

Leicester  
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED**  
ALL WARDS (CORPORATE ISSUE)

**CABINET**

**12<sup>th</sup> March 2007**

---

**Good practice guidelines for a policy development process**

---

**Report of the Corporate Director for Resources**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To set out a good practice model for corporate policy development, as requested by the Equality Stakeholder Scrutiny Group, chaired by Councillor Sandringham.

**2. Summary**

- 2.1 The Equality Stakeholder Scrutiny Group are of the view that the Council should have a standard model for a corporate policy development. The Group was established in September 2006 to scrutinise the work of the Council in delivering its equality agenda generally, and specifically the implementation of the Equality Standard for Local Government. The members of the group are from various voluntary organisations representing the interests of people on the basis of the six equality streams: age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation and religion and belief. The group is chaired by Councillor Sandringham, and includes the strategic corporate lead for equality, Keith Murdoch, and the lead officer for equality, Ian McBride.
- 2.2 Heads of Policy and Performance Group considered this proposal and the options. In such a complex organisational, policy development happens in many ways and at several levels according to the scale and nature of the policy. The Group therefore recommended that guidelines presenting good practice in policy development should be presented for officer information and guidance instead of the establishment of a compulsory corporate policy development process.
- 2.3 The model recommended by the Heads of Policy and Performance, set out in the supporting information, is based on practice within a Canadian provincial government. It incorporates the requirements for undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). The inclusion of EIAs within a policy development framework reflects proposals that are currently being developed to incorporate EIAs of current policies and practices (service delivery as well as implementation of policies and procedures) within the Council's service planning process. This shift aims to embed EIAs within the Council's business planning processes instead of these being perceived as being separate from them.

### **3. Recommendation**

- 3.1 That the policy development process be endorsed and promoted as an example of good practice.

### **4. Headline Financial and Legal Implications**

#### **4.1 Financial implications (Andy Morley)**

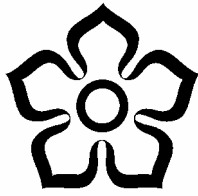
Policy development should be carried out with the financial implications of policy options being fully considered and evaluated from an early stage. This should ensure that policy decisions are not taken which subsequently turn out to be unaffordable or have undesirable financial consequences.

#### **4.2 Legal implications (Peter Nicholls)**

The proposed guidelines for a policy development process as set out in this report will help to ensure that the authority complies with equality legislation such as the Race Relations and (Amendment Act) 2000.

### **5. Report author**

Name: Irene Kszyk  
Job Title: Head of Equalities  
Extension number: 7164  
Email address: [Irene.Kszyk@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:Irene.Kszyk@leicester.gov.uk)



Leicester  
City Council

CABINET

12 March 2007

---

## Good practice guidelines for a policy development process

---

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

#### 1. The proposed policy development process

- 1.1 The proposed good practice model builds on existing good practice which generally involves research, analysis, consultation and the synthesis of information to produce recommendations.
- 1.2 This example of good practice has five steps:
  1. **Issue identification** – the policy process should begin by defining the problem and the issues that are to be the subject of a policy development process.
  2. **Issue analysis** – the policy process should include quantitative and qualitative analysis to understand the various facets of the problem/issues and their influencing factors. Identification of expected trends in regard to the problem/issues and a review of how other authorities may have addressed similar circumstances all form part of issue analysis.
  3. **Generating solutions** – the development of potential solutions should be undertaken within the context of a set of guiding principles (i.e. citizens have access to safe and affordable housing), underlying assumptions (i.e. budgetary or other restrictions) objectives and/or desired outcomes. Each potential option should be evaluated against a common set of criteria (i.e. client/stakeholder impact, financial impact, the achievement of Council or Government objectives, etc.).
  4. **Consultations** – during the policy development process, input is sought at strategic points from various interests including clients, stakeholders, service providers, Members, etc.
  5. **Performance monitoring** – the process should include a monitoring system to determine whether the policy is achieving its intended results. Indicators to monitor and evaluate the impact of the chosen policy need to be identified as part of the policy development process.
- 1.3 The following elements of the EIA process would be incorporated into the above policy development process:
  1. The needs of each of the six equality groups (race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion and belief) would be considered as part of issue/problem analysis (step 2).

2. Consultation (step 4) may be required to make issue analysis more robust (step 2).
  3. The consideration of detrimental impacts on any of the equality groups arising from potential or preferred policy options need to be identified and their impact ameliorated or alternative solutions with no detriment identified when generating policy solutions (step 3).
  4. Any monitoring system should incorporate the equality group categories to insure there is no unanticipated detrimental impact over time (step 5).
- 1.4 More detailed officer guidance is being developed to support the above EIA elements of the policy development process.
- 1.5 These five steps present a general overview of what should take place. Their application should be proportionate to the nature and scale of the policy concerned. They are not prescriptive about actual practice (although the Council has set some evaluative criteria such as risk management, environmental impacts, as well as financial and legal impacts).

## 2. Quality assuring policy reports

- 2.1 In addition to presenting good practice guidelines for a policy development process, good practice guidelines are also required for the 'product', the policy report. The following guidelines are recommended, again applied proportionate to the scale and nature of the policy:

1. **Present the purpose of the policy report** - the report should explain the reasons for the policy paper, the nature and scope of the issue/problem for which a policy response is being sought and the desired outcome that a policy or set of policies is intended to achieve.
2. **Provide evidence** – the report should provide data/facts to substantiate and support the various arguments and recommendations it contains.
3. **Identify and evaluate options** - the report should identify the range of options available to address the issue/problem described and the basis on which the options presented were selected. A common set of criteria should be used to evaluate the pros and cons of each of the options considered. Where a review of options is not considered to be relevant to the policy question at hand, the report should include a statement to this effect.
4. **Logical sequence** - the report should contain a logical flow for the various arguments and recommendations presented. The linkage between various sections of the paper should be clear.
5. **Present the results of consultations** - the report should identify who has been consulted in the process of developing the policy paper and feedback received from those consulted. Where consultation has not been undertaken, the report should provide a statement to this effect with reasons.
6. **Clear presentation** - the report should present each section in a direct and straightforward manner and as briefly as possible while ensuring comprehensiveness and comprehension.
7. **'Easy to read' version for the public/service users and for staff** - for policies which shape service provision to targeted users, the policy should be summarised in an 'easy to read' version, taking into account the diverse range of accessibility needs of those who may wish to or need to read and understand it.

## 3. Conclusion

- 3.1 By endorsing this policy development process, Cabinet will be acknowledging the good work of the Equality Stakeholder Scrutiny Group and their contribution to ensuring good standards in future policy proposals brought before Cabinet for approval and the impact of such policies on the people of Leicester.

**4. Other implications**

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	Yes/No	Paragraph references within Supporting Information
Equal Opportunities	Yes	3.3
Policy	Yes	Whole report
Sustainable and Environmental	No	
Crime and Disorder	No	
Human Rights Act	No	
Older people/People on low income	No	

**5. Consultations**

Heads of Policy and Performance Group

11 January 2007  
15 February 2007