

# BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL - IMPACT ASSESSMENT

## WHY DO I NEED TO DO AN ASSESSMENT?

This Impact Assessment isn't designed to 'catch you out'. It is designed to help you think about and improve the way you deliver your services by ensuring that they are as inclusive as possible.

It will help you to test the impact on people when reviewing or developing new policies, strategies and functions to find out if there is any adverse impact or illegal discrimination or any unmet need or requirements.

Legislation imposes duties on local authorities to promote equality and tackle discrimination related to Age, Disability, Gender (includes marital status, gender reassignment), Race (colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality) Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, However, we have also included discretionary but important additional categories relevant to our District in this assessment process: People Living in Rural Areas, People living in Urban Areas, People on Low Incomes and People for whom English is not their first Language.

To comply with legislation the Council is required to publish its Impact Assessments and these will be made available on our website.

## WHAT HAS TO BE IMPACT ASSESSED?

You need to do an Assessment when reviewing, making changes to or developing new and existing policies, strategies and functions that are relevant to equality. This can be determined as follows:

### RELEVANT – Impact Assessment must be done

- The policy, strategy or function will impact on people (residents, staff or people living, visiting or working in Braintree District)
- The policy, strategy or function may benefit some people or communities and not others

### NOT RELEVANT – Impact Assessment not needed

- No intended impact on people
- The policy, strategy or function is administrative only

## HOW DO I DO THIS ASSESSMENT?

By answering the questions in the following Assessment template you will be able to consider any possible positive or negative impacts that a new or existing policy, strategy or function may have on defined groups, using data as evidence, and take action accordingly.

## IMPACT ASSESSMENT – INITIAL SCREENING

Name of Policy, Strategy or Function being assessed	Reduction of Contact Magazine to one issue a year from 4 issues a year
Is this a new or existing Policy, Strategy or Function?	<b>A change to an existing function/service</b>
Person responsible for the assessment	<b>Claire Thwaites</b>
Service Area	<b>People &amp; Democracy</b>
Head of Service	<b>Sharon Lowe</b>
Date	<b>21<sup>st</sup> January, 2011</b>

### 1. What is the main purpose of the Policy, Strategy or Function?

Contact Magazine is produced for residents of the district to provide information, advice and updates about Braintree District Council services, activities and events. There are other channels of communication where this information is also available.

### 2. Who else will be involved in the delivery of this Strategy, Policy or Function?

**If so, state who they are. They will need to be involved in producing this Impact Assessment**

**Not applicable**

### 3. Who are you delivering your service to/who will be affected by the Strategy, Policy or Function?

Every household in the district receives Contact Magazine, three or four times a year. The reduction to one issue a year will affect every household who reads the magazine, however households do have other methods of keeping informed about council activities and services.

4. To ensure that you have all available information that could help you to undertake this Impact Assessment complete the following table to evidence which of the following sources of information you are using, or intend to use, to assess the impact of the Policy, Strategy or Function on people within the following **equality groups**: Disability, Race (colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality) Religion or Belief, Sex (marital status, gender reassignment), Sexual orientation, Age, People living in rural areas, People living in urban areas, People on low incomes, People for whom English is not their first language. **The sources listed are for guidance so please add/substitute your own categories as appropriate.**

Source	Reference (date/ relevant publication, etc)
Performance Indicators/Targets	
User Satisfaction Surveys	<b>Readers of Contact ( Your Council Your Say – Jan '11 )</b>
Consultation results (new and existing)	<b>Your Council Your Say consultation was sent to representative of all the equalities groups . Dec '10</b>
Staff monitoring data	
Complaints information	
Demographic profiles (census, etc)	<b>Mosaic profiles</b>
Local Needs Analysis (internal or external sources)	
Staff Survey results	
Research reports	

Best Practice Information	
Benchmarking data	
Expert views of people representing the equality groups	
Other – please state	

**5. Based on the data indicated in question 4, assess the impact that the Policy, Strategy or Function could have on the groups below. The impact could be positive ie it will benefit this group, it could help to promote equality, access, or improve relations within equality groups. The impact could be negative i.e. it could disadvantage them. You need to explain the reasons for the impact assessment you have made**

Equality Group	Category	Positive Impact	Negative Impact/ Risk	Explanation
Age	Children 0-16			
	Young People 17-25			<b>89% of the 1290 respondents to the survey in Contact magazine agreed that to find a saving, the magazine should be cut to one or two issues a year. The implication is that people are prepared to accept less information or are prepared to seek out information themselves from other media. The People's Panel who are a representative group from the district also supported the change. We also informed the equalities groups in the district of these potential changes and no concerns have been raised to date.</b>
	Ages 26-59			<b>As above</b>
	Older People 60+			<b>As above</b>
Disability	Blind/Partially Sighted			<b>As above</b>
	Deaf/Hearing Impaired			<b>As above</b>
	Wheelchair user/mobility difficulties			<b>As above</b>
	Learning Difficulties			<b>As above</b>
	Mental Health Difficulties			<b>As above</b>
	Learning Difficulties			<b>As above</b>
Gender	Women			<b>As above</b>
	Men			<b>As above</b>
	Transgender			<b>As above</b>
	White including English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, Eastern European (Polish Slovak, etc) Other White background – please specify			<b>As above</b>
	Asian including Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian, Vietnamese, Chinese, Other Asian background – please specify			<b>As above</b>
	Black including Caribbean, Somali, Other African, Other Black background – please specify			<b>As above</b>
	Mixed Dual Heritage including White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, Other			<b>As above</b>

**6. Based on your answer to question 5, could the Policy, Strategy or Function discriminate against any of the groups below either directly or indirectly**

**NOTE: Direct Discrimination** occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their racial or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

**Indirect Discrimination** occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would disadvantage people on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, unless the practice can be objectively justified by a legitimate aim

Group	Direct Yes/No	Indirect Yes/No	If Yes state how
Age	No	No	
Disability	No	No	
Gender	No	No	
Race	No	No	
Religion/Belief	No	No	
Sexual Orientation	No	No	
Social Inclusion	No	No	

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**7. Referring to your answers to questions 5 and 6, can you easily minimize or remove any negative impacts identified and if so how?**

**Although this change may not disadvantage certain groups we do know from our Mosaic demographic profiles that some people prefer to receive information in certain ways. With those who prefer information in the post to other forms we will have to work hard to find other communications methods to suit them.** The following groups within our District have cited face to face/post as their preferred communication channel:-

- Residents of small and mid sized towns with strong local roots (13.5% - 8315 households ) receptive to local papers
- Owner/occupiers in older style housing in ex industrial areas (8.71% - 5331 households ) receptive to local papers
- Residents with sufficient incomes in right to buy social housing (9.24% - 5654 households) receptive to local papers
- Active elderly living in pleasant retirement locations (2.4% - 1470 households ) receptive to local papers
- Elderly reliant on state support (5.7% - 3542 households) receptive to local papers
- Families in low rise social housing with high benefits needs (1.82% - 1116 households) receptive to local papers

**8. If the negative impacts cannot be minimized or removed, they need to be justified. Please explain how and what the evidence for this is.**

**You may want to refer back to the monitoring data you listed in Question 4 to answer this question.**

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**9. If you have identified any impacts as positive in Question 5, are there any further ways in which you can adapt the policy, strategy or function to increase or extend its positive benefits for equality groups? Please explain your reasoning.**

**10. Based on the information you have now provided in this assessment please proceed as follows:**

<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	<b>Action</b>
No negative impacts have been identified and this has been justified with evidence	Go to Q11 and Sign Off
Negative impacts were identified but have been minimized or removed	Go to Q11 and Sign Off
There is insufficient evidence to reach a valid conclusion on the Impact	Go back and collect additional evidence/data and then complete a new Assessment
Negative impacts were identified but have not been minimized, removed or justified	Complete the Action Plan below and then sign off by completing Q11

**11. Sign Off**

<b>Assessment Completed by (name &amp; signature)</b>	<b>Claire Thwaites</b>
<b>Senior Manager (name &amp; signature)</b>	<b>Sharon Lowe</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>21<sup>st</sup> January, 2011</b>

**A copy of the signed Impact Assessment and any Action Plan should be retained and appended to the relevant Policy/Strategy document or Business Plan. A signed hard copy and an electronic copy should be sent to Charmaine Dean, Head of Community Services. It is a statutory requirement to publish the results of Equality Impact Assessments. We will make these available on our website.**

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN**

**You now need to develop and implement an Action Plan to address the negative impacts identified that could not be minimized, removed or justified.**

**This should include more detailed research, further data collection or consultation with representatives from the equality group(s) who you have identified as being likely to suffer a negative impact/be disadvantaged by the Policy, Strategy or Function being assessed.**

## **ACTION PLAN**

<b>Equality Group (eg young people, blind/partially sighted, etc)</b>	<b>Negative Impact Identified</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By Who</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>


**ACTION PLAN MONITORING**

How will you monitor progress of your Action Plan? And at what intervals?	
How frequently will this monitoring take place?	
Who will be responsible for this?	

**Now go back to question 11 to complete and sign off this Assessment**