

Equality Impact Assessment Form



Directorate:	Transformation	Service:	Planning
Completed by:	Stephen Benge	Date:	1/12/15
Subject Title: Draft Statement of Community Involvement 2016			
1. DESCRIPTION			
Is a policy or strategy being produced or revised:	Yes		
Is a service being designed, redesigned or cut back:	No		
Is a commissioning plan or contract specification being developed:	No		
Is a budget being set or funding allocated:	No		
Is a programme or project being planned:	No		
Are recommendations being presented to senior managers and/or Councillors:	Yes		
Does the activity contribute to meeting our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (Eliminating unlawful discrimination/harassment, advancing equality of opportunity, fostering good relations):	Yes		
Details of the matter under consideration:	Seeking approval for public consultation on a document that sets out the Council's proposed standards for consultation when carrying out its various planning functions.		
<i>If you answered Yes to any of the above go straight to Section 3</i> <i>If you answered No to all the above please complete Section 2</i>			
2. RELEVANCE			
Does the work being carried out impact on service users, staff or Councillors (stakeholders):	<div style="text-align: right;"><i>*delete as appropriate</i></div> Yes/No*		
If Yes , provide details of how this impacts on service users, staff or Councillors (stakeholders): <i>If you answered Yes go to Section 3</i>			
If you answered No to both Sections 1 and 2 provide details of why there is no impact on these three groups: <i>You do not need to complete the rest of this form.</i>			

3. EVIDENCE COLLECTION	
Who does the work being carried out impact on, i.e. who is/are the stakeholder(s)?	<p>The document has the potential to impact on almost all stakeholders in, or with an interest in, the Borough.</p> <p>The new draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the Council will engage with and consult stakeholders when carrying out its various planning functions, e.g. preparing planning policy documents, dealing with planning applications, Neighbourhood Planning. These different functions have the potential to impact a very wide range of stakeholders.</p> <p>The SCI under consideration will influence how such stakeholders are consulted on planning matters by setting out minimum standards that must be adhered to.</p>
If the work being carried out relates to a universal service, who needs or uses it most? (Is there any particular group affected more than others)?	There should be no particular group affected more than others.
<p>Which of the protected characteristics are most relevant to the work being carried out?</p> <p>Age Gender Disability Race and Culture Sexual Orientation Religion or Belief Gender Reassignment Marriage and Civil Partnership Pregnancy and Maternity</p>	<p>All of these protected characteristics are indirectly relevant to the work being carried out. The SCI sets out standards for consultation and seeks to ensure that people with any protected characteristic can engage equally easily in the planning process.</p>
4. DATA ANALYSIS	
In relation to the work being carried out, and the service/function in question, who is actually or currently using the service and why?	<p>Previous engagement with the general public in relation to planning policy matters and consultation exercises across the Borough (for example for the Local Plan between 2008 and 2013) show that it tends to be those of a white-British ethnic background and those of older age groups who most actively engage in the process of preparing general planning policy.</p>
What will the impact of the work being carried out be on usage / the stakeholders?	<p>The document in question is intended to replace an existing, older, SCI, but continuing with the same principles of meaningful engagement with all sections of the community. In that sense, the impact of the work should not be significant, but it simply reflects changes to planning legislation that affect, for example, the number of stages of a document's preparation, or the procedure for development management.</p>

What are people's views about the services? Are some customers more satisfied than others, and if so what are the reasons? Can these be affected by the proposals?	<p>The DPD is not a 'service' as such. This report is seeking approval to consult on a draft document.</p> <p>Looking back to the engagement carried out since the adoption (in 2007) of the existing SCI, it is evident that some customers have ended up being more satisfied than others. It would appear, however, that levels of satisfaction are most closely related to the outcome of the planning decision in question (e.g. permission being granted for development that may affect their outlook), rather than to the nature of the consultation carried out.</p> <p>The SCI is concerned with consultation procedures, rather than planning decisions.</p>
What sources of data including consultation results have you used to analyse the impact of the work being carried out on users/stakeholders with protected characteristics?	We have very little, if any, data on the impact of our consultation methods to date on people with various protected characteristics. We have included equalities monitoring forms alongside our comments forms when undertaking consultation exercises, but very few have been returned, and cannot be used to arrive at any statistically robust conclusions.
If any further data / consultation is needed and is to be gathered, please specify:	The report is seeking approval to consult on the draft SCI for 6 weeks (February - March 2016).
5. IMPACT OF DECISIONS	
In what way will the changes impact on people with particular protected characteristics (either positively or negatively or in terms of disproportionate impact)?	As previously stated, the SCI is an update to an older, now out-of-date, SCI (out-of-date in terms of the planning legislation it refers to). The new SCI does not represent any significant change in approach to community engagement and seeking to facilitate the involvement in planning of people with protected characteristics.
6. CONSIDERING THE IMPACT	
If there is a negative impact what action can be taken to mitigate it? (If it is not possible or desirable to take actions to reduce the impact, explain why this is the case (e.g. legislative or financial drivers etc.).	We do not envisage any negative impact associated with the new SCI.
What actions do you plan to take to address any other issues above?	N/A

7. MONITORING AND REVIEWING

When will this assessment be reviewed and who will review it?

It is anticipated that the new SCI, once adopted, will not need reviewing for several years.

Equalities monitoring questionnaires will continue to be used in tandem with consultations on planning policy documents to monitor how well different sections of the community and other stakeholders are being engaged.