

# Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA)

## Front Sheet:

### Directorate and Service Area:

Social & Community Services  
Independent Living Services - Oxfordshire Employment Services

### What is being assessed:

The option to reduce the number of business units (properties) used by the Oxfordshire Employment Service (Reprographics and Design, and County Print Finishers) from two to one

### Responsible owner / senior officer:

Seona Douglas, Deputy Director Adult Social Care

### Date of assessment:

October 2015

### Summary of judgement:

Oxfordshire Employment Service (OES) supports people with disabilities or long term health conditions to prepare, train and enter or return to paid employment, thereby supporting equality and economic wellbeing. OES incorporates both the County Print Finishers and the Reprographics and Design units.

This assessment considers the potential impacts of reducing the number of properties used by the Oxfordshire Employment Service units from two to one to deliver savings of £30,000 from 2017/18.

The greatest impact will be on people accessing the Oxfordshire Employment Service and people with disabilities being supported to work at County Print Finishers. Depending on the agreed location for the single business unit, current travel routes for these people could change, impacting on their ability to access these services and get to and from work. To mitigate this, the council would ensure that the site chosen is near main bus routes and that travel support is offered to people with disabilities who are working in the unit.

Staff working in the business units may have to change their base of work, impacting on their travel time and cost. To mitigate this, the council would keep staff fully informed of plans for the business units and consult them on options for the future

location of a single unit. Dedicated support staff would assist those who are in supported employment to change their travel plans and complete Access to Work claims.

### **Detail of Assessment:**

#### **Purpose of assessment:**

This assessment considers the potential impacts of reducing the properties used by the Oxfordshire Employment Service from two to one to deliver savings of £30,000 from 2017/18.

This assessment is being carried out to ensure that the council considers the impact of these proposed changes on different people, especially those who share a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (“the 2010 Act”) imposes a duty on the Council to give due regard to three needs in exercising its functions. This proposal is such a function. The three needs are:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality 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.

Complying with section 149 may involve treating some people more favourably than others, but only to the extent that that does not amount to conduct which is otherwise unlawful under the new Act.

The need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages which are connected to a relevant protected characteristic and which are suffered by persons who share that characteristic,
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and which are different from the needs other people, and
- encourage those who share a relevant characteristic to take part in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such people is disproportionately low.
- take steps to meet the needs of disabled people which are different from the needs of people who are not disabled and include steps to take account of a person’s disabilities.

The need to foster good relations between different groups involves having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

These protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership

### **Social Value**

Under the Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012 the Council also has an obligation to consider how the procurement of services contracts with a life value of more than £173,934<sup>1</sup> might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the area affected by the proposed contract, and how it might act to secure this improvement. However, it is best practice to consider social value for all types of contracts, service delivery decisions and new/updated policies. In this context, 'policy' is a general term that could include a strategy, project or contract.

### **Context / Background:**

Oxfordshire Employment Service (OES) supports people with disabilities and or long term health conditions to prepare, train and enter or return to paid employment, thereby supporting equality and economic wellbeing.

A form of this service has existed since 1946 when a workshop was established to provide sheltered employment for people who had been disabled during the war. In 2006 it became County Print Finishers and now provides paid employment for those wanting to gain employment skills, with support to take these skills into long term employment, as well as supported employment for those with disabilities or a long term health condition.

OES incorporates both the County Print Finishers and the Reprographics and Design units.

These units operate across two sites and as such, there is duplication of equipment, additional staff input and energy costs.

### **Proposals:**

The option being assessed is the reduction of sites that are part of the Oxfordshire Employment Service from two business units to one.

<sup>11</sup> [EC Procurement Threshold for Services](#)

This could be achieved by closing one of the two units and moving all functions into the remaining unit, or closing both units and relocating all functions into one new unit. This would achieve savings of £30,000, as known lease costs would reduce.

**Evidence / Intelligence:**

The current lease costs for each business unit are in the region of £36,000.

As part of Oxfordshire Employment Service, County Print Finishers employs 16 people with disabilities and/or long term health conditions. It also provides a platform for six month paid training placements for people preparing for or returning to work. These placements are not just in Print Finishing, but include options such as administrator roles, the Future Clean car cleaning project or graphic design and reprographics.

The total number of staff working across both business units is 40.

Further information and intelligence will be gathered as part of any feasibility work undertaken as this option is taken further. This would inform a decision about the location of the business unit.

**Alternatives considered / rejected:**

The alternative option is to retain two business units, one of which is currently underutilised.

As central government funding to the council is reduced, the council needs to make significant savings to meet budgetary pressures. The option to reduce the number of business units is part of broader savings options that aim to reduce spending without affecting statutory services.

**Impact Assessment:**

Identify any potential impacts of the policy or proposed service change on the population as a whole, or on particular groups. It might be helpful to think about the largest impacts or the key parts of the policy or proposed service change first, identifying any risks and actions, before thinking in more detail about particular groups, staff, other Council services, providers etc.

It is worth remembering that 'impact' can mean many things, and can be positive as well as negative. It could for example relate to access to services, the health and wellbeing of individuals or communities, the sustainability of supplier business models, or the training needs of staff.

We assess the impact of decisions on any relevant community, but with particular emphasis on:

- Groups that share the nine protected characteristics
  - age
  - disability
  - gender reassignment
  - pregnancy and maternity
  - race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
  - religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
  - sex
  - sexual orientation
  - marriage and civil partnership
- Rural communities
- Areas of deprivation

We also assess the impact on:

- Staff
- Other council services
- Other providers of council services
- Any other element which is relevant to the policy or proposed service change
- How it might improve the economic, social, and environmental of the area affected by the contract **if** the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies

For every community or group that you identify a potential impact you should discuss this in detail, using evidence (from data, consultation etc.) where possible to support your judgements. You should then highlight specific risks and any mitigating actions you will take to either lessen the impact, or to address any gaps in understanding you have identified.

If you have not identified an impact on particular groups, staff, other Council services, providers etc. you should indicate this to demonstrate you have considered it.

<b>Impact on Individuals and Communities:</b>
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**Impacts on groups with protected characteristics, rural communities and areas of deprivation:**

<b>Risks</b>	<b>Mitigations</b>
Depending on the agreed location for the single business unit, travel routes could change for people accessing the Oxfordshire Employment Service and people with disabilities being supported to work at County Print Finishers, impacting on their ability to access these	The council would ensure that the site chosen for locating the business unit is near main bus routes and that travel support is offered to people with disabilities who are working in the unit.

services.

**No differential impacts have been identified on groups that share protected characteristics beyond those given above.**

**Impact on Staff:**

<b>Risks</b>	<b>Mitigations</b>
Depending on the agreed location of the business unit, staff may need to change their base of work. This could impact on staff travel time and cost.	Staff working in the business units would be consulted about the future location of services and kept informed by managers.  Dedicated support staff would assist those who are in supported employment to change their travel plans and complete Access to Work claims.

**Impact on other Council services:**

A reduction in the number of sites from which the service operates is unlikely to have an effect on the service provided to the council and external customers, therefore no risks have been identified on other service areas.

**Impact on providers:**

No risks have been identified for other providers at this point.

**Social Value**

*If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area.*

**How might the proposal improve the economic well-being of the relevant area?**

N/A

**How might the proposal improve the environmental well-being of the relevant area?**

N/A

**Action plan:**

<b>Action</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>
Decision on whether the business units will be reduced to one site as part of the broader budget proposals	February 2016	Council members
Review and update the SCIA	March 2016	Operations Manager
If the proposal is agreed, develop an implementation plan	March 2016	Operations Manager

**Monitoring and review:**

**Person responsible for assessment:**

Version	Date	Notes (e.g. Initial draft, amended following consultation)
1	14.10.15	Initial draft and feasibility project work needed to develop the assessment.