

Equality Impact Assessment [version 2.12]



Title: Directory of Services Recommissioning	
<input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function <input checked="" 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: People	Lead Officer name: Paul Housden
Service Area: Adult Social Care	Lead Officer role: Transformation and Commissioning 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.

The proposal is that a new Directory of services be commissioned which will replace and build upon the current Directory of services known as Well Aware. This will be achieved over the course of several months beginning in April 2024 and concluded by latest end of March 2025.

Well Aware is the Directory of Services in use at this time and the contract for this has been held in one form or another since 2006. Well Aware is a web-based search engine that allows both citizens and professionals supporting them to find care and support services, community groups, education and training opportunities and events that are available in their own localities.

This service is currently joint funded by Bristol City Council, South Gloucestershire Council and Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board. (BNSSG ICB).

Unfortunately, over time, the accuracy of the data on the platform has become eroded and, in many cases, not kept up to date, the feedback from users is that it is difficult to navigate and does not often produce positive results for those trying to access information. We also have limited information on the users of wellaware.

A new service will be designed that will be more accessible, more accurate, easier to use and is an opportunity to introduce a jointly commissioned, cross-authority solution for both Adult Social Care and Health across the area. We will need to consult with Procurement colleagues to find the most appropriate route to market for this exercise.

1.2 Who will the proposal have the potential to affect?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bristol City Council workforce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service users	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The wider community
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commissioned services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City partners / Stakeholder organisations	
Additional comments: This service is available to anyone with internet access and is web-based so is a form of "open data." It is free at source and does not require membership or log-in details to access.		

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.

Yes **No** [please select]

Yes – in theory closing the Well Aware Directory of Services would have a negative impact across all service users/citizens within Bristol and South Gloucestershire, however this is entirely mitigated by having a replacement service that will be better designed and more accessible to all user groups.

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: [How we measure equality and diversity \(bristol.gov.uk\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/what-we-do/equality-and-diversity)

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 - do not forget to benchmark to the local population where appropriate. Links to available data and reports are here [Data, statistics and intelligence \(sharepoint.com\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/what-we-do/equality-and-diversity). See also: [Bristol Open Data \(Quality of Life, Census etc.\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/what-we-do/equality-and-diversity); [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/what-we-do/equality-and-diversity); [Ward Statistical Profiles](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/what-we-do/equality-and-diversity).

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 \(sharepoint.com\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/what-we-do/equality-and-diversity) 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](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/what-we-do/equality-and-diversity) and [Stress Risk Assessment](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/what-we-do/equality-and-diversity)

Data / Evidence Source [Include a reference where known]	Summary of what this tells us
2021 Census Profile for areas in England and Wales - Nomis (nomisweb.co.uk)	General population data for Bristol based on 2021 census
Care Act 2014 (legislation.gov.uk)	A local authority must establish and maintain a service for providing people in its area with information and advice relating to care and support for adults and support for carers.
Internet users - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)	In Bristol 94.7% of adults (347,000 people) recently used the internet (i.e. used within the last 3 months)
Office for National Statistics data: www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/internetusers	Nationally, internet usage in 2020 (where internet was used within last 3 months) amongst persons aged 16 and over is highest for in the younger age groups and then gradually decreases as the age group increases.

	However, it is amongst those above 75 years that the biggest increase in internet usage has been recorded, from 39.3% in 2014 to 62.1% in 2020, an increase of 58%.
ONS Internet Users coverage, release date 6th April 2021 https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/internetusers	Nationally, internet usage is lowest amongst disabled people, where 14.9% have not used the internet in 2020. This rate is half that of 6 years ago with recent usage rates increasing year on year.
ONS Internet Users coverage, release date 6th April 2021 https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/internetusers	Nationally, there is little difference by ethnic group, with all groups having internet usage over 90%, with the exception of the Bangladeshi ethnic group where usage was lowest at 87.8%
Quality of life in Bristol	According to the 2021/22 Bristol Quality of Life (QoL) survey, 96.1% of residents have access to the internet at home. However, this is lower for residents who live in the 10% most deprived areas (91.3%). By ward the highest access rates are in Ashley (99.4%) and Windmill Hill (99.4%) and the lowest are in Hartcliffe & Withywood (87.2%) and Filwood (89.1%).
JSNA 2020/21 - Internet Connectivity (bristol.gov.uk)	For those who “lack the skills or confidence to use the internet” (Bristol average 5.0%), significantly more Older people aged 65+ (17.7%), Disabled people (17%), Full-time carers (11.7%) and Christians (9.8%) are affected.
2023 Well Aware Survey Analysis ¹	The Well Aware Directory of Services in its current format does not meet the needs or expectations of the majority of its users.
2023/2024 Wellaware Contract Monitoring information	Data collection from the provider is poor with a lot of information regarding users protected characteristics not collected. In 2023/24 only two protected characteristics were recorded, Disability and gender. The highest reported disability accessing Wellaware include, 29% of people accessing Wellaware have a long term condition, followed by 26% Mental Impairment and 26% Physical Impairment. 54% of contacts were from women with 31% being from men and 13% preferring not to say.
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 type="checkbox"/> Gender Reassignment
<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage and Civil Partnership	<input 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 do not have enough information about some equality groups, include an equality action to find out in section 4.2 below. This does not mean that you cannot 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.

¹ [Well Aware Survey Analysis 10.02.23](#)

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.

There is currently a shortage of information relating to the 5% of the Bristol population who “lack the skills or confidence to use the internet”. Under the Well Aware service this group of citizens were supported by a non-digital option. (A telephone helpline where the caller was assisted by an operator who would conduct the service search on their behalf). It would be useful to have more information on who these people are, where they reside etc., Having a non-digital option for the new service will be critical to ensuring that no-one is disadvantaged. More work will be done as part of the Action Plan to investigate accessing this information.

We have limited data on who currently uses the service, as stated above. Due to this we have had to make assumptions on the protected characteristics of users based on national and local data sets.

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

You will 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.

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 a change process 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.

A recent survey was conducted with “professional” users of the Well Aware DOS – Care Management and Brokerage (practitioners and brokers) and community-based support, advice and guidance workers attached to our VCSE partners within communities.

The headline results of this survey were that the current format of Well Aware was not accessible or easy to use and that information contained within it was out of date, inaccurate or misleading.

As part of the analysis and planning stages for this process we intend to engage with relevant stakeholders including the current provider, VCSE organisations, equality groups, internal teams such as Communities and Neighbourhoods, Data Protection, IT, South Gloucestershire Council and investigate alternative models as used by other comparable local authorities. We will do this through stakeholder focus groups, beta testing, and a questionnaire. Alternative models will be investigated by the process of benchmarking against the Core Cities and other local authorities who are delivering a successful model of DOS. These are detailed in the “Action Plan” section below.

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 are 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.

Joint meetings between all partners specifically South Gloucestershire, will continue during the development of the new proposed DOS. We will further communicate our plans through a variety of service user groups such as the Equalities Forum, The Learning Disability/Autism Forum, Diverse Providers Forum and BCC Internal Staff Briefings. Full communications will be available through the BCC public facing website as well as on The Source.

It is proposed that we will also conduct “beta testing” of any new platform to ensure accessibility to all user groups.

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 \(EqIA\) \(sharepoint.com\)](https://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 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)	
<p>The planned recommissioning of the DOS which will offer an updated, more reliable, more efficient service mitigates the change from Well Aware to a new service. This new service will be in place and ready to take over from Well Aware before the closure of the existing platform.</p> <p>The new social care directory will be specifically developed to cover both social care and community-based support services at a more specialised locality level and will be formatted not only to be simpler to use but also to offer a dual service covering enquiries from the public as well as a more specific service for “professional” users. In the future we want to broaden the scope of the DOS to potentially include Children's Services, the SEND offer and incorporate using API's other directories currently in use around the City.</p> <p>The new contract is set to take over seamlessly from the old one. We have a plan in place to keep all stakeholders fully advised as the process progresses and closer to the date of changeover, we will advertise on both the current well aware website and the Council's public facing web pages. We do not envisage any disruption and actively plan to increase traffic to the Directory of Services platform to prevent, reduce and delay the need for long term care and support and to focus on protected characteristic that differ from comparative data sets.</p>	
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	The proposal is for a more user friendly, intuitive web-based platform that will be easier to use for those groups who may be digitally challenged. Older people more generally tend to be most excluded when it comes to SMART technology however, statistics show that this is improving over time. For those who “lack the skills or confidence to use the internet” (Bristol average 5.0%), significantly more Older people aged 65+ (17.7%), are affected. Wellaware contract monitoring information from 2023/24 does not record age of service user. The contract monitoring information does indicate that 29% of users have a long term condition and 26% of users have a physical impairment. We can infer from this that users are likely to be Older.
Mitigations:	See above
Disability	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	Internet usage is lowest amongst disabled people, where 14.9% did not use the internet in 2020. This rate is half that of 6 years ago with recent usage rates increasing year on year. We will work with partners such as WECIL to ensure that this group of citizens are enabled to make use of the new service. For those who “lack the skills or confidence to use the internet” (Bristol average 5.0%), significantly Disabled people (17%), are affected.
	The Wellaware contract monitoring information from 2023/24 records service user Disability. The contract monitoring information indicates that 29% of users have a long

	term condition, 26% of users have a physical impairment and 26% of users have a mental impairment. The monitoring information does not record other Disabilities such as Learning Disability. This indicates that some people with specific Disabilities are either not accessing the service or the information is not being recorded. If it is the latter, then there may be a potential impact.
Mitigations:	See above
Sex	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	Wellaware contract monitoring information from 2023/24 records the sex of service user. The contract monitoring information does indicate that 54% of users are Women and 31% of users are Men. The proportion of Women accessing the service is higher than Census 2021 data (50.4%). The proportion of Men accessing the service is significantly lower than Census 2021 data 49.6%. This indicates that more Women could be impacted by the service change. This data also indicates that the current service does not attract or is not accessible to men.
Mitigations:	
Sexual orientation	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	Lack of data on this protected characteristic to understand the impact
Mitigations:	Ensure future service specification ensure all protected characteristics are recorded for the future contract
Pregnancy / Maternity	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	Lack of data on this protected characteristic to understand the impact
Mitigations:	Ensure future service specification ensure all protected characteristics are recorded for the future contract
Gender reassignment	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	Lack of data on this protected characteristic to understand the impact
Mitigations:	Ensure future service specification ensure all protected characteristics are recorded for the future contract
Race	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	Lack of data on this protected characteristic to understand the impact
Mitigations:	Ensure future service specification ensure all protected characteristics are recorded for the future contract
Religion or Belief	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	Lack of data on this protected characteristic to understand the impact
Mitigations:	Ensure future service specification ensure all protected characteristics are recorded for the future contract
Marriage & civil partnership	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	Lack of data on this protected characteristic to understand the impact
Mitigations:	Ensure future service specification ensure all protected characteristics are recorded for the future contract
OTHER RELEVANT CHARACTERISTICS	
Socio-Economic (deprivation)	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	96.1% of residents have access to the internet at home. However, this is lower for residents who live in the 10% most deprived areas (91.3%). By ward the lowest rates of access are in Hartcliffe & Withywood (87.2%) and Filwood (89.1%).
Mitigations:	See above
Carers	Does your analysis indicate a disproportionate impact? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Potential impacts:	Lack of data on this protected characteristic to understand the impact. The Wellaware contract monitoring information 2023/24 indicates a number of qualitative case studies. These case studies provide qualitative insight into peoples experience of the service. A number of case studies are from people who are carers to people who draw upon care and support. This indicates that this is a service that is accessed and used by some carers in the City.

Mitigations:	Ensure future service specification ensure all protected characteristics are recorded for the future contract. Ensure that the new supplier of the Directory of Services works in partnership with local carers support organisations to promote and advertise the new service.
Other groups [Please add additional rows below to detail the impact for any other relevant groups as appropriate e.g. asylum seekers and refugees; care experienced; homelessness; armed forces personnel and veterans]	
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 do not.
- ✓ Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The recommissioning of the Directory of Services will result in the provision of a better service for all citizens. Having a simpler more targeted service will provide a more accessible directory that will enable users to achieve far greater success in sourcing the information and advice that they need to satisfy their care and support needs. The proposed service will be able to better identify service user demand and supply of services ensuring that gaps are quickly identified and addressed, monitoring will be more robust ensuring any issues that arise are dealt with quickly and efficiently and solutions developed in partnership with South Gloucestershire colleagues and VCSE partners.

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 intention to have a more effective, user-friendly interface through the new Directory of Services, will improve on citizen experience of the DOS and mitigate any concern around the switch from the previous service

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

Having a simpler to use Directory will offer a far more effective and satisfying user experience for everyone and ensure that our PSE duty is fulfilled in relation to people with protected characteristics being able to source more relevant services for themselves or the people they care for. It should take less time and cause less frustration than the current provision does.

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
Stakeholder Engagement will comprise of Focus Groups, Beta Testing and Questionnaires during the “set up” phase	Viacheslav Pustovalov	During Implementation Oct 24 – March 25

Improvement / action required	Responsible Officer	Timescale
Benchmarking will take place to compare how our Core City authorities achieve their aim via a DOS	Viacheslav Pustovalov	May-July 2024
Ensure there is a suitable user feedback process (potentially a user forum) to regularly update on issues, barriers, etc., post service "Go Live" date.	Viacheslav Pustovalov	During Implementation Oct 24 – March 25
Obtain feedback/engagement with VCSE colleagues/community organisations re relevance of new platform and accuracy of data	Viacheslav Pustovalov	During Implementation Oct 24 – March 25
Set Up new contract monitoring arrangements with South Glos Council.	Viacheslav Pustovalov	June 2024
Draw up a new SLA with more robust contract monitoring requirements and expectations of new provider.	Viacheslav Pustovalov	June 2024
Clear communications to all stakeholders during Commissioning process and implementation of new service	Viacheslav Pustovalov	June 2024 - March 2025
Market Engagement event pre tender.	Viacheslav Pustovalov	July 2024

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.

We will conduct robust service performance monitoring meetings with partners to ensure that we are reaching as many people as possible. We also plan to implement more regular service-user satisfaction feedback processes such as surveys and engage with citizens as a locality level to ensure that the alternative platform is indeed meeting the needs of the communities that it serves.

Step 5: Review

The Equality and Inclusion Team need at least five working days to comment and feedback on your EqIA. EqIA 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 Director².

<p>Equality and Inclusion Team Review: <i>Reviewed by Equality and Inclusion Team</i></p>	<p>Director Sign-Off: </p>
<p>Date: 15/05/2024</p>	<p>Date: 17/06/2024</p>

² 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.