Equality Analysis

Consultation

• Details of function, policy, procedure or service:	
Title of what is being assessed: **Customer Access Strategy - Public Consultation Findings**	
Is it a new or revised function, policy, procedure or service? **Revision to existing services**	
Department and Section: **All**	
Date assessment completed: **June 2016**	
• Names and roles of officers completing this assessment:	
Lead officer	Katherine Lyon Head of Customer Service & Transformation Capita Local Government
Stakeholder groups	Delivery Unit Directors, Commissioning Directors
Representative from internal stakeholders	Kari Manovitch, Head of Customer Strategy & Programmes
	Members of Customer & Information Management Board and Strategic Commissioning Board
Representative from external stakeholders	None at this stage
• Full description of function, policy, procedure or service:	

Please describe the aims and objectives of the function, policy, procedure or service

The Customer Access Strategy 'CAS' is a corporate strategy to ensure the Council's agreed vision for customer services up to the period 2020 is achieved. The Draft was approved subject to public consultation, which was completed in March 2016. The EIA was initially produced during the development of the CAS. It has now been updated as a result of the consultation, the analysis of the consultation against the strategy key proposals contained within the CAS, and the work to develop the detailed Digital inclusion Strategy (due to be published in sep 2016).

A key aim of the strategy is to widen Customer Access to fully incorporate developments in digital technology, so that *access can be provided for 80% of interactions via on-line and digital methods*. Traditional telephone contact is changing, to take advantage of digital service delivery. This strategy will enable the telephone contact centre to support on-line access and adopt a multi-channel approach that will assist people accessing services in the most appropriate manner for their issue and circumstances. This requires improvements being made to the quality of the website's self-service facilities, recognising that over 82% (as evidenced from national and local data sets) of the residents of Barnet already have access to the internet.

The vision for customer services in 2020 is to:

- Ensure that the majority of customer access is via digital means i.e. 'digital by default', whilst continuing to provide assisted digital or access to telephone and face to face services where required by the service.

- Support all residents who need additional support and access via traditional channels, including assisting people to go on-line or supporting them via phone or face to face as appropriate to their needs.

- Ensure that customers find their journey from service request to fulfilment of service needs efficient and effective, with resolution provided at the earliest opportunity.

- Ensure that the focus is on quality of service delivery, customer satisfaction, and advocacy for those needing additional support.

- Ensure that customers receive a high quality personalised service, including relevant services from partners.

- Ensure that customers use the MyAccount on-line to link up their service requests and information at a local and personal level, or be supported by telephone and face to face services to access services appropriate to their needs.

- Support residents being connected to the community, not just council services. Customer Services will take a proactive part in supporting this through promoting services that may be of interest/support.

The principle aim is to shift customer services contracts from being predominantly phone based (i.e. currently approx 80% of contact is by phone), to on-line services by 2020. However, that is an ambitious target and requires the key proposals of the CAS to be incorporated into service planning priorities and the IT strategy; it also requires a total focus on the customer experience and end to end service delivery customer satisfaction, and end-to end digital delivery. It also requires on-going development and support for the customer service infrastructure supporting those digitally excluded, or with issues that cannot be resolved via digital on-line approaches.

The conclusion from the consultation is that the key proposals detailed in the CAS support the

strategy for moving to a digital service delivery approach, and the aim for 80% on-line contacts by 2020 is reasonable, as the majority of respondents were active users of on-line services. However, it is noted that in order to achieve the vision for moving services on-line there must be adequate support for those unable to go on-line.

- Whilst 'digital by default' is the council's vision for a range of services where it would be appropriate to provide them as such, the Committee was understandably concerned that this would not work for all residents and there needed to be on-going support for those who are 'digitally excluded'.
- This was supported by the consultation, which sets out that the majority of respondents are able to access the internet and would be willing and keen to do so for Council services, despite a significant proportion of respondents who cannot access the internet or have low confidence. Whilst this report includes the principles for addressing digital exclusion, a detailed Digital Inclusion Strategy is required to ensure a comprehensive plan is developed to address these concerns.
- As such, a detailed Digital Inclusion Strategy is being developed which sets out how the council will ensure that people who do not have access to, or do not have the ability to use, web based services will be continue to be supported.
- The full report will be brought back to the Committee in October and will address issues such as what additional training & support can be provided, for example, through working with partner organisations and accessing funding sources for disadvantaged groups.

Various studies have identified that between 18-25% of people in Barnet are digitally excluded, 40% are high users of the internet, 40% moderate users of the internet. Therefore, whilst 80% use the internet, of the 40% who are moderate users the internet there maybe one or more barriers to fully maximising on-line services. These barriers include (but are limited to) financial, employment, social/confidence skill or IT skill issues.

This conclusion requires the CAS to be supported by mitigating actions, to support the 20% who are digitally excluded, and the 40% who are not as confident or well resourced to take advantage of all the opportunities the internet provides.

It is clear that there is a need for assisted digital and a continued need for a telephone customer service centre to meet the needs of the 20% who are unlikely to be able to fully access services on-line by 2020. The face to face service needs to develop to both support self-service and assisted digital, whilst meeting the needs of the services and those for whom only face to face provides access to services e.g. certain disabilities may limit phone and on-line access.

This EIA addresses those specific concerns, and will be further supported by the more detailed Digital Inclusion Strategy that will provide the specific actions to underpin mitigations and approaches that services need to adopt in order to achieve the aims set out in the CAS. The Digital Inclusion Strategy is being developed as part of the Customer Transformation programme, and will be presented in September 2016.

The services currently accessed via customer services provision is show in the table below
Table 1 - Matrix of services & current access options

Service	Telephone	Face to Face - Barnet House	Face to Face - Burnt Oak Library	Face to Face – bespoke
Customer services provision				

General enquiries	X	X	X	
Council tax & council tax support	X	X	X	
Housing benefits	X	X	X	X[1]
Street-based services (street cleansing, refuse & recycling, green spaces, trees, grounds maintenance)	X			
Parking	X			
Street Lighting	X			
Assisted Travel (freedom passes & blue badges)	X			
Highways (roads & pavements)	X			
Licensing, environmental health, pest control, noise & nuisance, trading standards	X			
Planning	X	X		
Registrars	X	X		X[2]
School admissions	X			
Libraries	X			X
Families and Young Peoples' Information	X			
Youth Services	X			
Children's Social Care	X	X		
Adult Social Care	X			
Housing tenants & leaseholder services	X	X		
Housing advice, housing options, homelessness	X	X		
BOOST – multiagency jobs assistance			X	
Referral-only services				
Welfare reform assistance		X		
Family services (including child protection)		X		
Special Educational Need services		X		

Summary of the approach to consultation:

The public consultation ran from 18 January 2016 to 14 March 2016. The consultation consisted of an online survey which was published on Engage Barnet. Paper copies were available at the Council's two face to face centres: Barnet House and Burnt Oak Library and Customer Service Centre. Easy-read versions were available on request. Posters to advertise the consultation were

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[1] Housing benefits claimants can ask libraries staff for assistance with filling out an application on-line
[2] The main Registrars office is in Burnt Oak, a separate location to the library

put up in various locations:

- North Finchley and Golders Green Libraries
- Burnt Oak Registration and Nationality Service
- Burnt Oak Library and Customer Service Centre
- Barnet House

The consultation was advertised through:

- An article in the CommUNITY Barnet newsletter,
- An email to the Communities Together Network,
- An email to elected Members,
- An article in the School Circular,
- A press release,
- An article in the Partnership Board Monthly Update,
- An email to the Barnet Borough Resilience Forum,
- An article on the Barnet Homes web page, and
- Social media coverage (Twitter and Facebook)

In total, 119 surveys were completed (69 online responses and 50 paper responses). This has then been further analysed, and this analysis has identified a number of under and overrepresented groups through this survey in comparison to the overall demographic of Barnet. Those in age groups under the age of 34 were underrepresented whereas those between 35 and 74 are overrepresented in the survey. The 75+ age group is underrepresented in these results.

Those from White, Asian, or Mixed ethnicities were underrepresented; whereas those from Black ethnic backgrounds were significantly overrepresented; those whose ethnicity is 'Other' were also overrepresented in the survey.

Respondents with a disability were significantly more represented in comparison to the general population of Barnet; there was an overrepresentation of female respondents and male respondents were underrepresented in the survey.

This Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) outlines four of the protected characteristic groups that could potentially be negatively impacted; pregnant/maternity leave; ethnicity; disability; and age. Although there is not data on pregnancy and maternity leave on a borough-wide level, of those who completed the survey 2% responded that they were pregnant, and 3% responded that they were currently on maternity leave. It is noted in this EIA that the assessment and actions in relation to the relocation of services away from Barnet House that may negatively impact on those who are pregnant or on maternity leave are the same as have been identified for the older population.
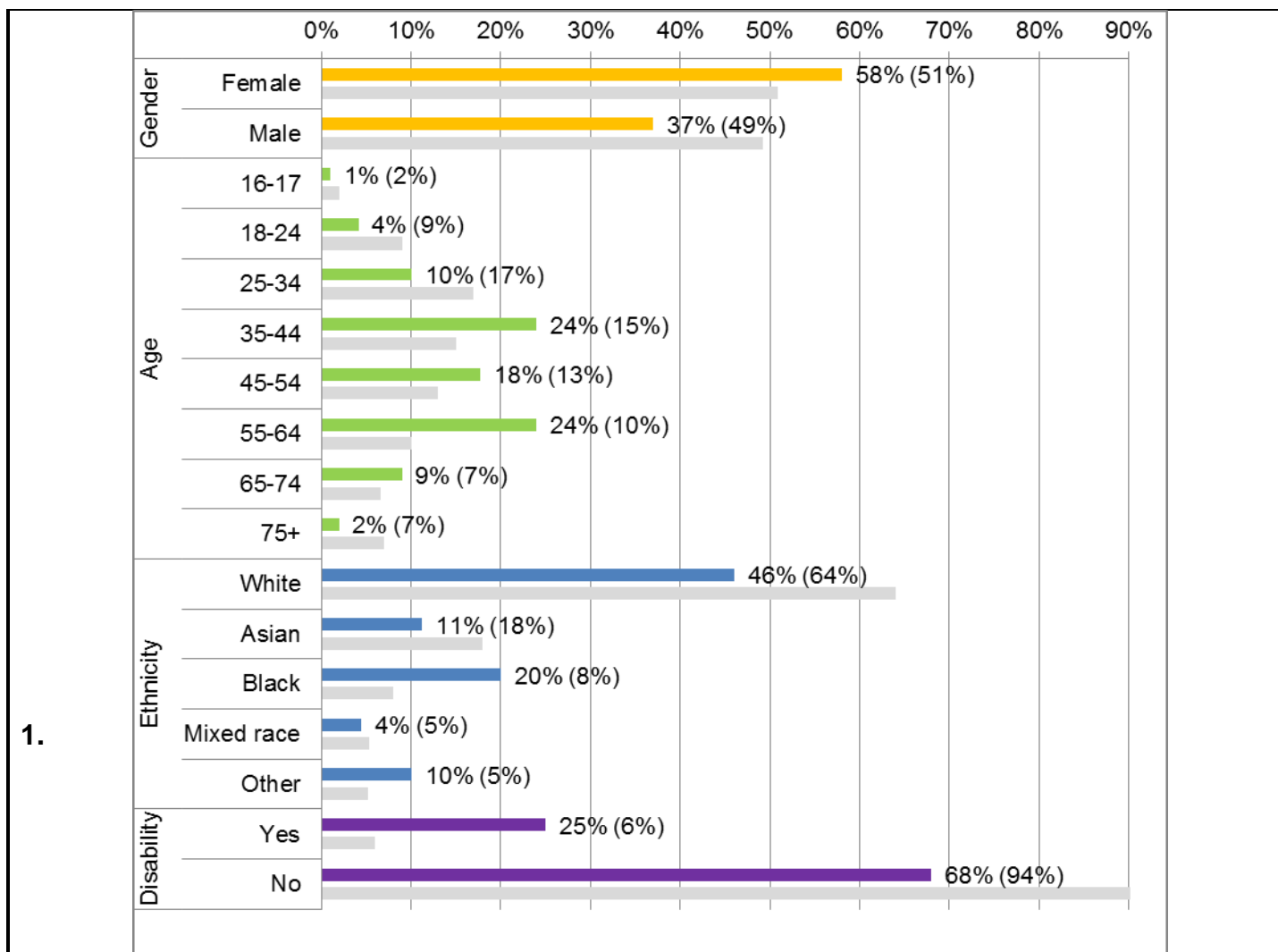
Ethnicity is noted in this EIA as being impacted by the proposals because those whose first language is not English may have traditionally preferred face to face options to communicate effectively. However, the CAS gives an opportunity to better support people with language barriers as on-line services are found to be easier for non-English speakers who are IT/digital literate. It is further noted that in the case of this survey, none of the ethnic groups were representative of the general Barnet population due to a key proportion of Asian, White, and Mixed ethnic backgrounds being underrepresented.

In terms of disability, disabled residents were overrepresented in comparison to the Barnet baseline in the results of the survey.

The survey under-represented people over 75. Therefore, whilst 75% of the survey had access to the internet, 25% did not. Focus will need to be put on the 75+ age group to ensure engagement

and that their views are taken into account. Statistically, the older population in Barnet are more likely to be digitally excluded, and Barnet customer insight data supports the findings that in the most digitally excluded the highest grouping were older people over 75.

The findings of the consultation are detailed in section 4 below, it recommends a proactive approach to digital exclusion, continued support and development of telephone and targeted face to face services. This consultation further support the need for a more detailed Digital Inclusion Strategy to mitigate the risks of directing customers to self service and on-line /digital channels, and to address the concerns and issues of those most likely to be digitally excluded, and to provide opportunities for people who would like to go on-line and currently cannot do so.

1.

Gender	Female	58% (51%)
	Male	37% (49%)
Age	16-17	1% (2%)
	18-24	4% (9%)
	25-34	10% (17%)
	35-44	24% (15%)
	45-54	18% (13%)
	55-64	24% (10%)
	65-74	9% (7%)
	75+	2% (7%)
Ethnicity	White	46% (64%)
	Asian	11% (18%)
	Black	20% (8%)
	Mixed race	4% (5%)
	Other	10% (5%)
Disability	Yes	25% (6%)
	No	68% (94%)

Assessing the impact of making some services self-service only

The strategy suggests the following services as pilots for making the web or automated telephony the only form of access, chosen because they are high volume transactions that should be straightforward, where customer services staff intervention can add little value if an end-to-end digital solution is provided.:

- Reporting highways/street related issues

- License applications for businesses

- Parking permits & appeals

- New bins and waste collections

- Pitch bookings

- Library Membership

- School admissions (excluding in year transfers)

- Schools information

It should be noted that the proposed strategy is not to restrict access to the phone for personal care and welfare services such as social care.

The strategy is clear that before this can be implemented, a full end-to-end customer journey

mapping exercise must be undertaken, and the service redesigned to ensure that the new digital only solutions are fully implemented. The proposed implementation plan for self-service options (with assisted digital for those needing it) will be detailed in the Customer Transformation business case.

The table below shows that the use phone is dominant across all customer segments, despite the high level of digital capability amongst Barnet residents.
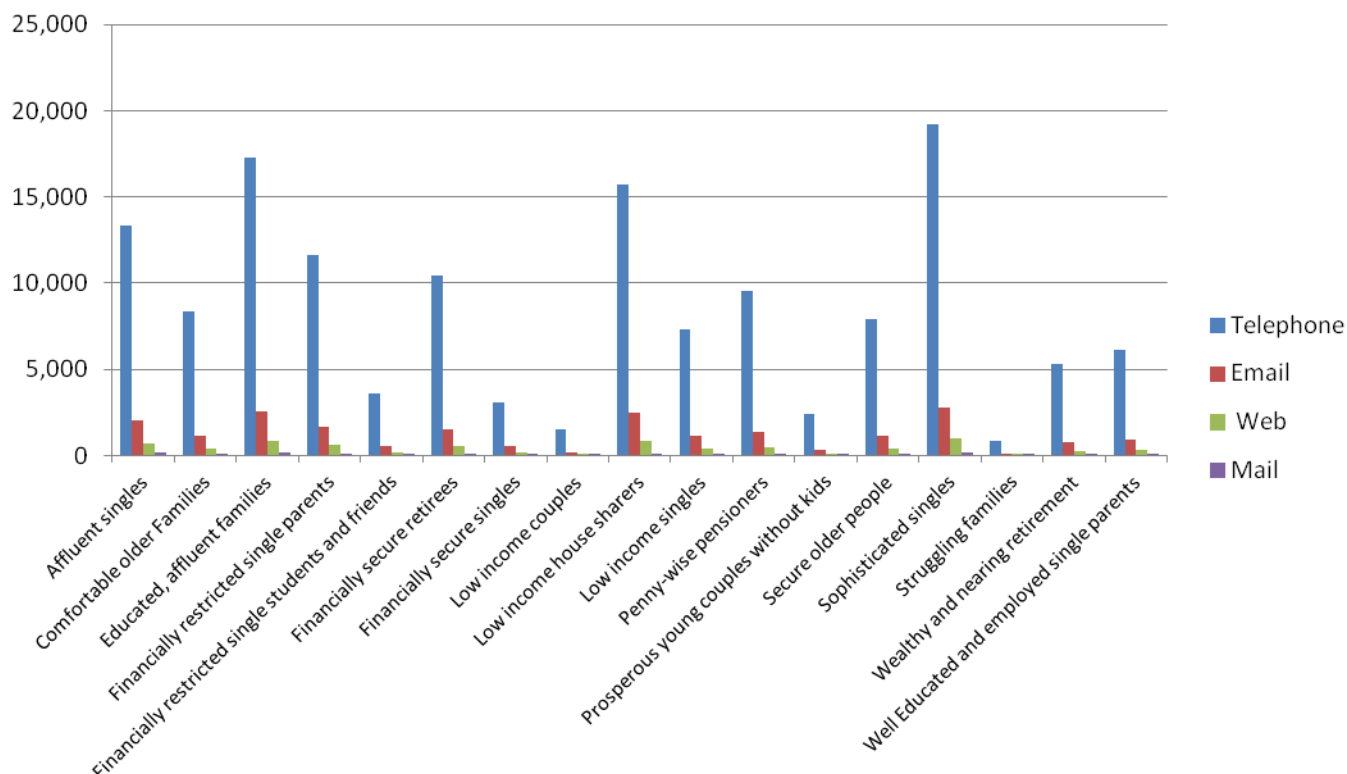
Web satisfaction scores are considerably below telephone and face to face satisfaction score, and there is a major preference in using the phone when accessing Barnet's services. Whilst the website satisfaction scores have improved in recent months to 45%, it is clear that significant improvement is needed in the infrastructure before people will have confidence in using the council's website; and to use it as a first preference. This requires an improvement in the design of on-line services to meet customer needs and expectations of a digital service (compared with experiences in on-line banking, retail and services) is a key theme in the strategy. The CAS notes that the majority of Barnet residents use the web for other services (e.g. flights, online shopping etc.) and therefore would potentially use the web for council services if they had confidence in it and it was easy to find what they wanted.

The CAS is clear that the key group impacted by the proposals (i.e. To make some services self-service only) will be those that are deemed to be digitally excluded. The strategy proposes that a detailed Digital Inclusion Strategy is agreed before these changes are implemented and that there are services to support those who are unable to use the improved self-service methods.

This EIA notes that the CAS has included a number of key proposals to mitigate the risks of people not being able to go on-line.

- The principle mitigation is the on-going development of the telephone contact centre, and the proposal to maximise the benefits of the CSG infrastructure for telephony base customer services and contacts.
- The CSG already offers a service for vulnerable customers and this service will need to be developed as moving 80% of contacts on-line will increase the proportion of customer

advocacy cases received by the telephone contact centre at Coventry. For example, once customers who are digitally excluded are identified, one option would be to encourage customers to register one or more phone number which the system would recognise when they phoned, directing them to the enhanced service with specially trained advisors.

- Service design will take into account those customers who will go on-line if it is simple to use and is accessible from a touch-screen device such as a tablet / ipad / large smartphone.
- Face to face services will be provided where needed to deliver the service, or where the personal circumstances require face to face.
- In addition, automated telephony will be utilised in addition to web self-service.
- The Digital Inclusion Strategy will further identify specific projects to support those who would benefit from going on-line but are not currently able.

The above actions specifically focus on providing support to those who are digitally excluded, or digitally limited in skills.

In addition, the work on the Digital Inclusion strategy and the consultation with Inclusion Barnet has identified a range of other organisations that are already working with Barnet residents, and that could be directed specifically to work with the excluded groups to enable more people to access the skills and technology, so that they can move from being excluded to digitally included. The actions arising from the Digital inclusion strategy will all further mitigate the risks of digital exclusion by aiming to reduce the number of people who are excluded. From the analysis conducted under the Customer Transformation programme so far, these actions are expected to include:

- Identify sources of funding. E.g. There is funding available for some excluded groups to support on-line access and IT skills, and this be further explored as part of the Digital Inclusion Strategy analysis.
- Partnership working. E.g. Age Uk has a digital literacy class which is over-subscribed.
- Staff and community digital skills. E.g. identify those staff and community volunteers who would benefit from more digital skills training, so that they in turn can support service users and support skills transfer.
- Assisted support to digital. As noted in the key proposals, telephone and face to face customer service staff have a key role to play in supporting residents gain confidence in moving to digital.
- Service design. Experience based co-design techniques will be used to ensure that on-line systems are designed and tested by those people who have least confidence to ensure the design is straight-forward, and does not required advanced digital skills to access.
- Improving resident's access. In order to access the best deals on digital devices and connectivity, specialist advice can be given to those who are excluded to access 'entry-level' devices. E.g. many people who are not on-line are over estimating the cost of an internet connection and a device, providers of devices and connections focus their marketing campaigns on the latest models and high end functionality.
- Promoting the benefits. Those who are digitally excluded and not on-line, or who are on-line but with limited skills are not always aware of the benefits that on-line banking or social media can bring. E.g. for people whose disability prevents them leaving their home, or with limited mobility can find on-line services opens up opportunities for accessing goods / services and social connections.

Therefore, the impacts for customers without internet access or with the skills to use the web will be mitigated by the above key proposals in the CAS and the actions arising from the detailed Digital Inclusion Strategy.

Internet usage in Barnet is extensively explored within the Customer Access Strategy and it shows that compared to other authorities in the UK, Barnet is classified as low probability – in terms of residents' likelihood of being digitally excluded – this is the lowest ranking in the UK.GoV system of measurement. It is estimated that around 82% of Barnet residents have access to, and the skills to use, the internet.

The table, reproduced from the strategy, also shows the growth in Smartphones in Barnet, broken down by age. It is interesting to note that the 55+ age range had a 10% increase between 2013 and 2014. It is estimated that now more people access the web via smartphones than via a laptop or PC.

Table 2 – % smartphone usage by age
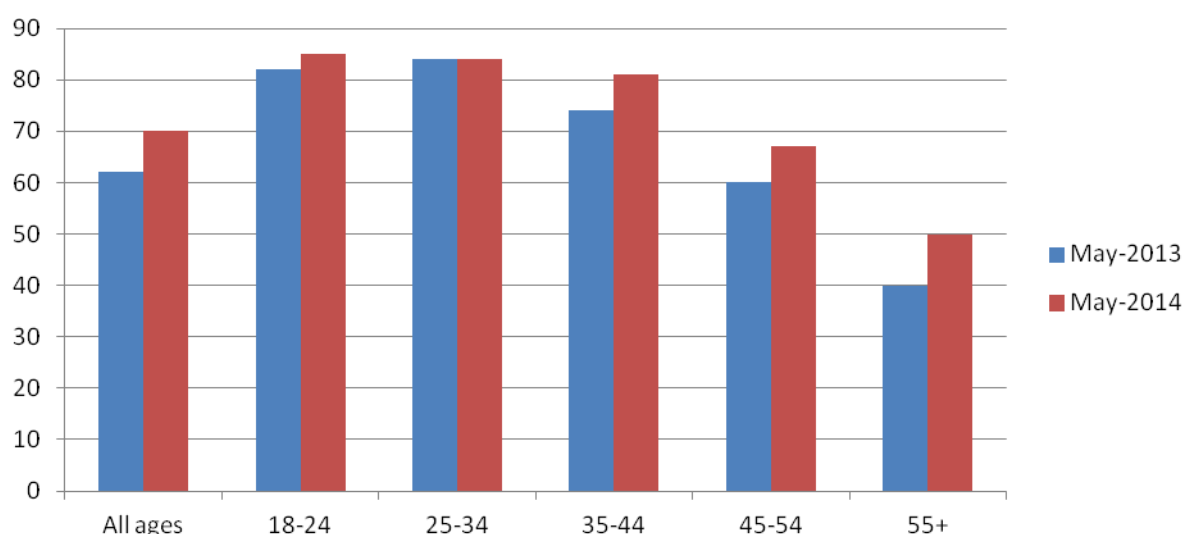
However, the strategy acknowledges that the estimated 18% of non-users are likely to be bigger users of council services than the 82% that are digitally included.

The table below shows the breakdown of likelihood of particular segments to be users of council services. Unsurprisingly the biggest group of high contact users are for benefits, with the biggest impact being on "pennywise pensioners" and "financially restricted single parents". While the strategy does propose changes to the face-to-face service for benefits via the closure of Barnet House, this is mitigated by the availability of assisted self service and document drop at initially two libraries, North Finchley and Golders Green. Customers will still have the option to visit Burnt Oak.

Table 3 - Propensity to use service by customer insight segment

High Contact

Medium Contact

Low Contact
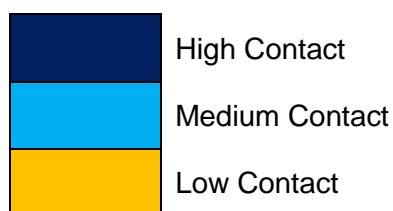
Segment	Households	Individuals	Adult Social Care	Schools	Benefits	Parking Permits	Libraries	Business Rates
Affluent Singles	9,404	17,849	light blue	light blue	light blue	dark blue	light blue	light blue
Prosperous Young Couples without Kids	1,907	3,742	light blue	light blue	light blue	light blue	dark blue	light blue
Educated, Affluent Families	14,374	38,900	light blue	dark blue	light blue	light blue	light blue	light blue
Well Educated and Employed Single Parents	4,260	5,775	light blue	orange	orange	orange	orange	orange
Sophisticated Singles	15,301	34,779	light blue	light blue	light blue	dark blue	light blue	orange
Wealthy and Nearing Retirement	4,277	8,355	light blue	light blue	light blue	orange	dark blue	light blue
Financially Secure Retirees	9,149	22,528	dark blue	light blue	light blue	orange	orange	light blue
Financially Secure Singles	2,509	2,509	light blue	light blue	orange	dark blue	light blue	dark blue
Low Income Couples	1,172	2,303	dark blue	light blue	dark blue	light blue	light blue	light blue
Low Income House Sharers	10,566	30,130	orange	light blue	light blue	light blue	light blue	light blue
Comfortable Older Families	6,568	19,582	orange	dark blue	light blue	light blue	light blue	light blue
Secure Older People	8.903	8,903	orange	light blue	orange	orange	dark blue	dark blue
Financially Restricted Single Students and Friends	2,164	5,039	light blue	light blue	dark blue	light blue	light blue	light blue
Low Income Singles	5,994	5,994	orange	light blue	light blue	light blue	orange	dark blue
Struggling Families	646	2,307	dark blue	dark blue	light blue	light blue	light blue	light blue
Financially Restricted Single Parents	7,448	12,036	light blue	orange	dark blue	light blue	orange	light blue
Penny-wise Pensioners	10,181	14,538	dark blue	light blue	dark blue	light blue	orange	light blue

2. Assessing the impact of moving service access from Barnet House to other locations

For face-to-face services, the volume of customers impacted by the closure of Barnet House is shown below as well as the expected impact and proposed mitigation.

Table 4 – Existing Volumes for Services at Barnet House

| Service	Avg Barnet House visitors a day	Nature of current visits	Proposed changes
Housing Benefits & Council Tax	150	Appointments and mandatory document provision/certification. Walk ins being reduced.	Assisted self-service, document certification and appointments to be relocated to North Finchley and Golders Green libraries. This would promote additional footfall to these libraries, and utilise existing community assets

				that are geographically close to where the existing customers live.
	Homeless and Housing Needs	65	Appointments and walk ins	Relocate appointments to the ground floor of the new Colindale HQ or a community hub subject to review. This is a more accessible location for the majority of the client group. Location of 'walk in' demand to be determined, and the proposed end to end review of this service will look at how 'walk ins' can be reduced.
	Housing Advice-Barnet Homes	35	Appointments and walk ins	Relocate appointments to the ground floor of the new Colindale HQ or a community hub subject to review. The proposed end to end review of this service will ensure an improved web presence to reduce the need for both walk in and appointment-based demand.
	Planning Office	25	Appointments and walk ins	Relocate appointments to the normal officer meeting rooms within the new Colindale HQ, and cease to offer walk ins. The need for walks ins is already reducing due to better availability of online documents.
	Registrars (Birth and Death Certificates)	20	Appointments only	Relocate appointments either to Barnet Hospital or Identify a better location for the service once a decision is made on the future of the existing office in Burnt Oak
	Family Services (child protection interviews and conferences, youth offending meetings)	7	Appointments only	Relocate appointments to the ground floor of the new Colindale HQ or community hub as determined by the new operation model for the service.
	Booked meetings	Unknown	Customer invited in for specific services e.g. SEN reviews	There are a number of meeting rooms that are booked by services for specific functions as and when needed. This will be captured by the Colindale HQ project

It is recognised that some people use face-to-face services as a result of having English as a second language. The latest data for Barnet, showing a ward by ward breakdown of the number of households, is shown below. It should be noted that in many cases, even if English is not the first

language, people may still be relatively fluid in English as a second language.

The overwhelming preference for accessing services was online, when presented with online or telephone self-service only options.

Table 5 – Housing where no-one had English as main language by ward

No-one in household has English as main language
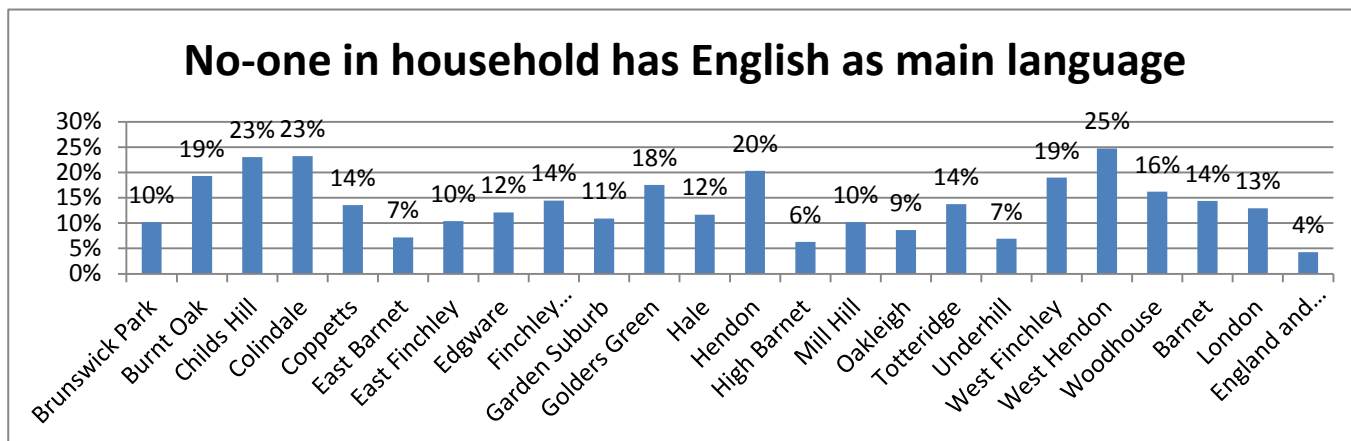
While there are some peaks in the data, the need is spread across all wards. Therefore, there is no specific location that would meet this widespread need. Again the combination of two libraries plus Burnt Oak will provide adequate accessibility for the services.

The map below shows where the majority of customers currently live and the new locations for the services. The data shows that around 90% of people will be within 2.5 miles of a centre. The blue circles indicate where clusters of customers who use the existing services travel from. The pins show the existing locations of all libraries. The choice of Golders Green and North Finchley is based on this data. Also, being main libraries they have the most extensive opening hours making them more accessible to customer need (e.g. open Saturday's or late night opening).
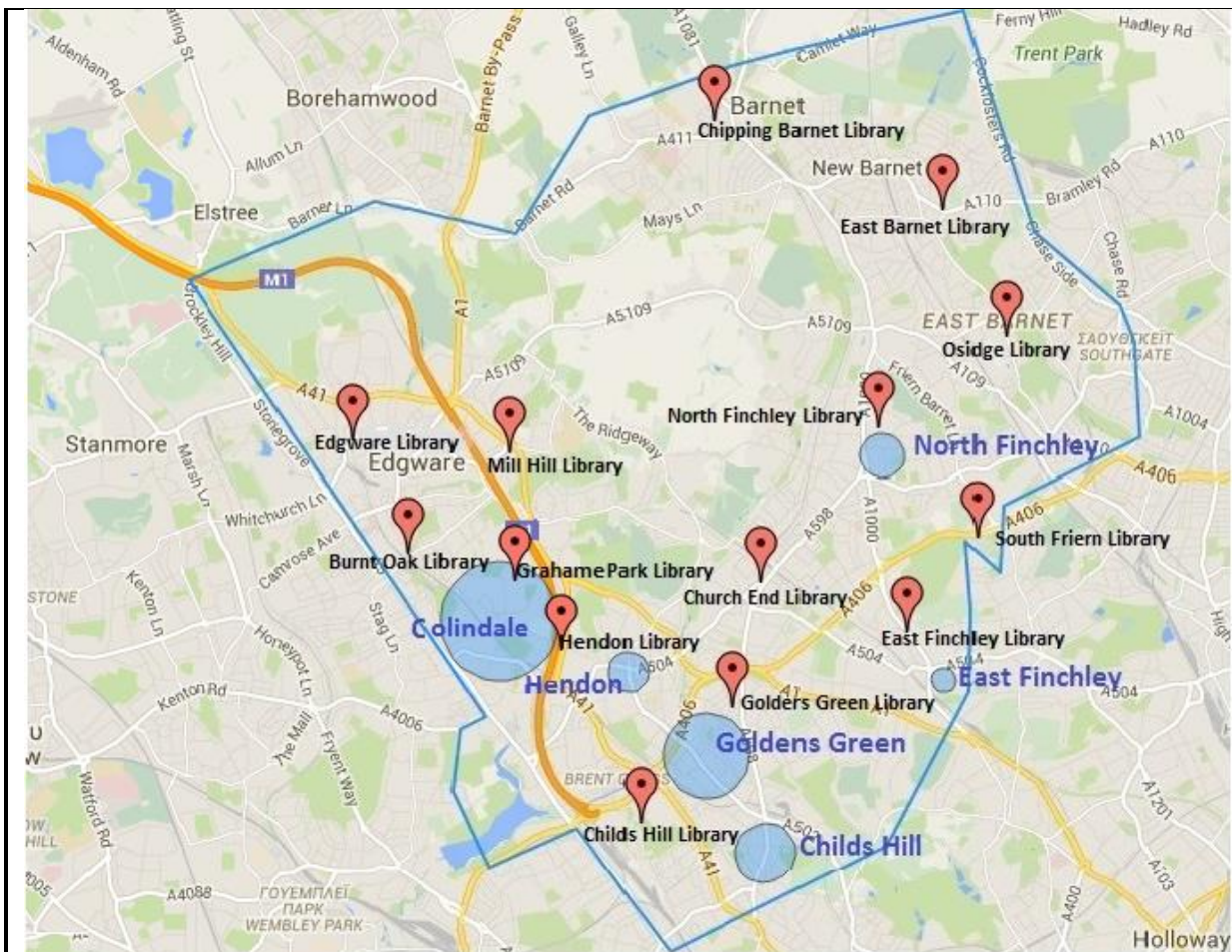
Therefore, the impact is judged to be neutral overall with the potential for enhanced accessibility using assisted self service and document drop at, initially, two libraries.

How are the equality strands affected following consultation? *Please detail the effects on each equality strand, and any mitigating action you have taken so far. Please include any relevant data. If you do not have relevant data please explain why.*			
Equality Strand	**Affected?**	**Explain how affected**	**What action has been taken already to mitigate this?** **What action do you plan to take to mitigate this?**
1. Age	Yes ☒	Older residents are more likely to be digitally excluded, and have mobility restrictions, so the increased emphasis on digital channels, and the change in location of face to face services, is likely to impact older people more than other residents.	The principle mitigation that is already in place is the provision of a telephone customer contact centre, with assisted digital and support for customer advocacy as key elements of the operating model and procedures. Training & business assurance is targeted to ensure customer service advisors are trained to identify the key reasons why a person may need additional support or advocacy, and the business assurance function proactively investigates issues and complaints. Additionally, the CAS has a key proposal to support the continued development of the Customer Service telephony infrastructure and services, delivered by CSG. The aim is to rationalise existing customer services functions (where possible and appropriate) to maximise this investment and to ensure consistency in service delivery and advocacy. Face to face services are being reviewed as part of the locality strategy. To address digital exclusion, the council provides free computer access in all libraries and its two face to face centres. In addition, staff are encouraged to identify and support customers who need help. Customer services staff in Coventry also provide guidance over the phone to assist customers in using website services and the two face to face centres have a number of free-phones that customers can use. The website is designed to meet the 'AA' standard (an international content accessibility standard set by an organisation called W3C) and there is a searchable list of frequently asked questions and answers (FAQs) to address common problems with using web self-service published on the website. The Customer Access Strategy includes the plan to produce a Digital Inclusion Strategy to identify more specific and localised ways in which older people can be supported to access council services via digital

			channels. Given that older people already tend to be comfortable using the phone, we will look at how phone self-service can be offered for the list of services that we wish to make 'self-service'. We will also look at methods of ensuring that where staff support is the only way a customer can reasonably access a service, this is made available on an individual and personalised basis.
			The services that the CAS proposes to move from Barnet House to Colindale are not services that are used much by older residents: i.e. Housing and homelessness services, Family Services, Special Education Needs. It is the case that moving these services will bring them closer to some residents, whilst moving them further away for others, the consultation affirms the impact of the move will benefit more residents than it will disadvantage, because of the demographics of the services users and the fact that these demographics are more concentrated in the west of the borough and therefore closer to Colindale.
			The move of housing benefits services from Barnet House to two libraries (currently proposed to be North Finchley and Golders Green) would have a positive impact of accessibility because North Finchley is very close to Barnet House's current location, and Golders Green is a brand new location not previously offered for these services. There is not a firm proposal for relocating the registering of births, marriages and deaths currently offered at Barnet House. Of these services, older people are most likely to register deaths. The re-location of this service needs to assess the impact on residents once the new location options are known as part of the Customer Transformation Programme. A re-location to Barnet Hospital is likely to make the service more accessible, whereas a re-location to a venue in the west of the borough may make it less accessible.
			Consultation analysis
			The consultation had a lower representation from those over 75, and a

				higher representation for those from 34-74.
				Of those who responded 75% had access to the internet, which is lower than the national average.
				Customer insight data will continue to be analysed as part of the CSG contract, and Customer Services will identify if there are relevant trends for the age group 60+ to the CAS.
				The Government Digital Service has analysed trends for the general population and over 75s are most likely to be digitally excluded, and it reports that the 60-75 age group are a growing cohort of the population with access to the internet, and active users of social media like facebook. However, the consultation suggests that the CAS needs to take into account the lower than average responses for access to internet in Barnet, especially from those accessing face to face services.
				The strategy recommends a 'digital only' approach for a number of services including library membership and missed bins/waste issues. These are two examples of services that will be accessed by older people. It is noted that one of the key proposals in the CAS is to promote the continued provision and development of the telephone and face to face services. The Council has always made it clear that customers will have assisted access with the support of face to face or phone based customer service staff via a dedicated helpline. The Digital Inclusion Strategy will identify if additional support can be provided based on national best practice.
				Therefore, it is recommended that the results of the consultation are included in the Digital Inclusion Strategy.
				The CAS includes a key proposal to ensure Customer Services supports community participation, and this supported as many of the respondents would use a Council member of staff, friend, or carer to go on-line. There is scope for support from volunteer groups, and social networks for additional support. The Inclusion Barnet group noted that Age UK has over-subscribed internet training sessions which are well

			regarded.
2. Disability	Yes ☒ / No ☐	Residents with a learning disability or a communication disability (visual or hearing impairment) may find it harder to use self-service options. Residents with a mobility impairment may be affected by the change in location of face to face services, if the new location is further away or less accessible by their mode of transport.	The principle key mitigation in the CAS is the approach to service design, and end to end digital service delivery. The aim being to make services easy to use and access. In addition, the CAS has a key proposal to support the continued development of the Customer Service telephony infrastructure and services, delivered by CSG, and to rationalise where possible existing customer services functions where appropriate to maximise this investment and to ensure consistency in service delivery. Face to face services are being reviewed as part of the locality strategy. These services already have provision for providing a more personalised service for needing additional support, and supporting those with a disability. This service will continue to develop and will be a key part of supporting those unable to access on-line due to a disability. These mitigations recognise that whilst many people with disabilities find accessing services easier on-line, and on-line services will be designed to be easy to use; equally this is a group where personalisation and customer advocacy are essential as noted above in the mitigations for older people, the customer service centre has a customer advocacy service, and this is set up to enable people with personalised needs to access services.. One of the key proposals is to use 'App' development to design the on-line customer interfaces and these in particular are easier to use, and accessible for people with learning difficulties. In addition to the actions described above, the council's website already has various features to make it more accessible for those with communications disabilities, such as 'BrowseAloud' for those with sight impairment or dyslexia. The Digital Inclusion Strategy will identify approaches to incorporate the involvement of people with disabilities in the design of new self-service channels so that accessibility and usability is maximised.

We will also look at methods of ensuring that where staff support is the only way a customer can reasonably access a service, this is made available on an individual basis.

Consultation analysis

The respondents with a disability was higher than the Barnet baseline, and so was well represented. Disability was noted as a concern for the self-service options, and as a barrier to accessing on-line services. 4% of the respondents accessed the internet with the help of a carer.

The CAS has already noted this and the survey results are in line with the assumptions made in the strategy that 20% of people will not be able to access services on-line by 2020, and so continued access to telephone support, and where needed the face to face service will be required.

The Inclusion Barnet group were very internet literate, and whilst not representative of all disabled residents, clearly made the point that access to on-line services should not be a barrier to disabled people, including those with a learning disability or physical disability. Whilst typing could be difficult, tablet style devices that allow touch screen access and using apps with easy to use interfaces including icons and pictures to select services should be made the principle of accessing local government services on-line for this group.

The majority of the group used email, facebook and google to communicate, share documents and pictures, and access information. This group were least interested in face to face services and rarely used them. Access to the internet was important to this group and several described the benefits of being able to access films & entertainment content, sharing photographs with family and friends more easily than without the internet.

Some of the group found phone calls difficult, and so had a preference for on-line, or face to face. However, those with mobility issues did not

				prefer face to face.
				Therefore, the Digital Inclusion Strategy will include these findings and the consultation supports the proposal to look at 'app style' development, and end to end service design. The findings support the need for continued telephone service provision with a focus on service resolution, and where appropriate face to face to meet service needs.
				The key proposal to ensure Customer Services supports community participation should be included as 7% of the respondents would use a friend, and there is scope for support from volunteer groups and social networks for additional support. The Inclusion Barnet group noted that Age UK has over-subscribed internet training sessions which are well regarded.
				It is noted that the telephone contact centre run by CSG has an advocacy service and this needs to continue to develop and needs to be better promoted to disability groups to support those with speech or communication challenges.
3. Gender reassignment	Yes ☐ / No ☒		No impacts identified	No additional issues identified through the consultation
4. Pregnancy and maternity	Yes ☒ / No ☐		Some pregnant women may mobility restrictions, particularly in the latest stages of pregnancy, thus they may be affected by the change in location of face to face services, if the new location is further away or less accessible by their mode of transport.	The assessment and actions in relation to the re-location of services away from Barnet House are the same as identified above for older residents from the consultation feedback given. No additional issues identified through the consultation. Women on maternity or pregnant were re-presented at 3% and 2% respectively.
5. Race / Ethnicity	Yes ☒ / No ☐		People whose first language is not English may prefer using face to face services, as this may enhance their ability to communicate effectively and	The council's website has a language translation built in (using Google Translate software) and new web self-service channels should continue to benefit from this. The voice recognition software in use for the automated switchboard

			obtain the service they need.	has been designed to recognise a number of different accents.
				The digital inclusion strategy will need to consider how translation can apply to emails that are sent in response to self-service transactions, and also to telephony self-service.
				The impact of face to face changes should be neutral because there will be assistance and appointments for housing benefits offered at two libraries instead of Barnet House.
				There is currently no translation service currently provided at face to face and there are no plans to change this.
				The consultation did not identify any barriers arising from English not being first language. The consultation respondents were under-presented by white and Asian ethnicity residents. There were no issues raised that identified any additional needs to support access to the internet, or digital.
				It is noted that the telephone contact centre run by CSG has an advocacy service and this needed to be better promoted to support those with language barriers.
6. Religion or belief	Yes ☐ / No ☒		No impacts identified	No additional issues identified through the consultation.
7. Gender / sex	Yes ☐ / No ☒		No impacts identified	Male respondents were under represented in the consultation. Government Digital Service and national data sets for digital exclusion always rate men as more likely to access the internet for ages over 55. Therefore, it is unlikely that the results of 75% access to the internet would be materially lower if more men had responded, and it is more likely that the results would have been higher.
				Therefore, the consultation is neutral on further impacts, but it will be included in the Digital Inclusion strategy that women over 75 may have lower access to the internet than men of the same age.

8. Sexual orientation	Yes ☐ / No ☒	No impacts identified	No additional issues identified through the consultation.
9. Marital Status	Yes ☐ / No ☒	No impacts identified	No additional issues identified through the consultation.
10. Other key groups?	Yes ☐ / No ☒	No impacts identified	No additional issues identified through the consultation.

• **What will be the impact of delivery of any proposals on satisfaction ratings amongst different groups of residents?**
Customers who are digitally excluded or who have a preference to speak to staff rather than use self-service may find the inability to speak to a member of staff for some services frustrating and therefore feel less satisfied with the council. It is therefore important that the council explains why it is making changes that focus on on-line service delivery, and provided assisted digital support via the telephone channel for those who need additional support. The services will be designed so that those who are genuinely excluded can access the support they need.
However, for the majority of residents in Barnet, following public consultation, if the strategy is fully implemented, the customer experience will be much better than is currently the case and will be comparable to some of the best service providers in both the private and public sector.
• **How does the proposal enhance Barnet's reputation as a good place to work and live?**
Following public consultation and being aware of the mitigation factors, If the strategy is implemented in full, customers will have a better experience of the council, and therefore a more positive impression of the council.
• **How will members of Barnet's diverse communities feel more confident about the council and the manner in which it conducts its business?**
Giving customers more information about services and transactions, and more control over when they interact with the council, will assist all communities.

- **What measures and methods have been designed to monitor the application of the policy or service, the achievement of intended outcomes and the identification of any unintended or adverse impact?** *Include information about the groups of people affected by this proposal. Include how frequently will the monitoring be conducted and who will be made aware of the analysis and outcomes? Include these measures in the Equality Improvement Plan (section 15)*

The council has an extensive customer services performance framework in place that includes the measurement of self-service transaction volumes, satisfaction and complaints on a quarterly basis, which is reported to the Performance and Contract Management Committee and therefore publically available.

In addition, the council has biannual resident satisfaction surveys that will assess the impact of the changes. This is also published on the council's website.

Following the consultation, the development of the Digital Inclusion Strategy will also need to include measuring the impact on residents who are digitally excluded, as these residents may not be identifiable from our existing measures. For example, a resident who typically uses the phone to contact the council and is unable to speak to a member of staff will not be given the opportunity to complete a satisfaction survey. They may also not know how to make a complaint to the council if they are unable to speak to a member of staff or obtain the online information about the council's complaints policy and process.

- **How will the new proposals enable the council to promote good relations between different communities?** *Include whether proposals bring different groups of people together, does the proposal have the potential to lead to resentment between different groups of people and how might you be able to compensate for perceptions of differential treatment or whether implications are explained.*

The aim is to provide enhanced customer services for all residents in a fair and transparent way. The consultation supports this aim.

- **How have residents with different needs been consulted on the anticipated impact of this proposal? How have any comments influenced the final proposal?** *Please include information about any prior consultation on the proposal been undertaken, and any dissatisfaction with it from a particular section of the community.*

The council ran a public consultation exercise from January 2016, following the approval of the Customer Access Strategy by the Policy & Resources Committee in December 2015, to assess whether the actions being taken by the council to promote accessibility are sufficient.

The council will also use the set of service design principles that were developed through consultation with residents in November 2013 when designing new ways of accessing services. These principles put customers at the heart of the design, and those who are digitally excluded will be supported by the mitigating actions described above.

The council will also seek to involve service users directly in designing services where possible, to find ways of increasing accessibility and ease of use, and reduce the risk of exclusion. This will make up part of the plan for the digital inclusion strategy and also the Customer Transformation Programme.

Overall Assessment

• **Overall impact**		
Positive Impact ⊠	Negative Impact or Impact Not Known[3] ☐	No Impact ☐
• **Scale of Impact**		
Positive impact: Minimal ☐ Significant ⊠	Negative Impact or Impact Not Known Minimal ⊠ Significant ☐	

• **Outcome**			
No change to decision ⊠	Adjustment needed to decision ☐	Continue with decision *(despite adverse impact / missed opportunity)* ☐	If significant negative impact - Stop / rethink ☐

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[3] 'Impact Not Known' – tick this box if there is no up-to-date data or information to show the effects or outcomes of the function, policy, procedure or service on all of the equality strands.

• Please give full explanation for how the overall assessment and outcome was decided

The CAS made a number of key proposals that balance the need to further develop and enhance digital service delivery, whilst maintaining and developing the phone and face to face channels for those who most need them, and are either digitally excluded, or need additional assistance.

The mitigating actions include addressing those who are currently digitally excluded but with the right support could access services on-line. There are additional benefits to getting people on-line, especially housebound or socially isolated people, as the internet provides access to a wide range of goods and services, and social groups to provide additional support.

The development of a Digital Inclusion strategy, as well the use of robust challenge during the service design phase, will ensure that digitally excluded customers, or those with mobility challenges, are not impacted in a negative way by the changes. While it is recognised that channel choice will be reduced for some services, this is only being used for services where there is no risk to individual welfare, and will only be implemented when necessary mitigations have been agreed.

For the vast majority of residents, the service will be significantly improved.