

Equality Impact Assessment [version 2.9]



Title: Budget Proposal: Reduce Electoral Services printing and postage costs	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Budget Proposal R6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changing
Directorate: Resource	Lead Officer name: Gareth Cook
Service Area: Legal (Electoral Services)	Lead Officer role: Electoral Services Manager

Step 1: What do we want to do?

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment is to assist decision makers in understanding the impact of proposals as part of their duties under the Equality Act 2010. Detailed guidance to support completion can be found here [Equality Impact Assessments \(EqIA\) \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

This assessment should be started at the beginning of the process by someone with a good knowledge of the proposal and service area, and sufficient influence over the proposal. It is good practice to take a team approach to completing the equality impact assessment. Please contact the [Equality and Inclusion Team](#) early for advice and feedback.

1.1 What are the aims and objectives/purpose of this proposal?

Briefly explain the purpose of the proposal and why it is needed. Describe who it is aimed at and the intended aims / outcomes. Where known also summarise the key actions you plan to undertake. Please use [plain English](#), avoiding jargon and acronyms. Equality Impact Assessments are viewed by a wide range of people including decision-makers and the wider public.

Budget context

Every year, we agree on a budget for the following year which shows how much money we will be able to spend on the services we provide. The money the council has available to spend on delivering day-to-day services to citizens is called the revenue budget. Bristol City Council is required by law to set a balanced budget however we face a large potential gap in our core budget next year. With such a significant challenge the budget cannot be balanced without additional funding, making greater efficiencies (doing the same for less money) or by transforming the way we do things.

The Council has defined statutory responsibilities, but deliver against a far broader agenda, providing universal services benefiting the whole community, and targeted services aimed at individuals, communities with particular needs, and businesses – administered by our workforce, city partners, stakeholder organisations and commissioned services.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been far reaching, with a lasting impact on our people and our economy. Our finances are stretched to the limit and up and down the country councils are facing similar funding crisis with less money to keep services going. This is because more money is needed to: help citizens with the immediate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic including the economic impact for low-income households; support more people than ever with mental health and social care services; and meet the rising need and cost of home to school transport for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). At the same time, the pandemic saw us receive less income from business rates, commercial rentals, parking, sports facilities, and our museums, shops and cafes – and we expect this trend to continue for some time.

The [Medium Term Financial Plan](#) underpins the Council's financial planning process and outlines the approach we will take to meet the challenges presented by focusing primarily on delivering efficiencies, service re-design programmes which cut across directorate boundaries, and increasing external income an Invest to Save revenue.

The proposal:

To reduce future spending on printing and postage for statutory year-round electoral registration and specific elections communication due to legislative changes.

The national statutory electoral register process changed in 2020.

	Current 2020 onwards process	Previous to 2020 process
Electoral Registration communication to all properties in Bristol to ensure the correct occupants in their house are on the electoral register.	Households only obligated to respond if there is a change in occupier details.	Every property must respond stating 'no changes' or 'changes' regardless as to their circumstances.
Electoral Services chasing responses	Electoral Services chase a response only where occupiers are not data matched.	
Electoral Registration communication to properties in Bristol where a property has not changed occupier recently.	Sent confirmation of details of occupier	A request to inform Electoral Services who is living there.
Response from citizens	More people are choosing to communicate electronically, thus further reducing printing and	

	postage costs.	
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All options of communication for citizens to communicate with Electoral Services remain ie post, phone, e-mail and web.

1.2 Who will the proposal have the potential to affect?

<input type="checkbox"/> Bristol City Council workforce	<input type="checkbox"/> Service users	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The wider community
<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioned services	<input type="checkbox"/> City partners / Stakeholder organisations	

Additional comments: There is no change to who is contacted with every property in the authority area being engaged with annually and no scope to deviate from the changes in legislation.
The primary legislated change is where a property has not changed occupier in recent times they are sent a confirmation of details of occupier rather than a request to inform us who is living there. All properties continue to be contacted but with information specific to them and they only need respond if changes of occupier have happened.

1.3 Will the proposal have an equality impact?

Could the proposal affect access levels of representation or participation in a service, or does it have the potential to change e.g. quality of life: health, education, or standard of living etc.?

If 'No' explain why you are sure there will be no equality impact, then skip steps 2-4 and request review by Equality and Inclusion Team.

If 'Yes' complete the rest of this assessment, or if you plan to complete the assessment at a later stage please state this clearly here and request review by the Equality and Inclusion Team.

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	[please select]
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The legislated change ensures that every property in the Bristol area continues to be contacted as before. Now information is tailored to their circumstances and only requiring a response if details have changed. Rather than the old system where a response was required regardless as to their circumstances.
This more intelligent approach to engagement maintains full contact with all citizens but in an appropriate method.

Step 5: Review

The Equality and Inclusion Team need at least five working days to comment and feedback on your EqIA. EqIAs should only be marked as reviewed when they provide sufficient information for decision-makers on the equalities impact of the proposal. Please seek feedback and review from the [Equality and Inclusion Team](#) before requesting sign off from your Director¹.

Equality and Inclusion Team Review: <i>Reviewed by Equality and Inclusion Team</i>	Director Sign-Off: Tim O'Gara
Date: 10/1/2022	Date: 10/1/2022

¹ Review by the Equality and Inclusion Team confirms there is sufficient analysis for decision makers to consider the likely equality impacts at this stage. This is not an endorsement or approval of the proposal.