

EQIA of Statement of Community Involvement

Toolkit Screen 1

My Directorate	Corporate Core
My Service	People, Policy & Reform
My Team/Section	Planning & Infrastructure Team
The name of the proposal being assessed	Statement of Community Involvement
Is this a new service or a change to an existing service?	Updated document
Who is completing the assessment	Claire Milner
2nd Person Completing the assessment	-
Who is the lead manager responsible for the assessment?	Katrina Holt
Name of Head of Service	Richard Elliott

Toolkit Screen 2

TELL US ABOUT THE PROPOSAL YOU'RE ASSESSING

Briefly describe the main aims and objectives of the proposal you're assessing. Let us know if your assessment has implications for other areas of the Council's work. Describe how your proposal supports the wider aims of the Council if relevant

This is an assessment of the Council's updated Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI sets out how we will involve residents, businesses and other stakeholders in the preparation of Local Development Documents in the future, and also how we will consult them on planning applications. Manchester's SCI also covers consultation on council regeneration and masterplan documents. It is a legal requirement to produce a SCI, and consultations on statutory planning documents must be carried out in line with it once it is adopted. Our existing SCI was adopted in 2007 so we have produced a new document to reflect changes in planning legislation since this time and to ensure that consultation on planning documents fully reflects the Our Manchester approach to community involvement.

Planning regulations require us to consult on planning policies and planning applications in a specific way, and this is re-iterated in the SCI. The SCI also sets out additional engagement methods which we would try to use where possible, and also explains how the community could be consulted by others, for example developers and landowners, at the early stages of development planning. We also set out how the community and other stakeholders will be involved in non-statutory planning frameworks produced by us and other organisations. Effective stakeholder engagement in the preparation of plans and development proposals is a key element in the wider Our Manchester approach, giving people opportunities to be fully involved in the way the city is managed, and the way that key public services, such as parks and community infrastructure, are planned for the future.

We consulted on a draft version of the new SCI for eight weeks between 7th August and 2nd October 2017. During this time we received 148 comments from 16 individuals/organisations. We have considered all of these comments and have made changes to the draft SCI as appropriate, and will be taking the SCI to Executive to adopt it in December 2017.

Toolkit Screen 3

ASSESSING RELEVANCE TO EQUALITY

WILL THE PROPOSAL YOU'RE ASSESSING IMPACT ON OUR DUTIES TO (PLEASE TICK)

- *Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by individuals or groups because of their characteristics*
- *Meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people*
- *Promote diversity and encourage people from protected groups to participate in activities where they are underrepresented*

Describe how you've reached your conclusion and what evidence its based on (max 500 words).

The draft Statement of Community Involvement sets out how we will try to make planning policy consultations accessible to a range of people, such as holding events in places which are accessible and trying to hold them at times of the day which are convenient for as broad a range of people as possible to try and remove obstacles to involvement encountered by some people. The SCI also refers to the requirement for us to carry out Equality Impact Assessment of all Local Plan policies which we produce, to determine whether they could impact upon any of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

During the consultation period we received comments from Manchester Disabled People's Access Group and from the Age-Friendly Manchester Design Group relating to making consultations accessible to the groups which they represent. In summary, the comments which they have made which relate specifically to equality issues are as follows (full comments are an appendix to the December Exec report):

- Diagrams and charts could be made clearer and text versions provided
- Asked for information about how to obtain policy documents in alternative formats, including availability of hard copies
- Many older people do not like to go out in the evening or winter months to consultation events
- Events need to be held at fully accessible venues
- Groups representing the equality strands should be consulted at all stages of policy preparation, and also on planning applications including by developers as part of pre-application consultation
- Planning policy consultations should be for at least three months to allow people to access alternative document formats and for groups to be able to come together to discuss responses.

We have amended the SCI where appropriate in light of these comments. In addition to the commitment to accessible events and to carrying out EQIAs when producing planning policies which was in the draft SCI, we have added reference to producing text versions and more accessible versions of diagrams and hard copies of documents on request where possible in the final version of the SCI. We have also stated that the consultation periods that we use (e.g. six weeks) are minimums

to allow for longer consultations where possible and reasonable, taking account of the nature of the consultation.

We will report back to everyone who responded to the consultation to let them know how we have taken on board their comments, or to explain why we are not able to.

Which, if any, of the following protected characteristics will be affected by the proposal?(Please tick)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Age (older people) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Age (Children/young people) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Carers | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Faith/religion/belief | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gender identity/Trans | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Marriage/Civil Partnership | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pregnancy/maternity | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Race | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sex | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sexual Orientation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Others (please state) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Describe how you've reached your conclusion and what evidence it's based on (max 500 words).

The updated SCI will not disproportionately impact upon any of the protected characteristics above.

During the consultation period on the draft SCI we emailed around 700 groups / individuals on our planning policy database, including the following the following organisations:

Manchester Disabled People's Access Group
Age Concern
Manchester Deaf Centre
Broad African Representative Council
CALM Co-ordinator
Faith Communities Network
BME People Network
Wai Yin Chinese Women Society
Cultural Centre for Diversity, Arts and Education
Manchester Jewish Housing Association

Irish Community Care
Manchester Asian Care Ltd
Manchester Race and Health Forum
Manchester Failsworth Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses
Manchester Carers' Forum
Faith Action
Voluntary Youth Manchester
Young Advisors
Manchester Women's Design Group
White Moss Youth Club
Womens Design Group
The National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups
Valuing Older People
Pankhurst Centre
LGBT foundation

When no representatives from these organisations had made comments by early September we emailed them again asking whether they thought that the SCI would have specific impacts on the people that their organisation represents. As stated in response to the previous question, we received comments from organisations representing disabled people and older people - please see their comments above. As stated, we have tried to take on board their requests and suggestions where possible but in some cases we have not been able to. We have not been able to guarantee that all planning policy documents will be available in different formats as standard. However, we have said that we will accommodate requests for these where possible. In addition, we have not been able to guarantee that all consultation periods will be for a minimum of three months as in some cases we have legal requirements which mean that we have to make policy decisions within short deadlines that do not allow for a consultation period of this length. We are also unable to commit to involving disabled people's groups and other groups representing the protected characteristics at all consultation stages in the development process: while we can seek to encourage developers to engage in consultation at the pre-application stage we cannot force them to do so, and we do not have the resources to guarantee that they will be consulted on specific planning applications and the Council's non-statutory planning frameworks. However we have added wording to the final version of the SCI to state that we will encourage developers to consult with various parties, which could include equalities groups, on a case by case basis depending on the nature of the application.

In light of the above we feel that the updated SCI will not impact disproportionately on any of the protected characteristics and therefore a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required.