

Section 6 – Community Impact Assessments

Introduction

The Equality Duty set out in S149 of the Equality Act requires the Council to think about the following three aims as an integral part of developing policy, making decisions, and providing services:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Council takes very seriously the need to be aware of the impact that our policies, decisions and services have on communities across Cambridgeshire, and the importance of using this information to inform the preparation of the Business Plan. Where relevant, for each of the detailed proposals, services have undertaken a Community Impact Assessment (CIA).

CIAs have been prepared alongside the development of detailed proposals and are published separately to the Plan. They can be found at <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/business-planning/>

Process of Assessment

Our CIA process is a local development of national Equality Impact Assessment procedures, allowing us to consider locally significant issues such as rural isolation and deprivation alongside nationally prescribed issues such as age and disability.

Each assessment considers the following areas:

- Aims and objectives of the service, document or function.
- What is changing.
- Who is involved in the impact assessment.
- What the impact will be. This includes an indication as to whether the impact on each of the following protected characteristics is positive, neutral or negative.
 - Age
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Disability
 - Sex
 - Race (this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality)
 - Religion or Belief (this includes lack of belief)
 - Gender Reassignment
 - Pregnancy and Maternity
 - Marriage and Civil Partnership

- Plus additional characteristics for Cambridgeshire of
 - Rural Isolation
 - Deprivation
- For each of the stated characteristics where there is a positive, negative and / or neutral impact, details are required to evidence this view.
- Actions that will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts and how the actions are to be recorded and monitored.
- Issues or opportunities that may need to be assessed.
- If relevant, any community cohesion issues.

Preparation and Review

The CIAs were undertaken by Officers, alongside relevant partners, stakeholders and communities, to inform Members as part of the budget preparation.

The Equality Duty is a continuing duty and the Council must have regard to the aims of the Duty, not only when a decision is taken or a policy developed, but also during implementation and review. Therefore, these CIAs are dynamic documents and will be continually reviewed and updated accordingly as the agreed Business Plan is implemented.

Having due regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of the decision-making process. This means that consideration of equality issues must influence our decisions, such as how we act as an employer, how we develop and review policy, how we design

and deliver services and how we commission and procure from others.

Our CIAs enable us to ensure we have due regard to the impact that decisions will have on different groups (the protected characteristics) and that even though a decision to implement a policy or strategy could have negative impacts, (for instance because resources are scarce and other needs are more pressing), we may still proceed with the decision.