

Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment



Completing an Equality Impact Assessment will help you to think about what impact your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service may have on people that live in, work in or visit Cambridge, as well as on City Council staff.

The template is easy to use. You do not need to have specialist equalities knowledge to complete it. It asks you to make judgements based on evidence and experience. There are guidance notes on the intranet to help you. You can also get advice from Suzanne Goff, Strategy Officer on 01223 457174 or email helen.crowther@cambridge.gov.uk or from any member of the Joint Equalities Group.

1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service:

Office Accommodation Strategy (OAS)

2. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

The Long Term Office Accommodation Strategy's Aspirations and Approach were approved by the Executive Councillor for Customer Services and Resources on 8 July 2013

"The Office Accommodation Strategy will work towards a future where the City Council need less office accommodation, thereby providing for a reduction in cost and the potential to redeploy its assets to generate revenue income or capital receipts.

The strategy will focus on the emerging challenges faced by the council including;

- the need to reduce cost and increase income in order to meet the financial challenges in the coming years;*
- the need to achieve suitable office conditions in appropriate locations;*
- the need to provide suitable accommodation for services provided in the local community;*
- the need to understand the Options for a future Depot facility.*

The strategy will seek to address the challenges anticipated over the next 7 to 10 years and will aspire to:

- Maintain a civic and customer presence in the heart of Cambridge City.*
- Provide accommodation and facilities to enable service delivery in the local communities.*
- Provide buildings that are fit for purpose and accessible to customers and staff; that are clean, well maintained and have up to date facilities."*

2. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

Phase I of the Office Accommodation Strategy was delivered in 2014 with the release of Lion House and the proposed letting of the Guildhall Annex for a restaurant which is still in progress. This has produced savings and improvements such as: the Guildhall meetings rooms and staff facilities; the Mandela House training rooms; ongoing savings of £334,000 p.a. from 2015/16; and proposed income generation of over £100k per annum from letting the Guildhall Annex

Parsons Court and the Guildhall Halls were let to Cambridge Live as part of the transfer to a cultural trust in April 2015. In principle agreements have been reached about future occupancy of the Guildhall and the Old Courts area by the Destination Management Organisation.

Phase II sets ambitious targets to vacate Hobson House between July 2016 and March 2017, Mill Road Depot by 2017 and 87/89 Cherry Hinton Road by July 2016. Hobson House will be released by relocating staff into Mandela House, The Guildhall and elsewhere. Mill Road Depot will be released by relocating operational services to new depot facilities elsewhere in Cambridge and to the shared waste facility at Waterbeach. Staff and services currently at 87/89 Cherry Hinton Road will be transferred to 171 Arbury Road

A significant cultural change in how and where we work will be required to successfully implement phase II. This will include more flexible working, reduction of space per desk where appropriate and reduction of desk to staff ratio. This will be underpinned by a strong technological infrastructure, further roll out of data and records management regimes, and changes in how we manage teams. All changes will comply with health and safety regulations.

Mobile technology, laptop computers, mobile phones and other equipment needed to facilitate SMART working by staff who will be relocated as part of phase two of the Council's Office Accommodation Strategy. Depending on the needs of individual services, the requirements for particular roles and the personal circumstances of individual members of staff, SMART working could include working from other City Council sites, partner organisations' sites, or from home. In the longer-term, it is proposed that a wider SMART working programme will be developed which will encompass all Council services.

Phase III discusses the possibility of further building rationalisation and sets a target of reporting the business case for options to committee by April 2018.

This EQIA focusses on Phase II implementation issues and will be updated if Phase III is approved

3. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick those that apply)

- Residents - particularly Housing tenants
- Visitors - customers who visit the customer service centre
- Staff – all staff

A specific client group or groups (please state):

4. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this? (Please tick)

- New (original office accommodation strategy dated 2010 has expired)
- Revised
- Existing

5. Responsible directorate and service

Directorate: Business Transformation

Service: Property Services

6. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

- No
- Yes (please give details): All Departments and Services

7. Potential impact

Please list and explain how this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service could **positively** or **negatively** affect individuals from the following equalities groups.

When answering this question, please think about:

- The results of relevant consultation that you or others have completed (for example with residents, people that work in or visit Cambridge, service users, staff or partner organisations).
- Complaints information.
- Performance information.
- Information about people using your service (for example whether people from certain equalities groups use the service more or less than others).
- Inspection results.
- Comparisons with other organisations.
- The implementation of your piece of work (don't just assess what you think the impact will be after you have completed your work, but also think about what steps you might have to take to make sure that the implementation of your work does not negatively impact on people from a particular equality group).
- The relevant premises involved.
- Your communications.
- National research (local information is not always available, particularly for some equalities groups, so use national research to provide evidence for your conclusions).

(a) Age (any group of people of a particular age, including younger and older people – in particular, please consider any safeguarding issues for children and vulnerable adults)

The assessment indicates a need to ensure engagement and support is provided to older staff when adopting new ways of working (e.g. desk sharing, flexible working or relocation issues). The 45 to 54 age group is the highest age range at the Council, and 2.64% members of staff are aged 65 and over (according to most up-to-date statistics for 2016/17).

In addition to the mobile technology required to support SMART working, a cultural change will also be required. It is possible that staff who have worked in a particular way for a longer period may find it more difficult to move to SMART working and may require more support as a consequence. (For instance, this might impact on 48.26% of the workforce who have 10 years or more for length of service.) This may be more likely to apply to older members of staff, but it could apply to staff across all age bands depending on personal circumstances and preferences. Older workers may also be less likely to have the technology necessary to work from home. The Council is currently carrying out a survey of staff to inform the SMART working programme, which will provide more data and comments about: how, where and when staff currently work; the technologies and processes they use in their roles; and about the Council's working culture.

Older workers may be less likely to have the technology necessary to work from home.

(b) Disability (including people with a physical impairment, sensory impairment, learning disability, mental health problem or other condition which has an impact on their daily life)

As at 31st March 2017, 6.84% of the Council's workforce declared themselves as disabled. The OAS assessment identified there is the potential to adversely impact people with disability whilst reducing our office accommodation stock and introducing more flexible ways of working. There is also the potential to create an adverse impact if the design features of refurbished office spaces do not adequately affect disability requirements. Consideration should be given to the following:

- Design of building refurbishments
- Design of offices and lay-outs
- Furniture specifications
- Space allocations
- Accessibility standards are adhered to in office and meeting room lay outs and desk design, including adaptations for furniture disability and work place assessments.
- Take opportunities to maximise accessibility to buildings - Particular issues around increasing accessibility at the Guildhall by adaptations to Front and Guildhall side entrances; improving facilities for blind or partially sighted and deaf people (e.g. portable hearing loops in meeting rooms)
- Physical and mental health issues are considered when assessing work place assessments.
- Individual access plans are reviewed as staff are relocated
- Re-provision of disabled parking and staff cycle parking will need to be considered within the strategy.
- Expanding the use of disabled toilets to a multifunctional use e.g. baby changing, unisex, disabled toilets should not adversely impact availability to disabled staff or customers. Making all future toilet provision multi-purpose e.g. to disabled toilet spec but for use by anyone could be promoted within the policy.

In order to ensure optimum use of space, some teams will be required to undertake hot-desking - where the functions they perform at work do not need to be in a set place. It is possible that some employees with disabilities may not be able to work from other locations, such as other Council offices, partner offices or from home. Currently, the Council carries out individual workplace assessments to assess what reasonable adjustments to the working environment are required to enable members of staff with disabilities to perform their role. These individual assessments would be extended to assess what adjustments would be required to enable staff in services affected by phase two of the Office Accommodation Strategy to work at other locations. Additionally, although roles might not require staff to have a fixed desk, if people have disabilities that require them to have specialist equipment that would be difficult to move across locations, arrangements can be made to ensure they have a fixed workplace.

The significant changes to work patterns may result in increased stress for staff members used to working a certain way, which could exacerbate existing mental health problems or have the potential to cause poor mental health. Responses to a SMART Working Survey (January 2017) demonstrated that up till now there has been a traditional way of working at the Council that is primarily desk-based, using desktop computers and desk phones, making little use of new digital technologies for interaction with colleagues and customers. Poor technology was felt to be one of the main constraints preventing smarter forms of working, and there was felt to be a culture of presenteeism at the Council. In the longer-term, it is hoped that opportunities to work more flexibly will have a positive impact on mental health

as people will have a greater work-life balance.

(c) Gender

As at 31st March 2017, 51.26% of our staff identify themselves as female and 48.74% as male.

The OAS assessments suggests the need to ensure adequate toilet, shower and changing facilities are available at each location to accommodate the Male/Female/other populations at each location.

Moreover, there are 274 part time employees, of which 72.26% are female. The ability to work flexibly would benefit part-time employees who may have other commitments outside of work, like caring commitments. However, in a SMART Working Survey (January 2017), respondents felt that there is a culture of presenteeism at the Council, which might hinder this. In practice, it has been found that managers and senior managers have a significantly greater uptake of flexible working hours and homeworking than other groups but non-managerial staff are much more likely to work part-time (and especially those with caring responsibilities).

(d) Pregnancy and maternity

Remodelling proposals could have a temporary negative impact on pregnant women and nursing mothers if this reducing the facilities available to them.

(e) Transgender (including gender re-assignment)

The assessment identified that there were very few "unisex" toilets and suggests the need to identify unisex toilet which would be accessible to people in any our office accommodation. Unisex toilets should be integrated within the design of all toilet facilities where possible so as not to stigmatise transgender staff or customers.

(f) Marriage and Civil Partnership

No specific impact

(g) Race or Ethnicity

No specific impact

(h) Religion or Belief

The provision of prayer rooms and rooms for quiet contemplation are limited within the current office accommodation. The strategy will examine the level of provision necessary and the case for extending the provision.

More data is needed to understand the level of provision needed

(i) Sexual Orientation

no specific impact

(j) Other factors that may lead to inequality – in particular – please consider the impact of any changes on low income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty (please state):

Mobile technology (Office Accommodation Strategy) - The personal circumstances of individual members of staff will need to be taken into account when considering SMART working options as part of the Office Accommodation Strategy. For some staff who have caring responsibilities, either for children or for elderly or other family members, working from home may not be an appropriate option, as it could create a conflict between work and the needs and expectations of those being cared for.

There are links to Customer Access Strategy and Digital Strategy, and OAS. Equalities issues related to the maintenance or change in customer service and equalities issues related to increasing digital access will be examined under each of these policies.

In the SMART Working Survey (January 2017), respondents felt that if the Council expects people to work more often away from Council premises it ought to provide the tools for the job. At the moment, employees are providing their own IT. This may have a detrimental impact on people on low-incomes who may not have the technology necessary for flexible working and may not have access to the internet. These people will be required to work from a Council office.

SMART working (from home or elsewhere) can be facilitated by the occasional loan of a council owned lap-top.

Staff parking policy is not being altered by this strategy therefore staff with special parking needs will need to have their provision reassessed as part of the work place assessments.

8. If you have any additional comments please add them here

Some staff may be impacted by the need to relocate to other premises (e.g. streets and open spaces and Estates and Facilities). There may be an economic disadvantage to those staff on low wages and examination of the impact on each group of staff needs to be assessed as proposals are firmed up.

Policy and guidance are in place to assess disturbance and travel reimbursements.

9. Conclusions and Next Steps

- There are a number of potential negative impacts which will need to be addressed within the design proposals and the proposals for implementation and change to prevent any negative impacts occurring.
- Consultation with disabled staff group and BAME staff group to inform the EqIA and future office design

All completed Equality Impact Assessments must be emailed to Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer, who will arrange for it to be published on the City Council's website. Email helen.crowther@cambridge.gov.uk

10. Sign off

Name and job title of assessment lead officer: Frances Barratt, Corporate Project Manager

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted:

Liz Brennan – Unison

Chris Jones - Unison

Kevin Roberts – GMB

Dave Prinsep – Head of Property Services

David Kidston – Corporate Strategy

Helen Crowther – Corporate Strategy

Date of completion: 5 June 2017 revision

Date of next review of the assessment: January 2018

Action Plan

Equality Impact Assessment title:

Date of completion: 9 January 2017- Revision

Equality Group	Age
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	The assessment indicates a need to ensure engagement and support is provided to older staff when adopting SMART working. Older workers may also be less likely to have the technology necessary to work from home.
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	Design into service transition plans consultation with staff and individual assessments for the potential and suitability to work flexibly, from other locations or from home
Officer responsible for progressing the action	Line Managers of staff impacted
Date action to be completed by	Before transition

Equality Group	Disability
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The assessment indicates a need to assess whether any reasonable adjustments may be required for staff with disabilities when adopting SMART working. 2. Significant changes to working practices may have a detrimental impact to some employees' mental health.
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design into service transition plans consultation with staff and individual assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the potential and suitability to work flexibly, from other locations or from home • any reasonable adjustments that may be required to facilitate flexible working, from other locations or from home <p>Training will be provided for employees and managers on how to manage the changes. Additionally, in May 2017 the Council launched a new Employee Assistance programme, which offers free confidential life management and personal support service available to all employees. This support is available 24/7, 365 days a year. Through PAM Assist, employees have access to clinical and professional expertise, giving them a chance to talk about all kinds of work (and personal issues) that are affecting them. Staff can call a helpline to get support. Prior to the launch of this programme, staff had to ask for the support via HR or their line manager (that compromised confidentiality) and could only get face-to-face support via appointments made – so they could not get support at any time.</p> 2. Current induction and workplace H&S processes will be adapted to meet new requirements of SMART working This will provide an opportunity for staff to raise any concerns they may have.
Officer responsible for progressing the action	Line Managers and Heads of Service of staff impacted
Date action to be completed by	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Before transition 2. Before, during and following the transition

Equality Group	Gender
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased occupancy of buildings could imbalance provision for toilet, shower and changing facilities at each location to accommodate the Male/Female 2. Impact of culture of presenteeism on part-time, non-managerial staff who are more likely to be women.
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incorporate assessment as part of the design phase of refurbishment and relocation plans 2. Managers of teams affected by the moves will receive training on how to manage people according to results rather than presenteeism. Employees affected by the moves will also receive training on how they should expect to be managed, and this will be an opportunity for them to identify concerns they have about the changes and enable them to prepare for discussions about these concerns with their line managers.
Officer responsible for progressing the action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corporate Project Manager responsible for design of training 2. Line Managers of individual staff raising concerns 3.
Date action to be completed by	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In planning stage of proposals 2. During transition

Equality Group	Pregnancy and Maternity
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	There could be temporary negative impact on pregnant women and nursing mothers during the course of refurbishments if this reduces the facilities available to them
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	Risk Assessment for pregnant women and nursing mothers At the planning stage of refurbishments and relocations
Officer responsible for progressing the action	Line Manager
Date action to be completed by	At planning stage

Equality Group	Transgender
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	There are no Unisex toilets provided in current office accommodation
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	The refurbishment and refitting plans should address this omission
Officer responsible for progressing the action	Head of Property Services and Corporate Project Manager
Date action to be completed by	At design stage of refurbishment

Equality Group	Marriage and Civil Partnership
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	none
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Race or Ethnicity
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	none
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Equality Group	Religion or Belief
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	The provision of prayer rooms and rooms for quiet contemplation are limited within the current office accommodation.
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	Estimate level of need based on consultation with BAME Staff group and HR statistics The strategy will examine the level of provision necessary and the case for extending the provision.
Officer responsible for progressing the action	Corporate Project Manager and Head of Property Services
Date action to be completed by	In design phase

Equality Group	Sexual Orientation
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	none
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	

Other factors that may lead to inequality	
Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact	Digital access for low-income staff
Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact	3Cs IT is looking into technology that the Council needs to aid SMART working via the Council Anywhere programme.
Officer responsible for progressing the action	
Date action to be completed by	Timescale for the Council Anywhere programme to be confirmed.