

Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Equality Act 2010 places a ‘General Duty’ on all public bodies to have ‘due regard’ to the need to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between those with a ‘relevant protected characteristic’ and those without one.
- Fostering good relations between those with a ‘relevant protected characteristic’ and those without one.

In addition, the Council complies with the Marriage (same sex couples) Act 2013.

Stage 1 – Screening

Please complete the equalities screening form. If screening identifies that your proposal is likely to impact on protect characteristics, please proceed to stage 2, and complete a full Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA).

Stage 2 – Full Equality Impact Assessment

An EqIA provides evidence for meeting the Council’s commitment to equality and the responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

When an EqIA has been undertaken, it should be submitted as an attachment/appendix to the final decision-making report. This is so the decision maker (e.g. Cabinet, Committee, senior leader) can use the EqIA to help inform their final decision. The EqIA once submitted will become a public document, published alongside the minutes and record of the decision.

Please read the Council’s Equality Impact Assessment Guidance before beginning the EqIA process.

1. Responsibility for the Equality Impact Assessment

Name of proposal	Amendments to Housing Allocations Policy – Neighbourhood Moves Scheme
Service area	Housing
Officer completing assessment	Martin Gulliver
Equalities/ HR Advisor	Hugh Smith
Cabinet meeting date (if applicable)	9 February 2021
Director/Assistant Director	Robbie Erbmann

2. Summary of the proposal

The proposal seeks approval of an amendment to the Housing Allocations Policy which would give priority for any newly built homes to those displaced by the new homes and nearby secure tenants. The over-arching principle of this policy is to ensure community cohesion and address over-crowding.

The amendments seek to maintain community cohesion by giving priority to local tenants displaced by estate renewal, allowing them to remain in the area, and to prioritise other secure tenants in the local area to ensure that the local community benefits from the new scheme.

The amendments also seek to address over-crowding both indirectly – by encouraging under-occupiers to release family homes – and directly by prioritising those who are over-crowded.

These amendments also support the Council’s commitment of a Right to Return for tenants displaced by estate renewal. Without this amendment, an individual Local Lettings Plan would be needed for each new build where tenants are displaced. This policy would give these displaced tenants priority for the new homes.

The scheme is only available to existing Council tenants who vacate their homes. This means that for every newly built home taken up by an existing tenant, an additional existing home will become available. Barring homes on estate renewal schemes, which may be used for temporary accommodation, these additional homes will be let through the usual allocations process meaning those on the waiting list will still benefit from the new homes.

The key stakeholders affected are existing secure tenants, who will have an improved chance of addressing their over-crowding, and those on the housing register who will have a reduced chance of moving into a newly built home. However, this loss is mitigated by an equal supply of existing homes where the new home is taken by an existing secure tenant who is not on an estate renewal scheme. The scheme also prioritises those who are under-occupying and so will benefit larger families by creating a greater supply of family homes and reducing overcrowding.

These amendments will be subject to consultation and approval is sought to consult on the proposed policy with the final amendments to be approved by Cabinet at a later meeting.

3. What data will you use to inform your assessment of the impact of the proposal on protected groups of service users and/or staff?

Protected group	Service users	Staff
Sex	Data from the housing register and council tenant database	<i>This policy only impacts on staff insofar as they are applicants on the housing register or an existing secure tenant.</i>
Gender Reassignment	No data held	
Age	Data from the housing register and council tenant database	
Disability	Data from the housing register and council tenant database	
Race & Ethnicity	Data from the housing register and council tenant database	
Sexual Orientation	Data from the housing register and council tenant database	
Religion or Belief (or No Belief)	Data from the housing register and council tenant database	
Pregnancy & Maternity	Data from the housing register and council tenant database	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Data from the housing register and council tenant database	

Outline the key findings of your data analysis.

This policy will affect existing tenants on estate renewal schemes by giving them additional options for rehousing. The policy will also affect existing tenants in the local area especially those who are over-crowded as these households will currently have a low priority for new homes and this policy will give them higher priority. As many of these households will have children, they will also benefit from a local nearby move.

The policy will also affect those on the Housing Register who are not already tenants as it is expected that the supply of new homes will largely be allocated to existing tenants. As this will generate an equal supply of existing homes to be let, this will not significantly reduce the chance of a move but will reduce the chance that this move is to a newly built property. Where the successful tenant is from an estate renewal scheme, their current home may be relet as temporary accommodation and thus leading to a reduction in supply available to those on the housing register. However, as these tenants will eventually need to move to undertake the estate renewal, a let will need to be allocated to these households even without this scheme. It is also noted that enabling tenants to move from estate renewal schemes is likely to help the delivery of additional new homes being built in those schemes.

Those on the Housing Register will also be affected as the final mix of homes available will depend on the relative take up these new homes by households who are under-occupying or those who are over-crowded.

The relative demographics of these two groups show some differences in the age, disability and ethnicity – with existing tenants generally being older than those on the housing register and with a corresponding higher level of disability and the Housing Register having a high proportion of BAME households.

The following data compares data collected in September 2020 and compares existing secure tenants and the head of households on the entire housing register.

Sex

Sex	Council tenants	Housing Register	Difference
Female	64%	63%	1%
Male	36%	37%	-1%

The above table shows that there is a similar rate of over-representation of females among both existing Council tenants and those on the Housing Register. Among Council tenants who are overcrowded and have an application on the housing register, 75% of those are in female headed households.

Gender re-assignment

The Council does not hold data on Gender Reassignment for either of these two groups. If any people affected by the decision are members of this protected group, the Council will ensure that the decision does not result in any direct or indirect discrimination.

Age

Age	Council tenants	Housing Register	Difference
19 and under	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
20-29	3%	19%	-16%
30-39	10%	32%	-22%
40-49	18%	25%	-7%
50-59	29%	15%	14%
60-69	20%	6%	14%
70 and over	20%	2%	18%
Unknown	Less than 1%	-	Less than 1%

This data shows that those on the Housing Register are generally younger than existing tenants, with 40% of tenants being of 60 years of age or older compared to around 8% of those on the Housing Register. Among Council tenants who are overcrowded and have an application on the housing register, 72% of those are aged between 30 and 50 years old and only 19% are 50 or older.

Disability

Disability	Council tenants	Housing Register	Difference
Y	33%	6%	-27%
N	67%	94%	27%

The above data shows a significant difference in disability rates between these two groups with existing Council tenants being significantly more likely to report a disability. This statistic correlates to the difference in ages described above. Among Council tenants who are overcrowded and have an application on the housing register, 20% are disabled.

Ethnic Origin

Ethnic origin	Council tenants	Housing Register	Difference
Asian	5%	7%	-2%
Black	32%	39%	-7%
Mixed	2%	5%	-3%
White	40%	32%	8%
Other	8%	12%	-4%
Unknown / refused	13%	5%	8%

These statistics show that there is a higher proportion of BAME households among those on the Housing Register compared to existing tenants. Among Council tenants who are overcrowded and have an application on the housing register, 76% are BAME households, 38% of which have a black ethnicity rising to 60% among those who are severely overcrowded.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation	Council tenants	Housing Register	Difference
Bisexual	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Gay Man	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Gay Woman / Lesbian	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Gay Woman/Lesbian	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Heterosexual	2%	8%	6%
Other	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Prefer not to say	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Unknown	97%	92%	-4%

This data shows that those on the Housing Register are four times as likely to declare themselves as Heterosexual. However, caution should be exercised over this characteristic as it is significantly under-reported.

Religion

Religion	Council tenants	Housing Register	Difference
Buddhist	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Christian	13%	2%	-11%
Greek Orthodox	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Hindu	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Jehovah Witness	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Jewish	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Muslim	7%	1%	-6%
No Religion	3%	1%	-3%
No Response	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Other	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Prefer not to say	Less than 1%	1%	-1%
Rastafarian	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Roman Catholic	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Sikh	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Unknown	74%	96%	22%

This data shows a significant difference in the reported religions of these two groups with existing tenants significantly more likely to declare a religion. Caution should be exercised over this characteristic as it is significantly under-reported

Pregnancy and Maternity

Just over 1% of households on the Housing Register are pregnant and a further 1% in maternity. The status of current Council tenants is generally unknown unless they have submitted an application to the Housing Register.

Marital Status

Marital Status	Council tenants	Housing Register	Difference
Civil Partner	Less than 1%	1%	1%
Divorced	2%	6%	4%
Living with partner	Less than 1%	2%	2%
Married	29%	25%	-4%
Separated	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Single	40%	60%	20%
Unknown	27%	2%	-25%
Widowed	1%	Less than 1%	-1%

This data shows that there are higher proportion of divorced and single people on the housing register. However, it should be noted that though this characteristic is known for almost all households on the housing register, the current marital status is unknown for just over a quarter of tenants.

4. a) How will consultation and/or engagement inform your assessment of the impact of the proposal on protected groups of residents, service users and/or staff?

<p>A full consultation has been carried out following approval to consult</p>	<p>Where the Council holds an email address, consultation was undertaken by email to all secure tenants and households on the housing register. This represented 15,751 households or 59% of the 26,796 households invited to take part in the consultation.</p> <p>Where an email was not held, a letter was sent to the remaining 11,045 households advising them of the consultation and inviting them to take part on-line, with a dedicated email and phone line to ask questions or to requests a paper form. Officers spoke to 112 respondents and sent out 226 paper forms, of which 80 were returned in the pre-paid envelope provided.</p> <p>Consultation events were limited by Covid-19 restrictions and so on-line webinars were held which were viewable as both live events where they could ask questions and as recorded sessions.</p> <p>Only one request was received for documents in a different format – a request for possible BSL translation or in writing for a deaf resident. This scheme was discussed with the resident by email. The Council received 589 responses with 80 submitted by paper and the remaining 509 on-line.</p>
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4. b) Outline the key findings of your consultation / engagement activities once completed, particularly in terms of how this relates to groups that share the protected characteristics

There was support for the scheme with only 5% against the scheme which was consistent among all protected characteristic groups.

From the comments, the most common reason for not supporting the scheme or seeking to amend it was that it only applied to exiting Council tenants and should be extended those in housing association tenancies, temporary accommodation and private sector tenancies. However, similar approval was seen among different tenures with only 7% of those temporary accommodation being against the scheme.

In terms of protected characteristics, comments were made that priority should also be given to other housing needs and particularly health. While the scheme does not offer explicit priority to those who are not under-occupying or over-crowded, those with other housing needs will be given priority under the third sub-group - existing tenants on the housing register. However, the scheme currently reserves any properties suitable for those with mobility issues to applicants who have a need for these properties. This means that anyone requiring new homes due to mobility issues will have priority for suitable properties. However, it is proposed that the wording is strengthened to ensure that these scarce properties are only allocated to those who need them.

During an email exchanges, one respondent raised concerns that allocating newly built homes for current housing tenants will be discriminatory against those in temporary accommodation or those on the housing waiting list. Although this issue was raised in relation to tenure rather than any protected characteristics, further analysis has been undertaken on those who will benefit from the policy – overcrowded current tenants who will have a greater chance of an appropriate size home – and those who may lose out – those on the housing waiting list who will be allocated an existing home released by an existing tenant rather than a new home. This analysis showed that existing tenants on the housing register who are overcrowded or severely

overcrowded have a much higher proportion of BAME households than both council tenants and those on the housing register.

Ethnicity	Overcrowded.	Severely overcrowded.
Asian	11%	7%
Black	38%	60%
Mixed	8%	0%
Other	10%	5%
unknown	9%	0%
White	24%	29%
Total	100%	100%

5. What is the likely impact of the proposal on groups of service users and/or staff that share the protected characteristics?

1. Sex

Positive	Y	Negative		Neutral impact		Unknown Impact	
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These amendments are likely to have a positive impact on women who are over-represented among tenants and particularly among over-crowded secure tenants who will have improved chances of being moved to suitable accommodation. The amendment will also benefit larger households by releasing additional family homes by rehousing under-occupying households.

2. Gender reassignment

Positive		Negative		Neutral impact		Unknown Impact	Y
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While this policy is generally positive to most households, the Council does not hold sufficient data on gender reassignment to fully to assess the impact on this group. We will make efforts to prevent any inequalities from occurring and address any that do.

3. Age

Positive	Y	Negative		Neutral impact		Unknown Impact	
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These amendments are likely to have a positive impact on under-occupiers, among whom older tenants are over-represented. These amendments will allow them to remain in the local area and retain local connections. With nearly 40% of tenants being of 60 years of age or older, this will offer a significant benefit to tenants with this protected characteristic. Younger existing tenants are likely to benefit if they are over-crowded.

These amendments are likely to have a neutral impact on households who are not existing tenants and on the housing register, who tend to be younger than existing tenants, as there will be an increased supply of larger family homes through under-occupiers moving to smaller homes, but these homes will be existing properties rather than newly built homes.

4. Disability

Positive	Y	Negative		Neutral impact		Unknown Impact	
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Adapted homes will only be offered to those who have need for them and so the number of adapted homes offered to those with disabilities will remain the same. These amendments are likely to have a positive impact on nearby tenants whose home is currently unsuitable and require a move. This will also allow them to remain local to their current support network. With 23% of tenants reporting a disability, this scheme will offer a significant improvement for those tenants sharing this characteristic.

5. Race and ethnicity

Positive	Y	Negative		Neutral impact		Unknown Impact	
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These amendments are expected to have a positive impact on BAME people who are over-represented among tenants. Of those tenants already on the Housing Register, BAME residents represent 42% of all over-crowded households and 60% of those severely overcrowded. Although those on the Housing Register will have a reduced chance of moving into a new home, this is offset by the additional homes made available by local tenants. The scheme is also likely to benefit those who need to move but wish to remain in established communities.

6. Sexual orientation

Positive		Negative		Neutral impact		Unknown Impact	Y
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While this policy is generally positive to most households, the Council does not hold sufficient data on sexual orientation to fully to assess the impact on LGB people.

7. Religion or belief (or no belief)

Positive		Negative		Neutral impact		Unknown Impact	Y
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These amendments will allow those who are over-crowded with a realistic chance of moving locally and will benefit those who have ties to particular religious establishments. However, reporting rates are low and so it is not possible to conclusively determine the likely impact on different religious groups.

8. Pregnancy and maternity

Positive	Y	Negative		Neutral impact		Unknown Impact	
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These amendments are expected to have a positive impact on those who are new mothers as it is likely that their housing need will have increased on the birth of an additional child. The amendments will also increase the chances of moving to a larger property in the same area and so maintaining existing support networks.

9. Marriage and Civil Partnership (Consideration is only needed to ensure there is no discrimination between people in a marriage and people in a civil partnership)

Positive	Y	Negative		Neutral impact	Y	Unknown Impact	
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This policy will apply in the same way to people in marriages and people in civil partnerships.

10. Groups that cross two or more equality strands e.g. young black women

These amendments will affect black women who are over-represented in both groups, and within this grouping, older black women who are particularly over-represented among tenants and younger black women who are particularly over-represented among those on the Housing Register. The amendments will provide greater chance of over-crowded tenants moving to a larger property and may help those on the housing register by releasing a larger home when this scheme is taken up by under-occupiers. Black women will also be overrepresented among those who benefit from being able to stay near existing social networks.

The amendments will also affect those who are both elderly and disabled and will support them to remain in the local area where they have established medical services and support networks.

Outline the overall impact of the policy for the Public Sector Equality Duty:

This policy will benefit over-crowded households by increasing their chance of an appropriately sized home for existing tenants and allow them to remain in their community. The policy will also promote community cohesion by allowing local residents to benefit from new building.

6. a) What changes if any do you plan to make to your proposal as a result of the Equality Impact Assessment?

Outcome	Y/N
No major change to the proposal: the EqIA demonstrates the proposal is robust and there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. All opportunities to promote equality have been taken. <u>If you have found any inequalities or negative impacts that you are unable to mitigate, please provide a compelling reason below why you are unable to mitigate them.</u>	Y
Adjust the proposal: the EqIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. Adjust the proposal to remove barriers or better promote equality. Clearly <u>set out below</u> the key adjustments you plan to make to the policy. If there are any adverse impacts you cannot mitigate, please provide a compelling reason below	
Stop and remove the proposal: the proposal shows actual or potential avoidable adverse impacts on different protected characteristics. The decision maker must not make this decision.	

6 b) Summarise the specific actions you plan to take to remove or mitigate any actual or potential negative impact and to further the aims of the Equality Duty

Impact and which relevant protected characteristics are impacted?	Action	Lead officer	Timescale
Access to mobility accessible units for disabled households	Strengthen the commitment to only let these properties to households who need them	Martin Gulliver	Policy Amended

Please outline any areas you have identified where negative impacts will happen as a result of the proposal, but it is not possible to mitigate them. Please provide a complete and honest justification on why it is not possible to mitigate them.

None

6 c) Summarise the measures you intend to put in place to monitor the equalities impact of the proposal as it is implemented:

This is a new approach to housing allocations and so will be monitored through the annual lettings plan with the intention of addressing any concerns as part of the new Housing Allocations Policy which is currently being developed.

7. Authorisation

EqlA approved by



(Assistant Director/ Director)

Date 25/01/2021

8. Publication

Please ensure the completed EqlA is published in accordance with the Council's policy.

Please contact the Policy & Strategy Team for any feedback on the EqlA process.