

Chesterfield Borough Council Equality Impact Assessment - Full Assessment Form

<i>Title of the policy, project, service, function or strategy:</i>	Housing Allocations Policy
<i>Service Area:</i>	Housing Services
<i>Section:</i>	Housing Options
<i>Lead Officer:</i>	Carl Griffiths – Housing Options Manager
<i>Date of assessment:</i>	09/18
<i>Is the policy, project, service, function or strategy:</i>	
<i>Existing</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Changed</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>New / Proposed</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 1 – Clear aims and objectives

1. What is the aim of the policy, project, service, function or strategy?

The policy sets out the way in which the allocation of council properties is administered, including the identification of priorities and areas of increased need.

The Council last reviewed its Housing Allocations Policy in 2015 with changes implemented in 2016. In 2017, following an interim review of the policy, Cabinet agreed to implement a Local Lettings Plan, enabling the letting of hard to let flats to residents of neighbouring authorities (North East Derbyshire District Council and Bolsover District Council).

A full and comprehensive review of the policy is due and has been completed. A copy of the proposed policy was taken to Cabinet in July 2018 seeking permission to consult. This has been undertaken and a new report is being taken to cabinet on 23rd October 2018 and full council on 12th December 2018.

2. Who is intended to benefit from the policy and how?

Introducing an on-line rehousing application form, accessed via a user-friendly website which is also used to advertise properties and process bids made by applicants, will improve customers' experience of the service.

Replacing the current points-based, quota system with a simplified priority band system will be transparent and easy for applicants to understand.

Using category groups to assess applicants' medical needs and the direct impact of the applicants' current housing on their health will make the system easier for applicants to understand and more transparent.

Applicants will benefit from the revision of residency requirement criteria will:

- bring the residency requirement in line with the residency requirement used with regard to local connection for homelessness
- allow applicants who have a family connection to join the housing register enabling them to give or receive family support

Reducing the current 12-month employment requirement would be of greater benefit to people who are employed in Chesterfield.

Acceptance of out of borough applications on to the housing register would benefit the council to effectively manage demand through our housing register and provide us with a solution to the ongoing issue of empty properties and loss of rent.

Introduction of an equity assessment would ensure that people who have sufficient equity or assets to address their own housing need are not allocated social housing. This will ensure that social housing is available for the benefit of people who have limited options to address their housing need.

Introduction of a time restriction on reapplying to the housing register after being rehoused would prevent tenants

who do not have a housing need from repeatedly moving within a short space of time. This will benefit the council by preventing unnecessary transfers, reducing costs to the council associated with voids, repairs and loss of rent.

Revision of property size (number of bedrooms) eligibility criteria will:

- reduce the number of tenants claiming welfare benefits who are liable for the under occupancy charge (bedroom tax) which will reduce rent arrears owed to the council
- enable pregnant women to bid for properties with a bedroom for their unborn child before their baby is born

Introduction of a pre-allocation financial assessment of affordability will enable the council to withdraw an offer of accommodation where it is clear that the prospective tenant has insufficient resources to be able to pay the rent and household bills. This will reduce rent arrears owed to the council and enable applicants with financial difficulties to be provided with appropriate advice and support.

Revision of housing register excluding times and financial levels will ensure that the council has appropriate measures in place for applicants to demonstrate their ability to sustain a tenancy which are achievable in light of Chesterfield being a full service Universal Credit area.

Alignment of the Allocations Policy with the Adaptations Policy 2017 will give preference to adapted properties to households who require adaptations, making better use of the council's housing stock.

3. What outcomes do you want to achieve?

The desired outcomes of the policy review are to:

- Enable the council to allocate the council housing stock to applicants in the most need
- Enable the council to provide a customer-focussed and user-friendly service
- to make all allocations fairly, equitably and without any unlawful discrimination
- make best use of council stock

Section 2 – What is the impact?

4. Summary of anticipated impacts. <i>Please tick at least one option per protected characteristic. Think about barriers people may experience in accessing services, how the policy is likely to affect the promotion of equality, knowledge of customer experiences to date. You may need to think about sub-groups within categories eg. older people, younger people, people with hearing impairment etc.</i>			
	Potentially positive impact	Potentially negative impact	No disproportionate impact
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability and long term conditions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender and gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pregnant women and people on parental leave	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Religion and belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Section 3 – Recommendations and monitoring

If you have answered that the policy, project, service, function or strategy could potentially have a negative impact on any of the above characteristics then a full EIA will be required.

5. Should a full EIA be completed for this policy, project, service, function or strategy?		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
Please explain the reasons for this decision: A full EIA will be completed following the consultation process for the full review of the policy.		

Section 6 – Knowledge management and publication

Please note the draft EIA should be reviewed by the appropriate Service Manager and the Policy Service **before** WBR, Lead Member, Cabinet, Council reports are produced.

Reviewed by Head of Service/Service Manager	Name:	Carl Griffiths
	Date:	09/10/2018
Reviewed by Policy Service	Name:	
	Date:	DD/MM/YY
Final version of the EIA sent to Policy Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Decision information sent to Policy Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	