

## Equality Impact Assessment Form

Name of strategy, project or policy to be assessed		Is the strategy/project/policy:	
Policy to Discharge Homelessness Duties through the Private Rented Sector		<b>New</b> <b>X</b>	<b>Existing</b>
Lead officer completing assessment	Job title	Date of assessment	
Tony Hobby	Housing Options Manager	23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2014	

### 1. What is the main purpose of the strategy/project/policy?

This new policy has been triggered by the Localism Act 2011. The aim of the policy is to allow the Housing Options Team to discharge it's homeless duty into the private rented sector by securing a suitable and affordable property under an assured shorthold tenancy for a minimum of 12 months.

### 2. List the main activities of the project/policy (for strategies list the main policy areas):

The Housing Options Team, through the West Suffolk Lettings Partnership will liaise with landlords and letting agents with regard to availability of properties and to discuss the length of tenancy required to meet the policy guidelines, the willingness to accept housing benefit and to discuss the safeguarding procedures put in place to secure and maintain the property. The property's suitability will be checked with reference to The Homelessness (suitability of accommodation) (England) order 2012).

Once a suitable landlord and property has been sourced, the 12 month tenancy will be offered to the most suitable applicant using the policy's Offer Hierarchy procedure

**3. Who are the main stakeholders?**

Households who the Council have accepted a duty to accommodate under Housing Act 1996 Part VII – Homelessness.

**4. What outcomes are wanted from this strategy/project/policy?**

This will provide an alternative to the housing register, allowing applicants outside of the homelessness duty to have a greater chance of being offered social housing due to the reduction of Statutorily Homeless in band A.

Using the private sector will also reduce the number of applicants in temporary accommodation and reduce the period of time applicants are waiting for suitable offers of accommodation.

**5. Are there any concerns that the strategy/project/policy could have a differential impact in terms of equality?**

**Use the table below to indicate:**

- (a) Where you think that the strategy/project/ policy could have a negative impact on any of the equality target groups i.e. it could disadvantage them
- (b) Where you think that the strategy/project/ policy could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relations within equality target groups.

Please provide an explanation as to why you think there is a positive/negative or no impact.

**APPENDIX B**

		<b>Positive impact</b> – it could benefit	<b>Negative impact</b> – it could disadvantage	<b>No impact</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Women			X	
	Men			X	
	Transgender			X	
<b>Race (census categories)</b>	White – British			X	
	White – Irish			X	
	White – other background			X	
	Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			X	
	Mixed – White and Black African			X	
	Mixed – White and Asian			X	
	Any other mixed background			X	
	Asian/Asian-British - Indian			X	
	Asian/Asian-British - Pakistani			X	
	Asian/Asian-British – any other Asian background			X	
	Black/Black British – Caribbean			X	
	Black/Black British – African			X	
	Black/Black British – any other Black background			X	
	Chinese			X	
	Gypsies/Travellers			X	
	Any other group (write in)			X	

**APPENDIX B**

		<b>Positive impact</b> – it could benefit	<b>Negative impact</b> – it could disadvantage	<b>No impact</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Disability</b>	Physical		x		A potential negative aspect to the policy is that for applicants that require adaptations and aids within the property to help with mobility, finding a property may prove difficult considering the length of tenancy offered, the financial implications of adaptations to the landlord and whether or not the landlord would allow modifications to the property. Social housing would be preferential in these circumstances.
	Sensory			X	
	Learning			X	
	Mental health issues			X	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	Lesbian, gay and bisexual			x	
<b>Age</b>	Older people (60 +)			X	
	Younger people (17-25), and children (0-16)			X	
<b>Belief or Religion</b>	Faith groups			X	
<b>Language</b>	English not first language			X	
<b>Social inclusion</b>	Low income			X	
	Rural isolation			X	
<b>Equal opportunities and /or improved relations</b>				x	

Notes:

Faith groups cover a wide range of groupings, the most common of which are Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Sikhs, and Hindus. Consider faith categories individually and collectively when considering positive and negative impacts.

The categories used in the Race section are those used in the 2001 census. Consideration should be given to the needs of specific communities within the broad categories, for example, Bangladeshi people, Polish and Portuguese that do not appear as separate categories in the census.

**6. Are key elements of people’s lives affected by this strategy/project/policy for example finance, accommodation, welfare?**

Housing

**7. Could the strategy/policy/project discriminate against any group(s) either directly or indirectly? If yes, please state how.**

No. This Policy recognises that if applied to those households with Physical Disabilities they could be disadvantaged. The Policy would not be applied in such cases.

(see guidance note for definition of discrimination).

**8 a) If there are any negative impacts, how could you minimise or remove any negative impact?**

N/A

**8 b) How could you improve the strategy, project or policy's positive impact?**

N/A

**9. If there is no evidence that the strategy, policy or project promotes equality, equal opportunities or improved relations – how could it be adapted so that it does?**

N/A

**10. What consultation has been carried out on the strategy/policy/project? Please include details of any equality monitoring carried out.**

None

**11. Do you have data available which monitors the impact of the policy on minority groups? If not, please explain how you intend to continue monitoring the impact of this strategy, policy or project**

Details of applicants ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, disabilities, religious beliefs are all recorded on the Councils Housing Register and Homelessness databases.

The ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, disabilities, religious beliefs of homeless households broadly reflects that of the general population in the area.

**12. Has this EqIA been consulted on? Who with? What feedback was received?**

**Internal:**

n/a

**External:**

n/a

**13. Next steps: Based on your assessment, what changes, if any do you need to make?** Tick one of the following and provide an explanation of why this is the action you are taking.

Action*	Tick ✓ relevant	Explanation of action
No major change		
Adjust the policy		
Continue the policy	X	The Policy is robust with no major potential for discrimination.
Stop and remove the policy		

**14. Summary of findings**

Please write a short summary of your findings including any recommendations for change or further actions. This summary could be included in any reports to committee. See other completed EqIAs for examples (available on the intranet).



This policy is an additional means by which to discharge homeless duty and will not override the Housing Register (Home-Link). For rare cases of homeless applicants with restricted mobility discharging into a privately rented property would not be feasible and an offer of long term secure accommodation through the housing register would be a far more cost effective and a more suitable means of discharging homeless duty.

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send one copy to the relevant Corporate Director and one to the Strategy and Performance Unit.

Name: .....Signed: .....

Date: .....

If you have identified any negative impact which is possibly discriminatory and not intended and / or of high impact, you must amend your policy/strategy and/or contact the Policy Unit to discuss remedial action