

# Equality Impact Assessment Form



<b>Section 1 - What is the policy or activity trying to achieve?</b>	
Describe the policy/strategy/procedure/function which is the subject of this impact assessment.	Report from the Housing Allocations Task and Finish Group (Resources Overview & Scrutiny)
Name and telephone number of officer completing assessment	Mark Mills, 0148 352 3078
Date completed	27 <sup>th</sup> May 2022
What outcomes are wanted from this policy/activity, what are you trying to achieve?	<p>To use the Council's stock of housing in the fairest and most efficient means possible to address the housing need within the borough. To this end, the Task and Finish Group is recommending that only housing related debts such as rent arrears and deposit scheme debts should be taken into account when considering eligibility for inclusion on the housing register and allocation of housing. Other debts such as council tax or housing benefit overpayments would be disregarded for this purpose.</p> <p>The Group felt that this would strike a better balance between ensuring debts are repaid to the Council and meeting housing need. It would also reduce the administrative burden on the Housing Options and Homechoice teams associated with conducting checks.</p>
Who is affected by this policy/activity?	Potential applicants to join the Council's housing register
Who are the main people involved in this activity?	Housing Needs team
Is the responsibility for the proposed policy/activity shared with another department, authority or organisation? If so, what responsibility and with whom is it shared?	No

<b>Section 2 - Information Gathering and Consulting Stakeholders</b>	
Do you have any monitoring data available on the number of people (from protected characteristic groups) who are using or are potentially impacted upon by your policy/activity?	<p>Applicants to join the Housing Register are asked to provide monitoring information which covers demographic characteristics. This includes protected characteristics such as sex, age and ethnicity. However, response rates to these questions vary.</p> <p>In addition, information on applicants' medical histories is collected as part of the banding process. Therefore, it is possible to compile reports on the number of applicants whose banding is affected by a medical condition. However, it should be noted that though there is an overlap, having a medical condition does not necessarily mean that one would be classed as having a disability for purposes of the Equality Act 2010, or vice versa.</p>

If monitoring has NOT been undertaken or information is not available, specify the arrangement you intend to make; if not please give a reason for your decision.	N/A
What research or consultation has been undertaken to understand the impacts of the strategy/policy/procedure/project/function?	The Task and Finish group consulted local voluntary groups with practical experience of assisting applicants to join the housing register.

### Section 3 – Assess the Impact on Protected Characteristic Groups

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Sex				
	Positive impact (it could benefit)	Neutral	Negative impact (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
Women	X			The recommendations would remove a potential barrier to the Housing Register.
Men	X			The recommendations would remove a potential barrier to the Housing Register.
Gender Reassignment				
	Positive impact (it could benefit)	Neutral	Negative impact (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
Transgendered Men/Women	X			The recommendations would remove a potential barrier to the Housing Register.
Race - The categories used in the Race section are those used in the 2001 census. Consideration should be given to the needs of specific communities within the broad categories.				
	Positive impact (it could benefit)	Neutral	Negative impact (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
Asian	X			The estimate from a poll conducted by ICM unlimited of a nationally representative sample of UK adults is that 16% of those who consider themselves to be from a minority ethnic background report being behind on council tax payments vs 6% from a white background. <a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt and Money Publications/Unavoidable debt.pdf">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt and Money Publications/Unavoidable debt.pdf</a>
Black	X			The estimate from a poll conducted by ICM unlimited of a nationally representative sample of UK adults is that 16% of those who consider themselves to be from a Black or minority

				ethnic background report being behind on council tax payments vs 6% from a white background. <a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt%20and%20Money%20Publications/Unavoidable%20debt.pdf">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt and Money Publications/Unavoidable debt.pdf</a>
Mixed race	X			The estimate from a poll conducted by ICM unlimited of a nationally representative sample of UK adults is that 16% of those who consider themselves to be from a Black or minority ethnic background report being behind on council tax payments vs 6% from a white background. <a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt%20and%20Money%20Publications/Unavoidable%20debt.pdf">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt and Money Publications/Unavoidable debt.pdf</a>
White	X			The recommendations would remove a potential barrier to the Housing Register.
Chinese	X			The estimate from a poll conducted by ICM unlimited of a nationally representative sample of UK adults is that 16% of those who consider themselves to be from a minority ethnic background report being behind on council tax payments vs 6% from a white background. <a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt%20and%20Money%20Publications/Unavoidable%20debt.pdf">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt and Money Publications/Unavoidable debt.pdf</a>
Gypsy, Roma, Traveller	X			The estimate from a poll conducted by ICM unlimited of a nationally representative sample of UK adults is that 16% of those who consider themselves to be from a minority ethnic background report being behind on council tax payments vs 6% from a white background. <a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt%20and%20Money%20Publications/Unavoidable%20debt.pdf">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt and Money Publications/Unavoidable debt.pdf</a>
Other racial or ethnic groups - specify	X			The estimate from a poll conducted by ICM unlimited of a nationally representative sample of UK adults is that 16% of those who consider themselves to be from a minority ethnic background report being behind on council tax payments vs 6% from a white background. <a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt%20and%20Money%20Publications/Unavoidable%20debt.pdf">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt and Money Publications/Unavoidable debt.pdf</a>
<b>Disability</b> - Long term health impairment could include, mental health problems, asthma, heart conditions, chronic fatigue etc.				
	<b>Positive impact</b> (it could benefit)	Neutral	<b>Negative impact</b> (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments

Physical	X			The estimate from a poll conducted by ICM unlimited of a nationally representative sample of UK adults is that 9% of those who consider themselves to have a disability report being behind on council tax payments vs 7% who do not. <a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt%20and%20Money%20Publications/Unavoidable%20debt.pdf">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt and Money Publications/Unavoidable debt.pdf</a>
Sensory	X			The estimate from a poll conducted by ICM unlimited of a nationally representative sample of UK adults is that 9% of those who consider themselves to have a disability report being behind on council tax payments vs 7% who do not. <a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt%20and%20Money%20Publications/Unavoidable%20debt.pdf">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt and Money Publications/Unavoidable debt.pdf</a>
Learning	X			The estimate from a poll conducted by ICM unlimited of a nationally representative sample of UK adults is that 9% of those who consider themselves to have a disability report being behind on council tax payments vs 7% who do not. <a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt%20and%20Money%20Publications/Unavoidable%20debt.pdf">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt and Money Publications/Unavoidable debt.pdf</a>
Long Term Health Impairment	X			The estimate from a poll conducted by ICM unlimited of a nationally representative sample of UK adults is that 9% of those who consider themselves to have a disability report being behind on council tax payments vs 7% who do not. <a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt%20and%20Money%20Publications/Unavoidable%20debt.pdf">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt and Money Publications/Unavoidable debt.pdf</a>
Mental health	X			Nationally, the proportion of people with mental health problems who have missed a council tax payment is about 3 times higher than amongst those who do not have mental health problems. <a href="https://www.moneyandmentalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Council-tax-policy-note.pdf">https://www.moneyandmentalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Council-tax-policy-note.pdf</a>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>				
Heterosexuals, lesbians, gay men and bisexuals	<b>Positive impact</b> (it could benefit)	Neutral	<b>Negative impact</b> (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
	X			The recommendations would remove a potential barrier to the Housing Register.
<b>Age</b>				
	<b>Positive impact</b> (it could benefit)	Neutral	<b>Negative impact</b> (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments

Older people	X			The recommendations would remove a potential barrier to the Housing Register.
Younger people and children	X			The estimate from a poll conducted by ICM unlimited of a nationally representative sample of UK adults is that 14% of 18–29-year-olds report being behind on their council tax payments vs 2% of those 50+. <a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt and Money Publications/Unavoidable debt.pdf">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Global/CitizensAdvice/Debt and Money Publications/Unavoidable debt.pdf</a>
<b>Religion or belief</b> – Faith or belief groups cover a wide range of groupings, the most common of which are Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, and Sikhs. Consider faith or belief categories individually and collectively when considering positive and negative impacts.				
Faith or belief groups	<b>Positive impact</b> (it could benefit)	Neutral	<b>Negative impact</b> (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
	X			The recommendations would remove a potential barrier to the Housing Register.
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>				
Pregnancy and Maternity	<b>Positive impact</b> (it could benefit)	Neutral	<b>Negative impact</b> (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
	X			17% of parents with children aged 5 or under report being behind on their council tax bills according to a poll by ICM unlimited of a nationally representative sample of UK adults
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>				
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<b>Positive impact</b> (it could benefit)	Neutral	<b>Negative impact</b> (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
	X			The recommendations would remove a potential barrier to the Housing Register.
<b>Other groups</b>				
	<b>Positive impact</b> (it could benefit)	Neutral	Negative impact (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
Carers	X			The recommendations would remove a potential barrier to the Housing Register.
Socio-economic disadvantage	X			Difficulties paying council tax are inherently linked to financial hardship
If you have indicated there is a potential negative impact on any group, are these intentional and of a high impact?				
<b>Intended</b> – i.e. can be justified in terms of legislation e.g. concessionary fares for over 60s				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>High Impact?</b> – i.e. it is or may be discriminatory against some groups				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				

If there are no potential negatives impacts on any groups go to section 6

### Section 4 - Consider Alternatives or Changes

Change - Explain how policy/activity has changed/needs to change	Reasons for the Change

### Section 5 - Action Planning

Issue	Action required	Officer	Timescale	Resource implications	Comment

Section 6 Sign off	Name	Date
Name of Assessor:		
Signed off by:		
Name of HOS or Director		

### Further guidance

If you need more advice and guidance, you may find the following sources useful:

- [Government Equality Office: Equality Act guidance](#)
- [Equality and Human Rights Commission; Public Sector Duty](#)
- [Equality and Human Rights Commission: Protected Characteristics](#)