

## Charnwood Borough Council

### Equality Impact Assessment 'Knowing the needs of your customers and employees'

#### Background

An Equality Impact Assessment is an improvement tool. It will assist you in ensuring that you have thought about the needs and impacts of your service/policy/function in relation to the protected characteristics. It enables a systematic approach to identifying and recording gaps and actions.

#### Legislation- Equality Duty

As a local authority that provides services to the public, Charnwood Borough Council has a legal responsibility to ensure that we can demonstrate having paid due regard to the need to:

- ✓ Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- ✓ Advance Equality of Opportunity
- ✓ Foster good relations

For the following protected characteristics:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and civil partnership
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Race
7. Religion and belief
8. Sex (Gender)
9. Sexual orientation

What is prohibited?

1. Direct Discrimination
2. Indirect Discrimination
3. Harassment
4. Victimisation
5. Discrimination by association
6. Discrimination by perception
7. Pregnancy and maternity discrimination
8. Discrimination arising from disability
9. Failing to make reasonable adjustments

**Note: Complete the action plan as you go through the questions**

**Step 1 – Introductory information**

Title of the policy	Buying Back Ex-Council Properties Sold Through Right-to-Buy
Name of lead officer and others undertaking this assessment	Beverly Wagstaffe
Date EIA started	October 2017
Date EIA completed	October 2017

**Step 2 – Overview of policy/function being assessed:**

Outline: What is the purpose of this policy? (Specify aims and objectives)
<p>This Equality Impact Assessment considers the impact of the Council buying back ex-council properties sold through Right-to-Buy.</p> <p>All properties (freehold and leasehold) sold under Right to Buy legislation since 18<sup>th</sup> January 2005 contain a covenant which requires any owner intending to sell their property within 10 years of purchase from the Council (Charnwood Borough Council) a requirement to offer the property back to the Council.</p> <p>The Council is not obliged to buy back properties that are offered in this way. The Council will consider each offer on an individual basis.</p> <p>The Council's decision whether to buy back a property or not will be determined by the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Capital funds available</li> <li>• Housing need and demand for the type of property being offered in the area where the property is located</li> <li>• The cost of any refurbishment work to bring the property up to the Decent Homes Standard</li> <li>• Whether the purchase represents value for money</li> </ul>
What specific group/s is the policy designed to affect/impact and what is the intended change or outcome for them?
The policy is not targeted at a specific group. The intended change of implementing this policy is to increase the supply of affordable housing for those households in housing needs.
Which groups have been consulted as part of the creation or review of the policy?
There has been no consultation. The policy is part of wider Government Policy and not specific to Charnwood.

**Step 3 – What we already know and where there are gaps**

List any existing information/data do you have/monitor about different diverse groups in relation to this policy? Such as in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation etc.
Data/information such as:

- Consultation
- Previous Equality Impact Assessments
- Demographic information
- Anecdotal and other evidence

As at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016, there were 2,029 households on the Council Housing Waiting list. As at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017, this figure had increased by 261 to 2,290 households.

There are currently (30<sup>th</sup> October 2017) 2,565 households on the Council Housing Waiting list in need of an affordable home to rent. This is an increase of 275 households in a 7-month period.

As at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017, the Council owned 5,642 properties. During 2016/17 the Council loss 60 homes through tenants exercising their Right-to-Buy.

During 2016/17 the Council let 406 general needs dwelling.

What does this information / data tell you about diverse groups? If you do not hold or have access to any data/information on diverse groups, what do you need to begin collating / monitoring? (Please list)

This information tells us that there is a high need for additional affordable homes to rent across the Borough. It does not tell us if there is a specific gap in need for a specific group.

All Council properties are let in accordance with the Council's Choice Based Lettings Allocation Policy. The decision to buy back ex-council properties, in accordance with this Policy, is based on an assessment of the property, not who is or will be accommodating the property.

#### Step 4 – Do we need to seek the views of others? If so, who?

In light of the answers you have given in Step 2, do you need to consult with specific groups to identify needs / issues? If not please explain why.

The Council does not need to consult with specific groups as the Policy is based on an assessment of the property, and it is the former tenant who offers the property back to the Council at the appropriate time, not the Council who determines which properties should be offered back to the Council.

#### Step 5 – Assessing the impact

In light of any data/consultation/information and your own knowledge and awareness, please identify whether the policy has a positive or negative impact on the individuals or community groups (including what barriers these individuals or groups may face) who identify with any 'protected characteristics' and provide an explanation for your decision (please refer to the general duties on the front page).

	Comments
<b>Age</b>	No impact/ neutral impact
<b>Disability</b> (Physical, visual, hearing, learning disabilities, mental health)	No impact/ neutral impact
<b>Gender Reassignment</b> (Transgender)	No impact/ neutral impact

<b>Race</b>	No impact/ neutral impact
<b>Religion or Belief (Includes no belief)</b>	No impact/ neutral impact
<b>Sex (Gender)</b>	No impact/ neutral impact
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	No impact/ neutral impact
<b>Other protected groups (Pregnancy &amp; maternity, marriage &amp; civil partnership)</b>	No impact/ neutral impact
<b>Other socially excluded groups (carers, low literacy, priority neighbourhoods, health inequalities, rural isolation, asylum seeker and refugee communities etc.)</b>	Potential positive impact, as there is a high need for social rented accommodation across the Borough.

Where there are potential barriers, negative impacts identified and/ or barriers or impacts are unknown, please outline how you propose to minimise all negative impact or discrimination.

Please note:

- a) If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately.
- b) Additionally, if you have identified adverse impact that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people.

No negative impacts have been identified.

Summarise your findings and give an overview as to whether the policy will meet Charnwood Borough Council's responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity (please refer to the general duties on the front page).

This Policy does not have a negative impact on any specific group as the decision to purchase is based on an assessment of the property not who is currently or will in the future occupy the property.

This Policy meets the Charnwood Borough Council's responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity.

#### **Step 6- Monitoring, evaluation and review**

Are there processes in place to review the findings of this Assessment and make appropriate changes? In particular, how will you monitor potential barriers and any positive/ negative impact?

The outcomes of this EIA will be monitored and reviewed alongside the Policy.

How will the recommendations of this assessment be built into wider planning and review processes? e.g. policy reviews, annual plans and use of performance management systems.

The Policy to Buy Back Ex-Council properties will be kept under review.

#### **Step 7- Action Plan**

**Please include any identified concerns/actions/issues in this action plan:**

The issues identified should inform your Service Plan and, if appropriate, your Consultation Plan

Reference	Action	Responsible	Target Date
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Number		Officer	

**Step 8- Who needs to know about the outcomes of this assessment and how will they be informed?**

	Who needs to know (Please tick)	How they will be informed (we have a legal duty to publish EIA's)
Employees		This EIA will be published on the CBC website.
Service users		
Partners and stakeholders		
Others		
To ensure ease of access, what other communication needs/concerns are there?		

**Step 9- Conclusion (to be completed and signed by the Service Head)**

Please delete as appropriate
I agree / disagree with this assessment / action plan
If <i>disagree</i> , state action/s required, reasons and details of who is to carry them out with timescales:
Signed (Service Head): Alison Simmons
Date: 02/11/2017

Please send completed & signed assessment to Suzanne Kinder for publishing.

