
**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

Bath and North East Somerset Council Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit

EIA for Libraries Income and Charging Policy

Title of service, function or policy being assessed	Libraries Customer charter for overdue charges
Name of directorate and service	Tourism, Leisure and Culture
Name and role of officers completing the assessment	J. Brassington, Acting Library Services Manager Peter Moth, Customer Services Manager
Contact telephone number	01225 396424
Date assessment completed	03/07/2009

1.	Identify the aims of the policy/service/function and how it is implemented.		
	Key questions	Answers / Notes	Actions required
1.1	Is this a new a new policy / function or service or a review of an existing one?	New charter	

1.2	What is the aim, objective or purpose of the policy/service/function?	To show a reasonable, fair and consistent approach to charging library customers, taking into account all equalities issues.	To publicise the charter in all service points and by electronic means
1.3	Whose needs is it designed to meet? Who are the main stakeholders?	Customers, Councillors, partners, Officers, residents, library staff,	
1.4	Who defines or defined the policy/function? How much room for manoeuvre is there?	The charter has been written by senior library managers to clarify the approach the library service takes when items go overdue. Staff have guidance within this charter to waive charges.	
1.5	Who implements the policy function? Is it possible for bias/prejudice to creep into the process?	All staff. There are possibilities for varying interpretations to creep into the implementation process, but staff training should make inconsistency less likely.	Ongoing - managers at all levels are required to follow B&NES' and libraries' policies to promote equalities. Relevant training opportunities are promoted internally, including those arranged by libraries' own staff, often working jointly with external partners. Action: all staff to receive relevant equalities training. Monitored by the libraries training strategy.
1.6	Are there any areas of the policy where those carrying it out can exercise discretion? If so, is there clear guidance on this?	Yes, there is a separate waiving policy which is available to see on request.	
1.7	What could stop the policy from meeting its aims? (see 1.2)	Outside influences – Customers not returning items to libraries and ceasing their memberships.	Staff to have knowledge of how the charter applies

		Inconsistent approach from staff on the frontline	
1.8	Do the aims of the policy link to or conflict with any other policies of the Council	Links to the Library Service Plan which contributes to the overall Tourism, Leisure and Culture Plan. It also contributes to the Income and charges policy, Social Inclusion Policy, Customer Service Policies and to Equalities Schemes	
1.9	Is responsibility for the implementation of this policy shared with other bodies	No	Share this policy with the LibrariesWest consortium, who share systems with B&NES libraries.

2. Consideration of available data, research and information

	Key questions	Answers / Notes	Actions required
2.1	What do you already know about people who use and deliver this service or policy?	Customers: From latest PLUS survey, 88% of users 16 and over are satisfied with the library service. We have 31,001 active borrowers and 637,593 visits are made to a library over a year. Staff: last staff survey (2006) showed 48% of library staff proud to work for the council, and 88% proud to work for their service area, 67% believed that the council treats its staff fairly and consistently and 61% agreed that the council ensures its staff are kept involved and informed.	

		Library users profile completed in June 2009	
2.2	What quantitative data do you already have? (e.g census data, staff data, customer profile data etc)	<p>We have reports of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yearly income breakdown • PLUS surveys held every 3 years to determine customer satisfaction. • Library review questionnaire carried out last year with users and non-users. • Voicebox surveys carried out regularly with users and non-users. • Staff: staff – staff surveys, 	Tabulate data and improve access to it, so staff can better utilise the information already collected.
2.3	What qualitative data do you already have? (e.g results of customer satisfaction surveys, results of previous consultations, staff survey findings etc).	<p>We have reports of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yearly income breakdown • PLUS surveys held every 3 years to determine customer satisfaction. • Library review questionnaire carried out last year with users and non-users. • Voicebox surveys carried out regularly with users and non-users. • Room hire consultation 	Adding satisfaction survey questions to EPH questionnaire, to be employed on a rolling programme of visits to EPHs. By Sept 2009
2.4	What additional information is needed to check that all equality groups' needs are met? (see section 4). Do you need to collect more data, carry out consultation at this stage?	We do need to carry out consultation. with particular user groups	Corporate Worker Challenge Groups (Black & Minority Ethnic / Disabled / Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender) to be accessed via the Equalities Team. We will carry out this consultation when the workers group next meet
2.5	How are you going to go about getting the	Analyse feedback from user groups	

	extra information that is required?		
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3. Formal consultation (include within this section any consultation you are planning along with the results of any consultation you undertake)

	Key questions	Answers/notes	Actions required
3.1	Who do you need to consult with?	Councillors, library users, residents, staff. Representatives of : Gender groups / Disability / Age / Race / Sexual orientation / Religion or belief. In addition, other specific groups as identified in our Social Inclusion Policy.	Designate staff and set a timetable. To be done by December 2009
3.2	What method / form of consultation can be used?	Council's designated process – Consultations - Bath & North East Somerset Council	Consider the different needs of the groups that we intend to consult with. E-consultation, Questionnaires, focus groups, Voicebox, market research,
3.3	What consultation was actually carried out as part of this EQIA and with which groups?	Consultation with Library senior managers	
3.4	What were the main issues arising from the consultation?	Outstanding debts on customer accounts and how we are going to get this reduced	Letters to debtors with accounts over £10.00. Date TBC

4. Assessment of impact

How have you reached the conclusions below when your answers to sections 2 & 3 give no information or evidence for your analysis?

Based upon any data you have analysed, or the results of consultation or research, use the spaces below to list how the policy will or does actually work in practice for each equalities group. Identify any differential impact and consider whether the policy/function meets any particular needs of each of the six equalities groups. Also include any examples of how the policy or service helps to promote race, disability and gender equality.

Impact or potential impact (negative, positive or neutral)

4.1	Gender – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on women, men and transgender people	Positive impact; Charges for library services are based on material types and whether items are kept overdue. No discrimination as individuals have free choice to borrow any type of material and whether to risk an overdue charge. Services and employment opportunities are equally available to all. Data: PLUS survey: 57.3% of library users are women, 42.7% men. Library staff: personnel records 109 staff, 95 female, 14 male: 12% male.
4.2	Disability - identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on disabled people (ensure consideration of a range of impairments including visual and hearing impairments, mobility impairments, learning disability etc)	Positive impact; library services are available to all so far as is reasonable or possible, (i.e. limitations on the number of home library service users we can serve is dependent on the number of volunteers who can deliver materials). Also there are only 8 static libraries, therefore 14% of households live further than 2 miles away from a static library (data: Public Library Standards 1) To improve on this, 2 mobile libraries (with access lifts) provide a service at carefully selected locations across B&NES. There are a number of services now fully accessible on line (24/7), including renewing books, checking the library catalogue across 5 local authorities including B&NES, and reserving items). DDA compliance has been rolled out to all libraries. Supernova and Microsoft software is available on the public computers in libraries, for people with visual impairments. Hearing loop systems are installed at Bath, Salford & Keynsham at counters, and in meeting spaces at Salford and Keynsham. Shelves are spaced to allow access for wheelchairs and shopmobility vehicles. Negative impacts: people have to go to a library to pay their account. We need ability for customers to pay on line, and/or publicise the ability to pay by cheque by

		post.
4.3	Age – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on different age groups	<p>Positive as it clarifies the charging structure in place. Positive for under 5's who are not charged.</p> <p>Neutral – insofar as some charges apply to all from age 5 upwards. There are no concessions for 65+, the concessions are mainly related to customers' ability to pay.</p> <p>Data: Children's Plus survey: 87.1% of under 16's thinks library service is good. Fees and Charges: no overdue charges for under 5's. Data: library charges on website and handouts. Targeted children's activities and specialist young adult collections. Spoken word books are free of charge for people with disabilities. Other targeted stock includes large print books and reminiscence packs. There are library services for Elderly People's Homes, and for the housebound, who are mainly elderly. If they borrow chargeable items uncluding DVDs, they are charged a concessionary rate, and they do not pay overdue charges.</p>
4.4	Race – identify the impact/potential impact on different black and minority ethnic groups	<p>Positive; specific book stock, targeted promotions, contacts with local BME users, BME staff members and volunteer opportunities all contribute, along with staff awareness training. With a very low BME population it is necessary to be aware of proportionality. Data: Specialist member of staff: Special Services and Social Inclusion Officer whose role includes developing contacts with BME users. Have set up swap magazine collections for magazines in English & other languages. Collections of books available in all the key BME languages for this area. Self Service kiosks have text in 6 different language choices</p> <p>Negative – The charter is only available in English at the current time - language and possible culture barriers. Arrangements can be made to translate it on request.</p>
4.5	Sexual orientation - identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on lesbians, gay men, bisexual and heterosexual people	Neutral; there is no difference in charging or concessions in realltion to any sexual orientation.
4.6	Religion/belief – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on people of different	<p>Positive; Bath Library opens for extra hours, ensuring that there is a library in B&NES open every day of the week. Web services are available 24/7.</p> <p>Neutral; there is no difference in charging or concessions in realltion to any religion</p>

	religious/faith groups and also upon those with no religion.	or belief. Negative – The charter is only available in English at the current time - language and possible culture barriers. Arrangements can be made to translate it on request.	
	Key questions	Answers/notes	Actions required
4.7	Have you identified any areas in which the policy/service or function is indirectly or directly discriminatory? If you answer yes to this please refer to legal services on whether this is justifiable within legislation.	No, but obviously children with no financial resources cannot pay charges so this is the responsibility of their parent or guardian.	
4.8	If you have identified any adverse impact(s) can it be avoided, can we make changes, can we lessen it etc? (NB: If you have identified a differential or adverse impact that amounts to unlawful discrimination, then you are duty bound to act to ensure that the Council acts lawfully by changing the policy or proposal in question).	We have different language scripts available, and a telephone service on call for translations. Technology advances will enable pay on line in near future.	N/A
4.9	Are there additional measures that could be adopted to further equality of opportunity in the context of this policy/service/function and to meet the particular needs of equalities groups that you have identified?		

5.	Internal processes for the organisation – to be explored at the end of the mentoring process.

Making a decision in the light of data, alternatives and consultations			
	Key questions	Answers/notes	Actions required
5.1	How will the organisations decision making process be used to take this forward?	Once the Equalities Impact Assessment is approved then the charter will be made public	
Monitoring for adverse impact in the future			
	Key questions	Answers/notes	Actions required
5.2	What have we found out in completing this EqIA? What can we learn for the future?	We are a flexible service open to all. No one is deliberately excluded, but have we all the information?	Need to listen to community groups
5.3	Who will carry out monitoring?	Library Service Manager	December 2009
5.4	What needs to be monitored?	The Charges charter, yearly, for developments after reviewing the income policy	Use team support, so it will also act as a training method for those needing to write their own EIAs.
5.5	What method(s) of monitoring will be used?	Yearly review, plus separate review of charter if service receives comments or suggestions that merit a change	
5.6	How will the monitoring information be published?	The Equalities Team will arrange this on behalf of service areas, by adding them to the Council's EIA web page	Send EIA to DLEG for review prior to publication.

Publication of results of the equality impact assessment			
	Key questions	Answers/notes	Actions required
5.7	Who will take responsibility for writing up the EqIA report?	Library Service Manager	
5.8	How will the results of the EqIA be published?	B&NES website	
5.9	Who will take responsibility for this?	Libraries' webmaster after sign-off by DLEG	

6. Bath and North East Somerset Council Equality Impact Assessment Improvement Plan

Please list actions that you plan to take as a result of this assessment (continue on separate sheets as necessary). These actions need to be built into the service planning framework and targets should be measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound.

Title of service/function or policy being assessed:

Name and role of officers completing assessment:

Date assessment completed:

Issues identified	Actions required	Progress milestones	Officer responsible	By when
To publicise the charter in all service points	Display charter in various formats	EIA completed and signed off	PM	September 2009
Consider if any of the six equalities strands have particular needs relevant to the charter.	Identification and consultation with representatives of these groups is needed, to improve on the current piecemeal / ad hoc situation.	Set consultation dates	PM	August 2009
All staff to receive relevant equalities training,	Timetable training into the training plan, balanced out throughout the year!	Monitored by the libraries training strategy Target set for 100% of new staff to receive equalities training as part of induction, and for 25% increase in equalities awareness training to existing staff by December 09	SH	December 2009
Share this charter with LibrariesWest partners	Share as part of the consultation process	Forward completed charter to LibrariesWest Officer	JBr	September 2009
Letters to debtors	Devise suitable wording and then send letters out using correct	Decision on how and who will send the letters	JBr	August 2009

	methods			
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Once you have completed this form, use it as a basis for writing a report of the Equality Impact Assessment. Keep a copy of the form as a record of the processes you have been through in carrying out the EqIA and send one copy to the Equalities Team (equality@bathnes.gov.uk, or by post to Equalities Team, Keynsham Town Hall, Bristol, BS31 1NL

Please contact your Directorate equalities officer for advice and guidance.

Customer services – Cordelia Johnney

Corporate Equalities Team

August 2007