



SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

SKDC – Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) 2025

Service Area:	Lead officer: Jessica Morris	Date of Meeting 02/12/25
Planning Policy Development and Growth	Assessors: Jessica Morris	
	Neutral Assessor: Jhanvi Shukla	

1. Name and description of policy/service/function/strategy

The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the Council will consult on planning policy documents (including the Local Plan), engage with and support neighbourhood planning, and consult on planning applications. As a local authority, we are required by the Equality Act 2010 to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. This means we need to carry out an equality analysis of our services and any proposals for change. We need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, services and functions, both current and proposed, give proper consideration and due regard to the needs of diverse groups to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity and access, and
- Foster good relations between different groups in the community

Is this a new or existing policy? Existing

2. Complete the table below, considering whether the proposed policy/service/function/strategy could have any potential positive, or negative impacts on groups from any of the protected characteristics (or diversity strands) listed, using demographic data, user surveys, local consultations evaluation forms, comments and complaints etc.

Equality Group	Does this policy/ service/ function/ strategy have a <i>positive, neutral or negative impact</i> on any of the equality groups? Please state which for each group	Please describe why the impact is positive, neutral or negative. If you consider this policy etc is not relevant to a specific characteristic, please explain why
Age	Neutral	The SCI document has a greater emphasis on online consultation methods and removes the minimum consultation requirement to have libraries and council offices as deposit points, which could disproportionately impact older people who are less likely to be online. However, the Council can still choose to deposit the documents at these points at their discretion and there is an option for hard copy documents to be sent out via post if required. The document also makes commitment to make reasonable adjustments for equalities purposes upon request. Overall, this would maintain the advancement of equality of opportunity.

Disability	Positive	The SCI document makes a commitment to make reasonable adjustments for equalities purposes by providing alternative formats upon request. This would particularly benefit individuals with certain disabilities. Overall, the aim of this is to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity to respond to consultations.
Race	Negative	It is recognised that there may be challenges in engaging all racial groups due to language barriers, or cultural differences. To address this, the local plan consultation database has attempted to include the contact details for a range of different organisations representing different racial groups who will be notified of any consultations.
Gender Reassignment	Neutral	Benefits of the SCI document would be equal as they apply to the public generally.
Religion or Belief	Neutral	Benefits of the SCI document would be equal as they apply to the public generally.
Sex	Neutral	Benefits of the SCI document would be equal as they apply to the public generally.
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	Benefits of the SCI document would be equal as they apply to the public generally.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Neutral	Benefits of the SCI document would be equal as they apply to the public generally.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	Benefits of the SCI document would be equal as they apply to the public generally.
Carers	Neutral	Benefits of the SCI document would be equal as they apply to the public generally.

<p>Other Groups (e.g. those from deprived (IMD*) communities; those from rural communities, those with an offending past)</p> <p>*(IMD = Indices of multiple deprivation)</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Overall, the aim of this is to advance equality of opportunity to respond to planning consultations.</p>
<p>General comments</p>	<p>The Statement of Community Involvement has been drafted with equalities considerations as a corporate priority. The information contained applies to the public generally and are not intended to focus on any specific group. For plan-making the Council has committed to maintaining a mix of online and offline consultation methods, and to make reasonable adjustments for equalities requests in line with the general equality duty. In all cases and considering that planning issues can vary significantly depending on individual proposals, the general equality duty applies irrespective of the Statement of Community Involvement.</p>	

3. What equality data/information did you use to inform the outcomes of the proposed policy/service/function/strategy? (Note any relevant consultation, who took part and key findings)

The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) under paragraph 16 states that - Plans should:

“c) be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees”

It is a legislative requirement within section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 for all councils to have an up-to-date Statement of Community Involvement in place which prescribes who should be consulted, when consultations should take place, and how.

The document is based on setting out consultation methods in accordance with Local Planning Regulations, Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure). These regulations provide the requirements for when it should happen and how it should take place.

The regulations also set out defined stages of plan production and lists individuals who need to be consulted known as ‘specific consultation bodies’. Furthermore, the Council has discretion to identify a number of other bodies representing certain interests known as ‘general consultation bodies’ and SKDC has therefore looked to broaden the scope as much as possible across the district.

While there is no specific requirement to consult on the SCI itself, a 6-week public consultation on the draft revised SCI will be carried out. The SCI consultation

document will be made available to view and access from the Council website. A general notification of the consultation will be sent out via email and letter to stakeholders. Should any negative impacts arise during the consultation, then these will be considered and addressed prior to the SCI being adopted with any mitigation measures being put in place to address the needs of the customer. Should there be any negative impacts identified, then a revised Equalities Impacts Assessment will be completed to address any changes required.

If there are any gaps in the consultation/monitoring data, how will this be addressed?

The Council is also committed to involving a wide range of other individuals including members of the public, local community voluntary groups, and 'hard to reach groups'. SKDC are constantly monitoring their contact database and looking for ways in which to effectively improve consultations to have more effective communications with the Local Authority.

4. Outcomes of analysis and recommendations (please note you will be required to provide evidence to support the recommendations made): Please check one of the options.

a)	No major change needed: equality analysis has not identified any potential for discrimination or for negative impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>If you have checked option a) you can now send this form to the Lead Officer and your Neutral Assessor for sign off</i>		
b)	Adjust the proposal to remove barriers identified by equality analysis or to better promote equality.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>If you have checked option b) you will need to answer questions b.1 and b.2</i>		
c)	Adverse impact but continue	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>If you have checked option c) you will need to answer questions c.1</i>		
d)	Stop and remove the policy/function/service/strategy as equality analysis has shown actual or potential unlawful	<input type="checkbox"/>

b.1 In brief, what changes are you planning to make to your proposed policy/service/function/strategy to minimise or eliminate the negative equality impacts?

- b.2 Please provide details of whom you will consult on the proposed changes and if you do not plan to consult, please provide the rationale behind that decision.**

If you have checked option b) you will need to complete a Stage 2 equality analysis

- c.1 Please provide an explanation in the box below that clearly sets out your justification for continuing with the proposed policy/function/service/strategy.**

If you have checked option c) you will need to complete a Stage 2 equality analysis. You should consider in stage 2 whether there are sufficient plans to reduce the negative impact and/or plans to monitor the actual impact.

Signed (Lead Officer):
(Name and title)

Jessica Morris
Jessica Morris - Interim Planning Policy Manager

Date completed:

02/03/26

Signed (Neutral Assessor):
(Name and title)

Jhanvi Shukla
Jhanvi Shukla – Assistant Planning Policy Officer

Date signed off:

02/03/26