

Colchester Borough Council

Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

Section 1: screening stage

Name of policy, service or strategy to be assessed:

- The Annual Housing Investment Programme (HIP)

1. What is the main purpose of the policy, service or strategy?

- Each year as part of the process to agree the Council's revenue and capital estimates the Cabinet is required to agree the allocations to the Housing Stock Investment Programme. This allows for capital programmes of work to be undertaken to maintain, improve and refurbish the housing stock and its environment.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

- The annual programme is linked to the Asset Management Strategy (AMS) and reviewed annually in the light of available resources and used as a framework for procuring housing related capital contracts.
- Individual contracts will be procured as detailed in the Procurement Section of the AMS and each contract will contain its own equality impact assessment to recognise the particular type of work being delivered.
- Typical contracts will cover those listed but will depend upon the maintenance requirements of the stock
 - Capital Investment Programme (Maintaining the Decent Homes standard)
 - Aids and Adaptations
 - Emergency failure under statutory obligation
 - Emergency failure covering structural work
 - Roofing programmes
 - Environmental works
 - Works covering asbestos control, legionella control and fire safety
 - Sheltered accommodation improvements
 - New build programmes

3. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected?

- Tenants and Leaseholders within the Council Housing Stock
- Occupiers and owners of adjoining buildings, users of the highway and pedestrians

4. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy, service or strategy?

- The housing stock represents Colchester's highest value asset and its repair and maintenance its largest liability. The property owned is worth many millions of pounds, either as capital assets or as revenue generating assets therefore planning for its sustainable future is important and reflects the Council's objective to work toward providing safe, secure, decent and affordable homes for all.

5. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below:

- Colchester Borough Homes
- Contractors delivering the programmes
- Planning Authority
- CBC Finance and Legal Services
- Portfolio Holder and Members
- Building related consultancies
- Essex County Council and Environmental Control

6. How does the policy, service or strategy help to further or facilitate to our 'general duty'¹ to:

(a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation?

(b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'² and those who do not?³

(c) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not?⁴

¹ These 3 points summarise the 'general duty' as it applies to public sector organisations in the Equality Act 2010

² The Equality Act's 'protected characteristics' include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

³ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

⁴ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

Please complete the following in order to identify how the policy, practice or strategy furthers the aim of the 'general duty':

'Protected characteristic' group		How does it help to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'?	How does it help to 'advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'?	How does it help to 'foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'?
Age	Older people (60+)	The programme facilitates arrangements to deliver resources more effectively to meet the older customer's specialist needs. This could help reduce the potential for discrimination, harassment and victimisation by supporting adaptations within their homes and refurbishing sheltered accommodation.	By providing housing to meet people's needs they have the opportunity to make choices over the property they live in and where they live, promoting equality of access to housing, community facilities and employment.	By giving people with protected characteristics choices over where they live they have the opportunity to participate in the activities of the broader community fostering good relations.
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	The programme includes maintaining buildings used for homelessness which could particularly benefit younger people and children.	As above	As above
Disability	Physical	The programme facilitates arrangements to deliver resources more effectively to meet customer's specialist needs. This could help reduce the potential for discrimination, harassment and victimisation by supporting adaptations within their homes.	As above	As above
	Sensory	As above	As above	As above
	Learning	As above	As above	As above
	Mental health issues	As above	As above	As above
	Other – <i>please specify</i>			

'Protected characteristic' group		How does it help to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'?	How does it help to 'advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'?	How does it help to 'foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'?
Ethnicity ⁵	White	This is addressed through the Allocations Policy	As above	As above
	Black	As above	As above	As above
	Chinese	As above	As above	As above
	Mixed Ethnic Origin	As above	As above	As above
	Gypsies/ Travellers	Not part of housing HRA asset	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Other – <i>please state</i>			
Language	English not first language	There will be an individual contract requirement to be able to communicate and assess customer satisfaction with the work being delivered for those who don't have English as a first language.	As above	As above
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	Not applicable	As above	As above
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none) ⁶	As above	As above	As above
Sex	Men	As above	As above	As above
	Women	As above	As above	As above
	Transsexual / gender reassignment	As above	As above	As above
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian, gay and bisexual	As above	As above	As above

⁵ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian (Asian or Asian British), African, Caribbean, Other Black (Black or Black British), White and Black African, White and Asian, White and Black Caribbean (Mixed), British, Irish, Other White (White), Chinese, Other (Other Ethnic Group).

⁶ For example, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh or no religious belief.

'Protected characteristic' group		How does it help to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'?	How does it help to 'advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'?	How does it help to 'foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'?
Marriage and Civil Partnership ⁷	People who are single, married or in a civil partnership	As above	As above	As above

7. Are there any concerns that the policy, service or strategy could have a differential impact in terms of equality?

- No

Please use the table below to indicate how the policy, service or strategy could have a positive or negative effect on any of the following equality groups (known under the Equality Act as 'protected characteristics'). Include reference to any consultation, data or information that you have used in making this assessment about positive or negative effects.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could disadvantage the group
Age	Older people (60+)	√	The group will benefit from the investment programme and ongoing improvements to housing stock and urban environment, providing housing that meets their needs.		
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	√	As above		
Disability	Physical	√	As above		
	Sensory	√	As above		
	Learning	√	As above		
	Mental health issues	√	As above		
	Other – <i>please specify</i>				

⁷ Our legal duty in respect of 'marriage or civil partnership' extends only to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could disadvantage the group
Ethnicity	White	√	As above		
	Black	√	As above		
	Chinese	√	As above		
	Mixed Ethnic Origin	√	As above		
	Gypsies/ Travellers		Not part of the housing HRA asset		
	Other – <i>please state</i>				
Language	English not first language	√	As above		
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks	√	As above		
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	√	As above		
Sex	Men	√	As above		
	Women	√	As above		
	Transsexual / gender reassignment	√	As above		
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian, gay and bisexual	√	As above		
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are single, married or in a civil partnership	√	As above		

8. Could the policy, service or strategy unlawfully discriminate⁸ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly?

- No

⁸ The Council has a general duty to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their 'protected characteristic' whether on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity; religion or belief; sex (gender), sexual orientation, or marriage and civil partnership. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would nevertheless disadvantage people on the grounds of their 'protected characteristic' unless the practice can be objectively justified by a legitimate aim.

9. If you have identified any negative impacts above, have you been able to minimise or remove them, and if so, how?

- Contractors will be required to be sensitive to the individual needs to our customer base and in the event that there is a disruption to main services they will be required to provide replacement or alternative facilities which may extend to on site units while work proceeds. This type of circumstance is never likely to be overnight.

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment – screening stage

10. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
No likely negative impacts have been identified and this has been justified with reference to consultation, data or information. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
Likely negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
Likely negative impacts were identified but have not been minimised or removed. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

11. Name and job title of person completing this form:

Lynn Thomas, Housing Asset Manager

12. Date of completion:

- 23rd December 2015

13. Date for update or review of this screening:

- Annually with HIP report to Cabinet