

South Cambridgeshire District Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Introduction – Please read

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) allow the Council to:

- Show that the Council are meeting its legal duty, demonstrating due regard for the provisions of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) as below:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
 - Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Methodically consider and assess the impacts of proposals across the [nine protected characteristics](#)
- Allow the Council to develop and implement high quality proposals that maximise positive outcomes for all.

EqIAs should be completed during the development and review of all Council policies, strategies, procedures, projects or functions. Where there is any doubt, the completion of an EqIA is always recommended.

When the form is completed, please send an electronic copy to equality.schemes@scambs.gov.uk. Further support and guidance, [including a video on how to fill out EqIAs](#), is available on Insite or you can contact the Policy and Performance Team.

Equality Impact Assessment Complete Form

Section 1: Identifying Details

- 1.1 Officer completing EqIA:
Michael Hill
- 1.2 Team and Service:
Transformation – Project Management Office
- 1.3 Title of proposal:
Organisational Management System Pilot Project
- 1.4 EqIA start date:
01/04/2024
- 1.5 Proposal implementation date:
01/04/2024
- 1.6 Who will be responsible for implementing this proposal (Officer and/or Team):
Project Management Office (Tom Garner & Michael Hill)

Section 2: Proposal to be Assessed

- 2.1 Type of proposal:
Function
If other, please specify
[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
- 2.2 Is the proposal:
New
- 2.3 State the date of any previous equality impact assessment completed in relation to this proposal (if applicable):
[Click or tap to enter a date.](#)

2.4 What are the headline aims of the proposal and the objectives that will help to accomplish these aims? (Max 250 words)

As part of our role in supporting the Council's commitment to continuous improvement, transformation, and general good practice, the Project Management Office (PMO) aims to help equip officers with the best tools possible. The Council's existing system, PM3, has been found to be unfit for purpose and, as such, the PMO has begun investigation into an alternative system to provide both project management support and wider organisational function support (i.e., organisational risk). The current EqIA relates to the implementation of a pilot project for the system Smartsheet, which will be trialled among a select group of officers in order to establish its effectiveness and suitability as a system in meeting the needs of the organisation. Outside of the financial benefits, in that Smartsheet results in significant savings compared to PM3, Smartsheet provides noted improvements to accessibility compared to PM3. Additionally, Smartsheet is more user friendly and understandable for those who may have limited technological skill, allowing a wider range of people to utilise the system than was possible before.

2.5 Which of the Council's equality objectives (as detailed in the Council's Equality Scheme) does this proposal link to or help to achieve?

- Identify, prioritise and deliver actions that will narrow the gap in outcomes between disadvantaged groups and the wider community
- SCDC is an employer that values difference and recognises the strength that a diverse workforce brings.
- Protected characteristic groups have a voice and are represented in forming the future shape of the district.
- None.

2.6 Which groups or individuals will the proposal affect:

- Service Users
- Employees
- External Stakeholders
- Councillors

Other

If other, please specify [Click or tap here to enter text](#).

2.7 Broadly speaking, how will these groups or individuals be affected? (you will be asked to provide more detail on the specific impacts on different protected characteristic groups later in the form) (max 250 words)

We recognise that South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) employs a diverse workforce that all have their own expertise, skill sets, and challenges. The previous system employed by the Council, PM3, had issues surrounding accessibility, whereas Smartsheet is fully compliant with the Section 508 Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, at level AA. Additionally, Smartsheet makes a commitment to continuous improvement of accessibility. This will allow individuals with additional accessibility requirements to be able to utilise the system to its fullest during the trial. Additionally, one of feedback regularly raised in relation to PM3 was that it was not user-friendly. By switching over to a new, more customisable system, we should be able to ensure that those who were struggling to use the system before are able to do so more confidently and without assistance than previously.

2.8 If any part of the proposal is being undertaken by external partners, please specify how the Council will ensure that they will meet equality standards? (Max 250 words)

As mentioned above, the supplier for the new system to be piloted, Smartsheet, states that is fully WCAG 2.1 compliant and that it commits to continuous development to ensure that it remains an accessible product. Please see the Accessibility page on the smartsheet website for more information.

Section 3: Evidence and Data

3.1 Describe any work you have done (this could include consultation) to understand any effects on groups of people, including those within [9 protected](#)

[characteristic groups?](#) Please list any key sources (e.g. web-search, previous versions of document, customer feedback etc) that you used to reach your conclusions.

(Max 250 words)

Before the decision was made to move away from our previous supplier, interviews and surveys were carried out in order to understand our users experience with the system. This included questions about usability. Whilst nobody interviewed had any additional accessibility needs which were known to the PMO, there were still comments made about the lack of user friendliness which limited engagement with the system. As such, during our procurement exercise for a new organisational management system, potential user friendliness was a key consideration.

3.2 If you have not undertaken any consultation, please detail why not, or when consultation is planned to take place.

(Max 250)

Smartsheet is not yet fully implemented and still requires some development from the PMO in order to bring it to an organisational standard. As such, there has only been very limited user feedback on the system. However, once the system is implemented and more widely used among the teams in the organisation, we will be better able to gather feedback from users. This will allow us to adapt the system as necessary in order to ensure that it remains accessible and useable for all of our users.

Section 4: Impact of proposal on those with protected characteristics

4.1 Please select all characteristics that may or will be impacted (positive or negative). When providing details of the impact please consider the following questions

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative



- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. (both the number of persons affected and the severity of the impact)
- you will be asked to set out actions to manage these impacts in the following question (4.2)

All - general to all protected Characteristics.

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Age

Details: It is understood that older adults are more likely, in general, to face challenges when using technology than younger adults. As such, older individuals may be excluded from being able to access the same tools as their younger colleagues, which may affect performance. By moving towards a new system that has better user friendliness, it is more likely that individuals of all ages will be able to utilise the system to its fullest. Additionally, it is recognised that, although the new system provides a marked improvement in user friendliness, a change in system may still offer up issues for those who are less digitally confident. Recognising this, the PMO will offer in person or online training sessions for all individuals, on a one-to-one basis if needed, alongside its offering of training videos and handbooks in order to support different styles of learning.

Disability

Details: The Council's previous system, PM3, was limited in its accessibility. As such, any individuals with disabilities which required them to use technological assistance when using digital technology may have been disadvantaged. In comparison, Smartsheet is WCAG 2.1 compliant and commits to continuous development of its service. Whilst we know of no specific examples of where people have been disenfranchised, the PMO recognises the need to take steps to minimise this risk going forward and to ensure equal access to any new system.

Gender reassignment

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Marriage and Civil Partnership



Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Pregnancy and maternity

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Race

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Religion and belief

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Sex

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Sexual orientation

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

None of the above

4.2 Other characteristics

Some characteristics are not yet protected in law, but the Council has made declarations it will consider them in policy making.

Digital inclusion ([what is this?](#))

Details: Smartsheet is for internal use only and as such will be used by staff who would all have access to devices to access the system, broadband connections etc. Therefore, there is no significant risk of digital exclusion having an impact on the service. Training and guides will be available in person and virtually to support different learning styles of colleagues.

Care experience ([what is this?](#))

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Rurality

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Socio-economic



Details [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

4.3 Considering the above impacts you have identified above, please detail any actions (specific or general) which may help to enhance or mitigate impacts.

Please include the timescale for completing the action.

Action and timescale	Officer
Launch the Smartsheet pilot to a select number of teams, including those who had issues with the usability of the system previously. This will occur by December 2024, once work has been completed to develop the system.	Tom Garner / Michael Hill
Provide training and guides to individuals and teams who will be utilising Smartsheet in order to ensure that all officers are able to access and use the system to the same level of confidence.	Michael Hill
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

4.4 How will you monitor that the above actions have been completed and that this proposal, once implemented, is impacting fairly on everyone it affects? In answering this question, please include information about feedback you will seek and/or data you will collect and analyse, and how often you will do this

Once the pilot is live, feedback will be continuously sought from users in order to ensure that Smartsheet is meeting the needs of the organisation and of the people who utilise it. This will be done through both structured means, such as project team meetings and surveys, as well as through informal feedback through conversations with staff.

Section 5: Summary

5.1 Briefly summarise the key findings of the EqIA and any significant equality considerations that should be taken into account when deciding how to proceed with the proposal (this section can be included within the 'equality implications' section of any committee reports). (Max. 250 words)

The Smartsheet pilot project, which will replace the Council's current project management system PM3, will provide significant benefits to users. Unlike PM3, Smartsheet meets the WCAG 2.1 standards for accessibility, as well as providing a more user friendly experience for our officers. This should allow more officers to utilise the system to its full capacity.

5.2 Confirm the recommendation of the officer completing the EqIA:

Proceed with the proposal (with any actions identified as required within Section 4 of the EqIA). Analysis demonstrates that the proposal is robust, we have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.

Reject the proposal: Analysis demonstrates that the proposal will cause unlawful discrimination and it must be removed or changed

Section 6: Sign Off

6.1 Signature of individual completing EqIA:

MICHAEL HILL

6.2 Date of completion:

15/07/2024

6.3 When will this proposal next be reviewed and who will this be? (when in doubt 3 years minimum)



This proposal will be reviewed once a decision has been made about the future of the system, once the initial pilot is completed. This is expected to fall within the 25/26 financial year and will be completed by the PMO

6.4 Approving officer signature *, this should be your Head of Service, Service Area Manager, or Project Sponsor:

PHIL BIRD

6.5 Date of approval:

13/08/2024

Please send the completed document to Equality.Schemes@scambs.gov.uk for publishing on the website.

**in the event that this EqIA is completed by Head of Service, then no additional approving signature is required.*