

Huntingdonshire District Council Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)



Consultation and Engagement Strategy Appendix 5

Service area	Corporate Team
Date of assessment	March 2014
Name of strategy/policy/function/service to be assessed	Consultation & Engagement Strategy
Is this a new or existing strategy?	Review of existing strategy
Name of manager responsible for strategy	
Names of people conducting the assessment	Louise Sboui
Step 1 – Description of strategy	
Describe the aims; objectives and purpose of the strategy (include how it fits in to wider aims or strategic objectives).	<p>The purpose of this strategy is to provide a framework and a consistent approach to our consultation and engagement activities. It is supported by guidance and an action plan.</p> <p>This strategy aims to adopt a more realistic and proportionate approach to consultation and engagement whilst also ensuring that, where appropriate, the views and needs of local residents and other stakeholders are, where appropriate, used to inform and shape the delivery of services.</p>
<p>The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, the Council also needs to demonstrate its compliance with the Equality Duty. The Council therefore needs to understand how its decisions and activities impact on different people, specifically employees and how they are affected by policies and practices. An Equality Impact Assessment is the current method by which the Council can assess and keep a record of the impact of new or amended strategies, policies, functions or services.</p>	



<p><i>Definition of Adverse Impact - occurs when a decision, practice, or policy has a disproportionately negative effect on a protected group. Adverse Impact may be unintentional</i></p> <p>Adverse impact can be measured statistically:</p>	
<p>Are there any (existing) equality objectives of the strategy?</p>	<p>To ensure that consultation and engagement is representative, inclusive and effective. The strategy recognises that successful involvement cannot happen without a good understanding of the make-up, needs and interests of different people and their capacity to engage. An inclusive approach will enable different groups to have the opportunity to participate and help us to fulfill our duties under the Equality Act.</p>
<p>Who is intended to benefit from the strategy and in what way?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local residents (opportunities to get involved in shaping the delivery of services) • Members (better informed and more involved in consultation & engagement activities) • Officers (guidance to support consultation & engagement activities).
<p>What are the intended outcomes of this strategy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that consultation and engagement is representative, inclusive and effective. <p>To contribute towards the council's vision which is to <i>continue to improve the quality of life for the people of Huntingdonshire and work towards sustainable economic growth whilst providing value for money services</i></p> <p>The Strategy will support this by contributing towards the priorities of:</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowering local communities • Ensuring that the council engages with customers when deciding how services are delivered, modified and improved
<p>Step 2 – Data</p>	
<p>What baseline quantitative data (statistics) do you have about the strategy relating to equalities groups (e.g. monitoring data on proportions of service users compared to proportions in the population), relevant to this policy?</p>	<p>Census district profile</p>
<p>What qualitative data (opinions etc) do you have on different groups (e.g. comments from previous consumer satisfaction surveys/consultation, feedback exercises, or evidence from other authorities undertaking similar work), relevant to this strategy?</p>	
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy could have a differential impact on different racial groups; this refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins. Gypsy/Travellers are distinct group within this category.</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>The Accessibility guidance aims to define different groups within communities, explains potential barriers and gives guidance on how to consult and engage with Black & Minority Groups, Gypsy/Travellers, migrant workers. Also included is guidance on when and how to use translation and interpretation services.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy could have a differential impact on younger or older people?</p> <p>For some services this should include consideration of impact in terms of safeguarding young people.</p> <p>What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>The Accessibility guidance aims to define different groups within communities, explains potential barriers and gives guidance on how to consult and engage with younger and older people.</p>

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<p>Are there concerns that the strategy could have a differential impact on gender, including transgender people? What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>The Accessibility guidance does not currently include any reference to barriers to consultation and engagement that may be experienced based on gender or transgender.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy could have a differential impact on part time/full time employees? What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>No adverse impact identified.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy could have a differential impact on disabled people? What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>The Accessibility guidance aims to define different groups within communities, explains potential barriers and gives guidance on how to consult and engage to take account of disabilities, also included is guidance on accessible information.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy could have a differential impact in terms of marriage and civil partnership</p>	<p>No adverse impact identified.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy could have a differential impact in terms of pregnancy and maternity (e.g. pregnant or breast feeding women)</p>	<p>No adverse impact identified.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy could have a differential impact on lesbian, gay men, bisexual or heterosexual (straight) people? What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>Accessibility guidance does not currently include any reference to barriers to consultation and engagement that may be experienced based on sexual orientation.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy could have a differential impact on grounds of religion or belief? What evidence do you have for your answer?</p>	<p>Accessibility guidance does not currently include any reference to barriers to consultation and engagement that may be experienced based on religion or belief.</p>
<p>Are there concerns that the strategy could have a differential impact in terms of specific characteristics of Huntingdonshire e.g. Rural isolation</p>	<p>The Accessibility guidance aims to define different groups within communities, explains potential barriers and gives guidance on how to consult and engage to take account of rural isolation.</p>



Findings

The Strategy acknowledges that effective involvement cannot happen without a good understanding of the make-up, needs and interests of different groups and their capacity to engage and that an inclusive approach will need to be used to ensure that different groups have the opportunity to participate. The Accessibility Appendix sets out how some of these groups can be reached.

Recommendations

- explore whether additional guidance required on issues relating to gender, transgender, religion and belief and sexual orientation .