

## **Stage 1: Equality Impact Assessment**

### **1. What are the main aims purpose and outcomes of the Policy and how do these fit with the wider aims of the organization?**

We intend to transform the current museum service through the redevelopment and redisplay of the museum building in St Faith's Street. This will be done by:

- Redesigning the layout of galleries in the museum to improve the coherence of exhibition areas and wayfinding for visitors
- Improving physical access throughout the museum
- Telling stories related to previously under-represented communities and individuals
- Co-producing stories and exhibitions with groups and residents in the borough

This work fulfils the Strategic Objective "A Thriving Place" and its subsection "A vibrant leisure and culture offer enjoyed by residents and attractive to visitors". In addition it meets the cross-cutting theme, "Respect the Heritage of the Borough."

### **2. How do these aims affect our duty to:**

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited by the act.**
- **Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.**
- **Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.**

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The project will allow members of previously under-represented communities and those sharing a protected characteristic to share their stories, opinions and experiences through the stories told in the new displays. We will actively seek out unheard voices to take part in our project alongside residents who do not share these characteristics and whose voices are currently in a

majority in the museum displays.

Our work to improve accessibility will, so far as we are able within the confines of a listed building, allow visitors with physical disabilities, visual and hearing impairments and other disabilities, to make their way around the building independently.

- **Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.**

Featuring the stories of an explicitly more diverse selection of people will increase awareness of people sharing protected characteristics among those who do not and help to lessen a sense of 'otherness'.

Co-production activities will also bring people together in the same physical space and solving problems in common.

### **3. What aspects of the policy including how it is delivered or accessed could contribute to inequality?**

There is a risk that, if the project is carried out in a half-hearted way, that a tokenistic or unrepresentative result may be enshrined in the galleries, that people will feel alienated that they are not properly represented and that promises have not been kept.

There is a risk that financial constraints will not allow for the full adaptations necessary to allow physical access to all parts of the building.

### **4. Will the policy have an impact (positive or negative) upon the lives of people, including particular communities and groups who have protected characteristics? What evidence do you have for this?**

There are a number of academic papers which show that lack of representation in museum displays leads to exclusion of people sharing protected characteristics. In short, people do not want to be where they do not see people like themselves because they do not feel welcomed. Increasing representation in displays, exhibitions and events leads to increased used by these under-represented groups.

Simple steps such as making explicit mention of policies, procedures or facilities can help to remove this barrier e.g. Allowing breast feeding in the museum meets current legal requirements but identifying areas with suitable furniture etc is an explicit statement of welcome. The redevelopment team will actively look for opportunities to include these features.

If the answer to the second question has identified potential impacts and you have answered yes to any of the remaining questions then you should carry out a full EQIA set out as stage 2 below.

### **Stage 2: Equality Impact Assessment**

<b>Name of Policy/Service/Function</b>
Transformation of Maidstone Museum
<b>Purpose</b>
To create a high quality museum service, a sustainable and resilient organisation which cares for and creates access to our collections for present and future generations. We will do this in an environment that inspires, educates and challenges visitors and users. We will ensure that the museum is accessible to everyone and has the power to transform lives through the use of collections. Our workforce will be forward thinking and innovative and work to national standards.
<b>Who defines and manages it?</b>
The Museum Director has final responsibility for defining and managing the project but it will be carried out in partnership with members, stakeholders such as Maidstone Museum Foundation, community and interest groups and individual residents.
<b>Who do you intend to benefit from it and how?</b>

We intend residents of Maidstone and visitors to the area to benefit. We will ensure this by offering a variety of opportunities for members of the public to get involved in planning and co-production whilst we will specifically target inclusion in the project of individuals and groups sharing protected characteristics.

We have previously worked with the following groups and will do so again whilst working with new partners we will recruit for this project:

- Kent Association for the Blind
- KCC LGBTQI Youth Hub
- The Maidstone Nepalese Women's Group
- Involve
- Maidstone Interfaith Network

**What could prevent people from getting the most out of the policy / service / function?**

Lack of opportunity to take part

Participants' input ignored

Lack of clarity for participants causing false expectations

**How will you get your customers involved in the analysis and how will you tell people about it?**

We have already carried out 7 public consultation sessions around the borough and online. A feedback wall in the museum which allows visitors to share their opinions on what we are planning.

We will carry out further consultation at different stages of the project including the use of advisory panels, focus groups and feedback opportunities.

We have agreed the use of an empty shop in Fremlin's Walk where we will offer fun ways to contribute people's own stories and ideas to the project. We will also use it as a base for work with community groups.

We have applied for a grant to fit out the shop and are seeking £600 to promote and share the work going on. We use social media and traditional marketing techniques currently.

<p><b>Evidence</b></p>
<p>We will be preparing a bid for the National Lottery Heritage Fund. At its most basic level, evidence that we have been successful would be to receive funding for the wider project.</p> <p>As part of our development period, we will recruit a professional museum evaluation consultant to carry out qualitative and quantitative evaluation of people’s experience in working on the period.</p> <p>The success of our recruitment to advisory panels, voluntary roles and engagement in shop will also show how successful we are.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500 non-staff people engaged with the development of the project</li> <li>• Participants report a positive experience</li> <li>• Participants representing all of the protected characteristics will be involved in co-production</li> <li>• Diversity of representation in the museum will increase</li> <li>• Support for a transformed museum will be visible in local media and among residents</li> </ul>
<p><b>How satisfied are your customers and how do you know?</b></p>
<p>Current visitors are somewhat satisfied with the service but not as satisfied as they could be. Visitor figures are currently growing after dropping off but this is likely to be because of increased numbers of activities and events. Minority groups and those with protected characteristics are under-represented in terms of visitors, volunteers and staff at the museum.</p> <p>We gather evidence from customer surveys, comments books and online reviews such as Trip Advisor.</p>
<p><b>What existing data do you have on the people that use the service</b></p>

<b>and the wider population?</b>
We have demographic information from customer feedback forms. This is limited in terms of numbers. We compare it to the council's own data from censuses.
<b>What other information would it be useful to have? How could you get this?</b>
Information on the number of non-visible ethnic minorities, EU immigrant community members.
<b>Are you breaking down data by equality groups where relevant (such as by gender, age, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital status, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity)?</b>
Yes
<b>Are you using partners, stakeholders, and councillors to get information and feedback?</b>
Yes
<b>Impact</b>
Are some people benefiting more – or less - than others? If so, why might this be?
So far much of our work has been with self-selecting audiences and so these

have perpetuated existing inequalities.

Our targeted work will help to correct this.

**Actions**

**If the evidence suggests that the policy / service / function benefits a particular group – or disadvantages another - is there a justifiable reason for this and if so, what is it?**

N/A

**Is it discriminatory in any way?**

No. There will be a variety of ways to get involved and we will take specific steps to recruit those under-represented at the moment

**Is there a possible impact in relationships or perceptions between different parts of the community?**

We anticipate that working with different groups will increase understanding across groups and among staff and volunteers.

**What measures can you put in place to reduce disadvantages?**

Grant funding means we will not charge for activities and we will bid for money to allow personal access requirements such as transport or adaptive equipment.

We will seek to advertise opportunities in a variety of places where a diverse audience are more likely to see it and respond.

**Do you need to consult further?**

<p>Yes. There will be an on-going consultation during the whole project. Our human centred design approach requires us to test ideas and gain feedback to iterate the next stage of development.</p>
<p><b>Have you identified any potential improvements to customer service?</b></p>
<p>We will provide improvements by the reconfiguring of elements within the building, training and developing staff and reacting to customer feedback.</p>
<p><b>Who should you tell about the outcomes of this analysis?</b></p>
<p><i>Members of ERL committee</i></p>
<p><b>Have you built the actions into your Service Plan or Policy Implementation Plan with a clear timescale?</b></p>
<p><i>The development of our Transformation plan and bid for funding is the basis of our Service Plan.</i></p>
<p><b>When will this assessment need to be repeated?</b></p>
<p><i>It will need to be repeated if we receive Stage 1(development) funding and then when we bid for Stage 2 (construction) funding</i></p>