



Equality Impact Assessment Appendix C

Carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will help the Council meet its Public Sector Equality Duties (Equality Act 2010).

The duties which need to be considered when making decisions are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Failure to assess the equality impact may increase the risk of making an unfair decision which could potentially be discriminatory. It also prevents us from identifying opportunities to promote equality and therefore leaves the Council open to potential legal challenges.

Using this EIA template will help to ensure that a decision is made in a fair way, based on evidence. It provides a clear and structured method to assess the potential impact on protected groups.

For more information how to complete this form please refer to the Guidance which can be found at [HERE](#)

Title of policy or proposal	Corporate Comments, Compliments & Complaints Policy Review (March 2026)
Briefly describe the aims of the policy change, decision or proposal, the likely outcomes, and the rationale for it	North East Derbyshire District Council is undertaking a scheduled review of the Corporate Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy. A key proposed change is reducing the formal complaint response timescale from 15 working days to 10 working days, in line with LGSCO (Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.) best practice and Internal Audit recommendations. This change relates solely to internal response deadlines and does not alter access, eligibility, or investigation processes.

Consider the potential impact on any member of staff or member of the public with the following protected characteristics:

Age, Disability, Gender identity/Gender reassignment, Race, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual orientation, Women who are pregnant or have recently had a baby.

Also, consider employees who are married or in a civil partnership.

<p>What information is already held, or have you obtained through consultation or engagement activity? (For each protected characteristic: What do you know about our employees, service users or anyone else who potentially could be affected by the proposal? Who has been consulted? If you have gaps in your evidence or data, you may need to carry out targeted engagement activity and/or consider information from local or national research).</p>	<p>See below</p>
<p>After considering the information, which protected groups may potentially be affected? (Delete those not likely to be affected)</p>	<p>Age – no adverse impact, timescale change does not affect access or processing</p> <hr/> <p>Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical/mobility impairment • Sensory: hearing/visual or speech • Mental health • Learning disabilities • Non-visible conditions such as epilepsy/diabetes <p>No adverse impact on any of the above</p> <hr/> <p>Sex – No adverse impact, Policy equally to all</p> <hr/> <p>Race including gypsies and travellers – No adverse impact, translation and interpreting support remains</p> <hr/> <p>Sexual Orientation – No adverse impact – Access and communication unchanged</p> <hr/> <p>Religion/Belief - No adverse impact – Access and communication unchanged</p> <hr/> <p>Gender Reassignment – No adverse impact, no elements relate to gender identity</p> <hr/> <p>Pregnancy & Maternity – No adverse impact, access and communication remain unchanged</p> <hr/> <p>Marriage & Civil Partnership (for employees only) No adverse impact – not relevant to policy content</p>

Using the information you have, give details of any potential positive and negative impacts on protected groups likely to be affected by the policy change, decision, or proposal

(For each protected characteristic where there could be a potential impact, consider the following:

Could people from any protected groups be positively or negatively affected? Could anyone's ability to take part in public life be affected? Could this policy change, decision or proposal affect public attitudes towards any protected group?

Could any groups become more or less likely to be at risk of harassment or victimisation because of this policy change, decision, or proposal? Are there opportunities to create positive impacts? *(remember that the law permits disabled people to be treated equally or better than other groups to enable reasonable adjustments to be made).*

All residents, customers, advocates and representatives may be affected in terms of experience, but no direct or indirect disadvantage is anticipated. Accessibility, communication channels and reasonable adjustments remain unchanged.

Digital exclusion and vulnerable individuals remain supported through telephone, written, face-to-face, and advocate submissions. No reduction in support or provision.

No negative equality impacts identified. The proposal supports fairness and best practice.

Customer feedback data and complaint themes from the last 12 months show no indication that response timescales disproportionately impact on any protected group.

Consultation with Customer Services, Service Managers and Internal Audit confirms that the proposed timescale change affects internal workflow only, with no changes to how customers engage with the Council.

Historical equality monitoring of complaint submissions indicates broad and representative use of the policy across all protected groups.

There is no evidence to suggest that any protected group experiences barriers linked to complaint timescales, as communication methods and reasonable adjustments remain unchanged.

National LGSCO research highlights the importance of timely complaint resolution and shows that shorter response times improve fairness and avoid undue delays, particularly for vulnerable residents.

No protected groups are disproportionately impacted as the proposal does not change how complaints are submitted, supported, or adjusted for accessibility needs.

Customers requiring alternative formats or communication support (e.g., BSL,) will continue to receive them without restriction.

Staff handling complaints may experience internal workflow changes, but this is operational and does not relate to a protected characteristic.

Faster responses may reduce anxiety or stress for customers awaiting outcomes, which may particularly benefit those with disabilities or health conditions.

Improved timeliness supports fairness and promotes trust in the Council for all communities.

Shorter timescales contribute to better service quality, aligning with LGSCO best practice and creating a more consistent experience.

Continue to offer a full range of accessible communication formats including telephone, email, webform, letter, face-to-face and advocate submissions.

Ensure staff are reminded of their duty to offer reasonable adjustments at the earliest point of contact.

Continue to monitor complaints for any themes related to accessibility or barriers experienced by protected groups.

Maintain clear public information about how to request support, translation, or alternative formats.

Provide ongoing training to staff on inclusive communication and equality duties within complaint handling.

Quarterly monitoring of complaint handling performance, including whether any protected groups report barriers or delays.

Review of LGSCO decisions to identify any equality-related feedback or concerns.

Monitoring of reasonable adjustment requests to ensure needs continue to be met effectively.

Feedback from service users and advocates will be incorporated into any future review of the policy.


Any adverse or unexpected impacts will be addressed through amendments to procedure or additional staff training.

The assessment concludes that reducing the response timescale from 15 to 10 working days does not introduce any direct or indirect adverse impact on any protected group. All reasonable adjustments, accessibility routes and support mechanisms remain unchanged. The proposal aligns with best practice and strengthens fairness, transparency and timely resolution for all customers.

Monitoring arrangements will ensure early identification

	<p>of any unintended impacts, with mitigation actions in place should they arise.</p>
<p>Give details of any actions that can be taken to promote equality or to lessen any potential adverse impact on protected groups.</p>	<p>By continuing to offer a full range of accessible communication formats including email, telephone, web form, letter, face to face</p> <p>Ensure staff are reminded of their duty to offer reasonable adjustments at the earliest point of contact</p> <p>Continue to monitor complaints for any themes relating to accessibility or barriers complainants have encountered</p> <p>Maintain clear public information about how to request support, translation, alternative formats</p> <p>Provide ongoing training to staff on inclusive communication and equality within complaints handling</p>
<p>What plans are there to monitor and review the actual impact of the policy change, decision, or proposal on equality of opportunity?</p>	<p>Monitoring of complaint handling performance reviewing barriers or delays – performance reported to SMT monthly via Management Dashboard, quarterly via Council plan metric reporting and annually via Council plan review</p> <p>Review of LGSCO decision to identify any equality related feedback or concerns, for transparency the annual report goes to Scrutiny Committee and the Standards committee each year, publicised on the LG&SCO website.</p> <p>Monitoring of reasonable adjustment requests to ensure needs continue to be met</p>
<p>When will follow up review be done?</p>	<p>We will continue our established process for reviewing the Policy every three years, coinciding with it's revised implementation. Additionally, if ongoing monitoring</p>

	identifies any emerging equality concerns, we will conduct a review earlier to ensure all issues are addressed promptly and effectively before the next official review takes place.
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Based on a consideration of all the potential impacts, mark one of the following as an overall summary of the outcome of this assessment:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The equality analysis has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The equality analysis has identified risks or opportunities to promote better equality; the change, decision or proposal will be adjusted to avoid risks and ensure that opportunities are taken.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The equality analysis has identified risks to equality which will not be eliminated, and/or opportunities to promote better equality which will not be taken. Acceptance of these is reasonable and proportionate, given the objectives of the change, decision or proposal, and its overall financial and policy context.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The equality analysis shows that the change, decision, or proposal would lead to actual or potential unlawful discrimination or would conflict with the Council's positive duties to an extent which is disproportionate to its objectives. It should not be adopted in its current form.
Explain how the judgement above was reached and action plan what will be taken to reduce any negative or to enhance any positive impacts on equality	The assessment concludes that reducing the response timescale from 15 to 10 working days does not introduce any direct or indirect adverse impact. All reasonable adjustments, accessibility routes and support mechanisms remain unchanged. The proposal aligns with best practice and strengthens fairness, transparency and timely resolution for all customers. Monitoring will ensure early identification of any unintended impacts with mitigation actions in place should they arise.
Name(s) and job title(s) of person (people involved in) carrying out this assessment	Rachael Pope
Authorising Director or Assistant Director	
Date authorised	8th April 2026
The completed equality impact assessment <u>must</u> be attached to the report that will be considered by the decision maker or decision makers to enable them to give due regard to the impact of the policy, decision, or proposal on protected groups. Also send a copy to Amar.Bashir@ne-derbyshire.gov.uk	