

Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit (from May 2012)

Section 1: Your details

EIA lead Officer: Robert Oates

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Head of Section: Andrew Fraser

Chief Officer: David Ball

Department: Regeneration and Environment

Date: 15/05/13

Section 2: What Council proposal is being assessed?

A revision of the Council's statutory Statement of Community Involvement for public involvement in planning decisions.

Section 2b: Will this EIA be submitted to a Cabinet or Overview & Scrutiny Committee?

Yes

If 'yes' please state which meeting and what date

Cabinet 13 June 2013

Please add hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published on the Council's website:

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/regeneration-housing-planning>

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Section 3: Does the proposal have the potential to affect..... (please tick relevant boxes)

- Services**
- The workforce**
- Communities**
- Other** (please state eg: Partners, Private Sector, Voluntary & Community Sector)

If you have ticked one or more of above, please go to section 4.

- None** (please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 4: Does the proposal have the potential to maintain or enhance the way the Council (please tick relevant boxes)

- Eliminates unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advances equality of opportunity
- Fosters good relations between groups of people

If you have ticked one or more of above, please go to section 5.

- No** (please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 5:

Could the proposal have a positive 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)?

You may also want to consider socio-economic status of individuals.

Please list in the table below and include actions required to mitigate any potential negative impact.

Which group(s) of people could be affected	Potential positive or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
All Groups	Paragraph 2.7 – Defining the Community, is considered to have a positive impact as the term ‘community’ is specifically taken to embrace “any individual, business or group that is likely to be affected by planning in Wirral, both now and in the future. This includes everyone who lives, works or has an interest in the Borough, together with local landowners, businesses and service providers, irrespective of their gender, faith, race, disability, sexuality, age or income.”				
All Groups	Paragraph 2.8, which states that “any person is entitled to make representations about an emerging local development document or about a planning application, before it is determined, provided the comments are made within the published period for comments to be received, is considered to have a positive impact on all groups.				

Which group(s) of people could be affected	Potential positive or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
All Groups	<p>Paragraph 2.10 to 2.13 – Equality and Diversity, which set out the aspiration to ensure that local consultation exercises are undertaken amongst a wider set of individuals than just those participating in established interest groups and to be fully representative of those who live, work or carry out business in the area, are considered to have a positive effect on all groups. Paragraph 2.11 sets out the need to identify methods to involve more ‘hard to reach’ groups such as the young, disabled, ethnic minorities, residents in deprived areas and gypsies and travellers; and paragraph 2.13 sets out how the Council will seek to minimise barriers to effective participation by giving people access to enough background information to enable a meaningful response; ensuring documents, letters and emails use plain English and avoid the use of unnecessary jargon; provide a consultation questionnaire to help people to frame their responses to more lengthy or complicated issues; ensuring venues for public meetings are genuinely accessible to the target community and provide appropriate facilities, such as induction loops, disabled access and toilets.</p>				All Groups

Which group(s) of people could be affected	Potential positive or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
All Groups	Paragraphs 2.14 and 2.15 are considered to have a positive effect on all groups by seeking to maximise the value of public consultation and safeguard the use of public resources by, wherever possible, using existing corporate consultation arrangements to engage and involve the community in the land use planning system.				
All Groups	Paragraph 3.18, which states that during early stages of consultation, emphasis will be on making simple background information as widely available as possible in a variety of formats and on presenting information on potential options to a series of invited audiences in focus groups and other forms of public meeting including Open Days and that more focused, targeted consultations may also need to be undertaken with 'hard-to-reach' groups, is considered to have a positive impact upon all groups.				
All Groups	Paragraph 3.19, which states that the Council will take all representations into account, is considered to have a positive impact on all groups.				

Which group(s) of people could be affected	Potential positive or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
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All Groups	Paragraph 3.21, which refers to statutory procedures at the public examination of local development documents, is considered to have a positive impact upon all groups, as it makes it clear that anyone who makes representations seeking a change to the proposed submission draft local plan must be given the opportunity to appear and be heard by the person appointed to carry out the public examination.				
All Groups	Paragraph 3.37 is considered to have a positive impact upon all groups, as it will allow the Council to identify the most appropriate methods to involve and engage the community at a scale and nature of consultation that is appropriate to the audience, as each local development document is being prepared.				
All Groups	Paragraph 3.55 is considered to have a positive impact upon all groups, as the Council will investigate the possibility of providing documents in different formats in response to specific requests.				
All Groups	Paragraph 3.57 is considered to have a positive impact upon all groups, as it states that any person may make representations about the emerging content of a local development document.				

Which group(s) of people could be affected	Potential positive or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
All Groups	Paragraph 4.34 is considered to have a positive impact on all groups, as it states that all representations, whether for or against a proposal, will be taken into account when a final decision on a planning application is taken, in line with national and local policies.				
All Groups	Paragraphs 4.56 and 4.57 are considered to have a positive impact on all groups, as they encourage landowners and developers to undertake their own pre-application community consultation, especially for large, complex or controversial proposals and for proposals that will be contrary to the Development Plan. They also set out the advantages of early involvement of the community including allowing proposals to be explained, assisting in gauging community support, obtaining accurate local information, clarifying the issues at debate, providing greater certainty and transparency, saving time later in the decision making process and the delivery of a more acceptable development.				

Which group(s) of people could be affected	Potential positive or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
Race, Disability, Age	Paragraph 5.1 is considered to have a positive impact on the following groups protected under the Equality Duty 2010 under the headings of race, disability and age, as it sets out the type of bodies and organisations that are currently consulted on the preparation of local plans and supplementary documents, which specifically includes the Disability Action Forum, Age UK, the Wirral Older People's Parliament, Black and Ethnic Minority Groups and Gypsy and Traveller Organisations.				

Section 5a: Where and how will the above actions be monitored?

Statutory reports of consultation will be prepared and published at each stage in the preparation of a local development document, to ensure that the requirements of the SCI have been complied with.

Records of people consulted on planning applications are kept on a Development Management database and responses are recorded on individual planning application files.

Section 5b: If you think there is no negative impact, what is your reasoning behind this?

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out what the Council will do to meet the requirements for community involvement in planning decisions set out in national legislation. The SCI represents the Council's commitment to facilitate early community involvement when local planning policies are being drawn up and to promote continuous community involvement in local planning decisions. The SCI aims to ensure that everyone who wants to is able to contribute to planning decisions, irrespective of their gender, faith, race, disability, sexuality, age or income and that special efforts are taken to obtain a contribution from 'hard-to-reach' groups when Council policies are being drawn up. As a result, there is considered to be no negative impact resulting from the SCI.

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

Changes in requirements to national policy and experience in promoting community involvement under the previous Statement of Community Involvement, since December 2006.

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

Yes

If 'yes' please continue to section 8.

Section 8: How will consultation take place and by when?

This is dealt with in Section 5.0 of the accompanying Cabinet Report which states that it is proposed to make the draft revised SCI available for public comment for a period of six weeks, place the draft revised SCI for public comment on the Council's website, in public libraries, One Stop Shops and at the public counter of the North Annexe of Wallasey Town Hall, notify all contacts on the Council's Local Development Framework Contact Database by letter and notify Area Forum contacts, the Older People's Parliament, Youth Forum, Invest Wirral Business Forum and Public Service Board and VCAW contacts by e-mail.

Consultation on the draft revised SCI will commence subject to approval by Cabinet on 13 June 2013.

Before you complete your consultation, please email your preliminary EIA to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer in order for the Council to ensure it is meeting it's legal requirements. The EIA will be published with a note saying we are awaiting outcomes from a consultation exercise.

Once you have completed your consultation, please review your actions in section 5. Then email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk for re-publishing.

Section 9: Have you remembered to:

- a) **Add appropriate departmental hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published (section 2b)**
- b) **Include any potential positive impacts as well as negative impacts? (section 5)**
- c) **Send this EIA to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer?**
- d) **Review section 5 once consultation has taken place and sent your completed EIA to equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer for re-publishing?**