

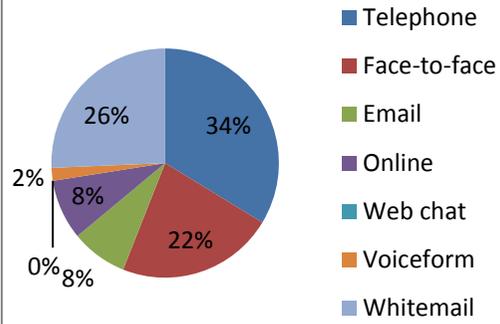
<b>Name of the activity being assessed</b>	Revenues and Benefits digitalisation project				
<b>Directorate / Department</b>	Finance	<b>Service</b>	Revenues and Benefits	<b>Assessment lead</b>	Andy Ormerod
<b>Is this a new or existing activity?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing	<b>Responsible manager / director for the assessment</b>		Andy Ormerod / Louise Mattinson	
<b>Date EIA started</b>	12/10/2016	<b>Implementation date of the activity</b>		01/03/2017	

**SECTION 1 - ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITY**

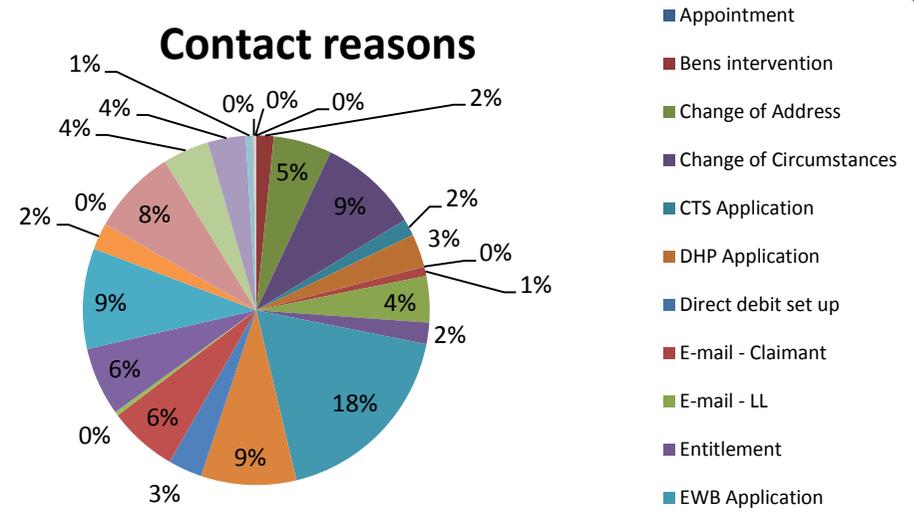
<b>How was the need for this activity identified?</b>	<p>In November 2012, the Government published its first digital strategy setting out how Government aims to become 'digital by default'. This strategy includes redesigning services to make them 'so straightforward and convenient that all those who can use them will choose to do so whilst those who can't are not excluded'.</p> <p>Blackburn with Darwen BC fully appreciates that the introduction of new technology across all areas of our lives has fundamentally changed the way in which customers interact. The Council through the Digital Vision document and three key strategies has now committed itself to working and delivering services in ways which keep pace with modern technology.</p> <p>In response to the Digital vision, the Revenues and Benefits Service has now outlined a roadmap to address the challenges of delivering technology and ensuring that the maximum benefit is derived for the Council.</p> <p>The transfer of the Revenues and Benefits service back from Capita did ensure that a full review of the system and hosting arrangements was undertaken. After evaluating the options, it was agreed that Northgate would host the computer systems. Included in the software licences and hosting arrangement is the availability of a number of digital modules.</p> <p>The digital modules provided by Northgate include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Paperless billing;</li> <li>▪ On-line Council Tax and Business Rate accounts;</li> <li>▪ Landlord portal, and;</li> <li>▪ Integrated on-line forms</li> </ul> <p>To deliver the maximum savings from the on-line and self-serve options, the implementation of the modules needs to be accompanied by a fundamental change to how we deal with many customer interactions and the adoption of</p>
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	<p>'Digital First' as an ethos within Revenues and Benefits</p> <p>In addition to adapting services in line with the Council's own vision a major driver towards 'digital first' is the significant potential cost savings. National research from 120 Local Authorities estimates that the cost of contact for face to face transactions is approximately £8.62, for telephone contact that reduces to £2.83 and for web contact the cost can be as low as 15p.</p>
<p><b>What is the activity looking to achieve?</b></p> <p><b>What are the aims and objectives?</b></p>	<p>The aim of this activity aligns with the overall Council digital strategy of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delivering cost effective and high quality systems and services to employees, partners and customers,</li> <li>▪ Provide higher quality and more efficient levels of service at reduced operating costs,</li> <li>▪ Meet growing customer demand for digital services,</li> <li>▪ Respond quicker to changing customer, business and legislative requirements, and</li> <li>▪ Work more collaboratively and effectively with partner organisations</li> <li>▪ Reduce the amount of double handling and delays in Council Tax, Business Rates and Benefits assessment.</li> <li>▪ Automate and provide financial savings to the council.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Services currently provided (if applicable)</b></p>	<p>Current contact channels for Revenues and Benefits customers include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Face to face</li> <li>▪ Email</li> <li>▪ Website</li> <li>▪ Eforms</li> <li>▪ Telephone</li> <li>▪ Social media, and</li> <li>▪ Post / white mail</li> <li>▪ Webchat</li> </ul> <p>In 2015/16, service users contacted the Council as follows, and for the following reasons –</p>

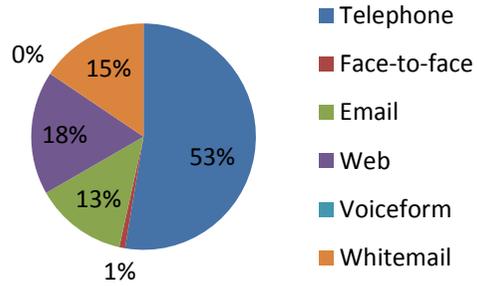
### Benefits



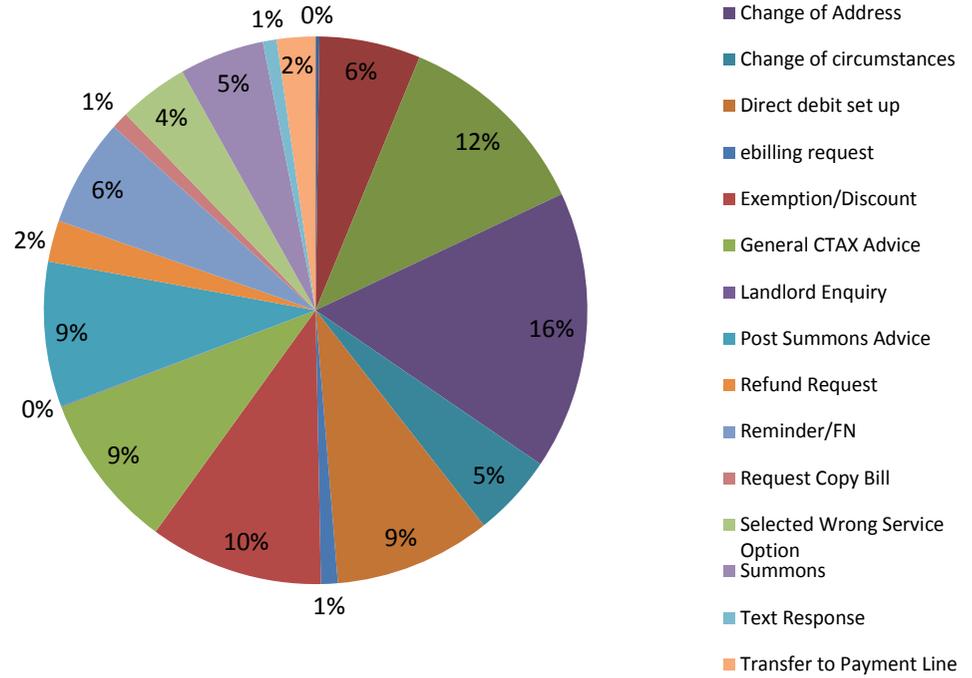
### Contact reasons



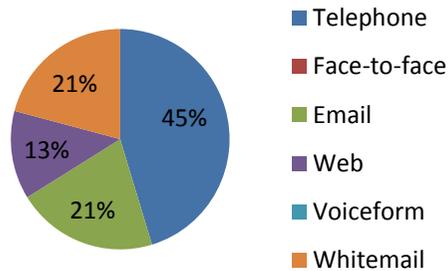
### Council tax



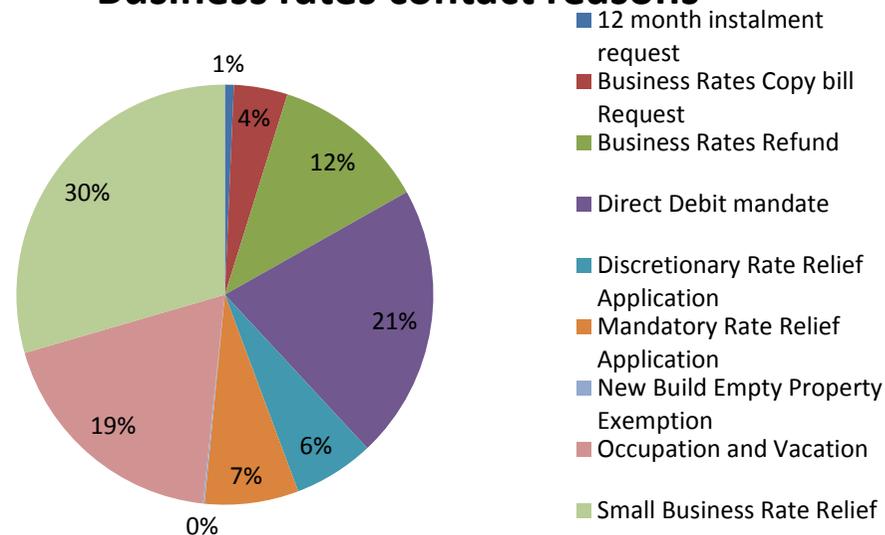
### Council tax contact reasons



### Business rates



### Business rates contact reasons



The objective of the Revenues and Benefits service will be to maintain all the available channels listed above but following the introduction of modules, migrate many service users to the digital ones.

**Please outline recommendations that have been identified for implementation following a review of the activity.**

As part of the wider Digital Customer Strategy, the following recommendations have been identified for implementation -

In respect of system modules, the following are recommended for implementation:

- **PAPERLESS/EBILLING, ERECOVERY & ON-LINE ACCOUNT**
  - This module will introduce the option for customers to register for an on-line account, and/or paperless/e-billing. All bills will be issued electronically as will reminders for non-payment.

The on-line account will also allow all simple queries to be self-served by the customer.
- **REVENUES INTEGRATED EFORMS**
  - This module will replace a number of existing e-forms with fully integrated ones that transfer all the information directly from the form into the main Council tax and Business Rates system. These improved forms will not require the keying of data and instead only require a brief check of the data before being authorised.
- **BENEFITS INTEGRATED FORMS**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This module will allow all new claims and change in circumstances to be completed online then integrated into the database with minimum review by a member of staff.</li> <li>▪ <b>LANDLORD PORTAL</b> This module will replace the documentation currently issued to landlords regarding Housing Benefit payments. In addition, all enquiries from landlords can be self-served through the portal.</li> </ul> <p>In respect of policies and procedures, the following are recommended for implementation:</p> <p>In order for the council to maximise customer take up of on-line/ self-service options, and deliver the necessary savings within the department, a number of policies and procedures do require amendment. The recommended changes are outlined below:</p> <p><b>Council Tax and Business Rates</b></p> <p>The analysis of customer contact for these two areas does clearly show that a substantial amount of customer contact is in respect of simple straightforward enquiries, for example, the amount outstanding on an account, the band of a property, requests for copy bills etc. The other common area of contact relates to applications or requests for discounts or exemptions. As all of these enquiries can be made via the new on line account, it is recommended that all future customer requests of this type are directed to the on-line account.</p> <p><b>Housing Benefits and Council Tax Support</b></p> <p>The Benefits service has already adopted the default position of applications for new claims and changes in circumstances being on-line. In order to maximise the savings and efficiencies, we would also propose to model the Council Tax and Business Rates approach and inform customers who require simple and straightforward enquiries to access the information on-line.</p> <p>In addition to promoting and directing customers to the on-line solutions, the Council Tax and Business Rates teams will also look to proactively use email addresses previously supplied by customers.</p>
<b>Type of activity</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Budget changes <input type="checkbox"/> Decommissioning <input type="checkbox"/> New activity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change to existing activity <input type="checkbox"/> Commissioning <input type="checkbox"/> Other [ <a href="#">please state here</a> ]

**Who else will be involved in undertaking the equality analysis and impact assessment?**

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholds>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-digital-strategy>  
 Blackburn with Darwen Digital Customer Strategy 2016-2019  
 Revenues and Benefits contact summary 2015-2016  
<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service/encouraging-people-to-use-your-digital-service>  
<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/measuring-success/measuring-digital-take-up>  
<http://disabilityactionalliance.org.uk/projects-3/digital-inclusion/>  
<http://www.citizenonline.org.uk/digital-inclusion-longitudinal-research-study/>  
 Blackburn with Darwen – Digital Vision  
 Blackburn with Darwen – Digital Strategies

**Who are you consulting with? How are you consulting with them? *(Please insert any information around surveys and consultations undertaken)***

Whilst public consultation has not been sought on the changes to service delivery, a number of discussions have taken place with key voluntary and charity organisations within the Borough, namely, Shelter and Age UK.

The discussions have taken the form of face to face discussions with the two organisations mentioned above.

<b>Who does the activity impact upon?*</b>	Service users	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Indirectly		
	Members of staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Indirectly		
	General public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Indirectly		
	Carers or families	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Indirectly		
	Partner organisations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Indirectly		
<b>Does the activity impact positively or negatively on any of the protected characteristics as stated within the Equality Act (2010)?*</b>  <b>The groups in blue are not protected characteristics (please refer to p. 3 of the guidance notes)</b>	Positive impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy & maternity
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Deprived communities</b>
	Negative impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy & maternity
		<input type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Deprived communities</b>
	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/> Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage & Civil	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy & maternity

				reassignment	Partnership	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Deprived communities

**\*If no impact is identified on any of the protected characteristics a full EIA may not be required. Please contact your departmental Corporate Equality & Diversity representative for further information.**

Does the activity contribute towards meeting the Equality Act's general Public Sector Equality Duty?	
DUTY	DOES THE ACTIVITY MEET THIS DUTY? EXPLAIN
<p><b>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act</b>  <i>(i.e. the activity removes or minimises disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristic)</i></p>	<p><b>Age</b>            In addition to the impacts stated below under 'all characteristics', younger generations are more confident in using digital technology and express a desire to use it in services they use.</p> <p>Whilst some older people may be less inclined to adopt the new channels, there are significant numbers of users nationally, in addition, the new channels can assist people who may be less mobile.</p> <p>The 24/7 nature of the services also means that extended family members can help older relatives outside of usual working hours.</p> <p>It is worth noting that Blackburn with Darwen has one of the highest proportions of young people aged 0-19 years compared to England and Wales local authorities. Within Blackburn with Darwen 42,500 residents fall into this age group, which represents 30% of all residents, compared with the national average of 24%.</p> <p>In addition, over 6,200 of the residents live in rural villages in the East Rural and North Turton with Tockholes wards. (Source ONS).</p> <p><b>Disability</b>            Digital technology helps to empower some disabled customers and especially those who have reduced mobility.</p> <p><b>Religion or belief</b>            The intrinsic values of some religions such as Judaism (Sabbath) and Islam (Ramadan) limit times of the day or week when a visit to the Council offices may be possible. The 24/7 availability of the programme may assist in transacting with the Council during these times.</p> <p><b>English not as a first language</b>            The use of simply worded transaction questions and buttons means that it is relatively easy to transact</p>

	<p><b>Deprived communities</b>          Whilst not everyone will have access to broadband or on-line facilities, there are locations throughout the area where customers can use such facilities, free of charge. This includes the Town Hall in Blackburn and Darwen, libraries, sports and community centres. Many retail outlets also provide free Wi-Fi access including Blackburn Market and the Mall.</p>
<p><b>Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not</b>  <i>(i.e. the activity takes steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people)</i></p>	<p><b>Age</b>          In addition to the impacts stated below under ‘all characteristics’, younger generations are more confident in using digital technology are actually demanding it. Whilst some older people may be less inclined to adopt the new channels, the new channels can assist people who may be less mobile. The 24/7 nature of the services also means that extended family members can help older relatives outside of usual working hours.</p> <p><b>Disability</b>          Digital technology helps to empower some disabled customers and especially those who have reduced mobility.</p> <p><b>Religion or belief</b>          The intrinsic values of some religions such as Judaism (Sabbath) and Islam (Ramadan) limit times of the day or week when a visit to the Council offices may be possible. The 24/7 availability of the programme may assist in transacting with the Council during these times.</p> <p><b>English not as a first language</b>          The use of simply worded transaction questions and buttons means that it is relatively easy to transact.</p> <p><b>Deprived communities</b>          Not everyone will have access to digital channels however, there are locations throughout the area where customers can use such facilities, free of charge. This includes the Town Hall in Blackburn and Darwen, libraries, sports and community centres. Many retail outlets also provide free Wi-Fi access including Blackburn Market and the Mall</p>
<p><b>Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not</b>  <i>(i.e. the function encourages people from protected groups to</i></p>	<p><b>Age</b>          In addition to the impacts stated below under ‘all characteristics’, younger generations are more confident in using digital technology are actually demanding it. Whilst some</p>

*participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low)*

older people may be less inclined to adopt the new channels, the new channels can assist people who may be less mobile. The 24/7 nature of the services also means that extended family members can help older relatives outside of usual working hours.

**Disability**  
Digital technology helps to empower some disabled customers and especially those who have reduced mobility.

**Religion or belief**  
The intrinsic values of some religions such as Judaism (Sabbath) and Islam (Ramadan) limit times of the day or week when a visit to the Council offices may be possible. The 24/7 availability of the programme may assist in transacting with the Council during these times.

**English not as a first language**  
The use of simply worded transaction questions and buttons means that it is relatively easy to transact.

**Deprived communities**  
Not everyone will have access to digital channels however, there are locations throughout the area where customers can use such facilities, free of charge. This includes the Town Hall in Blackburn and Darwen, libraries, sports and community centres. Many retail outlets also provide free Wi-Fi access including Blackburn Market and the Mall

<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>Is a full EIA required?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Please explain how you have reached your conclusion *(A lack of negative impacts must be justified with evidence and clear reasons, highlight how the activity negates or mitigates any possible negative impacts)*

Following a review of the activity it is expected that, by introducing the recommendations listed above, the following benefits would be achieved:

- Improved consistent customer service through online services
- Access to information and advice, bookings and services 24hrs per day / 365 days per year
- Direction to the most appropriate service based on customer need, and
- Improved customer insight which includes data on all of the protected characteristics.

It is also acknowledged that there will be customers who may not feel confident using on-line services and / or do not have the facilities to be able to use on-line methods of contact. There is however, significant evidence from the research listed above to suggest that such issues can be

overcome.

In addition, for those customers who may require assistance on-line, webchat with an experienced customer services assistant will also be available. This service will be advertised on customer documentation and be available via an interactive button which is on display on all web pages.

If there are any individuals who are unable to access the on-line options or one of the Town Halls, appropriate telephone support will still be available.

<b>Assessment Lead Signature</b>	<i>A. Hodgkinson</i>	<b>Date</b>	<b>24/10/2016</b>
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**SECTION 3 – ANALYSIS OF IMPACT**

Does the activity have the **potential** to:

- **positively** impact (benefit) any of the groups?
- **negatively** impact/exclude/discriminate against any group?
- **disproportionately** impact any of the groups?

Explain how this was identified – through evidence/consultation.

Any negative impacts that are identified within the analysis need to be captured within the action plan in **Section 4**

**N.B.** Marriage & Civil Partnership is only a protected characteristic in terms of work-related activities and NOT service provision

Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Don't know	Reasons for positive and/or negative impact Please include all the evidence you have considered as part of your analysis	Action No.
<b>Age</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>In addition to the impacts stated earlier within this document, younger generations are more confident in using digital technology. Blackburn with Darwen BC has one of the youngest populations in the country, and as a consequence services should be being developed with these demographics in mind.</p> <p>Whilst some older people may be slightly less inclined to adopt the new channels, these channels can also assist people who may be less mobile, or reside a more rural location.</p> <p>The 24/7 nature of the services also means that extended family members can help older relatives outside of usual working hours.</p> <p>It is possible that some older customers may be unable to access localities that offer digital access.</p>	<b>1</b>
<b>Disability</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>In addition to the impacts stated below under 'all characteristics', digital technology helps to empower some disabled customers and especially those who have reduced mobility.</p> <p>It is possible that some disabled customers may be unable to access localities that offer digital access.</p>	<b>2</b>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific impacts identified – see 'all characteristics' below.	<b>3</b>

<b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific impacts identified – see ‘all characteristics’ below.	<b>4</b>
<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific impacts identified – see ‘all characteristics’ below.	<b>5</b>
<b>Race</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific impacts identified – see ‘all characteristics’ below.	<b>6</b>
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The intrinsic values of some religions such as Judaism (Sabbath) and Islam (Ramadan) limit times of the day or week when a visit to the Council offices may be possible. The 24/7 availability of the on-line solutions and modules may assist in transacting with the Council during these times.	<b>7</b>
<b>Sex</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific impacts identified – see ‘all characteristics’ below.	<b>8</b>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific impacts identified – see ‘all characteristics’ below.	<b>9</b>
<b>Vulnerable Groups</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>English not as a first language – The use of simply worded transaction questions and buttons means that it is relatively easy to transact. Also see ‘all characteristics’ below.</p> <p>In addition, experienced customer service assistants will be available in the Blackburn and Darwen Town Halls to help individuals with on-line services.</p> <p>It is possible that some vulnerable groups may lack the skills to access digital services.</p>	<b>10</b>
<b>Deprived Communities</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some deprived families may not have access to digital channels, however, there are locations throughout the borough where customers can use such facilities, free of charge. This includes the Town Hall in Blackburn and Darwen, libraries, sports and community centres. Many retail outlets also provide free Wi-Fi access including Blackburn Market and the Mall.	<b>11</b>
<b>Carers</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific impacts identified – see ‘all characteristics’ below.	
<b>Other [All characteristics]</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Actual / potential benefit would include –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved consistent customer service through online services</li> <li>▪ Access to information and advice, bookings and services 24hrs per day / 365 days per year</li> <li>▪ Direction to the most appropriate service based on customer need</li> <li>▪ Improved customer insight which includes date on all of the protected</li> </ul>	<b>12</b>

				<p>characteristics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Actual / potential negative outcome may include –</li> <li>▪ Improved access for rural residents</li> </ul> <p>The following statistics are taken from the Office for National Statistics – Households and individuals : 2016 released on 4 August 2016 and available at <a href="https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividuals/2016">https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividuals/2016</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The internet was used daily or almost daily by 82% of adults (41.8 million) in Great Britain in 2016, compared with 78% (39.3 million) in 2015 and 35% (16.2 million) in 2006,</li> <li>▪ In 2016, 70% of adults accessed the internet ‘on the go’ using a mobile phone or smartphone, up from 66% in 2015 and nearly double the 2011 estimate of 36%.</li> <li>▪ New analysis of the use of smart TV’s show 21% of adults used them to connect to the internet in 2016,</li> <li>▪ In 2016, 77% of adults bought goods or services online, up from 53% in 2008, an increase of 1% from 2015,</li> <li>▪ In 2016, 89% of households in Great Britain (23.7 million) had internet access, an increase from 86% in 2015 and 57% in 2006.</li> </ul> <p>Source – The Internet Access Survey results are derived from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN). Estimates for 2016 in the above refer to data collected in the January, February and April 2016 modules of OPN.</p> <p>There is increasing amounts of data available to demonstrate the take up of on-line services across the country. Whilst the same amount of data is not recorded specifically against Blackburn with Darwen borough, it is reasonable to assume the growth of on-line has expanded in a similar way.</p> <p>It is possible that some customers will be less inclined to adopt the new channels, this could be as a result of lack of access to digital services or an inability to access locations where provisions are made.</p>	
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				The 24/7 nature of the services also means that extended family members can help older relatives outside of usual working hours.	
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<p><b>Does the activity raise any issues for community cohesion?</b></p> <p><b>Does the activity contribute positively towards community cohesion?</b></p>	N/A
<p><b>Does the activity raise any issues in relation to human rights as set out in the Human Rights Act 1998?</b></p>	N/A
<p><b>Does the activity support / aggravate existing departmental and/or corporate risk?</b></p>	As an increased amount of customer contact would be based on-line, should the Council IT system develop any problems / issues this will clearly affect the ability of customers to contact / request services from the Council.

## CONCLUSIONS OF THE ANALYSIS

<b>Action following completion of the impact assessment</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> No major change in the activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Adjust activity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue with activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Stop and reconsider activity
<b>Please explain how you have reached your conclusion</b>			
<p>Digital first is about adopting digital tools to make contacting and dealing with the Council 24/7 using more efficient means. Using the digital modules and adapting policies and procedures will help the Council communicate more effectively and develop more efficient working practices.</p> <p>In addition to adapting services to better meet customer expectations, a major driver towards 'digital first' is the significant potential cost savings. National research from 120 Local Authorities estimates that the cost of contact for face to face transactions is approximately £8.62, for telephone contact that reduces to £2.83 and for web contact the cost can be as low as 15p.</p> <p>It has been acknowledged above that there are customers who may be unable to access on-line facilities or have the required skills. In addition to still having appropriate options of telephone support to those groups care will be taken to continually monitor the impact of the changes on such groups.</p>			

Delivering the recommendations stated would enable the Council to:

- Deliver cost effective and high quality systems and services to employees, partners and customers,
- Provide higher quality and more efficient levels of service at reduced operating costs,
- Meet growing customer demand for digital services,
- Respond quicker to changing customer, business and legislative requirements, and
- Work more collaboratively and effectively with partner organisations
- Reduce the amount of double handling and delays in Council Tax, Business Rates and Benefits assessment
- Automate and provide financial savings to the council.

**ACTION PLAN**

Action No.	What is the negative / adverse impact identified?	Actions required to reduce / mitigate / eliminate the negative impact	Resources required	Responsible officer(s)	Target completion date
1.	The elderly may be less inclined to adopt new channels	<p>Advertise widely the facilities that provide on-line access (PC's/wi-fi).</p> <p>Discuss and monitor the impact of the digital agenda with voluntary sector organisations.</p> <p>Monitor customer feedback/complaints from the elderly.</p> <p>Ensure that customers are still aware and are able to access telephone and face to face channels.</p> <p>Provide webchat to assist customers with obtaining information from the web or accessing on-line forms/systems.</p>	Existing resources	<p>Andy Ormerod  Diane Hart  Kristina Fenwick  Ross McQueen  Anthony Keogh</p>	<p>The mitigation will continue for a number of financial years</p>
2.	Disabled customers may be unable to access the locations that provide on-line access	<p>Advertise widely the facilities that provide on-line access (PC's/wi-fi) and ensure local facilities are listed for disabled customers.</p> <p>Discuss and monitor the impact of the digital agenda with voluntary sector organisations.</p> <p>Monitor customer feedback/complaints from the disabled.</p> <p>Ensure that customers are still aware and are able to access telephone and face to face channels.</p>	Existing resources	<p>Andy Ormerod  Diane Hart  Kristina Fenwick  Ross McQueen  Anthony Keogh</p>	<p>The mitigation will continue for a number of financial years</p>

		Provide webchat to assist customers with obtaining information from the web or accessing on-line forms/systems.			
3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12	Limited access to on-line services  Potential reluctance or lack of skills to use on-line services.	<p>The design of the on-line forms/portals etc will be done using plain English. It is hoped this approach will make it easy to understand.</p> <p>Advertise widely the facilities that provide on-line access (PC's/wi-fi) and ensure local facilities are listed for disabled customers.</p> <p>Discuss and monitor the impact of the digital agenda with voluntary sector organisations.</p> <p>Monitor customer feedback/complaints from those with difficulty with reading or writing English.</p> <p>Ensure that customers are still aware and are able to access telephone and face to face channels.</p> <p>Provide webchat to assist customers with obtaining information from the web or accessing on-line forms/systems.</p>	Existing resources	Andy Ormerod Diane Hart Kristina Fenwick Ross McQueen Anthony Keogh	The mitigation will continue for a number of financial years
10	Difficulty with reading or interpreting English on-line	<p>The design of the on-line forms/portals etc will be done using plain English. It is hoped this approach will make it easy to understand.</p> <p>Advertise widely the facilities that provide on-line access (PC's/wi-fi) and ensure local facilities are listed for disabled customers.</p> <p>Discuss and monitor the impact of the digital agenda with voluntary sector organisations.</p>	Existing resources	Andy Ormerod Diane Hart Kristina Fenwick Ross McQueen Anthony Keogh	The mitigation will continue for a number of financial years

		<p>Monitor customer feedback/complaints from those with difficulty with reading or writing English.</p> <p>Ensure that customers are still aware and are able to access telephone and face to face channels.</p> <p>Provide webchat to assist customers with obtaining information from the web or accessing on-line forms/systems.</p>			

## MONITORING AND REVIEW

The responsibility for establishing and maintaining the monitoring arrangements of the EIA action plan lies with the service completing the EIA. These arrangements should be built into the performance management framework.

Monitoring arrangements for the completion of EIAs will be undertaken by the Corporate Equality & Diversity Group and the oversight of the action plans will be undertaken by the Management Accountability Framework.

If applicable, where will the EIA Action Plan be monitored?	<p>The EIA action plan will be monitored through the Revenues and Benefits Management and Team meetings, and liaison meetings with Customer Services.</p> <p>Discussions with the voluntary sector will be on an ad-hoc basis.</p>
How often will the EIA Action Plan be reviewed?	Every 6 months.
When will the EIA be reviewed?	Annually as part of the review of Revenues and Benefits policies.
Who is responsible for carrying out this review?	Andy Ormerod



<b>SIGNATURE OF EIA LEAD OFFICER</b>	<i>A. Ormerod</i>
<b>DATE COMPLETED</b>	<b>07/11/2016</b>

<b>SIGNATURE OF DEPARTMENTAL E&amp;D LEAD</b>	
<b>DATE SIGNED</b>	Click here to enter a date.
<i>This signature signifies the acceptance of the responsibility to publish the completed EIA as per the requirements of the Equality Act 2010</i>	

<b>SIGNATURE OF HEAD OF SERVICE / DIRECTOR</b>	
<b>DATE SIGNED</b>	<b>07/11/2016</b>
<i>This signature signifies the acceptance of the responsibility and ownership of the EIA and the associated Action Plan (if applicable)</i>	