

## Assessing Equality – The Equality Act 2010

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### Customer Impact Review

#### Name and brief description of policy being analysed

##### Consultation

Consultation is a key priority for the Council, as outlined in our Business Plan. Our Corporate Consultation Strategy supports us to appropriately engage and consult with residents about Council services and proposals. Elected members use consultation results to help inform policy and decision making. It is therefore important that consultation is properly constructed and follows a consistent process to give clear results that can help inform future decisions.

The Council is committed to ensuring that strategic priorities reflect local public opinion. Effective consultation plays an important role in achieving this. We are Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accredited, a national standard for delivering excellent customer service. A key element of this award is making the consultation of customers integral to continually improving our services and advising customers of the results and action taken.

Consultation can mean a range of different things, including:

- Asking people about their priorities
- Seeking their advice on matters that affect them
- Telling people what you propose to do

Consultation plays a vital role in enabling our whole community to give their views. Gaining this knowledge is vital to informing effective decision making and improving service delivery. Our website lists the current available consultations at [www.fenland.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/consultations)

#### Information used for customer analysis

The Council undertakes frequent consultation upon a range of statutory and non-statutory issues (statutory duties include consulting on planning applications and the Local Plan). Government legislation can also require us to engage with individuals who have a disability, for example, the polling district review.

Although consultation is not new to the Council, we continually look for customised and innovative methods to develop and improve our approach to consultation and community engagement. Fenland District Council is part of the Cambridgeshire Compact, which is a partnership agreement between statutory bodies and the voluntary and community sector in Cambridgeshire. The agreement sets out a framework for effective consultation, representation and partnership working to achieve common goals and outcomes for the benefit of the local community.

The Communications team keep a Corporate Consultation Calendar to ensure all consultations are co-ordinated and to avoid duplication. Before any new consultation is undertaken a thorough search is made to ensure relevant questions have not already been asked.

The Communications Team offers advice in ensuring that any consultation meets corporate objectives and principles of consultation. It is important that all consultation is well planned and prepared, and gives adequate time for consultees to prepare their response. A consistent process will allow the consultation to give clear results and therefore inform future decisions.

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	Could particularly benefit	Neutral	May adversely impact	Explanations	Is action possible or required?	Details of actions or explanations if actions are not possible  Please note details of any actions to be placed in your Service Plan
<b>Race</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>All consultations are <a href="#">available on our website</a> which can be accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.</p> <p>People who can't access the internet at home can contact us by telephone and a My Fenland advisor can access the website on their behalf.</p> <p>We have accessibility information on the footer of our website that has information on assistance with language translation and visual impairments.</p> <p>Where possible, consultations are also available in other FDC outlets: Customer Service Centres, Community Hubs, Business Centres and Business Reception.</p>	Y / N	<p>All consultations are written in plain English and adhere to our Corporate Consultation Strategy</p>
<b>Sex</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>		Y / N	
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>		Y / N	
<b>Disability</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>		Y / N	
<b>Age</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>		Y / N	
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>		Y / N	
<b>Religion or belief</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>		Y / N	
<b>Pregnancy &amp; maternity</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>		Y / N	
<b>Marriage &amp; civil partnership</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>		Y / N	
<b>Human Rights</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y / N		
<b>Socio Economic</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y / N		
<b>Multiple/ Cross Cutting</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	Y / N		
<b>Outcome(s) of customer analysis</b>						
a) Will the policy/ procedure impact on the whole population of Fenland and/ or identified groups within the population; negative <input type="checkbox"/> neutral <input type="checkbox"/> positive ✓						

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No major change needed       Adjust the policy       Adverse impact but continue       Stop and remove / reconsider policy

Fenland District Council seeks to gain a representative cross-section of views from our community. However, some sections of the community are harder to engage through more 'traditional' consultation methods than others. Appropriate action will be taken to ensure that views are actively sought from 'harder to reach' audiences (for example older people, younger people and the migrant community) and depends on the type of consultation.

Examples of past successful engagement with minority groups include:

- Running engagement sessions in wards with high population of minority groups
- **Running engagement sessions with youth groups such as 20TwentyProductions** • Visiting Golden Age Fairs and other events which attract an older audience
- Sending a postal survey to every household in Fenland
- Providing translated copies of surveys in key community locations e.g. the Oasis and Rosmini Centre. (The Council also states that its documents can be translated into different languages or put into Braille/Large Print etc)
- Engaging a translator at a community centre (e.g. Rosmini Centre) who can explain the consultation and capture feedback in a different language.

The Council's Traveller and Diversity Manager can also offer advice on how to engage with harder to reach groups. Each service area also has 'Equality Champions' who is responsible for ensuring that their team delivers its services inclusively.

### Arrangements for future monitoring:

Consultations are implemented using guidelines and best practice outlined in the Corporate Consultation Strategy. The Communications Team ensure that all consultations are promoted via the correct communication channels and use the correct consultation methods to gain the best results.

We currently use a number of services to help us monitor our consultation. These include:

- Survey Monkey (consultation software) to analyse survey results
- Google Analytics to analyse consultation numbers and responses via the website
- Ongoing feedback from service users
- Ongoing feedback from website online forms and social media

Where possible, will use consultation results to help inform policy and decision making.

Further to our service related consultations, we publicise all Council minutes and decisions, and the Council's forward plan which sets out decisions that the Council, Cabinet or an individual member of the Cabinet intends to take. All key decisions are transparent and publicised online at; [www.fenland.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/councillors)

In addition, members of the public also have the opportunity to submit a petition, which dependent on the number of signatures can initiate a debate at Full Council. Full details of petitions can be found online at; [www.fenland.gov.uk/petitions](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/petitions)

### Details of any data/ Research used:

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FDC Consultation Strategy

Survey Monkey – consultation software

Google Analytics – website software

<http://www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com/>

<http://www.lgcomms.org.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications>

<http://www.cambridgecvs.org.uk/group-support/compact>

**Completed by:**

**Name: David Wright**

**Position: Head of Policy & Communications**

**Approved by** (manager signature):

**Date published:** 31 January 2024

**Details of any Committee approved by** (if applicable):

**Date endorsed by Members** if applicable: