

# Equality Impact Assessment Form



<b>Directorate:</b> Development & Regeneration	<b>Service:</b> Planning policy
<b>Completed by:</b> Stephen Bengé	<b>Date:</b> 29/4/15
<b>Subject Title:</b> West Lancashire Statement of Community Involvement	
<b>1. DESCRIPTION</b>	
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 ( <b>Eliminating unlawful discrimination/harassment, advancing equality of opportunity, fostering good relations</b> ):	Yes
Details of the matter under consideration:	Seeking approval for the adoption of a document that sets out the Council's standards for consultation when carrying out its various planning functions.
<p><i>If you answered <b>Yes</b> to any of the above <b>go straight to Section 3</b></i>  <i>If you answered <b>No</b> to all the above <b>please complete Section 2</b></i></p>	
<b>2. RELEVANCE</b>	
Does the work being carried out impact on service users, staff or Councillors (stakeholders):	Yes
<p>If <b>Yes</b>, provide details of how this impacts on service users, staff or Councillors (stakeholders):</p> <p><i>If you answered <b>Yes</b> go to <b>Section 3</b></i></p>	
<p>If you answered <b>No</b> to both Sections 1 and 2 provide details of why there is no impact on these three groups:</p> <p><i>You do not need to complete the rest of this form.</i></p>	

### 3. EVIDENCE COLLECTION

Who does the work being carried out impact on, i.e. who is/are the stakeholder(s)?

The document has the potential to impact on almost all stakeholders in, or with an interest in, the Borough.

The new 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.

The SCI will influence how such stakeholders are consulted on planning matters by setting out minimum standards that must be adhered to.

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.

Which of the protected characteristics are most relevant to the work being carried out?

Age  
Gender  
Disability  
Race and Culture  
Sexual Orientation  
Religion or Belief  
Gender Reassignment  
Marriage and Civil Partnership  
Pregnancy and Maternity

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.

### 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?

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.

What will the impact of the work being carried out be on usage / the stakeholders?

The document in question will replace an existing, older, SCI, but will continue with the same principles of meaningful engagement with all sections of the community. In that sense, the impact of the work should not be significantly different from previously, 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>	<p>The document is not a 'service' as such.</p> <p>Looking back to the engagement carried out since the adoption (in 2007) of the previous 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 refused or granted for development that may affect their outlook or financial position), rather than to the nature of the consultation carried out.</p> <p>The SCI is concerned with consultation procedures, rather than planning decisions.</p>
<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?</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>If any further data / consultation is needed and is to be gathered, please specify:</p>	<p>No further consultation is required on the document in question, i.e. the SCI.</p>
<p><b>5. IMPACT OF DECISIONS</b></p>	
<p>In what way will the changes impact on people with particular protected characteristics (either positively or negatively or in terms of disproportionate impact)?</p>	<p>As previously stated, this new SCI is replacing 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 nor in seeking to facilitate the involvement in planning of people with protected characteristics.</p>
<p><b>6. CONSIDERING THE IMPACT</b></p>	
<p>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.).</p>	<p>We do not envisage any negative impact associated with the new SCI.</p>
<p>What actions do you plan to take to address any other issues above?</p>	<p>N/A</p>

## 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, unless there is a major change in government legislation relating to community engagement or planning procedures.

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.