

**Birmingham City Council - Equality Impact Assessment Budget Savings
Proposal 2020+**

Title of proposed EIA

DC010 SMS Text Messaging Factsheet (EQUA410)

EIA is in support of

New Service

Directorate

Digital and Customer Services

Service Area

Responsible Officer

Simon J Field

Purpose of proposal

During 2018/19 the Revenues Service issued approximately 170,000 reminder notices where the citizen had missed their payment and 8,000 letters for broken their special payment arrangement. It is proposed to make greater use of text messaging

What sources of information/data have been used to produce the screening of this policy/proposal?

PLEASE ASSESS THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF YOUR PROPOSAL ON THE FOLLOWING PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Age

Service Users / Stakeholders

Some older people may be less familiar with mobile phones and text messaging.

The SMS reminder would not replace the official paper reminder, the SMS would be sent 7 days ahead of the paper reminder to prompt the customer to pay again. The SMS would enclose a payment link making it must easier for the customer to pay there and then in the hope that the paper reminder would then no longer need to be sent. This costs savings attached to the proposal are around not having to send the paper reminders as the payment would have been received through the SMS.

Therefore the impact on the older generation will be negligible as they'll still get the paper reminder.

Disability

Service Users / Stakeholders

Some people with disabilities may not use mobile phones and text messaging and not be able to access this.

The SMS reminder would not replace the official paper reminder, the SMS would be sent 7 days ahead of the paper reminder to prompt the customer to pay again. The SMS would enclose a payment link making it must easier for the customer to pay there and then in the hope that the paper reminder would then no longer need to be sent. This costs savings attached to the proposal are around not having to send the paper reminders as the payment would have been received through the SMS.

Therefore the impact on the older generation will be negligible as they'll still get the paper reminder.

Sex

Not Applicable

Gender Reassignment

Not Applicable

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Not Applicable

Pregnancy and Maternity

Not Applicable

Race

Some non-English speakers may be unable use mobile phones and text messaging and not be able to access this.

The SMS reminder would not replace the official paper reminder, the SMS would be sent 7 days ahead of the paper reminder to prompt the customer to pay again. The SMS would enclose a payment link making it must easier for the customer to pay there and then in the hope that the paper reminder would then no longer need to be sent. This costs savings attached to the proposal are around not having to send the paper reminders as the payment would have been received through the SMS.

We will monitor and review services to address any adverse impacts.

Religion or Beliefs

Not Applicable

Sexual Orientation

Not Applicable

Please indicate any actions arising from completing this initial screening exercise

Further work will be done to evaluate the impact of SMS use with older people and those with disabilities and to ensure sufficient mitigation is in place.

Please indicate whether a full impact assessment is recommended

NO

If a full assessment is required please complete sections below:

What information/data has been collected to facilitate the assessment of this policy/proposal?

Any consultation analysis

Is there any adverse impact/s on any people with protected characteristics?

No

If yes, please explain your reasons for going ahead with your proposal?

Could the policy/proposal be modified to reduce or eliminate any adverse impact on any particular protected equality group(s)?

How will the effect(s) of this policy/proposal on equality be monitored?

What data is required in the future to ensure effective monitoring of this policy/proposal?

Consulted people or groups

Informed people or groups

As the SMS messages are sent out with a prompt for payment in advance of paper records it is hoped that this prompt will remove the need to then send out a paper letter. For those unable to engage with SMS messages they will still receive the paper reminder still so there should be detrimental impact.

Summary and evidence of findings from EIA

As the SMS messages are sent out with a prompt for payment in advance of paper records it is hoped that this prompt will remove the need to then send out a paper letter. For those unable to engage with SMS messages they will still receive the paper reminder still so there should be detrimental impact

DATE: 11/10/2019

