

Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening: 12 March 2012	Directorate: Environment, Culture and Communities	Section: Housing
1. Activity to be assessed	<p><i>Please give full details of the activity and summarise the budget reduction proposal</i></p> <p>The Council is reviewing it's policy for the allocation of social housing in the light of new government guidance and legislation.</p> <p>The Allocation Policy review proposes the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To remove Band E from the housing register. Households who are adequately housed will not be held on the register • Priority will reflect housing need rather than housing aspirations. Tenants wishing to move from a flat to a house of the same size will not be held on the register. • The length of time an applicant has waited for housing will be reflected by enabling applicants to progress up through Bands C and D in line with time on the register. Applicants in Band B will not move to band A. • A residency requirement is introduced so that households must have lived in the borough for at least one year before their application will be considered • Applications from households who are considered to have deliberately make their housing situation worse to gain additional housing priority will be placed in the band below the need they present. • Housing applicants who are working will be prioritised above those who are not working when bids are received for properties and those applicants who have the financial resources to meet their housing needs are prioritised below those who don't. • Applicants who move to resolve overcrowding must move to a property which resolves their overcrowding. • House holds for whom the Council has accepted a duty to re-house under the homelessness legislation will be made a direct offer of suitable accommodation <p>There are no budget reductions proposed in these changes</p>	
2. What is the activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing	
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Clare Dorning	

5. Who are the members of the EIA team?	Clare Dorning – Head of Housing Strategy and Needs Janet Weekes – Housing Strategy and Resources Manager																				
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	<p><i>Please describe briefly its aims, objectives and main activities as relevant. Provide further details of the budget reduction proposal that you will be assessing the impact of.</i></p> <p>The purpose of the Allocations Policy is to ensure social rented housing in the borough is let to those in greatest need, that best use is made of the social rented stock in the borough, to encourage sustainable communities, and to make sure the housing needs of vulnerable applicants and those in priority need are given reasonable preference.</p> <p>The Localism Act 2011 part 7 chapter 1 provides reform of part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 in the allocation of affordable housing. Given these changes and the fact that the Council's allocation policy and choice based letting scheme BFC my choice has been operating for two years it is right to review the Council's policies. The Department of Communities and Local Government is currently consulting on statutory guidance on the allocation of accommodation in the light of the Localism Act changes.</p>																				
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	Households on the My Choice Housing Register applying for social rented housing.																				
8. a Racial equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	Y	N	We have no evidence to suggest there is a differential impact upon people from particular racial groups at this time.																		
8. b What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc.	<p>The following table summarises the ethnic profile of the housing register:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="909 954 2047 1126"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Band B</th> <th>Band C</th> <th>Band D</th> <th>Band E</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Minority ethnic households</td> <td>9.7%</td> <td>10.7%</td> <td>9%</td> <td>9.8%</td> <td>9.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>White British households</td> <td>90.3%</td> <td>89.3%</td> <td>91%</td> <td>90.2%</td> <td>90.2%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>9.8% of applicants on the My Choice housing register are from minority ethnic groups. These households are however evenly distributed across each of the register bands and should not therefore be disproportionately affected by the proposed policy changes.</p>				Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Total	Minority ethnic households	9.7%	10.7%	9%	9.8%	9.8%	White British households	90.3%	89.3%	91%	90.2%	90.2%
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9. a Gender equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	Y	N	We have no evidence to suggest there is a differential impact on applicants from a particular gender																		

<p>9. b What evidence do you have to support this?</p>	<p>60% of applicants on the housing register are female. However, where there is a joint application, the gender is taken from the primary applicant, therefore the data cannot be taken as an accurate reflection of the makeup of households on the register.</p> <p>The distribution of female applicants is similar across all bands and should therefore not be disproportionately affected by the proposed policy changes.</p> <p>Through the consultation that has been carried out, female applicants with children living in 2 bed properties were particularly supportive of the proposed policy change to allow movement between bands.</p>																																
<p>10. a Disability equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.</p>	Y	N	We have no evidence to suggest there is a differential impact on applicants with a disability.																														
<p>10. b What evidence do you have to support this?</p>	<p>The disability equalities strand is measured using a social model of disability as opposed to the medical model, ie, applicants are asked to define for themselves whether they consider they have a disability. 13% of applicants consider themselves to have some form of disability.</p> <p>Where an application has been awarded medical priority in support of a disability, this assessment would mean that the application would be in one of Bands D-B. The proposed policy changes should not impact disadvantageously on these applicants.</p>																																
<p>11. a Age equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.</p>	Y	N	We have no evidence to suggest there is a differential impact on people from particular age groups.																														
<p>11. b What evidence do you have to support this?</p>	<p>The following table summarises the age profile of applicants on the housing register:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="920 930 1653 1106"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Band A</th> <th>Band B</th> <th>Band C</th> <th>Band D</th> <th>Band E</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>16-24 yrs</td> <td>0</td> <td>5%</td> <td>29%</td> <td>53%</td> <td>19%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-44 yrs</td> <td>0</td> <td>8%</td> <td>34%</td> <td>30%</td> <td>27%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>45-59 yrs</td> <td>1</td> <td>8%</td> <td>17%</td> <td>24%</td> <td>50%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>60+ yrs</td> <td>0</td> <td>14%</td> <td>10%</td> <td>14%</td> <td>61%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>While 50% of applicants aged 45-59 years and 61% of applicants aged 60+ years are in Band E, applicants in this band have no prospect of rehousing because they are adequately housed and do not have a current housing need. These applicants will be offered housing advice and assistance in terms of their housing options. Officers will work with households to ensure any medical/health needs or social needs which may impact on their housing priority are reflected in the reporting of their housing circumstances.</p>				Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	16-24 yrs	0	5%	29%	53%	19%	25-44 yrs	0	8%	34%	30%	27%	45-59 yrs	1	8%	17%	24%	50%	60+ yrs	0	14%	10%	14%	61%
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<p>12. a Religion and belief equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If</p>	Y	N	We have no evidence to suggest there is a differential impact on people from particular religious or belief groups at this time.																														

the impact is neutral please give a reason.																					
12. b What evidence do you have to support this?	<p>The following table summarises the religion/belief profile of the housing register.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="907 375 1310 758"> <tr><td>Buddhist</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>Hindu</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>Christian</td><td>1711</td></tr> <tr><td>Jewish</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>Muslim</td><td>38</td></tr> <tr><td>None</td><td>1047</td></tr> <tr><td>Other</td><td>146</td></tr> <tr><td>Sikh</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>Do not want to answer</td><td>771</td></tr> </table> <p>These groups are distributed across all bands. Applicants in Band E are adequately housed and have no identified housing need. All applicants in Band E will be offered advice and assistance in terms of their housing options</p>			Buddhist	20	Hindu	10	Christian	1711	Jewish	13	Muslim	38	None	1047	Other	146	Sikh	6	Do not want to answer	771
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13. a Sexual orientation equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	Y	N	We have no evidence to suggest there is a differential impact on people on the basis of their sexual orientation.																		
13. b What evidence do you have to support this?	<p>The following table summarises the sexual orientation of applicants on the housing register.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="907 1069 1332 1340"> <tr><td>Sexual Orientation</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Bisexual</td><td>1%</td></tr> <tr><td>Gay</td><td>1%</td></tr> <tr><td>Heterosexual</td><td>70%</td></tr> <tr><td>Lesbian</td><td>1%</td></tr> <tr><td>Other</td><td>2%</td></tr> <tr><td>Do not want to answer</td><td>26%</td></tr> </table>			Sexual Orientation		Bisexual	1%	Gay	1%	Heterosexual	70%	Lesbian	1%	Other	2%	Do not want to answer	26%				
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	These applicants are distributed across all bands. None of the proposed policy changes should impact disproportionately on any specific sexual orientation.		
14. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carer's/ex-offenders) and on promoting good community relations.	<p>The proposed allocations policy changes do include a proposal to prioritise applicants who are working over applicants who are not working. It is proposed that the definition of working household is the same as the requirements for working tax credits, but with the addition of voluntary work as well as paid work.</p> <p>Employment will not outweigh housing need. Bid for properties will be prioritised on the basis of Band (housing need) first, followed by working.</p>		
15. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	<p>The proposed changes to the Allocations Policy are in response to new legislation introduced by the Localism Act.</p> <p>At present households who join the housing register and are placed in Band E on the basis of their current housing circumstances face no prospect of being rehoused because they are adequately housed. The removal of Band E has no adverse impact on these households because they would never attract sufficient priority for rehousing.</p>		
16. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	The Allocation Policy changes do include a proposal to reward households who are working when prioritising applicants for a nomination. Whether a household is working will however not over-ride housing need. The band (level of housing need) will continue to be the first criteria ordering the bidding shortlists		
17. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	N	
18. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	Extensive consultation has been carried out on the proposed allocations policy changes. The results of the consultation are set out in the Executive report.		
19. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	N	
20. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
21. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	Adult Social Care, Health and Housing		

22. Have any current actions to address issues for any of the groups or examples of good practice been identified as part of the screening?	
23. Chief Officers signature.	Signature: Simon Hendey Date: March 2012
24. Which PMR will this screening be reported in?	Adult Social Care, Health and Housing

When complete please send to abby.thomas@bracknell-forest.gov.uk for publication on the Council's website