



Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

1. Topic of assessment

EIA title	Corporate Complaints Procedure
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EIA author	Carole Comfort
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2. Approval

	Name	Date approved
Approved by	Susan Grizzelle	11/09/2017

3. Quality control

Version number	2	EIA completed	11/09/2017
Date saved	11/09/2017	EIA published	

4. EIA team

Name	Job title	Organisation	Team role
Carole Comfort	Project Officer	Surrey County Council	Customer Services
Sarah Bogunovic	Customer Relations and Service Improvement Manager	Surrey County Council	Customer Services

5. Explaining the matter being assessed

What policy, function or service is being introduced or reviewed?	Corporate complaints procedure
What proposals are you assessing?	The complaints handling procedure now requires corporate complaints to be made within 12 months of when the customer first became aware of the issue they are unhappy about. This is because it is easier to find out what happened and put things right, when complaints are received at the time something happens. It also brings the process in line with the timescales applied by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO). This means that customers who remain dissatisfied once they have exhausted the council's complaints procedure will be able to escalate their complaint to the LGO within accepted timescales.
Who is affected by the proposals outlined above?	Anybody who wants to complain about the council regarding a matter covered by the corporate complaints procedure.

6. Sources of information

Engagement carried out
<p>Engagement/awareness raising has taken place with corporate service complaints leads</p> <p>An awareness campaign has taken place across the organisation via the council's intranet</p> <p>The council's website has been updated to ensure members of the public are aware of the changes</p>
Data used
N/A

7. Impact of the new/amended policy, service or function

7a. Impact of the proposals on residents and service users with protected characteristics

Protected characteristic	Potential positive impacts	Potential negative impacts	Evidence
Age	None	None	None
Disability	None	May have a negative impact on complainants who, due to disability or poor health, could find it challenging to complain within the 12 month time limit.	None
Gender reassignment	None	None	None
Pregnancy and maternity	None	None	None
Race	None	None	None
Religion and belief	None	None	None
Sex	None	None	None
Sexual orientation	None	None	None
Marriage and civil partnerships	None	None	None
Carers (protected by association)	None	May have a negative impact on carers who, due to their caring responsibilities, could find it	None

challenging to complain within the 12 month time limit.

7b. Impact of the proposals on staff with protected characteristics

Protected characteristic	Potential positive impacts	Potential negative impacts	Evidence
Age	None	None	None
Disability	None	None	None
Gender reassignment	None	None	None
Pregnancy and maternity	None	None	None
Race	None	None	None
Religion and belief	None	None	None
Sex	None	None	None
Sexual orientation	None	None	None
Marriage and civil partnerships	None	None	None
Carers (protected by association)	None	None	None

8. Amendments to the proposals

Change	Reason for change

9. Action plan

Potential impact (positive or negative)	Action needed to maximise positive impact or mitigate negative impact	By when	Owner
<p>May have a negative impact on complainants who, due to disability or poor health, could find it challenging to complain within the 12 month time limit</p> <p>May have a negative impact on carers who, due to their caring responsibilities, could find it challenging to complain within the 12 month time limit</p>	<p>The time limit will be applied with discretion and will take into account any exceptional circumstances or specific reasons that may have impacted the customer's ability to make a complaint within the 12 month timescale.</p> <p>Any decision by a service not to accept a complaint by applying this time limit will need to be approved by the Customer Relations Team to ensure that any exceptional circumstances or specific reasons have been taken into account. This will also ensure that the time limit is applied fairly and consistently across the organisation.</p>		

10. Potential negative impacts that cannot be mitigated

Potential negative impact	Protected characteristic(s) that could be affected

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11. Summary of key impacts and actions

Information and engagement underpinning equalities analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement/awareness raising with corporate service complaints leads • Awareness campaign across the organisation via the council's intranet • The council's website has been updated to ensure members of the public are aware of the changes
Key impacts (positive and/or negative) on people with protected characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complainants who have a disability or poor health, and carers may find it challenging to complain within the 12 month time limit
Changes you have made to the proposal as a result of the EIA	
Key mitigating actions planned to address any outstanding negative impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The time limit will be applied with discretion and will take into account any special circumstances or specific reasons that may have impacted the customer's ability to make a complaint within the 12 month timescale. • Services applying the time limit will need to obtain approval from the Customer Relations Team to ensure that any exceptional circumstances or specific reasons have been taken into account.
Potential negative impacts that cannot be mitigated	N/A