

Appendix 3b

**Equality Analysis (EA) (formally Equality Impact Assessment)
Record Form**

Revised April 2011

Department: Corporate

Team or Service Area Leading Assessment: HR Policy, Equality & Pay

Title of Policy/ Service or Function: British Sign Language (BSL) Charter

Proposals to introduce/ alter/ delete policy, service, expenditure:

Date of proposals: Spring 2015
Committee

Committee/Team: Executive

Lead Officer: Catherine Mugonyi

STEP 1 - IDENTIFYING THE PURPOSE OR AIMS

1. What type of policy, service or function is this?

Existing New/ proposed Changing/ updated

2. What is the aim and purpose of the policy, service or function?

To promote better access to public services for Deaf people; this helps the Council to meet its statutory Equality Objectives.

3. Please outline any proposals being considered.

For the Council to sign up to the five pledges of the BSL Charter:

1. Ensure access for Deaf people to information and services.
2. Promote learning and high quality teaching of British Sign Language.
3. Support Deaf children and families.
4. Ensure staff working with Deaf people can communicate effectively in British Sign Language.
5. Consult with our local Deaf community on a regular basis.

4. What outcomes do we want to achieve?

The Charter aims to help the Council to:

- Remove direct and indirect discrimination against Deaf people.
- Empower local Deaf communities.
- Resolve conflicts between service providers and Deaf people.
- Increase awareness of Deaf issues and BSL issues.
- Provide better educational opportunities for Deaf children.

The Charter also highlights good practice and will build Blackpool Council's capacity to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and build good relations with the Deaf community.

5. Who is the policy, service or function intended to help/ benefit?

The local Deaf community and visitors to Blackpool.

6. Who are the main stakeholders/ customers/ communities of interest?

The local Deaf community and visitors to Blackpool.

7. Does the policy, service or function have any existing aims in relation to Equality/ Diversity or community cohesion?

It support the Council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010:
To eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and build good relations with the Deaf community.

STEP 2 - CONSIDERING EXISTING INFORMATION AND WHAT THIS TELLS YOU

8. Please summarise the main data/ research and performance management information in the box below.

<i>Data/ information</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New specific consultation exercise conducted in Summer 2014. Internal and External consultation. • Dialogue with Blackpool Council Sensory Team • BSL Expenditure figures
<i>Research or comparative information</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Council Services for Older Deaf People in England and Wales, 2014, British Deaf Association.
<i>Key findings of consultation and feedback</i>	
Charter Pledge	Summary of actions identified
1	<p>Ensure access for Deaf people to information and services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure staff receive BSL Awareness/Deaf Equality training, including information about how to communicate with deaf people. • Use qualified and registered BSL/English interpreters. • Adapt public information to be more BSL accessible, for example on DVD or websites, and using technology such as SMS messaging, textphones, faxes and videophones/webcams. • Ensure all public information is accessible to deaf BSL users.
2	<p>Promote learning and high quality teaching of British Sign Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that we employ BSL teachers who are native or fluent in BSL and actively engaged with the Deaf community with a comprehensive knowledge of Deaf Culture. • Provide opportunities for parents/guardians to learn BSL with their children. • Ensure young Deaf people are offered the opportunity to improve and accredit their BSL learning.
3	<p>Support Deaf children and families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure teachers, teaching assistants, communication support workers and other staff working closely with Deaf children have, or are working towards advanced BSL signing skills.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for Deaf children to meet with Deaf peers and role models. • Raise awareness of BSL and Deaf culture within children’s services and education. • Ensure parents who are deaf are fully involves in our strategies for improving parenting skills.
4	<p>Ensure staff working with Deaf people can communicate effectively in British Sign Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness amongst front-line staff of the existing BSL interpreter booking procedure and Deaf awareness training. • Explore using different technology such as BSL information videos to assist with communication.
5	<p>Consult with our local Deaf community on a regular basis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building upon links made during this consultation exercise, establish ways for local Deaf groups to feed issues into the Council. • Commit to an annual/bi-annual open engagement event with the local deaf community.
<p>As a result of the internal consultation, it was noted that a significant number of areas for action are already being addressed. Signing the Charter would help to highlight and promote the work already taking place in the Council (such as that of the Sensory Team) and educational settings.</p>	
<p>A more detailed examination of the actions can be found in the full report</p>	

9. What are the impacts or effects for Key Protected Characteristics?

Age
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved access to BSL educational services for young Deaf people and their families. • Improved access to adult social care services for Older people
Disability
Better access to services for Deaf people.
Gender Reassignment
Marriage and Civil partnership
Pregnancy and Maternity
Race

Religion and Belief
Sex
Sexual Orientation

12. What do you know about how the proposals could affect community cohesion?

The proposals aim to give the Deaf community equal access to Council services. This should help to reduce feelings of exclusion and invisibility for Deaf people.

STEP 3 - ANALYSING THE IMPACT

13. Is there any evidence of higher or lower take-up by any group or community, and if so, how is this explained?

Deaf people generally have a much lower take-up rate of Council services due to an historical lack of suitable service adjustments such as Deaf awareness training and BSL provision.

14. Do any rules or requirements prevent any groups or communities from using or accessing the service?

The Charter aims to increase access.

15. Does the way a service is delivered/ or the policy create any additional barriers for any groups of disabled people?

The Charter aims to increase access, and will hopefully remove existing barriers to different services.

16. Are any of these limitations or differences “substantial” and likely to amount to unlawful discrimination?

Yes No **N/A**

If yes, please explain (referring to relevant legislation) in the box below

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17. If No, do they amount to a differential impact, which should be addressed?

Yes No **N/A**

If yes, please give details below.

STEP 4 - DEALING WITH ADVERSE OR UNLAWFUL IMPACT

18. What can be done to improve the policy, service, function or any proposals in order to reduce or remove any adverse impact or effects identified?

The Charter itself does not contain any adverse impacts. However, some may be identified when examining individual services. It is anticipated that dialogue with the Deaf community and the BDA and monitoring within the Charter action plan will allow us to remove these.

19. What would be needed to be able to do this? Are the resources likely to be available?

As a result of the internal consultation, it was noted that a significant number of areas for action are already being addressed. Signing the Charter would help to highlight and promote the work already taking place in the Council (such as that of the Sensory Team) and educational settings.

20. What other support or changes would be necessary to carry out these actions?

None anticipated

STEP 5 - CONSULTING THOSE AFFECTED FOR THEIR VIEWS

21. What feedback or responses have you received to the findings and possible courses of action? Please give details below.

As Q8.

22. If you have not been able to carry out any consultation, please indicate below how you intend to test out your findings and recommended actions.

N/A

STEP 6 - ACTION PLANNING

Please outline your proposed action plan below.

Issues/ adverse impact identified	Proposed action/ objectives to deal with adverse impact	Targets/Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility	Indicate whether agreed
To tackle any adverse impacts that are identified within Individual services in the course of auctioning the Charter.	Record impact in BSL Charter Action Plan Offer assistance from Equality Officer, BDA and Deaf Consultation Group	To be identified as impact is identified.	To resolve 2 months from identification	Service Manager	
				(type to expand box)	
				(type to expand box)	
				(type to expand box)	

STEP 7 - ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND REVIEW

Please outline your arrangements for future monitoring and review below.

Agreed action	Monitoring arrangements	Timeframe	Responsibility	Added to Service Plan etc.

Date completed: 16/12/2014

Signed:

Name: Catherine Mugonyi

Position: Equality Officer