



Impact on Equality Toolkit

Section 1: Your details

Council officer: Mike Callon

Email address: michaelcallon@wirral.gov.uk

Head of Service: Emma Degg

Department: Communications and Community Engagement

Date: 26th July

Section 2: What Council function / proposal is being analysed?

Neighbourhood Plans Consultation Process

Section 3: Is the Council function / proposal relevant to equality? (please tick relevant boxes)

- In services**
- In the workforce**
- In communities**
- Other** (please state)
- None** (please stop here and send this form to your Head of Service for approval)

Section 4: Within the Equality Duty 2010, there are 3 legal requirements. Which of the following are relevant to the Council function / proposal? (please tick relevant boxes)

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- To advance equality of opportunity
- To foster good relations between groups of people

Section 5: Will the proposal have a favourable or negative impact on any of the protected groups (race, gender, disability, gender reassignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership)?

A communications and marketing strategy has been developed as part of the design process for the Neighbourhood Plans consultation. This provided the framework for assessing the impact of planned activities and making the consultation programme as widely accessible as possible to all sections of the community.

Specific actions undertaken to ensure that the consultation programme was accessible to protected groups are set out below.

It is anticipated that the outcomes of the neighbourhood plan consultation will have a favourable impact for local communities in Wirral including all protected groups. Equalities considerations will be taken into account in the development and delivery of planned actions through close working with services and partners.

Actions to ensure equality considerations addressed

The communications and marketing strategy specifically identified four groups for which additional marketing and engagement activities were planned and undertaken. A number of preliminary focus groups were facilitated with these target groups as well as testing of the draft consultation questionnaire to ensure its accessibility in terms of language and format. The approach with these protected groups is set out below.

1. Young People

Specific activities to engage young people included marketing the consultation through the Teen Wirral Website, Youth Hub programme and Connexions service. An e-questionnaire was sent to every school pupil along with a number of initiatives in schools and email was also extensively used in a viral marketing campaign with young people forwarding the link to the questionnaire through email circulations and Facebook contacts.

2. Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Communities

Specific activities for BME communities were coordinated through our partnerships with organisations such as Wirral Change, Wirral Multicultural Organisation and Irish Community Care Merseyside to access their memberships and client bases. The outreach workers of these organisations assisted with promoting the consultation and facilitating translation of the questionnaire where required.

3. Older People

Focus groups were facilitated through groups such as Age UK and the Older People's Forum. Contact was also made with other voluntary organisations that have a higher proportion of older people as members. The Older People's Parliament developed a special newsletter about the consultation to encourage older people to take part.

4. People with Disabilities

Evidence from an initial focus group indicated that the focus of engagement with this audience needed to be face to face. In response to this the consultation visited every day centre and employment project supported by Adult Social Services. Contact was also facilitated through partnerships such as the Learning Disabilities Partnership and the Enabling and Fulfilling Lives Group. In addition, an 'easy read' version of the consultation questionnaire was developed.

Actions in relation to the following protected groups were also included in the communications and marketing strategy:

- Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people
- Civil Partners

Specific attempts were made to contact people from these communities by promoting the consultation via the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Federation North West which has a number of members registered in the Wirral area.

- Religion/Belief/Faith Practitioners

Contact with faith groups has been made through the voluntary sector support networks and the Council's own database of community-based groups.

- Pregnant Women
- People on Maternity / Paternity Leave

The consultation was promoted through all Council buildings including Children's Centres from which services for pregnant woman are delivered.

- Looked after children

A preliminary focus group was facilitated with the Children in Care Council and the consultation distributed through its membership.

- Vulnerable adults

The consultation was promoted at every day centre and employment project supported by Adult Social Services. The consultation questionnaire was also available in 'easy read' format.

- Carers

The consultation included a question about carers as a means to promote Council support available to people who care for an elderly or vulnerable person.

Where and how will the actions be monitored?

A dedicated project team is in place to ensure the effective delivery of the consultation process. Weekly project team meetings provide the opportunity for regular review of the equalities considerations at each critical stage of the project through initiation, project planning, document production, the consultation phase itself and the analysis, findings and reporting back stages.

Actions are also being monitored by the appropriate departmental equalities group.

If you think there is no negative impact, what is your reasoning behind this?

The consultation process seeks to maximise community participation in developing neighbourhood plans around local priorities. There is no apparent detrimental impact as a direct result of the consultation process itself.

Section 6: What research / data / information have you used in support of this process?

The Council has drawn upon its extensive networks of contacts and partners to promote the consultation process with a specific emphasis on voluntary, community and faith sector groups and organisations.

Section 7: Are you intending to carry out any consultation with regard to this Council function / policy?

Yes / No

If 'yes' please continue to section 8.

If 'no' please state your reason(s) why: (once completed stop and send to your Head of Service for approval)

Section 8: How will consultation take place?

X **via your Department's consultation process?** (please state which process)

X **via the Council's corporate consultation process?** (please state which process)

X **via the Council's Community 100 initiative?** (external)

X **via the Council's Wirral 100?** (internal)

✓ **other?** Specific consultation was undertaken with a number of the protected groups in relation to the accessibility, format and language of the consultation questionnaire including:

- Wirral Information Resource for Equality and Disability
- Advocacy in Wirral
- Wirral Multicultural Organisation
- The Children in Care Equality Council
- Voluntary and Community Action Wirral