

Equality Impact Assessment [version 2.9]



Title: Digital Strategic Partner	
<input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Other [please state]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Already exists / review <input type="checkbox"/> Changing
Directorate: Resources (Cross Directorate)	Lead Officer name: Gavin Arbuckle
Service Area: Digital Transformation (IT)	Lead Officer role: Head of IT Operations/ Acting Digital Transformation Director

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 \(EqIA\) \(sharepoint.com\)](http://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.

This proposal relates to the procurement of a ‘Strategic Partner’ to assist in the delivery of the Council’s IT/digital ambitions.

- At present, the Council bridges some of its internal capacity shortfalls (or specialist expertise needs) with the use of either ad hoc external contractor resource on a project by project basis , or/and one off commissioned/contracted relationships.
- By having a core strategic partner it will enable us to plan and manage this external support more efficiently and have the positive impact that it will allow us to effectively level the peaks and troughs of future workloads in the external supplier and not from the internal Council team.
- This is anticipated to be a long-term arrangement (5+ years) with a partner with a private sector partner with the capacity and access to the right technical skills, knowledge and expertise to supplement the internal resources already available within the IT service. It is anticipated the partner will be able to keep up to date with new innovations and changes to the IT/digital market that would not be possible internally.
- There is also an expectation that a longer term partnership arrangement would provide a better relationship (than one off temporary commissions) where the partner shares our values and understands our ambitions and is motivated to help us deliver those.
- The scope of the partner arrangement is expected to cover (but will be refined through the specification/tender stage):
 - Support for the upcoming ‘Digital Transformation programme’ – business case and cabinet

paper due in June 22.

- All any future IT/digital works - from scoping to delivery – details yet to be defined but based on historical averages of needing IT specialist support
- Potential support for or delivery of targeted business-as-usual (BAU) functions and activities on BCC's behalf (rather than delivering internally with BCC staff, potential for the partner to deliver this for us)

1.2 Who will the proposal have the potential to affect?

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

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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Step 2: What information do we have?

2.1 What data or evidence is there which tells us who is, or could be affected?

Please use this section to demonstrate an understanding of who could be affected by the proposal. Include general population data where appropriate, and information about people who will be affected with particular reference to protected and other relevant characteristics: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/people-communities/measuring-equalities-success>.

Use one row for each evidence source and say which characteristic(s) it relates to. You can include a mix of qualitative and quantitative data e.g. from national or local research, available data or previous consultations and engagement activities.

Outline whether there is any over or under representation of equality groups within relevant services - don't forget to benchmark to the local population where appropriate. Links to available data and reports are here [Data, statistics and intelligence \(sharepoint.com\)](#). See also: [Bristol Open Data \(Quality of Life, Census etc.\)](#); [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#); [Ward Statistical Profiles](#).

For workforce / management of change proposals you will need to look at the diversity of the affected teams using available evidence such as [HR Analytics: Power BI Reports \(sharepoint.com\)](#) which shows the diversity profile of council teams and service areas. Identify any over or under-representation compared with Bristol economically active citizens for different characteristics. Additional sources of useful workforce evidence include the [Employee Staff Survey Report](#) and [Stress Risk Assessment Form](#)

Data / Evidence Source	Summary of what this tells us
[Include a reference where known]	
HR Analytics: Power BI reports (sharepoint.com)	Summary of Digital team staff characteristics -noting those

	<p>which are different to the Bristol averages</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Service operations (<i>*IT operations team – 62 headcount according to diversity dashboard 08/02/22</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significantly lower proportion of younger staff aged “16-29” - Higher proportion of disabled employees - Lower levels ‘Asian/Asian British’, ‘Black/Black British’ and ‘Other’ ethnic groups - Higher ‘Mixed’ ethnicity - Significantly lower proportion of female employees (under 20%). - Higher proportion of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual employees 2. Applications & Digital (<i>*Apps & Digital team – 55 headcount according to diversity dashboard 08/02/22</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significantly lower proportion of younger staff aged “16-29” - Higher proportion of disabled employees - Lower levels ‘Asian/Asian British’, ‘Black/Black British’ and ‘Other’ ethnic groups - Higher ‘Mixed’ ethnicity - Minimally lower proportion of female employees - Lower proportion of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual employees 3. Enterprise Architecture (<i>smaller team with redacted diversity data</i>)
Additional comments:	

2.2 Do you currently monitor relevant activity by the following protected characteristics?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender Reassignment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marriage and Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy/Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation

2.3 Are there any gaps in the evidence base?

Where there are gaps in the evidence, or you don’t have enough information about some equality groups, include an equality action to find out in section 4.2 below. This doesn’t mean that you can’t complete the assessment without the information, but you need to follow up the action and if necessary, review the assessment later. If you are unable to fill in the gaps, then state this clearly with a justification.

For workforce related proposals all relevant characteristics may not be included in HR diversity reporting (e.g. pregnancy/maternity). For smaller teams diversity data may be redacted. A high proportion of not known/not disclosed may require an action to address under-reporting.

We have available data for employees and a corporate approach to diversity monitoring for services. However we aware there are gaps in citywide data, especially where this has not historically been required for statutory reporting.

2.4 How have you involved communities and groups that could be affected?

You will nearly always need to involve and consult with internal and external stakeholders during your assessment. The extent of the engagement will depend on the nature of the proposal or change. This should usually include individuals and groups representing different relevant protected characteristics. Please include details of any completed engagement and consultation and how representative this had been of Bristol’s diverse communities. See <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/people-communities/equalities-groups>.

Include the main findings of any engagement and consultation in Section 2.1 above.

If you are managing a workforce change process or restructure please refer to [Managing change or restructure \(sharepoint.com\)](#) for advice on consulting with employees etc. Relevant stakeholders for engagement about workforce changes may include e.g. staff-led groups and trades unions as well as affected staff.

At this stage we have carried out internal engagement with relevant teams and business partners.

2.5 How will engagement with stakeholders continue?

Explain how you will continue to engage with stakeholders throughout the course of planning and delivery. Please describe where more engagement and consultation is required and set out how you intend to undertake it. Include any targeted work to seek the views of under-represented groups. If you do not intend to undertake it, please set out your justification. You can ask the Equality and Inclusion Team for help in targeting particular groups.

We will carry out provider engagement as part of the procurement approach. Any subsequent proposals which were likely to impact on workforce would be subject to staff consultation in accordance with our Managing Change Policy.

Step 3: Who might the proposal impact?

Analysis of impacts must be rigorous. Please demonstrate your analysis of any impacts of the proposal in this section, referring to evidence you have gathered above, and the characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010. Also include details of existing issues for particular groups that you are aware of and are seeking to address or mitigate through this proposal. See detailed guidance documents for advice on identifying potential impacts etc. [Equality Impact Assessments \(EqIA\) \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

3.1 Does the proposal have any potentially adverse impacts on people based on their protected or other relevant characteristics?

Consider sub-categories (different kinds of disability, ethnic background etc.) and how people with combined characteristics (e.g. young women) might have particular needs or experience particular kinds of disadvantage.

Where mitigations indicate a follow-on action, include this in the 'Action Plan' Section 4.2 below.

GENERAL COMMENTS (highlight any potential issues that might impact all or many groups)

The **potential** impacts for **staff, specifically the IT teams** are:

- For projects/ programmes deliver, they will need to work closely/collaboratively with this partner, although the overall nature of their work is not expected to change (many IT staff already work in this way) with other partners. However, if we expand and grow use of the partner, there is potential for staff to feel demotivated if they feel work is being delivered by an external partner that they feel could be delivered internally. **This in theory could lead to higher than usual staff turnover.** The service will need to follow standard management of change processes, and HR guidance to assess the impact on the make up their team if this impact occurred and consider opportunities to strengthen the diversity if affected.
- At a future date in time there is **potential** for the partner to support delivery of BAU functions through this agreement – either enhancing/supplementing internal capacity or replacing it. These would have more fundamental decisions on the IT workforce if progressed. This could include potential TUPE arrangements and/or a reduced internal workforce (although at present this is anticipated could be managed via turnover and vacancy management). **These decisions would be subject to future business cases/decisions/ and associated impact assessments and standard /formal management of change. Note there is no obligation to draw any of this down.**

The **potential** impacts for **users (including staff)**:

- All consultancies and partners are likely to have their own views re: preferred tools and technologies. As our partner, they naturally have/will influence our choices on technologies used as they will be a key advisor. Therefore there may be an indirect impact. We would need to ensure we continue to scrutinise any future tech/tool changes via standard business case approaches to

ensure accessibility considerations fully and appropriately considered – and subject to EQIA as part of those decisions, as usual.

We do not anticipate any **direct** impact or change to service users/customers of the digital /IT team in terms of their access, outcomes or experience/satisfaction levels from this initial decision to secure a partner.

As part of standard procurement approach we will ensure partner has/meets public sector equality duty requirements and has appropriate policies in place. Additionally, we would be looking to specify that a partner must match our values/behaviours/culture and assess this as part of our tender process to find a best fit.

We will also ensure through our contracting arrangements and ongoing quality assurance that there are clearly defined roles, processes and accountabilities in place to respond swiftly and effectively to any emerging issues relating to the accessibility of digital solutions, such as ensuring ongoing compatibility with assistive technology, which might disproportionately impact disabled colleagues and service users.

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Age: Young People	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Age: Older People	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Disability	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Sex	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Sexual orientation	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Pregnancy / Maternity	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Gender reassignment	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Race	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Religion or Belief	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Marriage & civil partnership	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	

OTHER RELEVANT CHARACTERISTICS

Socio-Economic (deprivation)	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	

Mitigations:	
Carers	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	
Other groups [Please add additional rows below to detail the impact for other relevant groups as appropriate e.g. Asylums and Refugees; Looked after Children / Care Leavers; Homelessness]	
Potential impacts:	
Mitigations:	

3.2 Does the proposal create any benefits for people based on their protected or other relevant characteristics?

Outline any potential benefits of the proposal and how they can be maximised. Identify how the proposal will support our Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- ✓ Eliminate unlawful discrimination for a protected group
- ✓ Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't
- ✓ Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

An increased capacity to respond to innovation and respond to change through ongoing partnership work with an external provider may advance equality of opportunity for those who are currently digitally excluded or find existing systems inaccessible.

Step 4: Impact

4.1 How has the equality impact assessment informed or changed the proposal?

What are the main conclusions of this assessment? Use this section to provide an overview of your findings. This summary can be included in decision pathway reports etc.

If you have identified any significant negative impacts which cannot be mitigated, provide a justification showing how the proposal is proportionate, necessary, and appropriate despite this.

Summary of significant negative impacts and how they can be mitigated or justified:

- The review of staff diversity/ characteristics has highlighted that due to the higher or lower proportions of people with particular protected characteristics in some categories, there may be disproportionate impacts . However, the impact is not known until any **future** decisions/considerations re: supporting BAU functions. Any future changes/uses of the contract that affects BAU services or teams will be subject to separate/ future EQIA.
- For the contract itself no direct negative implications identified.

Summary of positive impacts / opportunities to promote the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- Learning/sharing opportunities from the partner arrangement, and potential to gather further knowledge about the tools BCC has.
- The strategic partnership will be inclusive and target promotion of equality opportunities for people with different needs or who are disadvantaged in some way. The tender process will ensure public sector equality duty is featured and appropriately considered.

4.2 Action Plan

Use this section to set out any actions you have identified to improve data, mitigate issues, or maximise opportunities etc. If an action is to meet the needs of a particular protected group please specify this.

Improvement / action required	Responsible Officer	Timescale
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Improvement / action required	Responsible Officer	Timescale
Develop future EQIA if decision to progress with proposals to support BAU functions or activities.	Gavin Arbuckle	No set timeline
Ensure clear roles / accountability re. emerging accessibility issues with external provider	Gavin Arbuckle	No set timeline

4.3 How will the impact of your proposal and actions be measured?

How will you know if you have been successful? Once the activity has been implemented this equality impact assessment should be periodically reviewed to make sure your changes have been effective your approach is still appropriate.

Service KPIs to be confirmed

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: <i>Gavin Arbuckle (Acting Digital Transformation Director)</i>
Date: 04/03/2022	Date: 07/03/2022

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.