

Dacorum BC Community Impact Assessment (CIA) Template

Policy / service / decision

Consultation responses and endorsement of an amended Vision and Objectives for the South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan

Description of what is being impact assessed

What are the aims of the service, proposal, project? What outcomes do you want to achieve? What are the reasons for the proposal or change? Do you need to reference/consider any related projects?

Stakeholders; Who will be affected? Which protected characteristics is it most relevant to? Consider the public, service users, partners, staff, Members, etc

It is advisable to involve at least one colleague in the preparation of the assessment, dependent on likely level of impact

Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City & District Council, Hertsmere Borough Council, Three Rivers District Council, Watford Borough Council, with the support of Hertfordshire County Council, are preparing the South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan (JSP). The JSP will provide a strategic planning framework for growth and infrastructure up to 2050 across the South West Hertfordshire area.

The JSP is accompanied by a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which is a legal requirement to prepare during the plan-making process. It was adopted by all the SW Herts authorities in July 2022:

<https://www.swhertsplan.com/13315/widgets/38228/documents/29755>

The SCI demonstrates that these legal requirements are being met in developing the JSP. The document seeks to positively address the needs of all members of the community where they are influenced by the built environment or provision of infrastructure signalled by this plan.

The first stage 'Issues and Options' (I&O) Regulation 18 consultation on the JSP has been guided by the SCI. The latter mirrors the framework used by our own planning consultation document and which has been tested on a number of occasions in practice.

The SCI sets out these Councils' shared approach to community involvement in undertaking the I&O consultation of the JSP and later stages of engagement. The JSP team has used its strategy for actively engaging the community (in a meaningful and

appropriate fashion). It has been supplemented by a more detailed Communications and Engagement Strategy prepared by the JSP Comms Officer (in liaison with District Comms Officers) specifically for the I&O stage:

<https://www.swhertsplan.com/18515/widgets/53801/documents/31328>

The SCI (and the more detailed Communication and Engagement Strategy) ensures that these authorities take account of various planning regulations (which we have to accord with), and the emergence of new consultation techniques/processes. In consulting on the I&O consultation, the SCI allowed the JSP team to carry out more efficient, effective and innovative ways of working and communicating with the local community. The consultation was largely funded through a 'Proptech' grant from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) which enabled the team to be more innovative in their approach to engagement by using a variety of social media platforms, as well as develop a bespoke engagement website. However, this did not exclude the use of some more traditional forms of engagement.

The SCI establishes an inclusive and positive approach to engagement with the community, including those with protected characteristics, alongside a range of other stakeholders. Through its objectives, it aims to promote equality for all and a more inclusive and sustainable communities.

It is important that the authorities consult with as wide an audience as possible to reduce inequality and accessibility. Thus the SCI ensures a positive impact on all groups in the local community when consulting on the JSP, and all planning officers are expected to accord with the SCI in the Plan's development. This affects anyone who lives, studies, works, visits, or has an interest in Dacorum and the South West Hertfordshire area, such as:

- The community (residents, businesses, voluntary and specialist groups (i.e. residents associations))
- Those who engage in planning matters in Dacorum
- Parish, Town and County Councils (including those within and surrounding the South West Hertfordshire area)
- Interested developers, landowners and agents
- Statutory consultees and various partners

- Council staff and elected members

The SCI seeks to improve access to the planning process in order to provide greater opportunities to better understand, engage with and influence the preparation of the JSP, including during the first stage I&O consultation. Certainly, the JSP team employed a varied range of tools and approaches to raise awareness and increase response rates to the consultation material.

In addition to following the requirements of the SCI, the Regulation 18 consultation on the JSP was accompanied by a Sustainability Scoping Report. The role of this document is to set an appraisal framework to ensure that the environmental, economic and social impacts of the plan are taken fully in to consideration. As the Sustainability Appraisal process moves forward it will also be widened to include an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA).

Evidence

What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service/decision might impact on protected groups?

(include relevant national/local data, research, monitoring information, service user feedback, complaints, audits, consultations, CIAs from other projects or other local authorities, etc.). You should include such information in a proportionate manner to reflect the level of impact of the policy/service/decision.

1. South West Hertfordshire Initial Engagement Results – ‘Your Future’ (July 2020). This was the initial engagement on the JSP and relied solely on a social media-hosted poll to obtain feedback. The success of the R18 social media poll element of the consultation has been bench-marked against the 2020 poll participation rates.
2. The SCI to the JSP has been compared against our own SCI (and associated CIAs) for the Regulation 18 Local Plan, and also the groups we actually engaged with as part of recent consultations on this Plan.
3. The Regulation 18 consultation report provides a comparison profile of respondents and methods of communication (and their relative success).

Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups? *If you have not consulted other people, please explain why? You should include such information in a proportionate manner to reflect the level of impact of the policy/service/decision.*

As the SCI to the JSP mirrors the Council’s own SCI to the Local Plan (and which has previously been subject to the CIA process and consultation), no further individuals or groups have been consulted. Furthermore, the SCI to the JSP has also itself been subject to consultation involving a number of community groups.

Officers at each of the six authorities were asked to advise on any key groups who should be directly notified about the consultation.

Analysis of impact on protected groups (and others)

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires Dacorum BC to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. Consider how this policy/service/decision will achieve these aims. Using the table below, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of these using the evidence that you have collated and your own understanding. Based on this information, make an assessment of the likely outcome, **before** you have implemented any mitigation.

- The PCs of *Marriage and Civil Partnership* and *Pregnancy and Maternity* should be added if their inclusion is relevant for impact assessment.
- Use “insert below” menu layout option to insert extra rows where relevant (e.g. extra rows for different impairments within Disability).

Summary of impact		Negative impact / outcome	Neutral impact / outcome	Positive impact / outcome
Protected group	<i>What do you know? What do people tell you? Summary of data and feedback about service users and the wider community/ public. Who uses / will use the service? Who doesn't / can't and why? Feedback/complaints?</i>			
Age	The SCI seeks to guide engagement activities when preparing the JSP, across all age ranges, in order to reach as many sectors in the local community as possible, including ‘hard to reach’ groups. It includes a wide range of consultation methods aimed at every age group that can be used when appropriate e.g. the use of the internet and emails and online consultation may make it more accessible to younger people, the working population and those who find it physically difficult to access Council offices or other deposit points. Other forms of communication (e.g. hard copy documents and use of	□	□	☒

	<p>local press notices) should also ensure that those who do not have access to the internet can be catered for, including the elderly. The SCI encourages a wide range of people to get involved in planning, including those who cannot go to events and/or come to the office (due to their age / disability / other factors). The SCI ensures improved general accessibility to information and better engagement with the plan-making process for the benefit of all protected groups in the community. The greater availability of information online may help reduce barriers to involvement for those with physical and mental disabilities, age related or otherwise, who may find it difficult to access Council information and events in traditional ways.</p> <p>The SCI should enable all to have an equal opportunity to both be involved (if they so wish) in planning and to better influence outcomes. Furthermore, reasonable adjustments to meet needs can be made where required.</p> <p>The social media based poll ('Give My View') was specifically targeted at harder to reach groups – especially residents in the 18-25 year age category.</p>			
<p>Disability (physical, intellectual, mental)</p> <p><i>Refer to CIA Guidance Notes and Mental Illness & Learning Disability Guide</i></p>	<p>(see above)</p>	<p>☐</p>	<p>☐</p>	<p>☒</p>
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p>No material impact on this protected group.</p>	<p>☐</p>	<p>☒</p>	<p>☐</p>

Race and ethnicity	No material impact on this protected group.	□	⊗	□
Religion or belief	No material impact on this protected group.	□	⊗	□
Sex	No material impact on this protected group.	□	⊗	□
Sexual orientation	No material impact on this protected group.	□	⊗	□
Not protected characteristics but consider other factors, e.g. carers, veterans, homeless, low income, loneliness, rurality etc.	<p>The SCI encourages the use of a wide range of engagement methods and tools. Information will be more accessible to a variety of disadvantaged groups in the community, and thus more people can better participate / have their say in the plan-making process and how it affects them.</p> <p>This ensures both individuals with and without protected characteristics have improved opportunities to become involved in the process and to better influence outcomes.</p>	□	⊗	□

Negative impacts / outcomes action plan

Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative impacts / outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

Action taken/to be taken <i>(copy & paste the negative impact / outcome then detail action)</i>	Date	Person responsible	Action complete
n/a	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date		<input type="checkbox"/>

If negative impacts / outcomes remain, please provide an explanation below.	
n/a	
Completed by (all involved in CIA)	Francis Whittaker
Date	14/08/2023
Signed off by (<i>AD from different Directorate if being presented to CMT / Cabinet</i>)	Sara Whelan – Assistant Director (Place)
Date	14/08/2023
Entered onto CIA database - date	
To be reviewed by (officer name)	
Review date	