



## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL

### PLANNING TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

The council has a statutory duty to consider the impact of its decisions on age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

The Council also has a duty to foster good relations between different groups of people and to promote equality of opportunity.

Completing an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is the **simplest way** to demonstrate that the Council has considered the equality impacts of its decisions and it reduces the risk of legal challenge. EIAs should be carried out at the **earliest stages** of policy development or a service review, and then updated as the policy or review develops. EIAs must be undertaken when it is possible for the findings to inform the final decision. Keep all versions of your EIA. An EIA should be finalised once a final decision is taken.

#### When should you undertake an EIA?

- You are making changes that will affect front-line services
- You are reducing the budget of a service, which will affect front-line services
- You are changing the way services are funded and this may impact the quality of the service and who can access it
- You are making a decision that could have a different impact on different groups of people
- You are making staff redundant or changing their roles (particularly if it impacts on frontline services).
- EIAs also need to be undertaken on how a policy is implemented even if it has been developed by central government (for example cuts to grant funding)
- **Section 1 of the EIA Tool: Initial Screening**, will help you decide whether a full EIA is necessary

#### Who should undertake the EIA?

- The person who is making the decision or advising the decision-maker

#### Further Guidance

- [Step-by-Step Guidance to the questions](#)
- An EIA e-learning module is available for all Westminster staff: [www.learningpool.com/westminster/course/view.php?id=159](http://www.learningpool.com/westminster/course/view.php?id=159)

**Please contact the Equalities lead to inform them when you begin and then complete an EIA: [equalities@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@westminster.gov.uk)**

**SEB will monitor compliance with the requirement to complete EIAs.**

<b>Title of Proposal</b>	
Development Planning Transformation	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	
i.	Full Name: Stuart Reilly
ii.	Position Head of Strategic Projects
iii.	Department: Development Planning
iv.	Contact Details: 02076413168
<b>Contact for further information.</b>	
v.	Full Name: Patrick Cassin
vi.	Position: Programme Manager
vii.	Department: Built Environment & Planning
viii.	Contact Details: 02076416592
<b>Has this project, policy or proposal had an EIA carried out on it previously? If yes, please state date of original and append to this document for information.</b>	
Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Date of original EIA:	
<b>Version number and date of update</b>	
Version 1.0 - Date: 18/08/14	
Version 1.1 – Date 27/08/14	
Version 2 – 20/11/2015	

**SECTION 1: Initial screening: Do you need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?**

*Not all proposals will require an EIA, this initial screening will help you decide if your project or policy requires a full EIA by looking at the potential impact on any equality groups.*

<b>1.1</b>	<b>What are you analysing?</b>
	<p>Development Planning initiated this project in response to an acknowledgement by the service that a comprehensive review of its business processes was required.</p> <p>Phase 1 of the Project comprised a Feasibility Study, which was completed on schedule in November 2013. The principal findings were that there is much that is good about Development Planning Delivery Unit (DPDU) but that there is considerable scope for improvement, especially in terms of the health of the service’s principal asset, its staff, and the maintenance of the quality of service provided to external stakeholders. The key to making progress against these challenging objectives was identified as being the successful re-design of the service’s back office business processes. The principal opportunities for realising costs savings were thought to include (but not be limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Streamline the Validation Process</li> <li>• New and Improved document / letter templates</li> <li>• More effective configuration of UNI-form to minimize scope for errors (and therefore avoidance of complaint scenarios)</li> </ul>

- Encouragement of customers to “self-serve”, thus reducing incoming telephony traffic
- Increased usage of automated input of incoming representations / responses
- Reduction in notification volumes / more customised notification documentation
- Increased dependence upon digital documentation for consultation purposes
- Generally reduced printing volumes

Phase 2 ran from January to April 2014, and delivered a report suggesting that widespread changes should be made. This report was supported by detailed AS IS and TO BE Business Process Models and a costs realisation plan. Key conclusions of this work included:

- Digital case files should be used for all transaction records in favor of the mix of paper and digital records which are currently in use
- A radical re-design of the Validation Process is urgently needed to improve efficiencies
- The structure and organisation of support staff into a single Unit-wide resource pool would provide a more effective and efficient function
- Use of the UNI-form / IDOX DMS / Enterprise solution should be confirmed, with greater emphasis being placed upon the on-going support of this solution, and greater use made of the functionality contained
- Workflow management should be introduced to support the use of digital case files and provide a solid foundation for performance management of the case load
- More effective use should be made of the GIS software which has already been deployed
- And, following achievement of the above, establish a practice of agile working, such that the unit’s footprint within City Hall can be reduced in line with corporate aspirations

Improvements in technology, and changes to the way in which other Westminster services and external stakeholders can, and are prepared to work, offers an opportunity for Development Planning to re-design its own processes. In addition a continued reliance upon existing business processes is no longer a tenable approach, in the face of ever increasing workloads, stakeholder expectations, and reducing resource availability.

If these changes are not implemented within Development Planning, the quality of the service currently provided will not improve and customer satisfaction will continue to diminish. Furthermore, the service will not be able to deliver the savings highlighted for MTP.

The implementation of improved back office business processes, IT systems reconfiguration and officer retraining will introduce consistent working practices, improves customer relationships and reduce costs associated with customers constantly contacting the service for updates on their applications.

<b>1.2 Does the project, policy or proposal have the potential to <u>disproportionately</u> impact on any of the following groups? If so, is the impact positive or negative?</b>					
		<b>None</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
	Disabled people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>X</b>
	Particular ethnic groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>X</b>
	Men or women (include impacts due to pregnancy/ maternity)	<b>X</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	People or particular sexual orientation/s	<b>X</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	<b>X</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	People on low incomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>X</b>
	People in particular age groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>X</b>
	Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	<b>X</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are there any other groups that you think may be affected negatively or positively by this project, policy or proposal?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>X</b> Other groups – English as a second language. Disabled – blind, mobility impaired (e.g. inputting data)

**If the answer is “negative” or “unclear” consider doing a full EIA**

<b>1.3 What do you think that the overall <b>NEGATIVE</b> impact on groups and communities will be?</b>		<b>None / Minimal</b>	<b>Significant</b>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><u>None or minimal impact would be where there is no negative impact identified, or where there will be no change to the services for any groups.</u> Wherever a negative impact has been identified you should consider undertaking a full EIA by completing the rest of the form.</p>			Send and Receive Date Electronically

**1.4 Using the screening and information in questions 1.2 and 1.3, should a full assessment be carried out on the project, policy or proposal?**

Yes **X** No

**1.5 How have you come to this decision?**

The decision to introduce paperless working practices for processing planning applications will have an impact of a number of external amenity societies who will be

required to receive and accept planning application Consultations electronically.

Software has been implemented (Consultee Access & Public Access) that allows Consultees and the Public to register their objections to a planning application.

It should be noted that this software is not new and that it has been implemented in most other Councils for a number of years.

Development Planning wants to encourage its customers to stop receiving paper notifications of applications and accept electronic notifications and to also submit their objects on-line.

The decision to complete a full EIA is to ensure that the two groups identified in section 1.2 "*people on low incomes and people in particular age groups*" are able to submit objections to planning applications.

## SECTION 2: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### Building an Evidence Base: What do you know?

*This section will help you build your evidence base and interpret what the likely impact will be of your service.*

<b>2.1 Build up a picture of who uses/will use your service or facility and identify who are likely to be impacted by the proposal</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you do not formally collect data about a particular group then use the results of local surveys or consultations, census data, national trends or anecdotal evidence (indicate where this is the case). Please attempt to complete all boxes.</li> </ul>	
How many people use the service currently? What is this as a % of Westminster's population?	12,500 Planning Applications Per year
Disabled people	Unknown – This information is not collected as part of the planning process.
Particular ethnic groups	Unknown – This information is not collected as part of the planning process.
Men or women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	Unknown – This information is not collected as part of the planning process.
People of particular sexual orientations	Unknown – This information is not collected as part of the planning process.
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	Unknown – This information is not collected as part of the planning process.
People on low incomes	Unknown – This information is not collected as part of the planning process.
People in particular age groups	Unknown – This information is not collected as part of the planning process.
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs	Unknown – This information is not collected as part of the planning process.
Any other groups who may be affected by the proposal?	Amenity Societies

<b>2.2 Summary (to be completed following analysis of the evidence above)</b>				
Does the project, policy or proposal have the potential to have a <u>disproportionate</u> impact on any of the following groups? If so, is the impact positive or negative?	None	Positive	Negative	Not sure
Disabled people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X

	<b>Particular ethnic groups</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>X</b>
	<b>Men or women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)</b>	<b>X</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>People of particular sexual orientations</b>	<b>X</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment</b>	<b>X</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>People on low incomes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>X</b>
	<b>People in particular age groups</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>X</b>
	<b>Groups with particular faiths and beliefs</b>	<b>X</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Are there any other groups that you think this proposal may affect negatively or positively?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>X</b> Other groups – English as a second language. Disabled – blind, mobility impaired (e.g. inputting data)

### SECTION 3: Assessing Impact

*In order to be able to identify ways to mitigate any potential impact it is essential that we know what those potential impacts might be.*

<b>3.1</b>	<b>Consultation Information</b> <i>This section should record the consultation activity undertaken in relation to this project, policy or proposal</i>								
	<p><b>i. Who have you consulted with?</b> Members, Other Councils, Professional Bodies, Amenity Societies</p> <p><b>ii. How did you consult? (inc meeting dates, activity undertaken &amp; groups consulted)</b> Letters, Email, Forums, Consultee Access Software</p>								
<b>3.2</b>	<b>What might the potential impact on individuals or groups be?</b> <i>Consider disability, race, gender, sexual orientation, transgender, age, faith or belief and those on low incomes and other excluded individuals or groups</i>								
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td><b>Generic impact (across all groups)</b></td> <td><b>Planning Development will send emails notifying groups of new planning applications.</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Men or women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)</b></td> <td><b>No Impact</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>People of particular sexual orientation</b></td> <td><b>No Impact</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have</b></td> <td><b>No Impact</b></td> </tr> </table>	<b>Generic impact (across all groups)</b>	<b>Planning Development will send emails notifying groups of new planning applications.</b>	<b>Men or women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>People of particular sexual orientation</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>Generic impact (across all groups)</b>	<b>Planning Development will send emails notifying groups of new planning applications.</b>								
<b>Men or women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)</b>	<b>No Impact</b>								
<b>People of particular sexual orientation</b>	<b>No Impact</b>								
<b>People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have</b>	<b>No Impact</b>								

	<b>undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment</b>	
	<b>Disabled people</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
	<b>Particular ethnic groups</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
	<b>People on low incomes</b>	<b>Need to ensure the Council continues to provide access to PC's in Libraries for access to respond</b>
	<b>People in particular age groups</b>	<b>Need to ensure people are able to use and submit their responses on-line – The Council must provide support (Call Centre Advisors)</b>
	<b>Groups with particular faiths and beliefs</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
	<b>Other excluded individuals and groups</b>	<b>No Impact</b>

#### SECTION 4: Reducing & Mitigating Impact

*As a result of what you have learned, what can you do to minimise the impact of the proposed changes on equality groups and other excluded / vulnerable groups, as outlined above?*

<b>4.1</b>	<b>Where you have identified an impact, what can be done to reduce or mitigate the impact?</b> <i>(Remember to think about the Council as a whole, another service area may already be providing services which can help to deal with any negative impact).</i>	
	<b>Impact 1: <u>People on Low Income</u> may not have access to a personal computer, therefore not be able to receive notifications nor respond</b>	<b>The Council should continue provide access to computers in all of its 14 Public Libraries and Information Services.</b>
	<b>Impact 2: <u>People in particular age groups</u> may not have the experience with computers or know how to access planning application data on-line</b>	<b>The Councils Call Centre will provide a service that will advice people how to complete a response on-line (The Call Centre will not be able to complete the consultation response on behalf of the customer, only show how)</b>
	<b>Impact 3: <u>Disabled Groups and ethnic minorities</u> – ability to use the online site</b>	<b>Consider disabled people &amp; those who do not speak English as a first language. Will utilise call centre data to monitor impact of change.</b>
	<b>Impact 4: [Insert impact here]</b>	
	<b>Impact 5: [Insert impact here]</b>	

<b>4.2</b>	<b>Now that you have considered the potential or actual effect on equality, what action are you taking?</b>	
	No major change (no impacts identified)	<b>X</b>
	Adjust the policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Continue the policy (impacts identified)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Stop and remove the policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Please document the reasons for your decision</b>	



	WCC's decision to move to electronic Consultations is not a new practice within the industry, WCC are in fact catching up with other Councils and improving the service offered to our Customers.
<b>4.4</b>	<b>How will the impact of the project, policy or proposal and any changes made to reduce the impact be monitored?</b>
	No Impact Identified
<b>4.5</b>	<b>Conclusion</b> <i>This section should record the overall impact, who will be impacted upon and the steps being taken to reduce/mitigate impact</i>
	There will be some groups who will refuse to accept electronic Consultations unless support is received from Management and Members. However, the project team will meet with the different groups and explain / discuss the reasons and benefits to be gained for all parties.

## SECTION 5: Next Steps

5.1	<b>Action Plan</b> <i>Complete the action plan if you need to reduce or remove the negative impacts you have identified, take steps to foster good relations or fill data gaps.</i>  <i>NB. Add any additional rows, if required.</i>						
	Action Required	Equality Groups Targeted	Intended Outcome	Resources Needed	Name of Lead, Unit & Contact Details	Completion Date (DD/MM/YY)	RAG

## 5.2 Risk Table

Ref	Risk	Impact	Actions in place to mitigate the risk	Current risk score	Further actions to be developed
R1.1	[Enter risk here]	[Enter here the likely impact if the risk came to pass]	[Record here any actions already in place to reduce the risk]	[Using the key below, enter the current risk score]	[Enter here any actions that can be developed in future to reduce the risk identified]



**THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE RELEVANT SERVICE MANAGER**

Signature: .....

Full Name: .....

Unit: .....

Email & Telephone Ext: .....

Date of Completion (DD/MM/YY): .....

**WHAT NEXT?**

**Please email your completed EIA to the Equalities Lead: [equalities@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@westminster.gov.uk)**