income collection). Penny Sharp is discussing with Pauline Kane.</p> <p>Adult Care will be notified of the integration of the fairer charging team within the wider assessment function.</p> <p>Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH) will be notified of the planned integration of the customer services and benefits functions. This will not impact on the Council's contract with RBH.</p> <p>The Community Language Service is used by the majority of other services within the Council. This proposal proposes a review of the Community Language Service, the impact will be unknown until the review is completed.</p>
4. Please state the name of the officer leading the EIA
5. Who has been involved in undertaking this assessment e.g. list the stakeholder groups which have been involved?
The management teams of Customer Access and Revenues and Benefits have been involved in this assessment. It will be updated based on feedback received during consultation.
6. What is the scope of this assessment? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• -what is included in this assessment• -does this proposal link to any other proposals (i.e. previous or current). If so, please state
This assessment seeks to set out the impact of the proposed changes on groups with protected characteristics.
7 a). What does the function currently do? b). Describe the needs which this service meets?

The Revenues and Benefits function currently administers Council Tax, Housing and related benefits, including business rates.

The Customer Access team provides the front end for this service, as well as wider services including libraries, advice, contact centre and web.

Revenues and benefits is a statutory service, however the method in which it is delivered varies (though not to a great degree) between authorities.

This proposal effectively brings the front and back office together.

This proposal proposes a review of the Community Language Service, managed within customers and communications. This service provides a translation and interpretation service to other Council services.

8. What changes do you propose to make?

This report proposes:

- The re-structure and integration of the existing Revenues and Benefits and Customer Access functions.
- A review of the Community Language Service, with the intention of ensuring a cost effective solution is in place, to meet the reduced needs of a smaller Council from 2013/14 onwards.

There is already a strong relationship between the Customer Access and Revenues and Benefits services, with the receipt of benefits evidence at front line customer service centres then being processed in the back office by revenues and benefits personnel. By bringing all staff involved in the assessment process under single line management, it will be possible to train all staff in all elements of the process which will increase resilience and should support improvements being made to benefits processing times. Culturally this approach also has the advantage of ensuring that all staff understand – and are therefore accountable for, all stages of the process.

The merger of the two functions has several impacts, including:

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- Increasing benefit assessment capacity by one additional post at the bottom layer of the structure, ensuring that processing times are not adversely impacted as far as possible.
- The strengthening of collection functions, creating a new corporate debt function which will map and bring together debt collection council wide as well as the strengthening of collection in relation to National Non Domestic Rates (NDR), which is particularly important as these business rates will, in the future, have a direct impact on council revenue.
- Creating a stable approach to the use of apprentices in the service by providing a specific budget for this purpose.
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It is not considered that the above re-structure will have a significant impact on customers.

In addition, the service intends to review the Community Language Service. This service provides translation and interpretation services internally. At present this service is provided in house and an administrative post is in place to oversee this. As the council reduces in size, it is not clear whether this will represent the most cost effective method of delivery in the future. It is proposed that during the consultation period, the existing service is reviewed, with a view to minimising demand and ensuring value for money. If the service remains in house, it will be required to at least cover its own costs and will be market tested. It is anticipated that the recommendations of the review will be reported back to members following consultation.

9. Who are the key stakeholders who may be affected by the changes proposed?

The main impact of these proposals will be on existing council staff, particularly at senior and middle management level.

The review of the Community Language Service may impact on customers who make use of this service and on providers (either positively or negatively depending on the outcome of the review).

10. What impact will this proposal have on all the protected groups

Description of Service Users

End users of the service will not have English as their first language.

Race Equality

There may be an unequal outcome as a result of any changes proposed to translation and interpretation services currently operated by the community language service. The impact is currently unknown, as it is proposed that a review of the community language service is undertaken.

This EIA will be updated once the outcome of the review of this service is known.

Disabled People

There is no evidence of a possible unequal outcome as a result of this proposal.

Carers

There is no evidence of a possible unequal outcome as a result of this proposal.

Gender

There is no evidence of a possible unequal outcome to either males or females as a result of this proposal.

Older and Younger People

There is no evidence of a possible unequal outcome as a result of this proposal.

People who are Socio-Economically Disadvantaged

There is no evidence of a possible unequal outcome as a result of this proposal.

Religion or Belief

There may be an unequal outcome as a result of any changes proposed to translation and interpretation services currently operated by the community language service. The impact is currently unknown, as it is proposed that a review of the community language service is undertaken.

This EIA will be updated once the outcome of the review of this service is known.

Sexual Orientation

There is no evidence of a possible unequal outcome as a result of this proposal.

Gender Reassignment

There is no evidence of a possible unequal outcome as a result of this proposal.

Pregnant Women or Those on Maternity Leave or Those who have given Birth in the Previous 26 weeks

There is no evidence of a possible unequal outcome as a result of this proposal.

Marriage or Civil Partnership

There is no evidence of a possible unequal outcome as a result of this proposal.

11. What are the main conclusions arising from this analysis?

At this stage, the bulk of this proposal has only an internal impact. Once the outcomes of the review of the community language service are known, this EIA will be updated before any decisions are taken to change provision.

12. What measures do you propose to put in place to mitigate any adverse impacts?

Possible Adverse Impact	Mitigation Measure
There may be an unequal outcome relating to 'race equality' and 'religion or belief' as a result of any changes proposed to translation and interpretation services currently operated by the community language service. The impact is currently unknown, as it is proposed that a review of the community language service is undertaken.	To be decided when the review is complete, and impacts are known.

What evidence do you have which demonstrates that these measures will be effective?

13. Please attach a copy of your consultation action plan.

Please briefly outline below who has been consulted and which consultation methods were used.

Full consultation will take place with affected staff.
In addition, consultation will take place online at www.rochdale.gov.uk and copies of each report will be available in hard copy at the borough's libraries.
Current providers of community language services will be consulted with as part of the review process, as will potential providers to determine relative value for money.

14. Please complete the mitigation action plan below.

Mitigation Action Plan

Mitigation Measure	Action	Responsible Officer	End Date	Status
Mitigation measure relating to translation and interpretation to be decided when review of Community Language Service is complete.				

15. Equality impact analysis sign off by the Director of Service, and an Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Representative

Name	Position	Date
		13 th August 2012
		4 th September 2012