

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

This form:

- Can be used to prompt discussions, ensure that due regard has been given and remove or minimise disadvantage for an individual or group with a protected characteristic
- Involves looking at what steps can be taken to advance and maximise equality as well as eliminate discrimination and negative consequences
- Should be completed before decisions are made, this will remove the need for remedial actions.

Note – An Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A) should be completed prior to this form.

When completing this form consider the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc. – see page 11 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

1. Title

Equality Analysis title:
Adoption of a revised Statement of Community Involvement

Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 19/7/2019

Directorate:
Regeneration & Environment Services

Service area:
Planning Policy Team
Planning, Regeneration and Transport

Lead Manager:
Ryan Shepherd,
Senior Planning Officer

Contact number:
823888

Is this a:

☒

Strategy / Policy

☐

Service / Function

☐

Other

If other, please specify

2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Name	Organisation	Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)
Andy Duncan	RMBC	Acting Head of Service, Planning and Building Control
Helen Sleight	RMBC	Senior Planning Officer
Ryan Shepherd	RMBC	Senior Planning Officer

3. What is already known? - see page 10 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance
Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known)

This may include a group/s identified by a protected characteristic, others groups or stakeholder/s e.g. service users, employees, partners, members, suppliers etc.)

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the Council's approach to consulting the local community and other stakeholders on planning matters. The production of a SCI is a requirement of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and should explain how the Council will engage local communities and other interested parties in producing their Local Plan and determining planning applications. It is a legal requirement that any consultation on Local Plans is undertaken in accordance with the adopted SCI.

What equality information is available? (Include any engagement undertaken)

Information on the protected characteristics of planning applicants or consultees (either in relation to planning applications or to the preparation of planning documents) is not collected by the Council.

Are there any gaps in the information that you are aware of?

No

What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

The Local Plan is subject to an annual monitoring report prepared by the Council:

https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/200074/planning_and_regeneration/729/monitoring

<p>Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)</p>	<p>This is a revision of a document which was adopted in 2015. It was previously subject to community consultation prior to it being finalised and subsequently adopted in 2015. Comments received during the public consultation were taken into account in finalising the SCI.</p> <p>The revised SCI was also subject to public consultation from 10 June to 8 July. Further details including the main issues raised, the Council's response and changes to the document are set out in the Consultation Statement which will accompany the Cabinet Report.</p> <p>The main issues raised in the representations were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking further detail on consultation activities and methods, contact details, guidelines for community consultation and petitions. • Appendix A should include reference to geodiversity interest, and loss of property value and loss of a view should be identified as "Material Considerations". • The Joint Radio Company Limited should be consulted on any planning application involving wind turbines. • For planning applications it does not identify who and when the Council will consult and involve. • Concerns about the SCI consultation process. • Concerns about the Council decision making process and other consultations. • The "Digital First" approach excludes those without access to those services. • Consultations should be advertised in local newspapers and libraries with a paper copy of the document. • Consultation forms should include more open ended free text options. • Concern regarding health and safety issues in relation to wireless telecommunications technology.
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Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)	<p>The revised draft SCI has been prepared following internal consultation with other colleagues within the planning service and in Information Management.</p> <p>As a result of comments received from Customer, Information and Digital Services (31 March 2019) the SCI was amended to clarify that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All customers, regardless of circumstance will have access to the information, advice and help they need. • Internet access in libraries is free for members but that there is a nominal charge for non-members. • In relation to Local Plan consultations the Council will not normally send letters by post, unless it is a legal requirement or justified by special circumstances considered on a case by case basis.
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4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)

How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups? (Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance)

Overall Rotherham's communities will benefit from having an up-to-date SCI. They will have a better understanding of the consultation processes involved in planning applications and preparing planning documents. It promotes efficient plan making and decision making which lead to wider community benefits, in that planning is undertaken in the public interest and sets the context for the delivery of sustainable development that is the foundation of sustainable communities.

Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups?

The delivery and implementation of the SCI is not determined by any individual protected characteristic. The SCI would allow increased electronic communication (such as email or use of the Council's website) in the notification and consultation process. This would in turn facilitate a move towards more efficient and modern ways of working and communicating.

Age - Under the revised SCI, there is greater emphasis on notification via email, rather than letter. There is potential that this may affect older age groups who may have lower digital skills. In Rotherham 2011 Census data indicates that 16.4% of the population were aged over 65. For those who are not digitally enabled, the Council will continue to use other forms of communication such as making documents available at the Council's offices and publicity through the local press. If for reasons of age a person is unable to view documents online or at the Council's offices, then alternative arrangements may be made on a case by case basis.

Disability – It is recognised that persons with disabilities may have difficulty accessing information digitally or at the Council's offices. Where this is the case then alternative arrangements may be made on a case by case basis. Assisted access is available from libraries.

Race - It is recognised that there may be challenges in engaging all racial groups due to language barriers, or cultural differences and that alternative arrangements may be required on a case by case basis. For example, provision of documents or summaries of information in alternative languages.

Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers?

Overall Rotherham's communities will benefit from having an up-to-date SCI. They will have a better understanding of the consultation processes involved in planning applications and preparing planning documents. It promotes efficient plan making and decision making which lead to wider community benefits, in that planning is undertaken in the public interest and sets the context for the delivery of sustainable development that is the foundation of sustainable communities.

What affect will the Policy/Service have on community relations? (may also need to consider activity which may be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another)

See response to question above.

Please list any **actions and targets** that need to be taken as a consequence of this assessment on the action plan below and ensure that they are added into your service plan for monitoring purposes – see page 12 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

If the analysis is done at the right time, i.e. early before decisions are made, changes should be built in before the policy or change is signed off. This will remove the need for remedial actions. Where this is achieved, the only action required will be to monitor the impact of the policy/service/change on communities or groups according to their protected characteristic - See page 11 of the Equality Screening and Analysis guidance

Title of analysis: Adoption of a revised Statement of Community Involvement
Directorate and service area: Planning Policy Team, Planning, Regeneration and Transport, Regeneration & Environment Services
Lead Manager: Ryan Shepherd, Senior Planning Officer
Summary of findings: <p>Overall, Rotherham's communities will benefit from having an up-to-date SCI. In line with the Council's Digital Strategy and Customer Access Strategy, the SCI strongly encourages on-line consultation on planning matters; while ensuring that customers, regardless of their circumstances, have access to the information, advice and help they need. This will in turn facilitate a move towards more efficient and modern ways of working and communicating.</p> <p>For those who are not digitally enabled, the Council will continue to use other forms of communication such as making documents available at the Council's offices and publicity through the local press. For example, if for reasons of age or disability a person is unable to view documents online or at the Council's offices, then alternative arrangements may be made on a case by case basis. Assisted access is available from libraries.</p> <p>It is recognised that there may be challenges in engaging all racial groups due to language barriers, or cultural differences and that alternative arrangements may be required on a case by case basis. For example, provision of documents or summaries of information in alternative languages.</p>

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Monitor the implementation of the Statement of Community Involvement	All	12/21

*A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups

6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Name	Job title	Date
Paul Woodcock	Strategic Director – Regeneration & Environment	
Councillor Lelliott	Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy	

7. Publishing

The Equality Analysis will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If this Equality Analysis relates to a **Cabinet, delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date Equality Analysis completed	22/7/2019
Report title and date	Adoption of a revised Statement of Community Involvement
Date report sent for publication	Cabinet – 21 October 2019
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	23/7/2019