Equalities Impact Assessment
Statement of Community Involvement
2026



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1. Introduction

1.1. The Public Sector Equality Duty, introduced under the Equality Act 2010, requires all public bodies, including local authorities, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

1.2. Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) allow the Council to:

- Show that we are meeting this legal duty by demonstrating due regard for the provisions of the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Identify possible negative impacts on individuals and groups with protected characteristics, plan mitigating action and seek to maximise opportunities to advance equality within our activities.

1.3. The Equality Act 2010 identifies nine 'protected characteristics' and seeks to protect people from discrimination on the basis of these characteristics. They are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

2. Identifying Details

Officer Completing EqIA	Grace Lockley Interim Planning Policy Team Leader
Team and Service	Planning Policy Planning and Economic Development Cannock Chase District Council
Title of Proposal	Statement of Community Involvement
EqIA Completion Date	7 October 2026
Proposal Implementation Date	2 November 2026
Who will be responsible for implementing this proposal	Cannock Chase District Council

3. Assessment

Stage 1: Scoping and Defining

1. **What are the aims and objectives of Plan/Strategy/Service/Policy?**
   The purpose of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is to set out how the Council intends to engage with communities through the planning process.

   The SCI is structured into separate sections and this EqIA relates to the following:

   Section 1 – Introduction

   Section 2 – Involving the Community

   Section 3 – General Standards of Public Consultation

   Section 4 – Local Plan

   Section 5 – Supplementary Plans

   Section 6 – Neighbourhood Plans

   Section 7 – Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

   Section 8 – Development Management

2. **How does it fit within Cannock Chase District Council's wider objectives?**
   The Council's Corporate Plan identifies the Council's long-term priorities serving the residents and communities of the District. The SCI is consistent with the wider objectives of the Corporate Plan, in particular the following:

   - Priority 1 – Economic Prosperity – to create a district that thrives
   - Priority 3 – The Community – to ensure Cannock Chase is a place that residents are proud to call home

3. **What are the expected outcomes?**
   The SCI provides certainty to both applicants and the community by setting out how consultation and engagement will be undertaken with communities across the District. Ultimately, the application of the SCI should lead to better development outcomes for local communities and the District as a whole by setting out how engagement in the planning process can be undertaken.

   Section 1: Introduction – advises of the legislative background and provides an overview of the purpose of the SCI and why it has been updated.

   Section 2: Involving the Community – provides an overview on community involvement and the different groups and their engagement within the process

   Section 3: General Standards of Public Consultation – this provides a set of general standards that would be adhered to at all stages of plan-making

Section 4: Local Plans – this provides an overview of the plan-making process and refers to the Communication and Engagement Strategy. The legislative process for consultations is also set out.

Section 5: Supplementary Plans – sets out the legislative process for consultations.

Section 6: Neighbourhood Plans – advises on the mechanisms for Neighbourhood Planning and the role undertaken by the Council.

Section 7: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – sets out the process for the production of a CIL Charging Schedule and the engagement that will take place at the various stages.

Section 8: Development Management – provides information on the levels of engagement that will be undertaken at the various stages of the process for determining applications, and advises of the process involved in an application for Permission in Principle and Prior Approval and the levels of engagement that will be undertaken at each stage. Provides information on the pre-application process and the level of engagement at this stage.

4. **Which of the groups with protected characteristics is this intended to benefit?**
   The SCI is not intended to benefit any one particular group. As such, the SCI is relevant to everyone who will live, work and visit the District.

Stage 2: Information Gathering

1. **What type and range of evidence or information have you used to help you make a judgement about the plan/strategy/service/policy?**
   The updated SCI is informed by legislation and national guidance, along with good practice guidance on consultation techniques and methods.

2. **Have you consulted on the plan/strategy/service/policy and if so with whom?**
   The SCI has not been consulted on as the Communication and Engagement Strategy provides the significant changes to the approach to plan-making as required by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 and has been consulted on as part of the Local Plan Scoping Consultation.

   The changes to the SCI are not considered significant, there have been no amendments to either section on CIL or Neighbourhood Planning, and the changes to the decision-making section are also reflect on the Council's website for public knowledge. The key requirement of the SCI is with regards to plan-making and that is clearly set out in the CES.

3. **Which of the groups with protected characteristics have you consulted with?**

N/A

Stage 3: Analysis of Impact

1. **From your data and consultations is there any adverse or negative impact identified for any particular group which could amount to discrimination? *If yes, identify the groups and how they are affected.***

RACE The SCI is inclusive of all equality groups.	**DISABILITY** The SCI sets out how the consultation and engagement will be undertaken using a variety of methods. This approach enables all groups to be able to engage in the plan-making process.	**SEX** The SCI is inclusive of all gender groups.
MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP The legislative requirements relating to this group are only relevant in the context of the District Council's role as an employer and are not therefore relevant to the EqIA for the SCI.	AGE The SCI sets out how consultation and engagement will be undertaken using a variety of methods. This approach enables all groups to be able to engage in the process.	**GENDER REASSIGNMENT** The SCI is inclusive of all gender groups.
RELIGION/BELIEF The SCI is inclusive of all religions.	**PREGNANCY/MATERNITY** The SCI sets out how the consultation and engagement will be undertaken using a variety of methods. This approach enables all groups to be able to engage in the plan-making process.	**SEXUAL ORIENTATION** The SCI is inclusive of all sexual orientations.

2. **If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified.**
   No adverse impacts in relation to the identified groups are anticipated.

3. **What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact? *(This should form part of your action plan under Stage 4)***
   No negative or adverse impacts are anticipated; therefore, no actions are needed.

4. **How does the plan/strategy/service/policy contribute to promotion of equality? If no what can be done?**
   The SCI sets out how consultation and engagement will be undertaken with communities across the District and therefore contributes to equality by enabling all people to be aware of how they are able to engage with the various aspects of the planning process.

5. **How does the plan/strategy/service/policy promote good relations between groups? If not, what can be done?**
   The SCI sets out how the community can be involved in the planning process through a variety of methods, thus fostering better relationships between different groups.

6. **Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes, how can they be overcome?**
   The CES sets out how consultation and engagement will be undertaken using a variety of methods including virtual and remote methods. This approach enables all groups to be able to engage in the planning process thus reducing barriers to engaging with the planning process.

Stage 4: Action Planning, Review & Monitoring

1. **Action Planning – Specify any changes or improvements which can be made to the service or policy to mitigate or eradicate negative or adverse impact on specific groups, including resource implications.** ***If No Further Action is required, then go to – Review & Monitoring***
   No Further Action is required

2. **Review and Monitoring – State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan**
   A Monitoring Report is produced by the District Council on an annual basis to review the effectiveness of policies and proposals in the Development Plan. The SCI will be reviewed every five years in accordance with legislation and guidance.