

SSDC Equality Analysis Template (2017)

Page 1: What is Equality Analysis?

Q1. Q1.1 Please describe the change that is the subject of this EqA i.e. the introduction of a new, or significant change to an existing, policy strategy, service or function .

Cease customer face to face services through the current Community Office in Ilminster.

Page 2: EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)

Q2. Q2.1 What information have you used to analyse the effects on equality, particularly in relation to protected groups?

Recorded footfall for previous years shows continual decrease in footfall at across all Community offices. It also provides details of days & times that customers visit the offices.
Customer Satisfaction detailed analysis for offices concerned (March 17).
Local availability of public pc's
Other methods of customers being able to contact the council to conduct business - ie phone, website online services
Information detailing trend and increase/shift to online transactions
Local bus routes
Availability of staff to provide bookable surgeries on an as needed basis for residents unable to travel to another location
Local knowledge
Design of building/access
Universal Credit

Over a 3 week period customers who visited the Ilminster Community Office were asked specifically about the effects of accessing services by alternative methods.

Q3. Q2.2 What has this information told you about the potential effect on equality, particularly in relation to the protected groups?

Ilminster Community Office showed a total service footfall decrease of 13% in 16/17 from 15/16. However, Housing & Homelessness increased from 68 to 104 enquiries.

None of the customers surveyed in Ilminster considered themselves as having a disability.

Everyone who visited the office lived locally - therefore closure of Ilminster office would mean travel to another office or accessing services in a different format - ie phones or website. To access the next nearest face to face office would mean travel to Chard (6 miles). Ilminster to Chard has a daily bus service. The majority of customers had previously contacted the council by phone. Ilminster has a local Library where there is free access to the website and wifi.

The majority of customers visiting Ilminster were in the 60-74 age bracket. All were of English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish origin. Although these customers stated that they would prefer to visit the office as opposed to not having internet access or that they found the website difficult to use, the majority had previously contacted the council by phone.

Caring responsibilities related to either none or for children under 18.

From the face to face interviews 18 users fell within the following Protected Characteristics

- Older People,
- Disabled/Carers and
- People of different race/ethnicity

11 of these users stated that they would have difficulty accessing services via alternate means and 9 of these customers indicated they are regular users of the Ilminster Community Office.

Q4. Q2.3 The Equality Act Aims to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation Advance equality of opportunity Foster good relations With these three aims in mind, what is your assessment of the likely impact of the policy, strategy, service or function on the following?:

	Likely to benefit (Positive Impact)	Likely to disadvantage (Negative Impact)	No specific impact
People from different age groups		X	
Men or women			X
Women who are pregnant or have recently given birth			X
People who have undergone, are proposing or are undergoing gender reassignment			X
People with disabilities or carers		X	
People from different religions, belief or faith (including those with no belief)			X
People of different race or ethnicity		X	
People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual			X
Marriage/Civil Partnership			X
People who are serving or have served in the armed forces and their families* (* this group is not protected by the Equality Act but are still potentially vulnerable or at risk of exclusion)			X

Q5. Q2.4 Where you have indicated a Positive or Negative Impact in Q2.3, please describe in more detail what the specific Impacts are. □

Ilminster Office does not currently have disabled access.
Visitors to Ilminster fall into the older people, carers, young parents category and therefore may be vulnerable to changes
Not all of the older population have access to ICT or are comfortable using ICT with many not having their own transport.
Closure of Ilminster will mean them travelling a distance of 6 miles by bus or lift basis.
Customers prefer face-to-face services with some finding it difficult to use the phone service due to language issues.

Of the 11 users from Protected Characteristic groups that said they would have difficulty accessing services via alternate means; 5 indicated the problem was either no transport or internet access and 6 stated they prefer face to face access.

Q6. Q2.5 What actions will be, or have been taken to either mitigate any negative impacts or create a positive impact as identified in Q4?

Access to SSDC services are available via the phone or online through self service forms
Housing & Benefit evidence can also be uploaded via the website/smartphones/tablet devices
Long lead in time for closure to allow assistance and awareness of digital services - aim to encourage more customers to use online services in line with Digital by Default / transformation.
Dedicated member of staff to assist customers to self serve
Bookable surgeries at convenient location with access point
Identifying local computer/digital training opportunities for customers
Monitor impact and access / revisit

The negative impacts indicated by the 11 users from Protected Characteristic groups who were surveyed can be mitigated through solutions agreed with relevant council services such offering appointments in other community venues (e.g. GP surgeries) or home visits.

Q7. Q2.6 If there is a need to review the EqA, when do you propose to do this?

* 01/04/2018

Q8. Q2.7 How will you monitor the impact that the decision or policy has had on protected groups?

Number of appointments required
Customer satisfaction survey - looking for reasons they are visiting the offices
Footfall increase in other Community Offices
Complaints
Information relating to online transactions

Page 3: Quality Check / Approval Log

Q9. Q3.1 Date and name of Officer Completing the EqA

* 06/06/2017

Name of Officer Completing the EqA and Date Completed
Lisa Davis/Debbie Haines

Q10. Q3.2 Date and name of the Line Manager/Senior Manager approving the EqA

* 25/08/2017

Name of the Line Manager approving the EqA
Helen Rutter

Q11. Q3.3 Date and Name of the Equality Coordinator signing off the EA

* 25/08/2017

Name of the Equality Coordinator
David Crisfield

Q12. Q3.4 Any Comments

No Response