

Equalities Impact Assessment

Doncaster Council

Environment Strategy - Adoption Version

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Equality Framework for Local Government requires the Council to carry out a self-assessment to demonstrate how effective it has been in developing projects, policies, services and functions, with regard to its diverse communities. The Equality Impact Assessments allows the Council to evaluate these through the various equality protected characteristics. Since October 2010, legislation now covers the following eight protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. All these are covered by employment and service delivery except age, which is employment only until 2012.
- 1.2 Doncaster's Borough Strategy indicates that the borough's population is currently 290,400 and that a lower than average proportion of residents in Doncaster is 'non-white' (4.9% compared to 10.9% nationally). It indicates that over the next five years:
- The overall population is projected to increase by almost 4,000;
 - The number of residents aged over 65 is expected to increase by almost 6,000; and;
 - The working age population (18-64) is expected to fall by 1,600.

Brief Description of the aim of the strategy and the intended outcome

- 1.3 The Council has never had an Environmental Strategy in place before, despite having corporate environmental priorities and obligations. As a result, the delivery and promotion of these Environmental priorities has sometimes lacked impetus, coordination and profile. The introduction of an Environment Strategy can address this by:
- providing clear direction on our Environment priorities that Officers and Members can agree on and wider organisations can understand and contribute to;
 - enabling the authority to make the most of a series of private and public environment-related initiatives and funding opportunities;
 - providing the template for effective resource planning on Environment-related work in the future; and,
 - set out the Council's 'green' credentials and commitment to the environment and sustainability.
- 1.4. The introduction and implementation of a coherent Environment Strategy can help to protect and build a better, greener Environment for the Borough that will also:
- improve what people think of their local area as a place to live; and
 - support increased inward investment into the Borough.
- 1.5. This strategy will help the Council make plans and policies that protect and enhance Doncaster's environment and improve the quality of life for present and future generations. A key aspect of this is to balance the need for economic growth with our obligation to have responsibility for the protection of our local

environment. Although this is a council strategy, it is produced in light of the need to work in partnership with a wide number of public, private and community organisations. This partnership approach to delivering shared priorities will help us to achieve even greater value for money and make better use of the assets and resources at our disposal.

1.6. The strategy identifies our key environmental challenges/priorities under 3 theme areas. Each of these themes (T) contains a number of key priorities (P) and sets out short and longer-term actions that contribute to addressing them, based on two key underlying principles:

- the need to strike a balance between the borough’s economic growth and the quality of our local environment; and,
- encouraging local people to take responsibility for their local environment.

T1. Managing our environmental resources and services	
P1. Waste minimisation	Minimise the creation of waste in the borough and reduce the amount of waste that is created from going to landfill
P2. Deliver more energy efficient housing	Improve the energy efficiency of social and private rented households and ensuring the efficiency of new developments
P3. Effective flood mitigation	Promotion of flood mitigation and further developing local residents knowledge of flood risks in order to increase personal flood resilience
T2. Ensuring a quality environment	
P4. Protect our air and water quality and address contaminated land issues	Effective monitoring of Air & Water Quality and sites with contaminated land, taking remedial action when required
P5. Create a more attractive street-scene	Improve the look and attractiveness of the borough’s Street Scene to support inward investment and to create places that people can be really proud of
T3. Valuing our environmental assets	
P6 & P7. Protect and promote our historic and natural environment	Increase public understanding of the value of our environment by promoting their social, cultural and economic benefits, whilst protecting its intrinsic value
P8. Ensure access to high quality green spaces and the countryside	Effective management of our public parks and woodlands and improve access to our public right of way network

1.7 Although this is a Council strategy, it is produced in light of the need to work in partnership with a wide number of public, private and community organisations. This partnership approach to delivering shared priorities will help us to achieve even greater value for money and make better use of the assets and resources at our disposal. The Strategy has the full support of the Doncaster Health and Well Being Board, as well as the Doncaster Active Partnership. Other key stakeholders have pledged their support as part of the Environment Strategy preparation process.

- 1.8 Where necessary, the Environment Strategy will be supported by detailed operational strategies, such as the Municipal Waste Management Strategy, Biodiversity Action Plan, Tourism Strategy and emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy and Culture Strategy. The Environment Strategy does not cover Planning issues as these are sufficiently covered through national and local policy, such as the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Development Framework. However, the priorities of the Environment Strategy will need to be taken into account when carrying out planning functions.

Scope of the Impact Assessment

- 1.9 The purpose of this Equalities Impact Assessment is to assess the priorities included in the Environment Strategy to ensure that the different requirements of different people and different communities are taken into account, and to ensure that Doncaster Council has considered the likely impacts or barriers to any of these people or communities during the preparation of the Strategy.

2. METHOD

2.1 Doncaster Council's Equality Impact Assessment guidance indicates that there are seven stages in the assessment process. The table below sets out how each of these stages has been complied with.

Table 1: Assessment Stages

Stage	Action
Stage 1: Consideration of Project Aim	Appendix 1 of this report considers the overall approach by appraising the 3 Themes of the Environment Strategy.
Stage 2: Fact Finding	Although having an Environment Strategy is not a statutory requirement, its adoption will help co-ordinate and deliver the Council's priorities in relation to the environment. The Borough Strategy is the key long-term document for improving quality of life in Doncaster. All other strategies and plans that are developed therefore need to reflect its values and principles. The proposed Environment Strategy will therefore provide the detail behind Theme 7 – Environment. The legal requirements on local authorities relating to the environment are vast in scope, with primary legislation in place for councils on issues ranging from air pollution to waste disposal.
Stage 3: The Assessment	Appendix 2 of this report considers the impact of each of the 8 Priorities. The main positive impacts come from the delivery of more energy efficient housing as this priority specifically makes references to the borough's most vulnerable households, which may include deprived communities and older people.
Stage 4: Think of alternatives	The Environment Strategy is a high level document and there are no significant impacts identified in stage 3 which would require a fundamental change to the strategy. It is noted that the impact of the Strategy may depend on its detailed application through more detailed operational strategies as referred to above.
Stage 5: Consultation	Internal engagement on the Strategy has been undertaken, including consultation with all Ward Members and Area Managers. Following this, the Strategy was subject to full public consultation for 4 weeks during September – October 2012. Particular key organisations and partnerships that can help deliver the Strategy were specifically targeted, including Town and Parish Councils. The consultation particularly welcomed stakeholder's views on whether the Strategy supports or conflicts with other plans and aspirations that they may have? Identification of any opportunities for us to work together to deliver the Strategy were also asked for.
Stage 6: Action plans and Equality Targets	The Strategy has been presented to the relevant management team and will be recorded on the Council's Corporate Performance Management system for monitoring and review.
Stage 7: Monitoring and Feedback	This assessment will be periodically reviewed in light of the implementation of the Environment Strategy. Regular monitoring of the Environment Strategy provides a mechanism to introduce appropriate measures to address any equalities issues which may arise.

APPENDIX 1: APPRAISAL OF ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY THEMES

The table below considers the impact of the Environment Strategy in terms of Disability (D), Gender (G), Race/Ethnicity (R/E), Age (A) Religion or belief (RoB), Sexual Orientation (SO) and Other Socio-Economic Groups (e.g. pregnancy and maternity homeless people, looked after children, carers, etc) (Ot). Each is scored as: + (has a positive impact) ; - (negative impact); +/- (could have either positive or negative impacts depending on how it is implemented); or; 0 (considered but no action to the relevant group).

Table 2: Appraisal of Environment Strategy Themes

Theme	Impact on:							Comments / evidence
	D	G	R/E	A	RoB	SO	Ot	
Theme 1: Managing our environmental resources and services	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	Generally, this does not focus on particular groups, but will indirectly benefit all groups. Priority 2 of this overall Theme (deliver more energy efficient housing) does make specific references to 'targeting most vulnerable households' which may include older people and deprived communities.
Theme 2: Ensuring a quality environment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This does not focus on particular groups, but will indirectly benefit all groups.
Theme 3: Valuing our environmental assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This does not focus on particular groups, but will indirectly benefit all groups.

APPENDIX 2: APPRAISAL OF ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY PRIORITIES

The table below considers the impact of the Environment Strategy in terms of Disability (D), Gender (G), Race/Ethnicity (R/E), Age (A) Religion or belief (RoB), Sexual Orientation (SO) and Other Socio-Economic Groups (e.g. pregnancy and maternity, homeless people, looked after children, carers, etc) (Ot). Each is scored as: **+** (has a positive impact) ; **-** (negative impact); **+/-** (could have either positive or negative impacts depending on how it is implemented); or; 0 (considered but no action to the relevant group).

Table 3: Appraisal of Environment Strategy Priorities

Priority	Impact on:							Comments / evidence
	D	G	R/E	A	RoB	SO	Ot	
Theme 1: Managing our environmental resources and services								
Priority 1: Waste minimisation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This does not focus on particular groups, but will indirectly benefit all groups.
Priority 2: Deliver more energy efficient housing	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	This will indirectly benefit all groups, but particular actions focus on the borough's most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups which may include older people or deprived communities.
Priority 3: Effective flood mitigation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This does not focus on particular groups, but will indirectly benefit all groups.
Theme 2: Ensuring a quality environment								
Priority 4: Protect our air and water quality and address contaminated land issues	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This does not focus on particular groups, but will indirectly benefit all groups.
Priority 5: Create a more attractive street-scene	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This does not focus on particular groups, but will indirectly benefit all groups.

Priority	Impact on:							Comments / evidence
	D	G	R/E	A	RoB	SO	Ot	
Theme 3: Valuing our environmental assets								
Priority 6: Protect and promote our historic environment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This does not focus on particular groups, but will indirectly benefit all groups.
Priority 7: Protect and promote our natural environment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This does not focus on particular groups, but will indirectly benefit all groups.
Priority 8: Ensure access to high quality green spaces and the countryside	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This does not focus on particular groups, but will indirectly benefit all groups.