

First things first: does this activity need an EIA?

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| Subject of the assessment: | Revised Corporate Complaints Policy – Oct 2022 | |
| Please answer Yes or No to the following questions: | | |
| Does it affect staff, service users or the wider community? | | Yes |
| Has it been identified as being important to particular groups of people? | | Yes |
| Does it or could it potentially affect different groups of people differently (unequal)? | | Yes |
| Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities or exclusion issues? | | No |
| Will it have an impact on how other organisations operate? | | Yes |
| Is there potential for it to cause controversy or affect the council's reputation as a public service provider? | | Yes |

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| Where a positive impact is likely, will this help to: | Please tick all that apply (✓) |
| Remove discrimination and harassment? | Yes |
| Promote equal opportunities? | Yes |
| Encourage good relations? | Yes |

If you ticked or answered Yes to one or more of these questions you should carry out an EqlA. There are two levels of analysis (Brief and Full) and in deciding which to go for, you should think about not just the number of people affected but the significance of the effect on them – both positive and negative.

If you answered No to all of the questions and decide that your activity doesn't need an EqlA you must explain below why it has no relevance to equality and diversity. You should reference the information you used to support your decision and seek approval from your Head of Service or Strategic Director before sending this to equalities@stevenage.gov.uk.

I determine that no EqIA is needed to inform the decision on the (insert name of subject being assessed).

Name of assessor:

Decision approved by:

Role:

Role:

Date:

Date:



Full Equality Impact Assessment

For a policy, project, service or other decision that is new, changing or under review

| What is being assessed? | | Revised Corporate Complaints Policy – October 22 | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--|---------------|-----------------|--|
| Lead Assessor | Gary Painter | | | Assessment team | Gary Painter, Greg Arends, Donna Smith |
| Start date | 01/11/2022 | End date | End of policy | | |
| When will the EqIA be reviewed? | | At policy change or significant demographic change | | | |

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| Who may be affected by it? | Anybody who makes a complaint to the council |
| What are the key aims of it? | An updated policy incorporating new ombudsman requirements to ensure the council has a corporate complaints process that works efficiently and is used by all service areas, including members. Staff will be trained and can take responsibility for the process and that all service level agreements are met. |

| What positive measures are in place (if any) to help fulfil our legislative duties to: | | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|
| Remove discrimination & harassment | System can be accessed by all residents | Promote equal opportunities | System can be accessed by all residents | Encourage good relations | Improvements in the resident experience and an increase in customer satisfaction |

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| What sources of data / information are you using to inform your assessment? | <p>In 2011, 7.5% of Stevenage residents who were 16-64 years of age had a disability which limited their day-to-day activities. The figure was 15.7% for all ages. 23.9% of households in Stevenage included a person with a long-term health problem or disability - (Source: Health & Provision of unpaid care - ONS Census 2011, Table KS301EW).</p> <p>Disabled people were more likely to report finding access to products in person difficult compared with non-disabled people (41.6% compared with 15.8%) and Disabled people were more likely to report finding access to services in person difficult compared with non-disabled people (51.5% compared with 25.2%) – Source: Office for National</p> |
|---|--|

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| | Statistics – Data and analysis from Census 2021) |
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| In assessing the potential impact on people, are there any overall comments that you would like to make? | <p>Improved complaint processes will both improve internal efficiency, leading to benefit release, and reduce risk which in turn reduces the risk of fines imposed by the governing ombudsmen.</p> <p>The new approach will add a new online self-service option and won't remove any existing channels for raising a complaint. For this reason the access impacts are generally beneficial</p> <p>The new policy makes clear that we will make reasonable adjustments for people based on their particular situation to ensure they can use the complaints service.</p> <p>In addition the new policy sets a welcoming and constructive tone for complaints, with the intention of ensuring all customers feel able to raise concerns, and don't feel excluded.</p> |
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Evidence and impact assessment

Explain the potential impact and opportunities it could have for people in terms of the following characteristics, where applicable:

| Age | | | | | |
|--|------|--|--|----------------|------|
| Positive impact | None | Negative impact | None | Unequal impact | None |
| Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment | | There is no differential impact identified in terms of different age groups. The policy and procedure and new application apply equally to all people regardless of age. Complainants will still be able to raise complaints via mail, letter, telephone, in person at the CSC, via their councillor or MP or a nominated person on their behalf. Customer Services can offer a translation service. | | | |
| What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion? | | | What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page) | | |

| Disability | | | | | |
|---|-----|---|--|----------------|------|
| e.g. physical impairment, mental ill health, learning difficulties, long-standing illness | | | | | |
| Positive impact | Yes | Negative impact | No | Unequal impact | None |
| Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment | | <p>People with some disabilities may find it challenging to complain online via self-service, however, they will still be able to raise complaints via telephone, in person at the CSC, via their councillor or MP or a nominated person on their behalf.</p> <p>People with other disabilities may find it easier to use the new online self-service functionality. For example, a customer with a hearing problem may prefer online self-service to use of the telephone.</p> <p>Customer Services can ask Relay UK to assist complainants with hearing and speech difficulties to use our services over the phone. This is a free service provided nationally and paid for by telephone companies.</p> | | | |
| What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion? | | | What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page) | | |

| Gender reassignment | | | | | |
|--|------|---|--|--|-----|
| Positive impact | None | Negative impact | None | Unequal impact | Yes |
| Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment | | <p>The policy and procedure apply equally to all people regardless of gender reassignment.</p> <p>People undergoing re-assignment may contact us under a different name to that held on our records, and this should be handled in a sensitive way in line with any applicable corporate policy and/ or guidance. This situation already exists with the current complaints policy and does not change as a result of the changes to approach</p> | | | |
| What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion? | | | What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page) | There is an opportunity to understand more about how frequently impacts arise because of gender reassignment | |

| Marriage or civil partnership | | | | | |
|--|------|--|--|----------------|------|
| Positive impact | None | Negative impact | None | Unequal impact | None |
| Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment | | The policy and procedure apply equally to all people regardless marital/ civil partnership status. No barriers in accessing the service identified for this group. | | | |
| What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion? | | | What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page) | | |

| Pregnancy & maternity | | | | | |
|--|------|--|--|----------------|------|
| Positive impact | None | Negative impact | None | Unequal impact | None |
| Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment | | The policy and procedure apply equally to all people regardless of pregnancy or maternity. No barriers in accessing the service identified for this group. | | | |
| What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion? | | | What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page) | | |

| Race | | | | | |
|--|-----|---|--|----------------|------|
| Positive impact | Yes | Negative impact | Yes | Unequal impact | None |
| Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment | | The policy and procedure apply equally to all people regardless of race. The complaints handling procedure explains that SBC will consider any request for translation of this procedure into alternative formats and community languages. SBC will consider any requests received and will monitor any patterns emerging from any such requests to determine any further actions required. | | | |
| What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion? | | | What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page) | | |

| Religion or belief | | | | | |
|--|------|--|--|----------------|------|
| Positive impact | None | Negative impact | None | Unequal impact | None |
| Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment | | The policy and procedure apply equally to all people regardless of religion or belief. | | | |
| What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion? | | | What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page) | | |

| Sex | | | | | |
|--|------|---|--|----------------|------|
| Positive impact | None | Negative impact | None | Unequal impact | None |
| Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment | | The policy and procedure apply equally to all, regardless of sex. No barriers in accessing the service identified for this group. | | | |
| What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion? | | | What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page) | | |

| Sexual orientation e.g. straight, lesbian / gay, bisexual | | | | | |
|--|------|--|--|----------------|------|
| Positive impact | None | Negative impact | None | Unequal impact | None |
| Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment | | The policy and procedure apply equally to all people regardless of sexual orientation. No barriers in accessing the service identified for this group. | | | |
| What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion? | | | What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page) | | |

Socio-economic¹

e.g. low income, unemployed, homelessness, caring responsibilities, access to internet, public transport users,
social value in procurement

| | | | | | |
|--|------|---|---|----------------|--|
| Positive impact | None | Negative impact | None | Unequal impact | |
| Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment | | <p>The policy and procedure apply equally to all people regardless of socio-economic category.</p> <p>Some people may not be able to afford or have easy access to the internet which will restrict access to the new online self-service. However, customers will still be able to raise complaints via telephone, in person at the CSC, via their councillor or MP or a nominated person on their behalf.</p> | | | |
| What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion? | | | What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page) | | |

Other

please feel free to consider the potential impact on people in any other contexts

| | | | | | |
|--|------|-----------------|---|----------------|------|
| Positive impact | None | Negative impact | None | Unequal impact | None |
| Please evidence the data and information you used to support this assessment | | | | | |
| What opportunities are there to promote equality and inclusion? | | | What do you still need to find out? Include in actions (last page) | | |

What are the findings of any consultation with:

¹Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

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| Staff? | All staff responsible for complaints will be trained on the policy and procedures | Residents? | Residents will be advised to raise complaints using the new process. |
| Voluntary & community sector? | | Partners? | |
| Other stakeholders? | | | |

Overall conclusion & future activity

| Explain the overall findings of the assessment and reasons for outcome (please choose one) : | | |
|--|-------------------------|--|
| 1. No inequality, inclusion issues or opportunities to further improve have been identified | | |
| Negative / unequal impact, barriers to inclusion or improvement opportunities identified | 2a. Adjustments made | |
| | 2b. Continue as planned | <p>Overall, there is no change for most characteristics, and the addition of a new way to access complaints is positive for disability.</p> <p>An existing negative impact for gender reassignment will continue with the new policy; that people undergoing re-assignment may contact us under a different name to that held on our records, and this should be handled in a sensitive way. As this is the same impact as the current policy it is recommended to continue as planned</p> |
| | 2c. Stop and remove | |

| Detail the actions that are needed as a result of this assessment and how they will help to remove discrimination & harassment, promote equal opportunities and / or encourage good relations : | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------|----------|---|
| Action | Will this help to remove, promote and / or encourage? | Responsible officer | Deadline | How will this be embedded as business as usual? |
| | | | | |
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Approved by Assistant Director / Strategic Director: Ruth Luscombe

Date: 28/09/2022

Please send this EqIA to equalities@stevenage.gov.uk