

Equality Impact Assessment - Level One - Initial Screening
Service Area – Planning and Transportation
Title of policy, procedure, strategy, function or working practice:

Development Control Commitments (Charter).

1. What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed policy, procedure, strategy, function or working practice to be assessed?

The purpose of the Charter is to provide customers with information about the aims and objectives of the Development Control Service and the level of service that customers can expect when submitting a planning application.

The aims of the service are to:

- promote and secure high quality and sustainable development within the Borough
- protect and enhance the quality of life of the local environment, and to
- improve quality of life and economic prosperity

The specific objectives for Development Control are:

- to facilitate development that meets the needs of the developer while protecting and enhancing the amenities of the local community and environmental quality.
- to make sound decisions based on clear policies and full consideration of all material issues and representations received.
- To offer free timely and comprehensive advice on relevant policies and procedures to anyone interested in a potential development.
- To deal with applications as quickly as possible consistent with the need to establish correct details and consider the views of interested parties.
- to ensure that development is carried out as approved and bring development carried out without planning permission into line with planning law and policy.

The documents stresses in the introduction that "we will deal politely and in a timely, fair and even handed manner with all customers, applicants, agents and those who comment on applications."

The Document is divided into 7 main sections:

1. Introduction

This sets out the purpose of the document, its aims and objectives. It also draws attention to the Council's Complaints Procedure.

2. Advice before you submit an application

This section recommends that applicants discuss their proposals with officers prior to submission of planning applications. The section needs to be reviewed so that it reflects the recently adopted Major Applications Protocol and the charges that are now levied in respect of pre-application advice / meetings.

3. The Planning Application

This section sets out how the planning application will be dealt with by the Council and the timescales involved.

4. Your Views on Planning Applications

This section explains that the planning process encourages local residents and interested parties to become involved with the planning process and comment on applications that affect them. It explains how comments will be taken into consideration and the Planning Committee process.

5. The Planning Committee

This section explains how the Council's Planning Committee functions. It is simply a factual account of the process involved and raises no equality issues. Planning Committee

is held in the Queen Elizabeth Room which has access for disabled people.

6. How to Submit a Planning Application - a Checklist
 This section sets out the information that is required to be submitted alongside the planning application. There is a need to update this section so that it reflects the recently adopted validation checklist for which an EIA (level 1 - screening) was undertaken.

7. Monitoring Performance
 This section sets out the monitoring framework for performance within the Development Control Team. This section has a neutral impact on equality.

2. Who is intended to benefit from the policy, procedure, strategy, function or working practice and in what way? Think about who will benefit and how. This will prompt thoughts on who will not benefit and whether this can be justified.

The Policy is intended to provide a guide for customers using the Development Control Service.

There is a need to review the Policy in the light of the recently adopted Validation Checklist and Major Applications Protocol. The Charter also needs to reflect the charging system that has been introduced for pre-application advice / discussions. The times of Planning Committee given in the document are wrong and overall there is a need to review it.

3. Is there any evidence of impact on people on the grounds of Race, Religion, Gender, Disability, Sexual orientation and age as a result of this policy, procedure, strategy, function or working practice. If there is positive or negative impact then please indicate the levels.

	Race	Religion	Gender	Disability	Sex	Age
Impact						
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Low	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level						
High	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medium	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Low	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The document does not have a positive or negative impact on people by virtue of their race, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation or age. It sets out the approach that the service will take to those who may submit a planning application and is based upon government guidance and the statutory planning requirements for planning applications.

Notwithstanding this, the document is now out of date and has been re-drafted to reflect current circumstances (the assessment has been undertaken on the current version, not the proposed new version). It would be necessary for this to be approved by the Council's Cabinet and the revised document would therefore also be subject to the EIA process. The revised version of the document could include more specific text that refers to equality issues, depending on the approach that is preferred by the Council.

4. Has any positive/negative impacts been identified which cannot be justified?

- YES Need to proceed to stage 2 or 3 (go to question 5)
- NO No need to proceed to stage 2 or 3 (go to question 7).

5. Should the policy procedure proceed to Stage 2 Partial impact assessment

or stage 3 Full Impact Assessment?		
Stage 2	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Stage 3	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6. What dates will the stage 2 or stage 3 impacts Assessment be completed by?		
N/A		
7. Has this Initial Screening been sent to the HR department to be uploaded on the internet?		
Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>
8. Authority		
Service Officer	Service Manager	Human Resources
Simon Prideaux	Daniel Hartley	
Date 29th July 2009	Date	Date