



# North West Leicestershire District Council

## Election Matters Equality Impact Assessment

# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**Name of the policy or service being assessed:**

Compilation of an accurate Register of Electors. Administration and Organisation of Elections and Referendum

**Service Area:** Legal and Democratic Services

**Date Impact Assessment completed:**

**Is this a policy or service?** Policy  Service  Procedure

**Is this a new or existing policy or function?** New  Existing

**Names and roles of the people carrying out the Impact Assessment:**

1. Melanie Phillips, Democratic Services Manager
2. Louise Beeston, Senior Electoral Services Officer

**Head of Service:** Elizabeth Warhurst

**Signature**



**Date:** March 2009

# **PART 1**

## **AIMS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY**

### **Identifying the aims of the policy**

Preparation and Maintenance of the Register(s) of Electors, including the Annual Canvass, Final Register/Rolling Updates etc; Responsibility for arrangements in connection with European, Parliamentary, County, District and Town/Parish Elections and referenda.

### **Rationale behind the policy and its delivery**

To attempt to get as near as possible to 100% of eligible electors on the electoral register and ensure fair and equal access to the democratic process for all residents.

### **Who is affected by the policy? Who is intended to benefit from it and how?**

- Residents – current and future
- Political Parties
- Members
- Prospective Candidates
- Staff
- Returning Officer

By enabling staff to carry out their duties in ensuring fair and equal access to the democratic process for all.

### **Policy Priorities: -**

To ensure that the election process is carried out in accordance with electoral law and reduce any possibility of an election petition.

### **How the policy is implemented?-**

An election plan is compiled at least 6 months before any major election and this is updated and reported on a monthly basis to CLT.

**Users and beneficiaries are:**

- Residents – current and future
- Political Parties
- Members
- Prospective Candidates
- Staff
- Returning Officer

**Action needed:** (Include short-term measures to be taken to provide a baseline where no or little information is available)

Not applicable

## PART 2

### ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

	<b>From the evidence available Identify how the groups are reflected in the take up of the service</b>	<b>From the evidence does the policy have an actual or potential negative impact</b>	<b>If there is an adverse impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity</b>
<b>Race</b>	All racial groups are treated the same way.	There is the potential problem of language or interpretation being a barrier, though there is no evidence to suggest that this has caused any problems to date.	N/A
<b>Gender</b>	All gender groups are treated the same way	No	N/A
<b>Disability</b>	People with learning disabilities may have difficulty in understanding some of the processes and procedures around registration and postal voting. Those with poor eyesight may benefit from having the written procedures in larger print. Those who are wheelchair bound or have walking difficulties may have difficulties in accessing polling stations.	No. Every effort is made to ensure that those who request assistance and guidance on any area of the electoral process are given it, whether disabled or not. Postal votes are encouraged to those with walking difficulties.	N/A
<b>Age</b>	16/17yr olds are put on the register to ensure they get a vote when they turn 18. It is nationally recognised that there is a low voting turnout for 18-24yr olds. Those aged over 70 can state so on the form to ensure they are not selected for Jury Service.	No	N/A
<b>Religion/Belief</b>	All religious groups are treated	We have Polling Stations	N/A

	<p>the same way. Polling stations can be religious buildings which other faiths may feel uncomfortable voting. There is also a requirement to count European votes on a Sunday. This may affect those whose beliefs prohibit them from working on the Sabbath. Proposals are also being put forward by the Government on weekend voting which may have the same affect on voters.</p>	<p>linked to a number of different faiths. If people feel uncomfortable about using the Polling Station, we can offer them a postal vote but if this has not been taken up, we will take measures at the Polling Station to ensure that the elector can still vote [i.e take the box to them]. If staff felt that they could not work on a Sunday then we would respect this and not put pressure on them to do so.</p>	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<p>All people of whatever sexual orientation are treated the same way.</p>	No	N/A
<b>Other groups</b>		<p>Anecdotal data suggests that migrant workers do not register due to lack of knowledge about voting rights and credit and it is nationally recognised that there is a low voting turnout for 18-24yr olds.</p>	

## **PART 3: PROCESS OF POLICY OR SERVICE DELIVERY AND MONITORING**

### **Operation Times**

Elections are from 7.00am until 10.00pm on Polling Day and often staff will work through the night to ensure the completion of the count.

### **Methods of communication to the public (external) and internally**

#### **Externally:**

Website, public notices on notice board, local press, as appropriate

#### **Internally:**

Intranet, e-mail and notice board.

### **How will the results of the EIA feed into the Service and Financial planning process?**

These will be picked up in future election project plans which are produced before each major election.

### **How and when will the policy be monitored?**

The Election Project Plans are compiled at least 6 months before each election and then updated and submitted to CLT on a monthly basis.

## **PART 4**

### **MEASURES TO REDUCE DISPROPORTIONATE OR ADVERSE IMPACT – POSITIVE IMPACT**

#### **RACE:**

Registration/voting information available in alternative languages upon request

#### **GENDER:**

Not applicable

#### **DISABILITY:**

Adapt Polling Stations, where necessary and as appropriate or make special arrangements in the Polling Station to assist disabled voters. Alternatively, encourage postal vote.

#### **AGE:**

Not applicable

#### **RELIGION/BELIEF:**

Ensure Polling Stations with religious connotations reflect all types of faiths and make special arrangements in the Polling Station where possible, Alternatively, encourage postal vote.

#### **SEXUAL ORIENTATION:**

Not applicable

## PART 5 – ACTION PLAN

Recommendation	Key activity	Responsible Officer	Milestones	Progress	Date of completion
Place notice on the website that the registration forms can be made available in large print or translated upon request.	Publication of documents	Melanie Phillips/Louise Beeston	October 2008		
Ensure that any issues which arise from the Presiding Officers in relation Polling Stations are addressed, where appropriate, and picked up in the Project Plan.	Accessibility	Melanie Phillips/Louise Beeston	In the run up to each election	Ongoing	
Ensure staff are advised to encourage electorate to take a postal vote if they are likely to face any difficulties in using the Polling Station.	Accessibility	Mel Phillips	With immediate effect	Ongoing	