

Equality Impact Assessment – Surrey and Sussex District Office relocation of functions

1. Introduction

This document is an Equality Impact Assessment: Initial screening for the relocation of Surrey and Sussex District Office functions currently located at Guildford Ranger House and Brighton Jobcentre Plus.

The purpose of the assessment is to ensure that in bringing about the proposed change it does not discriminate unlawfully on the grounds of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and/or religious belief

Name of strategy/project/policy/process/function:

Rationalisation of Surrey and Sussex District Estate to move towards locating all District staff in one location at Lewes Jobcentre Plus site.

Person(s) Responsible for Assessment:	Nick Law
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Geographic Location of change (i.e. National / Region / District):	Surrey and Sussex District
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Stage 1: Screening

Have you identified the aims of the proposed change?

Recent progress in DWP's Estates Strategy has required us to look closely at our general business environment and to consider how processes and services could be enhanced through better use of workspace. The strategy also requires us to site corporate functions on existing operational Jobcentre Plus sites.

An opportunity has recently arisen to review the use of the Lewes Jobcentre Plus site as some significant space will soon become available there. The aim of relocating District staff to Lewes is to fit in with the policy to site corporate functions at operational sites, and to improve the effectiveness of District Office by siting all District staff at one location where possible.

What is the purpose of the change?

To create a single District Office site located at an existing operational site, improving the efficiency of District Office functions and fit in with DWP's Estates strategy.

Who will benefit from it and how?

District staff currently located at Brighton Jobcentre Plus currently have to rely on hot-desking on a frequent basis due to over-crowding at that site. There will be space available at Lewes to accommodate all District Office staff desks, and greater liaison achievable between District functions, including F2F meetings. Less travel for Managers who have responsibility for staff in Guildford and Brighton sites.

Lewes site has a subsidised canteen, plenty of car parking and an existing conference facility.

How will the change benefit the wider business of the organisation?

There will be substantial savings on Estates costs as the area currently occupied by the District at Guildford Ranger House will be vacated (formally by DWP Estates in the future).

What data on the diversity of both your customers and staff is available to you?

Train journey between Brighton and Lewes is between 11 and 16 minutes with a 5-8 minute walk to Lewes office.

Train journey between Guildford and Lewes is between 1 hour 31 minutes and 1 hour 54 minutes – which is outside of the Departmental mobility policy of 1 hour 30 minutes.

121 discussions with all staff will establish individual mobility issues and/or application of the Departmental Mobility Policy.

Other staff diversity data is not available but will be confidentially asked for at 121. Any identified issues (eg caring responsibilities, disability or working patterns) affected by any additional travel to Lewes will be addressed on an individual basis, in line with JCP policies.

Does collected data show that there may be a disproportionate or adverse impact on either customers or staff?

There is no impact on customers.

There is no evidence that the location of District Office within Surrey and Sussex district impacts adversely on staff. Where any individual member of staff is unable to travel to Lewes within the mobility rules, the District Manager will ensure suitable job roles are available within travelling distance.

Employers will see no change as they already access our services through the Employer Services Direct telephone-based service.

Partnership organisations will see an enhanced service of accessing our District services in one place.

There were no equality issues identified with this move.

Conclusion:

In view of the information available it is not thought that either customers or staff will be unduly or adversely affected by this change, or that the change could discriminate unlawfully on the grounds of race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religious belief.

It is concluded that a full impact assessment is not required in respect of this change.

Signed:

Name: Judith Lord/Simon Brooks

Dated: 12.2.10