

Equality Impact Assessment Record

Date of EIA July 2009

Directorate Environment , Culture and Communities

Initial Screening Record	
Activity to be assessed	Allocation policy
What is the activity?	x Policy/strategy
Is it a new or existing activity?	x New
Aim / objective / purpose of the activity – who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	<p>The purpose of the activity is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure through the use of Choice Based Lettings that applicants exercise greater control over their choice of housing, increasing the likelihood that tenancies will be sustained • Ensure social rented housing in the borough is let to those in greatest need • Make the process of allocating tenancies as transparent as possible • Make best use of the social rented stock in the borough • Encourage sustainable communities • To make sure the housing needs of vulnerable applicants and those in priority need are given reasonable preference <p>The activity is designed for: Applicants for affordable housing</p>
Who is responsible for the activity?	The person/section/team responsible for this policy/function is: Housing options team
Did Step 1: Initial Screening indicate that a full EIA was necessary?	x Yes – full EIA completed and recorded below.
Full EIA Record	
Who are the members of the EIA team?	Simon Hendey Chief Officer: Housing Clare Dorning Head of Housing Strategy and Needs Bob Orrow Housing Options Manager
What evidence has been found to indicate that the activity might need to be amended? (Include any consultation)	The introduction of a choice based letting scheme (CBL) will require applicants to make bids for properties they wish to be considered for. Applicants may be disadvantaged if they are not able to make bids for any reason. The scheme has been introduced following

undertaken)	<p>consultation with housing applicants which indicated that applicants did not understand the current allocation system and wished to have more of a say in the homes they are allocated.</p> <p>A questionnaire was issued to every household on the Housing Register. The results told us :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost a third (32.0%) of all respondents said that they would prefer a 'banding system' to be used when allocating housing • The majority (61.3%) of all respondents said that if vacant properties were to be advertised to people on the Housing Register, then they would prefer to be made aware of which properties were vacant via the 'internet (web page specially for this)'. Smaller minorities of respondents would prefer to be made aware by means of a 'dedicated telephone line with recorded information' (33.4%), • The majority of all respondents said that they would prefer to contact the Council about 'bidding' for an advertised home 'by telephone' (57.1%), and 'via the internet/ web page' (50.8%), whilst just under half (49.2%) would prefer to make contact 'by post (letter/ application form). <p>All of this feedback has been incorporated into the new CBL scheme.</p> <p>Extensive research has been carried out into the types of allocations policies and CBL scheme which exist across the country. Examples of best practice have been incorporated into the new policy and processes.</p>	
With regard to the equalities themes, which groups might be impacted by the activity? Might any of these groups be impacted adversely ?	<p>Groups Impacted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> x Race and ethnicity x Disability x Gender x Age x Sexual Orientation x Religion or belief 	<p>Groups impacted adversely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Race and ethnicity <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Age <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief
What evidence is there to suggest an impact/adverse impact?	<p>There is no evidence of an adverse impact but officers are aware of the potential for an adverse impact.</p>	
On what grounds can impact or adverse impact be justified?	<p>Approximately 25% of annual lettings are within the sheltered housing stock. This type of housing is only available for older people and not for the wider housing register.</p> <p>There is a range of specialist housing schemes where access is for defined applicant groups. Access to</p>	

	<p>these schemes is via a multi-agency panel which assess the housing and support needs of vulnerable people and prioritises them for rehousing. Vacancies in these schemes will not be available for the wider housing register.</p>
<p>Is there any current action that addresses issues for any of the groups impacted/adversely impacted?</p>	<p>Monitoring of allocations by ethnic origin of applicant is currently undertaken and reported to the Housing Management Team each month. This monitoring indicates that the ethnicity of applicants being re-housed is in line with the ethnicity of applicants on the housing register.</p> <p>Monitoring of allocations by type of applicant is undertaken and reported to the Housing Management Team on a monthly basis. This monitoring indicates that allocations are distributed across all housing need streams.</p> <p>The Young Persons Resource Panel and Adults Panel assess the needs of vulnerable single people and identify any help that may be needed. The Panel monitors the access to supported housing and support services that is being achieved by minority groups such as people with learning disabilities and people with mental health problems.</p>
<p>What changes will you make to the activity reduce or remove any differential/adverse impact?</p>	<p>An assisted bidding scheme has been developed to help vulnerable applicant's access vacant properties. A designated officer will be assigned to manage the assisted bidding process.</p> <p>The allocations policy will be made available to the public via the Council's website. Briefing sessions for statutory agencies, the voluntary sector and community groups will be carried out to ensure they advise applicants who may approach their services</p> <p>Housing targets will be set on an annual basis and monitored to ensure priority groups are receiving the optimum level of housing.</p> <p>Bidding activity will be monitored to ensure priority applicants are engaging with the scheme.</p> <p>Bidding activity will be published on the CBL website so that applicants can see how properties are being allocated.</p> <p>An annual review of the new policy will be undertaken and will include feedback from applicants.</p>
<p>Into which action plan/s will these</p>	<p>Housing service plan Housing Strategy</p>

actions be incorporated?	
Who is responsible for the action plan?	Head of Housing Needs and Strategy
Have any examples of good practise been identified as part of the EIA?	No
Has the EIA been published on the Council website?	Yes
Who is the relevant Chief Officer and have they signed off the EIA?	Simon Hendey
Which PMR will this EIA be reported in?	Housing Services Q2, 2009-10 Environment Culture and Communities Directorate