



# EDITH WESTON PARISH COUNCIL

4 Normanton Cottages, Empingham Road,  
Normanton, Rutland, LE15 8RW

10 August 2020

To the Scrutiny Committee

You will have seen, and I hope read, the letter Edith Weston Parish Council sent to the Monitoring Officer on 19<sup>th</sup> June expressing our concern over the decision to not carry out an equality assessment in advance of the Statement of Community Involvement consultation.

Edith Weston Parish Council had grave concerns that RCC were rushing the SCI consultation and cutting corners.

Having realised that it was unlikely that RCC would recall the consultation as it had already started, Edith Weston Parish Council asked that an Equality Impact Assessment be carried out immediately to inform the Cabinet's decision on the consultation outcome.

You may not have seen the reply we received but unfortunately it was less than clear and seemingly pushed back on our request - and I quote- *'The Council recognise the duties under the Equality Act 2010. Section 149 of the Act requires public authorities to have due regard to several equality considerations when exercising their functions. There is, however, no requirement to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment and one has not been completed, as recognised in paragraph 8.1 of the Report to Cabinet for the meeting on 16 June 2020.'*

For those of you that don't have Para 8.1 in front of you it explained RCC's decision that the current equality screening assessment for the Local Plan would require updating to take account of the amended proposals for the SCI, but nothing more, and this would not be done until after the consultation.

Albeit delayed, the Cabinet and Monitoring Officer have realised their mistake and rather than simply relying on an update to the Local Plan equality impact screening have now undertaken an equality impact screening on the Statement of Community Involvement policy changes.

Were RCC acting with good intentions delaying the equality screening and how has the delay impacted on consultation process? Well, the latter is easy - consultees have not been given the chance to comment on the equality screening outcome, not had the chance to decide if RCC comments against each of the nine protected characteristics are reasonable, and, lastly not had the chance to express any view as to if a full EIA is actually needed.

Before the Scrutiny committee even start to consider the responses to the consultation, they need to consider whether it was it reasonable for RCC to delay undertaking an Equality Impact Screening. Scrutiny also need to discuss the

screening itself and if RCC have fairly assessed the impacts on each of the 9 group. Age, disability and race need particular attention. We ask that you debate and discuss in full and give this matter the attention it deserves.

Yours sincerely

***Paul Boggust***

Paul Boggust  
Edith Weston Parish Council Chairman