

Equality Impact Assessment of the Core Strategy Submission Draft
Agenda Item 7

Portfolio Area: Cllr N. Harley Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Culture
Report Presented by: Eleanor Dash Planning Policy Manager

Background Papers: Braintree District Council Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit.
 Braintree District Submission Core Strategy Equality Impact Assessment.

Corporate Implications: Please refer to table at end of report

- Options:**
1. To approve the Equality Impact Assessment for the Submission Core Strategy
 2. Not to approve the Equality Impact Assessment for the Submission Core Strategy

Risks: The Equality Impact Assessment is required by legislation. Non-compliance with the legislation could potentially risk legal challenges from equality groups.

Executive Summary

Local Authorities are required under legislation to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) when reviewing or developing new policies, strategies and functions, to determine if there is an adverse impact, or illegal discrimination, or any unmet need or requirements.

The Equality Impact Assessment has assessed the aims and objectives of the Submission Draft Core Strategy and has concluded that there is no adverse impact on the following equality groups:- age, disability, gender, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation and social inclusion.

This Equality Impact Assessment is an updated version of the Equality Impact Assessment of the 'Draft Strategy for People and Places in Braintree District to 2025', which was approved by Members of the LDF Panel on 3rd February 2010.

Decision

1. To approve the Equality Impact Assessment of the Submission Core Strategy including the following recommendations set out in the Assessment:-
 - The Development Management Policies Development Plan Document

(DPD's) should consider the impact of design in reducing crime and fear of crime in developments.

- The Braintree District Access Group should be consulted on all DPD's to assess the impact of policies on race, gender and disability.
 - The adopted Core Strategy should be made available in alternative formats and languages if required.
2. To amend the Statement of Community Involvement in due course, to include the second and third points above.

1 Introduction

1.1 Local Authorities are required under legislation to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) when reviewing or developing new policies, strategies and functions to determine if there is any adverse impact, or illegal discrimination, or any unmet need or requirements.

1.2 This duty is set out in the Race Relation (Amendment) Act 2000 under which all public authorities have a duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups

1.3 Other relevant acts include Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999, the Gender Recognition Act 2004, Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005, the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations December 2003, Civil Partnership Act 2005, Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, Age Discrimination 2006, Human Rights Act 1998.

1.4 The legislation imposes duties on local authorities to promote equality and tackle discrimination related to Age, Disability, Gender, Race, Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation. People living in rural areas, people living in urban areas, people on low incomes, people whom English is not first language are also an important additional categories to be assessed relevant to the Braintree District.

2. The Equality Impact Assessment

2.1 The Assessment examines the purpose of the Core Strategy and who is involved in the delivery of the Core Strategy proposals. It also considers who is affected by the implementation of the Core Strategy, and who was consulted on the proposals.

2.2 The EQIA then assesses the impact of the Core Strategy on different groups, including groups relating to disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation and social inclusion and sets out evidence to support the assessment. The assessment determines whether the strategy discriminates

against any of the groups and whether any negative impacts can be minimised, or removed.

2.3 The Assessment concludes that there is no adverse impact on the following equality groups:- age, disability, gender, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation and social inclusion. It sets out the following recommendations relating to the Core Strategy and to other Development Plan Documents to be prepared by the Council:-

3. Recommendations of the Equality Impact Assessment

- The Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD's) should consider the impact of design in reducing crime and fear of crime in developments.
- The Braintree District Access Group should be consulted on all DPD's to assess the impact of policies on race, gender and disability.
- The adopted Core Strategy should be made available in alternative formats and languages if required.

3.1 Further to the second bullet point, the Council states in Appendix 4 of the LDF Statement of Community Involvement that :-

When preparing Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and the SCI the Council will seek to engage and consult, where appropriate, with the general public, the wider community, and hard to reach groups. These may include:

the list of organisations includes the Braintree District Access Group.

This recommended change will make it clear that the Council will consult the Access Group on all DPD's.

3.2 At present, paragraph 3.8 of the Statement of Community Involvement states:-

In order to ensure that as many groups and individuals as possible take part in the process the Council will:

- ensure that all documents are clear and concise and written in plain English
- offer documents in alternative formats if required
- arrange meetings at times and locations convenient for as many people as possible
- provide documents in both written and electronic formats and make all documents available on the Council's website

3.3 It is proposed that changes are made to the Statement of Community Involvement, when it is next revised, to incorporate these recommendations.

Corporate Implications				
Financial:	None			
Legal:	Race Relations (Amendment Act) 2000 Sex Discrimination Regulations 1999 Employment Equality Regulations 2005 Civil Partnership Act 2005 Disability Discrimination Act 1995 Age Discrimination 2006 Human Rights Act 1998			
Equalities & Diversity:	The Equality Impact Assessment determines if the Submission Core Strategy would have any adverse impact or illegal discrimination or unmet need or requirements relating to the various equality groups.			
Customer Impact:	The legislation requiring an equality impact assessment imposes a duty on local authorities to promote equality and tackle discrimination related to age, disability, gender, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation and social inclusion. This inevitably has a positive customer impact.			
Environment & Climate Change:	None			
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Local Committees		Partners	
	Public		Staff	✓
Key Decision:	No			
Public/Private Report:	Public			
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