

Web Access Policy

Evidence based equality analysis – can include documents, quotes, and web links for photos and videos

Main aims, purpose and outcomes and how does it fit in with the wider aims of the organisation:

We aim to make our digital channels as accessible as possible to all audiences in accordance with our commitment to promote equality and diversity and in order to meet our statutory obligations

The aims of our digital channels are to:

- make our digital services accessible to all users, ensuring they meet the needs of all users, and are viewable in the widest possible range of web-browsing technology.
- provide a wide range of information about council services – 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- provide users with a range of digital channel options to contact us about services – for example online forms, email and the use of web enabled applications.

Whilst we have endeavoured to make our digital channels as fully inclusive as possible we have found that there is no single solution that meets the needs of all users. We have built, and constantly review, the Cheshire West and Chester website, associated microsites, intranet and other digital channels following international standards and government guidelines for accessible web content. These guidelines are the BS 8878 and web content accessibility (WCAG) guidelines (version 2.0) 'Double A' standard as a minimum issued by World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)

Lead officer: Phil Orchard, Online Services Manager

Stakeholders: web steering group, people panel, internal staff, external customers, customer liaison group

Equality analysis is a valuable tool to help embed equality into everything we do

While process is important, equality analysis is essentially about outcomes

Lack of evidence of discrimination is not evidence of a lack of discrimination

It is not acceptable to say that a policy is applied uniformly to all groups and is therefore fair and equal. Applying a policy or procedure consistently may result in differential outcomes for different groups.

For each of the areas below, an assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a positive, negative or neutral impact, and brief details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation should be included. Where the impact is negative, this needs to be given a high, medium or low assessment. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact –some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

All Users: We have designed the website to meet relevant technical specifications and ensure that our web content is accessed and understood by as many people as possible.

- User-centric design - we have designed our interface around the needs of our users to make it easier for all users to find what they are looking for.
- Browser compatibility - we have built the website to make it accessible to all browsers.

Optimisation - our web pages and documents are optimised for the web - for users with slow internet connection. The website also provides further information about equality and diversity and signposting to information about the protected characteristics

	Neutral	Positive	Negative
Target group / area			
Race and ethnicity (Low) (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers, asylum seekers etc.)		Wherever possible, we divide large blocks of information into small chunks and work to publish information written in plain English. This is a common guideline for enhanced usability, but it also benefits users whose first language may not be English. A corporate arrangement for	

<p>Disability (High) (as defined by the Equality Act - a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)</p>		<p>provision of translation is in place.</p> <p>We have built our website so that it is accessible via assistive technologies. (Assistive technologies are technological devices used by people with disabilities to interact with the web, e.g. screen readers). We provide screen readers a way to skip the navigation, making it easier for visually impaired users to navigate the site.</p> <p>We offer alternate text for images.</p> <p>The website layout allows for the enlarging of text.</p> <p>We have checked that all of the colours used have a sufficient contrast.</p> <p>For users who may have difficulties using a mouse, the site can also be navigated using a keyboard only.</p> <p>Our links contain meaningful content (e.g. we do not use "click here"). We also notify users when a link opens in a new window.</p> <p>Corporate arrangement for provision of information in alternative formats available</p>	<p>We have identified an adverse impact caused by some of our older and graphical PDF documents. Users who may have problems accessing those PDFs would potentially have to request that content may be sent to them in an alternative format. To mitigate this issue, we provide some help on accessing PDFs on our help page</p>
<p>Gender (Low)</p>			
<p>Gender reassignment (Low)</p>			
<p>Religion and belief (Low)</p>			
<p>Sexual orientation (Low)</p>			

(including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual)			
Age (Medium) (children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults aged 25 – 50, younger older people aged 51 – 75/80; older older people 81+. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs)		Some of the arrangements related to accessibility apply	
Rural communities (Low)		Computers available in all libraries, posters are also displayed to advise of availability	Only communicated on-line or in libraries, need to widen communications to this group
Areas of deprivation (Low)		Computers available in all libraries, posters are also displayed to advise of availability	Only communicated on-line or in libraries, need to widen communications to this group
Human rights (Low)			
Health and wellbeing (Low) (consider both the wider determinants of health such as education, housing, employment, environment, crime and transport, as well as the possible impacts on lifestyles and the effect there may be on health and care services)			
Procurement/partnership (Low) (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance)			

Evidence:

Equality Act 2010, Public Sector Duty
Level 2 Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
BS 8878 Web Accessibility Code of Practice
Internal/external feedback channels about accessibility

Action plan:

Actions required	Key activity	Priority	Outcomes required	Officer responsible	Review date
<p>Continue the development of a fully accessible intranet</p> <p>Encourage user feedback:</p> <p>Ensure all commissioned websites are fully</p>	Development of a fully accessible intranet		Communications meet the needs of users with disabilities	Phil Orchard	February 2014
	Carry out user testing sessions with users with disabilities		Communications meet needs of users with disabilities	Phil Orchard	February 2014
	Analyse and address potential issues identified from testing and customer feedback		Communications meet needs of users	Phil Orchard	February 2014
	Maintain regular liaison with the customer experience team and marketing/communications to enhance users experience		Wider communications to external users regarding access e.g. availability of computers in libraries with particular emphasis to enhancing access to black and minority ethnic people, areas of deprivation and rural groups	Phil Orchard	February 2014
	Gather and analyse user stats, comments and feedback		Feedback used to address user issues/enhance access	Phil Orchard	February 2014
	Implementation of fully accessible microsites		Communications meet the needs of users with disabilities		July 2014

accessible					
Review all in-house and external web applications	Analyse and address potential accessibility issues		Communications meet the needs of users with disabilities		July 2014
Review equality and diversity information on the website	Ensure information is kept up to date		Accurate and appropriate information including signposting to further sources of information	Equality and Diversity Managers	Ongoing

Sign off	
Lead officer:	Phil Orchard
Approved by Head of Service:	Dermot Lacey
Moderation and/or Scrutiny	
Date:	Moderated at directorate equality group 10 December 2013
Date analysis to be reviewed based on rating (high impact – review in one year, medium impact - review in two years, low impact in three years)	One year