



**Equalities Impact Assessment
Local Plan Communication and
Engagement Strategy
2026**



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Public Sector Equality Duty, introduced under the Equality Act 2010, requires all public bodies, including local authorities, to have due regard to the need to:
 - 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
- 1.2. Equality Impact Assessments (EqlAs) allow the Council to:
 - Show that we are meeting this legal duty by demonstrating due regard for the provisions of the Public Sector Equality Duty
 - Identify possible negative impacts on individuals and groups with protected characteristics, plan mitigating action and seek to maximise opportunities to advance equality within our activities.
- 1.3. The Equality Act 2010 identifies nine 'protected characteristics' and seeks to protect people from discrimination on the basis of these characteristics. They are:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender Reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation

2. Identifying Details

Officer Completing EqIA	Grace Lockley Interim Planning Policy Team Leader
Team and Service	Planning Policy Planning and Economic Development Cannock Chase District Council
Title of Proposal	Local Plan Communication and Engagement Strategy 2026
EqIA Completion Date	6 October 2026
Proposal Implementation Date	2 November 2026
Who will be responsible for implementing this proposal	Cannock Chase District Council

3. Assessment

Stage 1: Scoping and Defining

1. What are the aims and objectives of Plan/Strategy/Service/Policy?

The purpose of the Communication and Engagement Strategy (CES) is to set out how the Council intends to engage with communities through the planning process specifically in relation to the Local Plan and Supplementary Plans.

The CES is structured into separate sections and this EqlA relates to the following:

Section 8 – Engage in the Local Plan

Section 9 – The Local Plan Process

Section 10 – Planning Policy Consultations

2. How does it fit within Cannock Chase District Council's wider objectives?

The Council's Corporate Plan identifies the Council's long-term priorities serving the residents and communities of the District. The CES is consistent with the wider objectives of the Corporate Plan, in particular the following:

- Priority 1 – Economic Prosperity – to create a district that thrives
- Priority 3 – The Community – to ensure Cannock Chase is a place that residents are proud to call home

3. What are the expected outcomes?

The CES provides certainty to stakeholders including the local community by setting out how consultation and engagement on the Local Plan and Supplementary Plans will be undertaken with stakeholders across the District. Ultimately, the application of the CES should lead to better development outcomes for local communities and the District as a whole by setting out how engagement in the plan-making process can be undertaken.

Section 8: Engage in the Local Plan – advises of the variety of ways in which communities and stakeholders can become involved in the preparation of the Local Plan.

Section 9: The Local Plan Process – sets out the different stages of the Local Plan process including on what, and where communities and stakeholders will be invited to participate

Section 10: Planning Policy Consultations – sets out who will be consulted and how they will be consulted and what will be done with any representations received

4. Which of the groups with protected characteristics is this intended to benefit?

The CES is not intended to benefit any one particular group. As such, the CES is relevant to everyone who will live, work and visit the District.

Stage 2: Information Gathering

1. What type and range of evidence or information have you used to help you make a judgement about the plan/strategy/service/policy?

The updated CES is informed by legislation and national guidance, along with good practice guidance on consultation techniques and methods.

2. Have you consulted on the plan/strategy/service/policy and if so with whom?

The CES has been consulted on as part of the six-week Local Plan Scoping Consultation in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026¹. Advertised on the Council's website and publicised through social media.

3. Which of the groups with protected characteristics have you consulted with?

N/A

Stage 3: Analysis of Impact

1. From your data and consultations is there any adverse or negative impact identified for any particular group which could amount to discrimination? If yes, identify the groups and how they are affected.

RACE The CES is inclusive of all equality groups.	DISABILITY The CES sets out how the consultation and engagement will be undertaken using a variety of remote and face to face methods. This approach enables all groups to be able to engage in the plan-making process.	SEX The CES is inclusive of all gender groups.
MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP The legislative requirements relating to this group are only relevant in the context of the District Council's role as an employer and are not therefore relevant to the EqlA for the CES.	AGE The CES sets out how consultation and engagement will be undertaken using a variety of methods including both digital and physical copies of appropriate documents being made available. This approach enables all groups to be able to engage in the process.	GENDER REASSIGNMENT The CES is inclusive of all gender groups.
RELIGION/BELIEF The CES is inclusive of all religions.	PREGNANCY/MATERNITY The CES sets out how the consultation and engagement will be undertaken using a variety of remote and face to face methods. This approach enables all groups to be able to engage in the plan-making process.	SEXUAL ORIENTATION The CES is inclusive of all sexual orientations.

¹ [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2026](#)

2. If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified.

No adverse impacts in relation to the identified groups are anticipated.

3. What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact? (*This should form part of your action plan under Stage 4*)

No negative or adverse impacts are anticipated; therefore, no actions are needed.

4. How does the plan/strategy/service/policy contribute to promotion of equality? If no what can be done?

The CES sets out how consultation and engagement will be undertaken with communities across the District and therefore contributes to equality by enabling all people to be aware of how they are able to engage with the various aspects of the plan-making process.

5. How does the plan/strategy/service/policy promote good relations between groups? If not, what can be done?

The CES sets out how public events can be undertaken, thus fostering better relationships between different groups.

6. Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes, how can they be overcome?

The CES sets out how consultation and engagement will be undertaken using a variety of methods including the use of social media, libraries and public events. This approach enables all groups to be able to engage in the plan-making process thus reducing barriers to engaging with the planning process.

Stage 4: Action Planning, Review & Monitoring

1. Action Planning – Specify any changes or improvements which can be made to the service or policy to mitigate or eradicate negative or adverse impact on specific groups, including resource implications. *If No Further Action is required, then go to – Review & Monitoring*

No Further Action is required

2. Review and Monitoring – State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan

A Monitoring Report is produced by the District Council on an annual basis to review the effectiveness of policies and proposals in the Development Plan. The CES will be reviewed upon the requirement for a new Local Plan in line with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 (or subsequent updates as appropriate).