



Equality Impact Assessment

Preliminary assessment form v5 / 2013

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The preliminary impact assessment is a quick and easy screening process. It should:

- identify those policies, projects, services, functions or strategies which require a full EIA by looking at:
 - negative, positive or no impact on any of the equality groups
 - opportunity to promote equality for the equality groups
 - data / feedback
- prioritise if and when a full EIA should be completed
- justify reasons for why a full EIA is not going to be completed

Directorate:

Director of Community & communications

**Function e.g. HR,
IS, carers:**

Resources portfolio

Title of policy, service, function, project or strategy (new or old) :

Improvements to the council chamber

Type of policy, service, function, project or strategy:

- Existing
- New / proposed
- Changed

Q1 - What is the aim of your policy, service, function, project or strategy?

The Council chamber has not had any improvements since 2010 so we are looking to make enhancements to the chamber to ensure all who wish to do so will be able to watch the council meetings online or in the chamber itself.

Overall, the recommended improvements to the Council Chamber will make meetings more accessible, will prepare the Chamber for future opportunities and deliver efficiencies and income.

Q2 - Who is this policy, service, function, project or strategy going to benefit or have a detrimental effect on and how?

The people who will benefit from the improvements will be anyone who wishes to watch the meetings online or within the chamber.

With these improvements it should also make the experience better for people with disabilities especially those with a hearing impairment or with people with a mobility issue including wheelchair users.

The council chamber resides in the Portsmouth Guildhall which is an old building which presents challenges in making it accessible for all including disabled people who may be wheelchair users or people with a hearing impairment for example.

The public gallery in the council chamber is not very accessible for wheelchair users although they can access the public gallery, it is only really big enough for a manual wheelchair which restricts the access for people with electric wheelchairs. In the gallery there are no specific spaces for wheelchair users to sit so they are normally situated by the door which in itself is difficult to open as its a double door and there is not enough space for someone in a wheelchair to use only one leaf of the door to pass through that Part M of the Building Regulations recommends.

Because of this we have made the provision that people with mobility difficulties or wheelchair users are now permitted to actually sit in the council chamber so they won't need to experience the issues with accessing the public gallery.

At present the council have been webcasting the council meetings to allow people to watch the meetings as part of the councils commitment to transparency. Currently this is managed via a fixed camera that is set up at the start of each meeting and is manually over-ridden as appropriate at adjournments and for exempt items.

The current system is unable to manage the flow of the meeting in terms of tracking the agenda and presenting related items to the audience, including amendments. Nor can it track the speaker or inform the audience of whom the speaker is.

In order to make the meetings more transparent and easier to engage with, the installation of new cameras linked to the recording system and eventually our Mod-Gov (document) system is recommended. This improvement actually means is the camera's will be zoomed on the person speaking at that time this could help people who lip read because at the present time it is difficult to see who or what is being spoken because of the one static camera.

The sound at the moment is poor quality and interrupted sound and recording and this impacts on accessibility. With the enhanced AV system the sound will be much clearer so will enable people to hear better especially those who may be older or have a slight hearing impairment but also make it clearer for blind people to listen to the meetings.

There is already an induction loop installed in the chamber so there will be no change to this facility that is helpful to people that wear hearing aids.

In the Council chamber there are no real presentation tools available for when people make presentations, it is recommended that a retractable screen is installed. This will make it easier for people to see in the chamber as well as people in the public gallery.

The general lighting of the Chamber is poor so the environment is not helpful for people with a vision impairment. As this core lighting is in the ceiling and requires the use of a scaffold platform to replace or fix the problems, it is recommended that we take the opportunity to replace the lighting with the more efficient and longer-lasting LED lighting as well as improving the lighting for people with a vision impairment not necessarily blind people.

Q3 - Thinking about each group below, does, or could the policy, service, function, project or strategy have a negative impact on members of the equality groups below?

Group	Negative	Positive / no impact	Unclear
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transgender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other excluded groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If the answer is "negative" or "unclear" consider doing a full EIA

Q4 - Does, or could the policy, service, function, project or strategy help to promote equality for members of the equality groups?

Group	Yes	No	Unclear
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Age	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disability	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Race	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transgender	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Religion or belief	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pregnancy or maternity	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other excluded groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If the answer is "no" or "unclear" consider doing a full EIA

Q5 - Do you have any feedback data from the equality groups that influences, affects or shapes this policy, service, function, project or strategy?

Group	Yes	No	Unclear
Age	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disability	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Race	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transgender	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Religion or belief	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other excluded groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If the answer is "no" or "unclear" consider doing a full EIA

Q6 - Using the assessments in questions 3, 4 and 5 should a full assessment be carried out on this policy, service, function or strategy?

yes No

Q7 - How have you come to this decision?

The Guildhall remains the property of Portsmouth City Council but is run by the Portsmouth Cultural Trust, over the years there have been many improvements to the rest of the building including induction loops, a raised area in the main auditorium but not the council chamber so this is a real opportunity to make this area more accessible for all and where possible we have had to make reasonable adjustments due to being a listed building, we are limited to changes we can make especially structural changes. This is the reason why for allowing wheelchair users and people with a mobility issue to sit in the chamber itself.

Making these improvements will not have a detrimental impact on any of the protected characteristics as described under the Equality Act 2010, these changes will only improve the experience for people who wish to listen and watch the council meetings and will definitely improve the accessibility for disabled and older people.

A lot of the recommendations regarding the electrical equipment have been suggested by professional companies as they are the experts in their field so they understand the challenges we have to ensure all people including disabled people can access these meeting through which communication channel they choose whether its attending the meeting or watching it online.

A consultation has not been undertaken due to the nature of the improvements, they are mainly sound and webcasting equipment that is being proposed so there were not any options we could suggest in a consultation for people to opt for as its more about the equipment rather than a change to a service, function etc. but obviously over the coming months once installed feedback will be taken on board and reviewed where appropriately.

If you have to complete a full EIA please contact the Equalities and diversity team if you require help
Tel: 023 9283 4789 or email:equalities@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Q8 - Who was involved in the EIA?

Gina Perryman

This EIA has been approved by: Louise Wilders

Contact number: 023 9268 8545

Date:

06/03/17

Please email a copy of your completed EIA to the Equality and diversity team. We will contact you with any comments or queries about your preliminary EIA.

Telephone: 023 9283 4789

Email: equalities@portsmouthcc.gov.uk