

# **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

## **DONCASTER METROPLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **Due Regard Statement Template**

How to show due regard to the equality duty in how we develop our work and in our decision making.

## **Due Regard Statement**

A **Due Regard Statement** (DRS) is the tool for capturing the evidence to demonstrate that due regard has been shown when the council plans and delivers its functions. A Due Regard Statement must be completed for all programmes, projects and changes to service delivery.

- A DRS should be initiated at the beginning of the programme, project or change to inform project planning
- The DRS runs adjacent to the programme, project or change and is reviewed and completed at the relevant points
- Any reports produced needs to reference “Due Regard” in the main body of the report and the DRS should be attached as an appendix
- The DRS cannot be fully completed until the programme, project or change is delivered.

1	<p><b>Name of the ‘policy’ and briefly describe the activity being considered including aims and expected outcomes. This will help to determine how relevant the ‘policy’ is to equality.</b></p>	<p><b>Revisions To The Council’s Constitution – Questions &amp; Statements By The Public /Elected Members</b></p> <p>The Council’s Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. In order to improve the opportunity for public engagement with Cabinet, in terms of asking questions relating to agenda items and receiving a timely and considered response, members of the public will be asked to submit any relevant questions in writing 3 days prior to the meeting. This will improve the outcomes for the members of public as they will receive a verbal response at the same meeting at which the questions is asked.</p> <p>One supplementary question without notice will be allowed, at the Chair’s discretion, provided that this arises directly out of the original question/statement or reply, and this will be put and answered without discussion. This provides an opportunity for clarity or consideration of additional, relevant information.</p> <p>Providing questions in advance is consistent with the process used for questions by the public at Full Council meetings. This approach has been in place for a number of years and has proved effective and is consistent with the approach adopted by other Councils.</p>
2	<p><b>Service area responsible for completing this statement.</b></p>	<p>Legal and Democratic Services</p>
3	<p><b>Summary of the information considered across the protected groups.</b></p>	<p>As part of the ‘due regard’ process for this proposed change we established the key elements of the revised process and considered these in relation to the protected characteristics outlined in the Public Sector Equality Duty.</p> <p><b>Elements of the process</b></p> <p>The revised process would require members of the public to have the ability to submit the question, electronically or in writing, 3 days prior to the meeting</p>

<b>Service users/residents</b>	<b>Implications against the protected characteristics</b>
<b>Doncaster Workforce</b>	<p><u>Disability</u> – If someone was unable to submit a question due to a disability, we would provide support, via an officer, to assist in the preparation and submission of the question. This might include a face to face or phone conversation to establish the question and its validity and help ensure the question is submitted in the appropriate format, either email or written, by the member of public being assisted by the appointed officer. A written response will be provided at the start of the meeting to the member of the public that asked the question to enable them to consider any supplementary question before the verbal response from the Chair. The written response will be forwarded to any member of the public asking a question who is unable to attend the meeting to ensure they have a record of the reply.</p>
	<p>The change to the process has no impact on the accessibility of the Civic Office. However, the revision to the process does allow a member of the public who is unable to attend the meeting the opportunity to ensure they can ask, and receive a response, to their question.</p>
	<p><u>Race</u> – If the member of public is not able to submit the question in English, or understand the response, support will be provided by the Customer Services Team and/or an officer within Governance Services, in line with the agreed corporate approach. Each request would be assessed on the individual’s circumstances with a view to ensuring the appropriate support can be given to assist in the submission of the question.</p>
	<p>To assist both the protected groups detailed above staff in Customer Services and Business Reception will be briefed on the new process and will be able to assist the public sensitively and discreetly. Where necessary the individual may be referred to an officer based in Governance Services if further help or support is required.</p>
	<p>To raise public awareness and understanding of the new procedure the revised process</p>

		<p>will be included on the Council's website .</p> <p>During this assessment we have identified no implications that would impact specifically on the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Sexual Orientation</li> <li>• Religion and Belief</li> <li>• Maternity and Pregnancy</li> <li>• Gender Reassignment</li> <li>• Marriage and civil partnership.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<b>Summary of the consultation/engagement activities</b>	<p>No formal consultation was undertaken. Best practice from other local authorities was considered.</p> <p>The issue is being considered by the Election and Democratic Structures Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2015.</p>
<b>5</b>	<b>Real Consideration:</b>  <b>Summary of what the evidence shows and how has it been used</b>	<p>The evidence from the previous arrangements indicated that by not submitting questions in advance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was often difficult to provide a comprehensive answer, particularly where further research or technical detail is required.</li> <li>• Sometimes there was misunderstanding or ambiguity over the question being asked.</li> <li>• This process was not consistent with other processes e.g. questions at Council which are submitted in writing in advance.</li> </ul> <p>The new arrangements seek to address the above issues.</p>
<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Making</b>	To be completed after decision taken
<b>7</b>	<b>Monitoring and Review</b>	To be completed after decision taken
<b>8</b>	<b>Sign off and approval for</b>	To be completed after decision taken

	<b>publication</b>	
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