

## Summary Fair Treatment Assessment (FTA)

<b>Area for Assessment:</b>	
<b>Name of service or function etc</b>	Design Consultancy
<b>Which Service does this affect?</b>	Community and Economic Regeneration – Landscape Architects and Ecology, Sustainable Development
<b>Is this a new, existing or revised function?</b>	Existing
<b>Summary of findings:</b>	
<b>Main conclusions on the likely impact of the proposed savings on different equality groups (protected characteristics):</b>	
<p>Our natural environment underpins our economic prosperity, our health and our well-being. Improvements to both the local built and natural environment are fundamental to narrowing the gap of inequality. Central to the delivery of the Council's Landscape Architects and Ecology Service is the provision of a comprehensive, integrated in-house landscape design and ecological consultancy service for our Clients within the Council, Parish and Town Councils and Schools, which underpins Solihull's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) key priorities.</p> <p>Set within the context of a demand driven service, the primary purpose of the 'Design Consultancy' function is to deliver high quality, creative and sustainable design solutions for a wide range of rural and urban projects that fulfill client needs and aspirations. The service provides a range of social, environmental and economic benefits through Sustainable Development, 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'</p> <p>The design of a high quality environment is vital to support a range of priority issues such as better health and education, crime reduction and improvements in community cohesion and social inclusion. On the whole, most of our projects have the main outcome to promote community cohesion and improving people's lives. It is embedded in everything we do.</p> <p>Design is informed by national, regional and local guidance and legislation, policy documents, plans and strategies, British and/or European Standards and Building Regulations, equalities legislation, guidelines, and best practice etc. The design consultancy function is considered to have a positive impact in promoting diversity and fairness in support of our responsibilities around equality and diversity, and closing the gap of inequality.</p> <p>The opportunity to influence equality and diversity issues is mainly through the application of legally compliant schemes that demonstrate best practice. Opportunities to influence community engagement are limited and largely dependent upon the particular client brief and resources available. Where intervention allows, or brief dictates, the Council's landscape design and ecological consultancy service can encourage greater use of the natural environment, parks and public open space for both young people and for an increasingly elderly population.</p> <p>The design consultancy function can, through the design of outdoor space address the barriers that may prevent disabled people from participating in activities that other people may take for granted. Such work is considered within the context of what is reasonable and practicable. The service has been asked to develop design methods of preventing motorised vehicles accessing parks and open space, safeguarding the recreational amenity or nature conservation interests. Where access barriers are installed to prevent indiscriminate vehicular access, measures are taken to accommodate wheelchair access, e.g. kissing gates with radar keys.</p> <p>Issues of personal safety are considered in the design of parks and publicly accessible open space, as they are with regards the design of the wider public realm. Specific actions within schemes can include access improvements, improved visibility and sightlines and the</p>	

management of vegetation etc. Measures are considered on a site by site basis to ensure they are reasonable, considered and proportionate. The design function should contribute to an improved sense of safety and personal well being.

Overall the service has a positive influence on promoting equality in the borough.

## **Actions**

### **Actions identified to address negative impacts identified or to better promote equality, human rights, cohesive and sustainable communities and safeguarding issues**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Employees to undertake continuing professional development and keep up to date with relevant legislation, regulations, policy, guidelines, current best practice, innovations and improved methods of working.	Design Consultancy informed by current best practice	Ongoing
<b>Date Assessment Signed Off</b>	March 2011	