

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EIA Version	Date	Author	Changes
1.0	10/02/2020	Andy Wilkins	

Stage 1: Title and aims of the activity (“activity” is an umbrella term covering policies, procedures, guidance and decisions including those that affect services the council delivers).	
Service	Business Services
Section	ICT
Title of the activity etc.	Robotic Process Automation (RPA)
Aims and desired outcomes of the activity	<p>Aims.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To purchase RPA software that allows the creation of a digital workforce able to perform low complexity repetitive computer-based tasks, 24/7. To automate a range of tasks initially in Business Services with a view to rolling out to all other services. <p>Outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential FTE financial savings. Increased accuracy of transactions – RPA virtual workers don’t make mistakes. Increased speed of transactions – in many cases the time taken to complete a transaction will cut by more than 50% meaning greater productivity and efficiency. Increased functionality of existing ICT systems. Upskilling of non-ICT staff in the tools for building new processes.
Author(s) & Title(s)	Andy Wilkins, ICT Business Analyst

Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment and explain what it means in relation to the activity you are assessing.

Evidence	What does it say?	What does it mean?
Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).	Little of this type of data available. A workshop was held, and a sample process was automated. The time taken to complete the process was reduced from 15 mins, to 2mins 18. The process is currently carried out approx. 400 times per month.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff involved in this process would be freed up to do other work. In this instance to clear a backlog of other work. • Decisions would need to be made about what would happen to these staff once the backlog is cleared. • The process can now be carried out 24/7
Internal consultation with staff and other services affected.	Initial workshops have openly involved employees from across Business Services in explaining the purpose of RPA and asking teams to participate in process identification. Initial support has been positive, with only 1 attendee asking how staff would be affected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of RPA and its affects may not be fully understood. • A decision will need to be made about whether savings are realised via FTE reduction, or staff are given other opportunities such as, redeployment.
External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils.	Consulted with other local authorities who are already using RPA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Council is only choosing processes where there are FTE savings. • Processes that start with people in protected characteristic groups such as payments from the Scottish Welfare fund or Social care requests could be dealt with more quickly, therefore be beneficial to those groups.
External data (census, available statistics).	N/A	
Other (general information as appropriate).	The Fairer Scotland Duty. "...consider ('pay due regard' to) how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions"	On a case by case basis, consideration needs to be given to whether staff on lower pay are negatively affected on a more frequent basis, than those on higher grades.

Stage 3: Evidence Gaps.	
Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold?	Not known at this stage if the automation of any processes in the future might potentially affect one of the protected groups or cause socio economic disadvantage.

Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps.		
What measures will be taken to fill the information gaps before the activity is implemented? These should be included in the action plan at the back of this form.	Measures:	Timescale:
	A Business Case would be carried out for each automation to determine the benefits and allow the equalities impact to be re-assessed.	

Stage 5: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups/areas?	
These should be included in the action plan.	There has been a very transparent and inclusive approach to identifying processes for automation, we have involved process owners, administrative staff and managers in understanding and supporting the overarching role of Automation. The business case outlines the implications of achieving savings through automation and explains that savings are tied to FTE reduction- and that this can be managed in a number of ways by services.

Stage 6: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?	

Stage 7a:	
Are there potential impacts on protected groups?	
The protected groups covered by the equality duty are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.	
Who is affected by the activity or who is intended to benefit from the proposed activity and how? Complete the table below for each protected group by inserting "yes" in the applicable box/boxes below.	

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown
Age – Younger			Yes	
Age - Older			Yes	
Disability			Yes	
Race – (includes Gypsy Travellers)			Yes	
Religion or Belief			Yes	
Sex			Yes	
Pregnancy and maternity			Yes	
Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual)			Yes	
Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender)			Yes	
Marriage and Civil Partnership			Yes	

Stage 7b: Do you have evidence or reason to believe that this policy, activity etc. will or may impact on socio-economic inequalities?

This is about trying to be fair to everyone. Part of that is realising that not everyone may be starting at the same place. Some individuals and families may have low income, may have very little or no savings which means they are living from month to month therefore changes to council policies/services may have a greater adverse impact on them.

On this basis you should consider potential impacts on individuals/families by:

- Place: on specific vulnerable areas or communities (SIMD, regeneration, rural) e.g. housing, transport.
- Pockets: household resources, (Income, benefits, outgoings) ability to access a service
- Prospects: peoples life chances e.g.access to, or ability to access: employment, training, services (such as council or health) or support.

Groups of people who may be impacted include, but not limited to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployed • Single parents and vulnerable families • People on benefits • Those involved in the criminal justice system • People in the most deprived communities • People who live in rural areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pensioners • Looked after children • Carers including young carers • Veterans • Students • Single adult households • People who have experienced the asylum system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those leaving the care setting including children and young people and those with illness • Homeless people • People with low literacy/numeracy • People with lower educational qualifications • People in low paid work • People with one or more protected characteristic
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Please complete by inserting “yes” in the applicable box/boxes below.

Socio-economic disadvantage	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown
Pockets: Low income/income poverty – cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing			Yes	

Pockets: Low and/or no wealth – enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future			Yes	
Pockets: Material deprivation – being unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies			Yes	
Place: Area deprivation – where you live, where you work			Yes	
Prospects: Socioeconomic background – social class i.e. parents education, employment and income , educational achievement.			Yes	

Stage 8: What are the positive and negative impacts?		
Impacts.	Positive (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)	Negative (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)
Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe those affected.		

Stage 9: Have any of the affected groups/areas been involved, engaged with or consulted?	
If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps?	

Stage 10: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts?		
These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form.	Mitigating Steps	Timescale

Stage 11: What monitoring arrangements will be put in place? How the EIA will be used to monitor the proposal	
These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).	Each process will be considered on a case by case basis, profiling of these groups would be done in partnership with HR.

Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?		
Please complete the appropriate box/boxes	1	No negative impacts have been identified –please explain.
	Each process will be looked at on a case by case basis, there may be some groups more affected than others,	
	2	Negative Impacts have been identified, these can be mitigated - please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen.

	3	The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen

* Stage 13: Set out the justification that the activity can and should go ahead despite the negative impact.

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Stage 14: Sign off and authorisation.

Sign off and authorisation.	1) Service and Team			
	2) Title of Policy/Activity	(if appropriate)		
	3) Authors: I/We have completed the equality impact assessment for this policy/activity.	Name: Andy Wilkins Position: ICT Business analyst Date: 12/02/20 Signature: Andy Wilkins	Name: Position: Date: Signature:	
		Name: Position: Date: Signature:	Name: Position: Date: Signature:	
	4) Consultation with Service Manager	Name: Colleen Henderson Date: 11/02/2020		
	5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service	Name: Position: Date:	Name: Position: Date:	
6) If the EIA relates to a matter that has to go before a Committee, Committee report author sends the Committee Report and this form, and any supporting assessment documents, to the Officers responsible for monitoring and the Committee Officer of the relevant Committee.			Date:	

	7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: equalities@aberdeenshire.gov.uk	Date:
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