

## Equalities Comprehensive Impact Assessment v3

Reference: ECIA569344305

Submitted: 14 December 2023 12:32 PM

### Executive summary

**Title of policy / decision:** Statement of Community Involvement – update

**Policy / decision type:** Cabinet Member Action (CMA)

**Overview of policy / decision:** The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a statutory document (under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004), which sets out Essex County Council's commitments to the level of community involvement in the County Council's preparation of Local Plan Documents and planning applications.

A minor change is proposed to the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which would remove the need to deposit paper copies of policy planning documents, during consultation periods, in libraries and district/city/borough council offices.

**What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve?:** This change would help speed up the plan-making process by removing costly and timely printing and delivery processes that currently slow down the ability for the ECC as Minerals and Waste Planning Authority to prepare an iteration of a plan for consultation purposes. For example, the lead-in times for printing and library delivery are between 4-6 weeks which leads to delay in giving members of the public access to consultation material.

This will lead to a more modern engagement system with people as part of the planning service further promoting the use of online consultation, helping speed up the Development Plan-making process.

**Executive Director responsible for policy / decision:** Tom Walker (Economy, Investment and Public Health)

**Cabinet Member responsible for policy / decision:** Cllr Lee Scott (Planning a Growing Economy)

**Is this a new policy / decision or a change to an existing one?:** Change to an existing policy / decision

**How will the impact of the policy / decision be monitored and evaluated?:** Should the change be made to the SCI we would implement this new process into our next public consultation on the Minerals Local Plan, scheduled for February 2024.

The Minerals Local Plan goes through various stages of public consultation with responses to each analysed for engagement and equalities issues. The analysis findings for each consultation stage are then highlighted within the Authority Monitoring Report which is published every December.

**Will this policy / decision impact on:**

**Service users:** No

**Employees:** No

**Wider community or groups of people:** Yes

**What strategic priorities will this policy / decision support?:** Strong, Inclusive and Sustainable Economy, High Quality Environment

**Which strategic priorities does this support? - Economy?:** Good jobs, Infrastructure, Future growth and investment

**Which strategic priorities does this support? - Environment:** Transport and built environment, Minimise waste, Green communities

**What geographical areas of Essex will the policy / decision affect?:** All Essex

## **Digital accessibility**

**Is the new or revised policy linked to a digital service (website, system or application)?:** No

## **Equalities - Groups with protected characteristics**

### **Age**

**Nature of impact:** Negative

**Extent of impact:** Low

### **Disability - learning disability**

**Nature of impact:** Negative

**Extent of impact:** Low

### **Disability - mental health issues**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **Disability - physical impairment**

**Nature of impact:** Negative

**Extent of impact:** Low

### **Disability - sensory impairment**

**Nature of impact:** Negative

**Extent of impact:** Low

### **Sex**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **Gender reassignment**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **Marriage / civil partnership**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **Pregnancy / maternity**

**Nature of impact:** None

## **Race**

**Nature of impact:** None

## **Religion / belief**

**Nature of impact:** None

## **Sexual orientation**

**Nature of impact:** None

**Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact:** Older members of the Essex community and people with a disability could face issues using a computer to view online documents.

**What actions will be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts, including timescales?:** Essex libraries provide a free internet service which librarians could help to access and navigate. We will continue to provide paper copies of the Plan at County Hall in Chelmsford on request and via appointment.

**What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?:** Unknown if further action required until a public consultation is undertaken and feedback is provided on this format change.

## **Levelling up - Priority areas & cohorts**

### **Children and adults with SEND, learning disabilities or mental health conditions (taking an all-age approach)**

**Nature of impact:** Negative

**Extent of impact:** Low

### **Children on Free School Meals**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **Working families**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **Young adults (16-25 who have not been in education, training or employment for around 6-12 months)**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **Residents of Harlow**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **Residents of Jaywick and Clacton**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **Residents of Harwich**

**Nature of impact:** None

## **Residents of Basildon (Town) housing estates**

**Nature of impact:** None

## **Residents of Canvey Island**

**Nature of impact:** None

## **Residents of Colchester (Town) - Housing Estates**

**Nature of impact:** None

## **Residents of Rural North of the Braintree District**

**Nature of impact:** None

**Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact:** People with a learning disability could face issues using a computer to view online documents.

**What actions will be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts, including timescales?:** Essex libraries provide a free internet service which librarians could help to access and navigate. We will continue to provide paper copies of the Plan at County Hall in Chelmsford on request and via appointment.

**What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?:** Unknown if further action is required until a public consultation is undertaken and the public provide feedback on this format change

## **Equalities - Inclusion health groups and other priority groups**

### **Refugees / asylum seekers**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **Homeless / rough sleepers**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **People who experience drug and alcohol dependence**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **Offenders / ex-offenders**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **Victims of modern slavery**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **Carers**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **Looked after children / care leavers**

**Nature of impact:** None

### **The armed forces community (serving personnel and their families, veterans, reservists and**

**cadets)**

**Nature of impact:** None

**People who are unemployed / economically inactive**

**Nature of impact:** None

**People on low income**

**Nature of impact:** None

**Sex workers**

**Nature of impact:** None

**Ethnic minorities**

**Nature of impact:** None

**Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities**

**Nature of impact:** None

**People with multiple complex needs or multi-morbidities**

**Nature of impact:** None

**Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact:** The removal of paper copies of documents from inspection locations would not affect any one group in particular from those listed above. Essex libraries provide free internet access and assistance to navigate it.

**What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?:** N/A

## **Equalities - Geographical Groups**

**People living in areas of high deprivation**

**Nature of impact:** None

**People living in rural or isolated areas**

**Nature of impact:** None

**People living in coastal areas**

**Nature of impact:** None

**People living in urban or over-populated areas**

**Nature of impact:** None

**Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact:** The removal of paper copies of documents from inspection locations would not affect any one group in particular from those listed above. Essex libraries provide free internet access and assistance to navigate it.

**What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?:** N/A

## Families

**Family formation (e.g. to become or live as a couple, the ability to live with or apart from children)**

**Nature of impact:** None

**Families going through key transitions e.g. becoming parents, getting married, fostering or adopting, bereavement, redundancy, new caring responsibilities, onset of a long-term health condition**

**Nature of impact:** None

**Family members' ability to play a full role in family life, including with respect to parenting and other caring responsibilities**

**Nature of impact:** None

**Families before, during and after couple separation**

**Nature of impact:** None

**Families most at risk of deterioration of relationship quality and breakdown**

**Nature of impact:** None

**Rationale for assessment, including data used to assess the impact:** The removal of paper copies of documents from inspection locations would not affect any one group in particular from those listed above. Essex libraries provide free internet access and assistance to navigate it.

**What actions have already been taken to mitigate any negative impacts?:** N/A

## Climate

**Does your decision / policy involve development or re-development of buildings or infrastructure?:** No

**Does your decision / policy take place in, or make use of, existing buildings or infrastructure?:** No

**Does your decision / policy involve elements connected to transport, travel or vehicles? This includes travel needs / requirements of both service users and staff (including staff you're planning to recruit):** No

**Are you undertaking a procurement exercise?:** No

**Does your decision / policy involve the purchase of goods or materials?:** No

**Will any waste be generated by this decision? This includes waste from construction, waste generated by service users / staff, and waste generated by replacing existing products / materials with new:** No

## Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

**Does your ECIA indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more of the groups / areas identified?:** No

## Details of person completing the form

**I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC**

**guidance:** I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance

**Date ECIA completed:** 14/12/2023

**Name of person completing the ECIA:** Rebecca Rushmer

**Email address of person completing the ECIA:** rebecca.rushmer@essex.gov.uk

**Your function:** Economy, Investment and Public Health

**Your service area:** Planning Service

**Your team:** Minerals and Waste Planning

**Are you submitting this ECIA on behalf of another function, service area or team?:** No

**Email address of Head of Service:** graham.thomas@essex.gov.uk