

Report to: Cabinet

Date: February 2013

Portfolio: Planning, Councillor Miles Parkinson

Report Author: Chief Planning and Transportation Officer

Title of Report: Rishton Canalside - Supplementary Planning Document

Customer First Analysis

The Council's corporate values include putting the customer first, providing opportunities for bright futures and narrowing inequality across the Borough. From 1 April 2011, a new legal duty applies to all public authorities. It covers these protected characteristics:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- gender;
- sexual orientation; and, for some aspects,
- marriage and civil partnerships.

The duty means that – as previously - we should analyse the effect of existing and new policies and practices on equality. It does not specify how we should do this. However, legal cases on the meaning of the previous general equality duties make it clear that the Council must carry out the analysis before making the relevant policy decision, and include consideration as to whether it is possible to reduce any detrimental impact. The Council has developed a template for this to be assessed that requires four areas to be considered:

1. Purpose

The purpose of the report is to seek approval from cabinet to appoint consultants to develop a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the area fronting the Leeds and Liverpool Canal in Rishton. The SPD will contain a series of policies that relate to the use and development of land in this area of the Borough that will reflect the strategic policies of the Core Strategy.

The SPD will be used by developers, planning officers, members of the public and members of Planning Committee in the determination of planning applications within that area. The SPD will form part of the Local Development Framework for Hyndburn that the Council is required to produce and it will be prepared in consultation with the local community and other stakeholders.

2. Evidence

The Council uses a database of its customers for consultation. In this instance it will be necessary to consider whether there is a need to add to this database so that it includes all planning consultancies/agents that have submitted planning applications. There are a number of the groups listed above where it will be necessary to give particular attention:

- Age. The Borough has a population that is aging and it is necessary to ensure that we plan for our elderly residents. This is addressed by the Core Strategy and will need to be taken into consideration by the SPD. It is also necessary to ensure that provision is made for younger people, for example through the provision of adequate open space and for issues such as affordable housing to be addressed.
- Disability. The design of new development should ensure that it caters for disabled people. Although this is normally managed through Building Regulations, the planning system also has a role to play in ensuring that this is considered from the outset and not as an add-on at the end of the process.
- Race / religion or belief. The housing and development needs of those of different races, often who have different beliefs, needs to be taken into consideration.

3. Impact

It is necessary to ensure that the impacts of the policy are taken into consideration and regard is had to any adverse impact and the policy adjusted if necessary. The work will be undertaken by consultants on behalf of the Council and it will be necessary to ensure that the tender brief includes the requirement to understand and address the impact of the policy framework on those with protected characteristics / equality groups.

4. Actions

- a. Ensure that the tender document contains a requirement for the consultants to address equality issues.
- b. Ensure that these issues are addressed when the SPD is developed and later approved by the Council's Cabinet.

February 2013.