

Appendix 4 - Ipswich Borough Council Draft Statement of Community Involvement Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Please Note: This EIA is being carried forward to support the adoption of the Final Draft Statement of Community Involvement, as no substantive changes have been made to the statement since this EIA was conducted. It is therefore considered to remain applicable.

Title of Report	Ipswich Borough Council Draft Statement of Community Involvement for Public Consultation
What is the report trying to achieve?	The report aims to ensure effective, inclusive, and legally compliant community engagement in the planning process by updating the Ipswich Statement of Community Involvement to reflect changes in consultation document access locations and operational adjustments. It also seeks Executive approval for the Ipswich Draft Statement of Community Involvement to proceed to public consultation.
What evidence/data is being used to support this equality analysis? Please select all that apply.	Published data - e.g Census, State of Ipswich Report
Service Area	Planning and Development
Corporate Manger	James Fairclough
Links to supporting documents where available	Published data - e.g Census, State of Ipswich report.
What is proposed?	The Council proposes updating the Ipswich Statement of Community Involvement to change how the Council notifies the public about planning applications and relocate public access to planning consultation documents from the Town Hall to Suffolk County Council's offices at Endeavour House. These change ensures continued compliance with legal requirements, maintains accessibility for the community, and reflects operational adjustments due to financial constraints.
Why are the changes being introduced?	The changes are being introduced to ensure consultations processes are effective, while also being mindful of the need to manage costs and resources. The changes will also ensure continued accessibility to planning consultation documents following operational changes at the Town Hall opening time.
What evidence is being used to support this Equality Impact Assessment, and how is it being used?	Evidence from the Equality Impact Assessment of the adopted Local Plan 2022 and demographic data from the Suffolk Observatory.

How will this change be implemented?	The change will be implemented by updating the Ipswich Statement of Community Involvement to include updates on how the Council proposed to notify the public about planning applications and designate Suffolk County Council's offices at Endeavour House as the new venue for accessing planning consultation documents. This update will be formalised through public consultation on the Draft Statement of Community Involvement, followed by adoption of the final document by Council.
Is there potential for positive or negative impacts on any of the protected characteristics below?	
Age	No significant impact - For those who are not digitally enabled, the Council will continue to make documents available at the Council's offices at Grafton House, the County Library and Endeavour House. The changes to the notification procedures will ensure regulatory compliance and will comprise a combination of digital and physical notification methods, including notices and letters (as set out in Appendix 1, page 15).
Disability	No significant impact – The identified venues are accessible, ensuring that individuals with physical disabilities have full access to consultation documents. The changes to the notification procedures will ensure regulatory compliance and will comprise a combination of digital and physical notification methods, including notices and letters (as set out in Appendix 1, page 15).
Marriage and Civil Partnership	The Ipswich Borough Council Draft Statement of Community Involvement would not have a negative impact on this protected group.
Race	It is acknowledged that engaging all racial groups may present challenges due to language barriers or cultural differences. To address this, the Local Plan consultation database includes contact details for a variety of racial groups, ensuring they are notified of any consultations.
Pregnancy & Maternity	The Ipswich Borough Council Draft Statement of Community Involvement would not have a negative impact on this protected group.
Religion or Belief	The Ipswich Borough Council Draft Statement of Community Involvement

	would not have a negative impact on this protected group.
Gender reassignment	The Ipswich Borough Council Draft Statement of Community Involvement would not have a negative impact on this protected group.
Sex	The Ipswich Borough Council Draft Statement of Community Involvement would not have a negative impact on this protected group.
Sexual orientation	The Ipswich Borough Council Draft Statement of Community Involvement would not have a negative impact on this protected group.
Does the report meet Ipswich Borough Council's equality objectives?	I can confirm that the report meets Ipswich Borough Council's equality objectives.
The report helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment & victimisation' in the following way(s):	<p>The Draft SCI helps us to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment & victimisation in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For those who are not digitally enabled, the Council will continue to make documents available at the Council's offices at Grafton House, the County Library and Endeavour House.
The report helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It outlines measures to ensure that all community members, including hard-to-reach or disadvantaged groups, have the opportunity to participate in the planning process. • Consultation documents will be available at accessible locations, ensuring individuals with physical disabilities can participate. • It allows for a variety of consultation methods (online and in-person) to cater to different needs and preferences within the community.
The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s):	<p>The Draft SCI helps us to "foster good relations" in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By ensuring that all community members, regardless of background or ability, have access to consultation documents and opportunities to engage, the policy promotes understanding and cooperation among diverse groups. • By being transparent in how the consultation process works and ensuring it is fair and accessible, the policy helps build trust between the Council and the community, encouraging ongoing positive engagement.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering multiple channels for participation, including online platforms and physical locations, promotes open dialogue and the sharing of perspectives, which is essential for fostering harmonious relations within the community.
The new provisions will be reviewed in the following way(s):	<p>The Statement of Community Involvement is reviewed every five years or sooner to reflect any changes to engagement. It is important that Statements of Community Involvement is kept up-to-date to ensure effective community involvement at all stages of the planning process. The Council's planning consultation database of individuals and organisations that have an interest in planning matters is also regularly reviewed so that stakeholders are aware of opportunities to participate in the planning process. Anyone can be added to this database subject to written consent and can be removed upon request.</p>