

Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)



This tool helps the Council ensure that we fulfil legal obligations of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) to have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Guidance on how to complete this tool can be found on the Cambridge City Council intranet. For specific questions on the tool email Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at equalities@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223 457046. Once you have drafted the EqIA please send this to equalities@cambridge.gov.uk for checking. For advice on consulting on equality impacts, please contact Graham Saint, Strategy Officer, (graham.saint@cambridge.gov.uk or 01223 457044).

1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service:

Statement of Community Involvement 2019 (and Addendum May 2020)

2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)

[Cambridge City Council Statement of Community Involvement](#)

3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council will engage the public in the planning process. The SCI describes how the public, businesses and interest groups within the local authority areas can get involved in the creation of local planning policy and the planning application process which shapes where we live, work and trade. This is essential to help improve understanding and openness of the planning process.

There is a legal requirement on Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to undertake public consultation on local plans, neighbourhood plans and planning applications. It is important that this is undertaken in a cost-effective, efficient and proportionate manner. This SCI is an important document as it will establish a minimum standard of consultation and publicity on planning matters for both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils.

The SCI has been split into three sections which cover the following roles and responsibilities of the planning service:

- Planning Policy including the production of planning policy documents including the Local Plan
- Development Management including how the councils consider and publicise planning applications, and
- Neighbourhood Planning setting out how the councils will assist groups who are preparing neighbourhood plans

The Councils are committed to treating everyone fairly and justly, and wants to ensure that everyone gets an opportunity to be involved in the planning process. We recognise that consultation and engagement activities are constantly evolving and this SCI will be revisited at regular intervals to ensure it is fully up-to date and reflects local and national priorities, practices and policies.

Please note that this version of the EqIA was last updated 1 May 2020 to reflect the Amended Practice in Response to Covid-19 Pandemic equality impacts

4. Responsible Service

Greater Cambridge Planning Service

5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick those that apply)

Residents of Cambridge City

Visitors to Cambridge City

Staff

Please state any specific client group or groups (e.g. City Council tenants, tourists, people who work in the city but do not live here):

6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this? (Please tick)

New

Major change

Minor change

7. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick)

No

Yes (Please provide details):

5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick those that apply)

To varying degrees;

Cambridge City Council (joint plan-making partner)

- Planning Services
- Community Services
- Housing
- Environmental Section
- Property Services
- Other service departments as relevant and required

South Cambridgeshire District Council (joint plan-making partner)

- Planning
- Environmental Health
- Housing
- Procurement
- Other service departments as relevant and required

Cambridgeshire County Council (key stakeholder assisting with plan-making)

- Planning including Minerals and Waste team
- Transportation
- Education
- Other service departments as relevant and required

The Statement of Community Involvement sets out the broad parameters guiding the ways in which interested parties may be able to engage in planning matters. This includes plan making, decision making on planning applications, and neighbourhood planning. These processes include a wide range of stakeholders in addition to those listed above.

8. Has the report on your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service gone to Committee? If so, which one?

The Draft Statement of Community Involvement was presented to Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee on 15 January 2019. The adopted version of the SCI was presented to Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee on 24 June 2019 at Cambridge City Council and Cabinet on 1 July 2019 at South Cambridgeshire District Council.

5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick those that apply)

9. What research methods/ evidence have you used in order to identify equality impacts of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

The SCI is concerned with the processes for enabling everyone to get involved in the planning process.

The Authority Monitoring Report will include data on any consultations that have been undertaken during the relevant monitoring period, and will use the following indicators:

- Number of people participating in consultation
- Number of people using the councils' online website to make representations

10. Potential impacts

For each category below, please explain if the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service could have a positive/ negative impact or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is. Consider impacts on service users, visitors and staff members separately.

(a) Age

Note that this refers to any group of people of a particular age (e.g. 32 year-olds) , or within a particular age range (e.g. 16-24 year-olds) – in particular, please consider any safeguarding issues for children and adults at risk

It is anecdotally recognised that it can sometimes be more difficult to engage with younger age groups, and where possible and appropriate relevant organisations and individuals will be identified to reach as wide an age range as possible. This could include ChYPPS and external organisations. Evidence suggests that some older people are also less likely to have access to the internet. The Council has a Digital Inclusion Strategy in order to support people who are excluded from using the internet gain access and skills they need to use it.

No safeguarding issues are identified at this stage however the Council has a Safeguarding Policy and a designated Safeguarding Officer to follow up on concerns in each service.

(b) Disability

Note that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The SCI identifies a range of external groups and organisations that may be consulted on planning matters, and we have a Disability Panel helping to feedback on impacts new developments have on people with a range of disabilities.

The consultation document can be made available on request in large copy print, audio cassette or Braille and officers are willing to meet individuals and talk issues through. This approach would also apply, as necessary, to subsequent consultation documents that are prepared in the plan making process. In respect of planning applications, information can be made available in a range of formats if required.

(c) Gender reassignment

No equality impacts have been identified at this stage that is specific to this equality group.

(d) Marriage and civil partnership

No equality impacts have been identified at this stage that is specific to this equality group.

(e) Pregnancy and maternity

Where people are required to care for children, it may be difficult for them to engage in consultation events and meetings. A number of the planning policy consultation events take place within and outside of usual working hours to try and ensure residents and businesses are able to engage in the process. Planning applications are available for public inspection online and can be accessed at any time of the day.

No equality impacts have been identified at this stage that is specific to this equality group.

(f) Race

Note that the protected characteristic ‘race’ refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

No equality impacts have been identified at this stage that is specific to this equality group.

(g) Religion or belief

No equality impacts have been identified at this stage that is specific to this equality group.

(h) Sex

No equality impacts have been identified at this stage that is specific to this equality group.

(i) Sexual orientation

No equality impacts have been identified at this stage that is specific to this equality group.

(j) Other factors that may lead to inequality – in particular – please consider the impact of any changes on low income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty

It can be difficult to contact some low income groups if they have limited access to the internet and transport, and the SCI sets out that where additional mechanisms are required to improve levels of engagement on planning matters that bespoke methods may be used. This will be considered in detail taking into account the subject matters and geographic scope of each new stage of plan making, and in respect of planning applications.

Evidence suggests that some older people are also less likely to have access to the internet. The Council as a Digital Inclusion Strategy in order to support people who are excluded from using the internet gain access and skills they need to use it.

11. Action plan – New equality impacts will be identified in different stages throughout the planning and implementation stages of changes to your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service. How will you monitor these going forward? Also, how will you ensure that any potential negative impacts of the changes will be mitigated? (Please include dates where possible for when you will update this EqIA accordingly.)

The SCI will go through the following stages:

- Adoption (2019)
- Monitoring and review 5 yearly reviews of SCI and annual review in AMR

12. Do you have any additional comments?

The councils will not accept or publish comments that contravene its compliance with the Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010¹.

The councils will publicise consultations to reach the widest groups of people as possible. This is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement.

Greater Cambridge Statement of Community Involvement 2019 – Addendum May 2020: Amended Practice in Response to Covid-19 Pandemic equality impacts

The decisions related to the amended practice result from government guidance on social distancing that has led us to close our offices, restrict site visits and increasingly seek community involvement through online platforms. Many of the equality implications of our Community Involvement process apply under the new restrictions but the info below considers how equality implications apply differently, or impacts might be exacerbated during the period of amended practice:

The increased reliance on technology for community involvement practices could have a negative impact on those most likely to be digitally excluded. This includes older people. Since 2011, adults over the age of 65 years have consistently made up the largest proportion of the adult internet non-users, and over half of all adult internet non-users were over the age of 75 years in 2018 (latest ONS stats available). Therefore, older people may be less able to participate. It also includes some disabled people who may struggle to access technology that is adapted to meet their needs - national statistics indicate that many disabled people are especially likely to be digitally excluded. Latest statistics from 2017, indicate that 56% of adult internet non-users were disabled, much higher than the proportion of disabled adults in the UK population in 2016 to 2017 that was estimated to be at 22%.

Cambridge City Council's Digital Inclusion Officer has been working hard to increase capacity of local voluntary and community sector organisations that support disabled people and older people to get online. For instance, Cambridge Online are the regional coordinators for the Devices Dot Now initiative. This aims to get internet enabled devices and data allowances to those who have been identified as most digitally excluded. They are also providing telephone support and guidance during COVID-19.

People might not have access to devices or good broadband due to being on low incomes. Before the COVID-19 crisis and beyond this, Cambridge City Councils' Housing Service has been working hard to provide people in our council homes access to reliable and cheap broadband. Many people on low-incomes might not have access to computers but are more likely to have access to smart phones. Most

also have limited data allowances, or use pay as you go. Cambridge City Council's and South Cambridgeshire District Council's websites meet the EU Web Accessibility Directive requirements, which also requires that our websites be compatible for use on smartphones.

Moreover, although we are not able to deposit documents in Council buildings which are shut during this time, we are providing contacts to email and phone so people can find out more information on issues they are concerned with, and get help accessing material if they need it. These will be on our webpages and notices. If people have accessibility needs they can still request documents in different formats if required (e.g. large print), as made clear on our website.

12. Sign off

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: Terry De Sousa, Senior Planning Policy Officer

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted: Amanda Thorn, Principle Planning Policy Officer

Jonathan Dixon, Planning Policy Manager

Date of EqIA sign off: 23 May 2019 and then 1 May 2020 update

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: Spring 2024

All EqIAs need to be sent to Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer. Has this been sent to Helen Crowther?

Yes

No

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website: June 2019

^{1 1} Equality Duty – Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council must have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different protected groups; and foster good relations between different protected groups.