

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Screening Form – V2 Template – November 2024

Section 1: Identify the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option

Name of the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option to be screened	Communication
Reason for change in Policy or Policy Development	No change
List main outcome focus and supporting activities of the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option	<p>Communication is at the heart of everything we do as a local authority. We are the leading public service delivery organisation in Fenland and have a duty to communicate with our diverse groups of stakeholders. These include the public, elected members, staff, partners, businesses and service users. We know that we must use a variety of mechanisms to engage with these stakeholder groups, each of whom has differing needs. The increasing popularity of the internet and social media platforms enables instant communication and can reach a large audience more quickly than the traditional mediums of print and post. Conversely however, they can be sources of rumour, criticism and misinformation. We have plans in place to manage these channels and have vastly increased our engagement with the public by using these tools.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <p>Our communications guidelines are a key corporate document that is relevant to all officers and members. It supports the delivery of the Council’s priorities (outlined in our Business Plan) and as such, should be reflected in service plans and cross-cutting Council strategies. The document sets out how the Council will proactively maintain good communications with its wide variety of stakeholders which include staff, councillors, residents, businesses and service users. Working closely with other organisations is vital to achieve this goal. Specifically, it aims to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance to all Council staff and elected members on effective communication methods to achieve clear and consistent messages. • A framework for communicating effectively with internal and external customers. • Support on information communication so that all employees are aware of organisational goals and contribute towards them to their full potential.

	<p>We aim to communicate clearly, openly and regularly with the public, partner organisations and within the organisation. This is to promote a high level of mutual understanding and provide accurate information on Council services. Key objectives are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish and maintain clear and regular communication channels with <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The public. Keeping the community informed of key service developments. Creating a positive, recognisable image for the Council whilst improving public satisfaction. b. Members. Keeping them informed of key service developments and supporting their work as elected representatives. c. Staff and Members. Maintaining a corporate environment of trust and loyalty, with core values embedded across the organisation. d. Partners. Working with other partners, at a local and national level, to promote joint working and high standards of service. 2. Deliver spoken, written and electronic communication that is clear, easy to understand, timely and up to date. Specifically, this should: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Support and reinforce our key values and 'one-team' approach. b. Reinforce our reputation for good quality service delivery.
Name of officer completing assessment (signed and date)	David Wright
Assessment verified by (signed and date)	16.12.2024

If applicable, please provide further details about the name and description of policy being analysed
Briefly summarise the policy including any key information such as aims, context etc; note timescales and milestones for new policies; use plain language – NO JARGON; refer to other documents if required

Section 2: Gathering Evidence and Stakeholder Engagement

The best approach to find out if a policy, etc. is likely to impact positively or negatively on equality groups is to look at existing research, previous consultation recommendations, studies or consult with representatives of those groups. You should list below any data, consultations (previous relevant or future planned), or any relevant research or analysis that supports the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option being undertaken.

Reminder – protected characteristics include age, disability, race and/or ethnicity, religion or belief (including lack of belief), gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

Name any research, data, consultation or studies referred to for this assessment	State if this reference refers to one or more of the protected characteristics	Do you intend to set up your own consultation? If so, please list the main issues that you wish to address if the consultation is planned; or if consultation has been completed, please note the outcome(s) of consultation.

If applicable, please provide further Information about stakeholder engagement or detail used for customer analysis

Note relevant consultation; who took part and key findings; refer to, or attach other documents if needed; include dates where possible

To effectively communicate and improve local services, we need to know who are communicating with. Our customers are individuals. They absorb information at different levels and access our services through a variety of channels. We use in-depth knowledge about our customers to tailor our service deliver to their needs. Seeking regular feedback from our customer groups enables us to make sure we are providing the most effective services and communications that we can. The rise of digital services and platforms, particularly through our website and social media channels, allows the Council to provide a quicker and more responsive service to customers. However, it is important that we do not exclude customers who cannot and choose not to engage with us through these more modern methods. We have identified our customer segments as:

Commented [LC1]: we

The Corporate Management Team, Heads of Service, Council Staff, Council Members, Council Partner Organisations, Journalists, Customers/Residents, Business/Investors, Visitors, MPs, Local Government, National Government and Government agencies We consult and engage with each of our customer segments to help shape our service and improve our customer experience. Mechanisms for doing this include online feedback questionnaires, Social Media channels (including Facebook, ~~Twitter~~, LinkedIn and You Tube), informal feedback (including by email, telephone or face-to-face) and through our corporate '3C's' (Comments, Complaints and Correspondence) process. The Communications Team offers advice on ~~all~~ council corporate communications campaigns and projects to ensure they all meet corporate standards.

Commented [LC2]: X (formerly Twitter)

Commented [LC3]: Suggest remove 'all'

Section 3: Assessment and Differential Impacts

Use the table below to provide some narrative where you think the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option has either a positive impact (contributes to promoting equality or improving relations within an equality group) or a negative impact (could disadvantage them) and note the reason for the change in policy or the reason for policy development, based on the evidence you have collated.

Please note that:

- a Positive Impact could benefit an equality group and a negative impact could disadvantage an equality group
- for reasons of brevity race is not an exhaustive list – please edit the list if appropriate to reflect the complexity of other racial identities
- a definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 is available on the [gov.uk website](http://gov.uk)
- there are too many faith groups to provide a list, therefore, please input the faith group e.g., Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Hindus, etc. Consider the different faith groups individually when considering positive or negative impacts

Protected Characteristic	Specific Characteristics	Positive Impact	Neutral	Negative Impact	Socio Economic/Human Rights Impacts
Sex or Gender	Women		X		
	Men		X		
	Transgender		X		
Race	White		X		
	Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups		X		
	Asian		X		

Protected Characteristic	Specific Characteristics	Positive Impact	Neutral	Negative Impact	Socio Economic/Human Rights Impacts
	African		X		
	Caribbean or Black		X		
	Other Ethnic Group		X		
Disability	Physical disability		X		
	Sensory Impairment (e.g. sight, hearing)		X		
	Mental health		X		
	Learning disability		X		
LGBT	Lesbians		X		
	Gay Men		X		
	Bisexual		X		
Age	Older people (60+)		X		
	Younger people (18-25)		X		
	Children (0-16)		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Women		X		
	Men		X		
	Lesbians		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women		X		
Religion and belief	See below		X		

Summary of Protected Characteristics most impacted	Neutral impact
Summary of Socio-Economic impacts	Neutral impact

Summary of Human Rights impacts	Neutral impact
Summary Explanation of the scoring against the protected characteristics	Overall a neutral impact

Section 4: Outcomes, Actions and Public Reporting

Screening Outcome	Yes, No or not at this stage
Was a significant level of negative impact arising from the project, policy or strategy identified?	No
Does the project, policy or strategy require to be amended to have a positive impact?	No
Does a Full Impact Assessment need to be undertaken?	No

<p>If applicable, please state the overall outcome of the assessment, impacts and customer analysis</p>
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Section 5: Monitoring outcomes, evaluation and review

The Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) screening is not an end in itself but the start of a continuous monitoring and review process. The relevant Service responsible for the delivery of the Policy, Project, Service Reform or Budget Option, is also responsible for monitoring and reviewing the EQIA Screening and any actions that may have been taken to mitigate impacts.

Arrangements for Monitoring	Annual
Timing of the current review	December 2025
Next scheduled review	December 2025

If applicable, please provide details of the arrangements for future monitoring:

Note when analysis will be reviewed; include any equality indicators and performance against those indicators

To ensure we provide open and honest information to the public about the council and its services, the communications team will:

- Monitor press and social media activity regarding Fenland District Council
- Assess and plan communications activities around the services we provide.
- Maximise opportunities for communications activities that showcase Fenland District Council with the public and our peers.
- Deliver a co-ordinated, proactive programme of press releases and social media updates to inform the public about key services.
- Deliver a comprehensive communications programme on Social Media, signposting the public to mechanisms to find out further information.
- Ensure that all key communicators, service managers, members and corporate managers are trained and supported in effective communications.
- Undertake an annual review of the Emergency Media Plan and carry out an annual event to exercise the plan.
- Review corporate service plans to identify consultation opportunities, target audiences and methods of communication. We also use the following methods/channels to help us monitor our communications:
 - Google Analytics to analyse website traffic
 - Ongoing feedback from service users.
 - Ongoing feedback from website online forms and social media.
 - Survey Monkey (consultation software) to analyse consultation results.

If applicable, please provide details of any supporting data/ research linked to monitoring arrangements (both FDC & Partners):

FDC Consultation Strategy.
Survey Monkey (consultation software)
Google Analytics.
LG Comms
Best practice from Gov.uk

Legislation

Equality Act (2010) – the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties)

The 2010 Act consolidated previous equalities legislation to protect people from discrimination on grounds of race, sex, being a transsexual person (transsexuality is where someone is changed, is changing or has proposed changing their sex – called 'gender reassignment' in law), sexual orientation (whether being lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual), disability (or because of something connected with their disability), religion or belief, having just had a baby or being pregnant, being married or in a civil partnership and age.