

South Cambridgeshire District Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Introduction – Please read

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) allow the Council to:

- Show that the Council are meeting its legal duty, demonstrating due regard for the provisions of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) as below:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
 - Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
 - Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Methodically consider and assess the impacts of proposals across the [nine protected characteristics](#)
- Allow the Council to develop and implement high quality proposals that maximise positive outcomes for all.

EqIAs should be completed during the development and review of all Council policies, strategies, procedures, projects or functions. Where there is any doubt, the completion of an EqIA is always recommended.

When the form is completed, please send an electronic copy to equality.schemes@scambs.gov.uk. Further support and guidance available on Insite or contact the Policy and Performance Team.

Equality Impact Assessment Complete Form

Section 1: Identifying Details

- 1.1 Officer completing EqIA:
Kevin Ledger
- 1.2 Team and Service:
Policy and Performance, Transformation
- 1.3 Title of proposal:
Feedback and Complaints Policy
- 1.4 EqIA start date:
27/09/2021
- 1.5 Proposal implementation date:
27/09/2021
- 1.6 Who will be responsible for implementing this proposal (Officer and/or Team):
Corporate Complaints Manager (Rachael Fox-Jackson), Complaints Champions, Head of Transformation.

Section 2: Proposal to be Assessed

- 2.1 Type of proposal:
Policy
If other, please specify
[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
- 2.2 Is the proposal:
Change to an established
- 2.3 State the date of any previous equality impact assessment completed in relation to this proposal (if applicable):
Unknown

2.4 What are the headline aims of the proposal and the objectives that will help to accomplish these aims? (Max 250 words)

The policy sets out how customers can submit feedback and complaints, plus details of what can be expected from these processes. At the heart of this approach, we aim to identify and put right where something has gone wrong, and to learn from the feedback and complaints that we receive. The policy also outlines measures that we may choose to put in place in response to vexacious or unreasonably persistent complainants.

2.7 Which of the Council's equality objectives (as detailed in the Council's Equality Scheme) does this proposal link to or help to achieve?

Identify, prioritise and deliver actions that will narrow the gap in outcomes between disadvantaged groups and the wider community

SCDC is an employer that values difference and recognises the strength that a diverse workforce brings.

Protected characteristic groups have a voice and are represented in forming the future shape of the district.

None.

2.8 Which groups or individuals will the proposal affect:

Service Users

Councillors

External Stakeholders

Other

Employees

If other, please specify [Click or tap here to enter text](#).

2.9 Broadly speaking, how will these groups or individuals be affected? (you will be asked to provide more detail on the specific impacts on different protected characteristic groups later in the form) (max 250 words)

The policy sets out how we will run our feedback and complaints policy and procedures, which will impact on those accessing the service. This aims to influence

an improvement in complaints handling performance. Employees and Councillors are impacted as the policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of both of these groups within feedback and complaints handling processes.

2.11 If any part of the proposal is being undertaken by external partners, please specify how the Council will ensure that they will meet equality standards?

(Max 250 words)

NA

Section 3: Evidence and Data

3.1 Describe any research (this could include consultation) and analysis you have undertaken to understand any effects on groups of people, including those within [9 protected characteristic groups?](#) Please list any key sources that you used to obtain this Information.

(Max 250 words)

Best practice guidance has been reviewed from both the Local Government Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman. In particular guidance from the Housing Ombudsman promotes the inclusion of a 'reasonable adjustments' section of the policy, setting out how the policy and processes will be made accessible to those with disabilities. Discussions have also taken place with key stakeholders within the organisation, including Service Area Complaints Champions, the Corporate Complaints Manager and Head of Transformation. This has included discussion around how to make the process accessible to those who may not be digitally enabled.

3.2 If you have not undertaken any consultation, please detail why not, or when consultation is planned to take place.

(Max 250)

Consultation has taken place internally only to date, however plans are in place to introduce a survey for complainants to complete indicating their satisfaction



with the complaints process. Feedback submitted through this channel will be used to review and improve this policy and associated practices going forward.

Section 4: Impact of proposal on those with protected characteristics

4.1 Please select all characteristics that may or will be impacted ([positive or negative]). When providing details of the impact please consider the following questions

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. (both the number of persons affected and the severity of the impact)
- you will be asked to set out actions to manage these impacts in the following question (4.2)

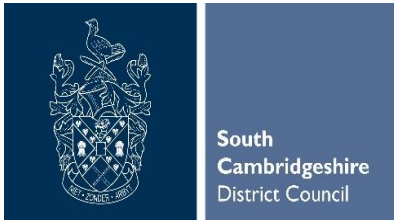
All - general to all protected Characteristics.

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Age

Details: Positive, medium. Whilst this policy aligns with the Council's aim to increase the proportion of customer transactions that take place on a digital, self-serve basis, it also confirms that we will continue to accept feedback and complaints that are submitted through other communications channels. It also signposts those who require assistance to self-serve to our call our contact centre, who will be able to assist. Although many older people are highly digitally enabled and tech-savvy, there may also be some sections of this community who are not as familiar with digital communication channels or technologies, and this aspect of the policy could therefore ensure that these people are not excluded from our feedback and complaints processes.

Disability



Details: Positive, medium. This policy includes a section on reasonable adjustments that sets out our approach to adapting our processes to avoid or correct any disadvantage that may be experienced by those with protected characteristics, including disabled people. Examples of reasonable adjustments that could be made include (but are not limited to): use of a particular communication method that best suits the customer's needs, provision of information in appropriate alternative formats (for example, large print, Braille, coloured paper); provision of an interpreter (including British Sign Language). This aspect of the policy could therefore ensure that disabled people are not excluded from our feedback and complaints processes.

Gender reassignment

Details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Pregnancy and maternity

Details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Race

Details: Positive, medium. This policy includes a section on reasonable adjustments that sets out our approach to adapting our processes to avoid or correct any disadvantage that may be experienced by those with protected characteristics, including people for whom English may not be their first language. Examples of reasonable adjustments that could be made include (but are not limited to): use of a particular communication method that best suits the customer's needs, translation of written communication alternative languages; provision of an interpreter to translate conversations into alternative languages. This aspect of the policy could therefore ensure that people of different nationalities and language users are not excluded from our feedback and complaints processes.

Religion and belief

Details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Sex

Details: Click or tap here to enter text.

Sexual orientation

Details: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Other

Details [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

None of the above

4.2 Considering the above impacts you have identified above, please detail any actions (specific or general) which may help to enhance or mitigate impacts.

Please include the timescale for completing the action.

Action and timescale	Officer
Ensure staff are aware of interpreting and translation services that are available for use within the feedback and complaints process (and beyond)	Rachael Fox-Jackson
Ensure complaints champions are aware that we can accept complaints through alternative channels and how they can set up complaints that have been received through non-portal means, on the My South Cambs portal.	Rachael Fox-Jackson
Ensure that Contact Centre staff are briefed and ready to assist any customers who wish to submit feedback or a complaint, but who require assistance to self-serve.	Rachael Fox-Jackson
Ensure that our feedback and complaints webpages are up to date with details of how feedback and complaints can be submitted.	Rachael Fox-Jackson and Kevin Ledger

4.3 How will you monitor that the above actions have been completed and that this proposal, once implemented, is impacting fairly on everyone it affects? In answering this question, please include information about feedback you will seek and/or data you will collect and analyse, and how often you will do this

Plans are in place to introduce a survey for complainants to complete indicating their satisfaction with the complaints process. Feedback submitted through this channel will be reviewed at least quarterly and used to review and improve this policy and



associated practices going forward. Monthly meetings with complaints champions to review any issues and lessons from the complaints process.

Section 5: Summary

5.1 Briefly summarise the key findings of the EqIA and any significant equality considerations that should be taken into account when deciding whether or not to proceed with the proposal (this section can be included within the 'equality implications' section of any committee reports). (Max. 250 words)

The policy includes provisions to ensure that those with protected characteristics (particularly disabled people, older people and non-English speakers) are not excluded from our feedback and complaints processes. This links closely to our third equality objective – 'Protected characteristic groups have a voice...'

5.2 Confirm the recommendation of the officer completing the EqIA:

Proceed with the proposal (with any actions identified as required within Section 4 of the EqIA). Analysis demonstrates that the proposal is robust, we have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.

Reject the proposal: Analysis demonstrates that the proposal will cause unlawful discrimination and it must be removed or changed

Section 6: Sign Off

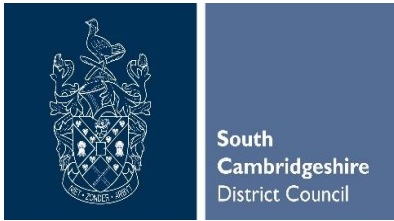
6.1 Signature of individual completing EqIA:

Kevin Ledger

6.2 Date of completion:

27/09/2021

6.3 When will this proposal next be reviewed and who will this be?



Alongside subsequent reviews of or changes to the policy.

- 6.4 Approving officer signature, this should be your Head of Service, Service Area Manager, or Project Sponsor (if the individual completing the EqIA is a Head of Service, Service Area Manager or Project Sponsor, additional sign off is not required):

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

- 6.5 Date of approval:

[Click or tap to enter a date.](#)

Please send the completed document to Equality.Schemes@scambs.gov.uk for publishing on the website.