

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Section 1: Description

Department	Growth and Regeneration		Lead officer responsible for assessment		Gerard Buckley
Service	Strategic Housing		Other members of team undertaking assessment		Karen Carsberg Karen Whitehead Lynn Glendenning
Date	17 October 2017		Version		1.1
Type of document (mark as appropriate)	Strategy ✓	Plan	Function	Policy	Procedure
Is this a new/existing/revision of an existing document (mark as appropriate)	New ✓	Existing			
Title and subject of the impact assessment (include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate and how it fits in with the wider aims of the organisation)	Cheshire East Housing Strategy 2018-2023 [Draft for consultation] which is seeking to replace the previous Housing Strategy 2011-2016. The new draft Housing strategy sets out how the housing needs of the Borough will be met over the next five years by the Council, partners and stakeholders. The Housing Strategy is a key document for planning and the delivery of housing related services. It supports Strategic Housing and Development in achieving the desired outcomes of the Cheshire East Local Plan. In summary, the central aims and outcomes;				
Please attach a copy of the Strategy	- Stimulate the housing market - Challenge poor quality housing - Commission housing support for people with complex needs - Support the Medium Term Financial Growth Strategy - Housing offer to support jobs-led growth - Adult Services - Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust - Cheshire East residents - Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership - Improve the housing offer for an ageing population - Prevent homelessness - Promote Affordable Warmth - Support regeneration to improve quality of our place - Promote independent living - Housing Developers - Housing Options - Neighbourhood Planning - Public Health - Registered Housing providers				
Who are the main stakeholders? (e.g. general public, employees, Councillors, partners, specific audiences)					

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	- Children Services - Communities and Partnerships - Community and Voluntary Sector - Elected Members	- Service Users - Spatial Planning - Strategic Housing
Section 2: Initial screening		
Who is affected? (This may or may not include the stakeholders listed above)	- Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership - Cheshire East Residents - Children Services - Communities and Partnerships - Community and Voluntary Sector - Housing Developers	- Housing Options - Neighbourhood Planning - Public Health - Registered Housing providers - Spatial Planning
Who is intended to benefit and how?	All residents of Cheshire East through the provision of new affordable housing; improved links with private rented sector; prevention of homelessness and provision of housing options.	
Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups?	No	
Does it include making decisions based on individual characteristics, needs or circumstances?	Yes	
Are relations between different groups or communities likely to be affected? (e.g. will it favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others?)	No	
Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality? Is there a history of unequal outcomes (do you have enough evidence to prove otherwise)?	No	

Is there an actual or potential negative impact on these specific characteristics? (Please tick)																	
Age	Y	N✓	Marriage & civil partnership	Y	N✓	Religion & belief	Y	N✓	Carers	Y	N✓						
Disability	Y	N✓	Pregnancy & maternity	Y	N✓	Sex	Y	N✓	Socio-economic status	Y	N✓						
Gender reassignment	Y	N✓	Race	Y	N✓	Sexual orientation	Y	N✓									
What evidence do you have to support your findings? (quantitative and qualitative) Please provide additional information that you wish to include as appendices to this document, i.e., graphs, tables, charts																	
The Housing Strategy has a positive impact on age. Good quality housing is recognised as a key factor in promoting health and wellbeing and supporting independent living, and moving towards more integrated services to prevent ill health and reduce dependence on health and social care services is high on the national and local agenda. The number of older people is growing. Between 2010 and 2030, As the Local Plan states - this is set within the demographic context that Cheshire East will have a 65% increase in the population aged 65 and above, and a 134% increase in the population aged 85 and above over the plan period. With an ageing population there are likely to be increasing numbers of people with complex health problems and disabilities, who may have different housing and service needs to other age groups. Younger people as individuals or households are finding it increasingly difficult to get on the housing ladder, having to remain longer with parents or in more expensive private rented accommodation. Nationally, as a whole has seen a significant increase in the proportion of younger households in the private rented sector over the last ten years. In 2004/05, 24% of those aged 25-34 lived in the private rented sector; by 2014-15 this had increased to 46%. [English Housing Survey 2014-15]. Nationally, around 1 in 5 adults aged 31 to 44, who don't already have children, are delaying starting a family because of concerns about housing [Council for Mortgage Lenders October 2016]. Therefore, this Strategy highlights the need to make provision for younger people to access affordable housing through the offer of homeownership products.																	
Age										<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Consultation/involvement carried out</td> <td>Yes</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Consultation/involvement carried out	Yes	No		✓	
Consultation/involvement carried out	Yes	No															
	✓																

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	The Strategy goes further in the provision of support for our 18 to 35 year olds who may be subject to the challenges of welfare reform – in that, we will continue working with our partners in the provision of accommodation for 18 -35 years olds who are on low incomes and / or in receipt of benefits, positively mitigating against possible effects on housing demand and homelessness. In terms of care leavers, the Strategy outlines clearly our commitment in working with our partners, to ensure housing; information and advice should include housing options, local authorities should promote housing that facilitates choice and control, and multi-agency working should include work with housing partners. We will secure opportunities for residents to make informed choices about their housing, to access and maintain good quality homes and sustain independent living by connecting them to services across housing, welfare rights, health, social care, education, training and employment, focusing on those who need the most support to achieve independent lives.	
Disability	The Housing Strategy has a positive impact on disability. Almost one in five people in the UK have a disability, with mobility being the most common impairment. At the same time there is a nationally recognised shortage of housing for people with disabilities. For example, around 2% of the UK population are wheelchair users, yet 84% of homes in England do not allow someone using a wheelchair to get to and through the front door without difficulty. Around 15% of households containing at least one wheelchair user feel that their current home is not suitable for their needs, and needs adaptations. Disabled people – with a range of disabilities – tend to have lower incomes, and are twice as likely as non-disabled people to be social housing tenants. Around 16% of the national population has a common mental health disorder, and professionals nationally and locally are reporting an increase in the number of service users with mental health issues. For example: increasing numbers of rough sleepers with mental health problems, many of whom also have alcohol and substance misuse issues; and an increase in numbers of older people with dementia. There is a growing body of evidence demonstrating that an accessible, adapted home can make a significant contribution to improving older and disabled people's quality of life. Because low income often coincides with disability, many disabled people rely on help to adapt their home. Handyperson services play a key role in keeping people safe and early intervention, with around 1,500 people each year helped to prevent falls and the subsequent hospital admissions, as well facilitating getting people home from hospital.	✓

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	As the Strategy highlights, major adaptations are also a critical part support provided by the home improvement agency guides people through the practical elements of designing adaptations, applying for grants and appointing contractors. Over the past 3 years the home improvement agency has facilitated £4.3million of Disabled Facilities Grants for 839 disabled people. Ensuring residents can access adaptations services is important; collaborative working with occupational therapists in Adult Services is vital, but we also need to make sure that people who have a substantial physical disability, struggle to access parts of their home but don't need care, can access the disabled facilities grants, and that vulnerable people who can afford the adaptations but need a helping hand with organising the repairs can access support from the home improvement agency.		
Gender reassignment	No differential impact identified		✓
Marriage & civil partnership	No differential impact identified		✓
Pregnancy & maternity	The Housing Strategy has a positive impact on pregnancy and maternity. Through directly supporting the delivery of the Homelessness Strategy 2018-2021, the Housing Strategy key aim is to facilitate the provision of increased housing options. We work directly to reduce the use of temporary Bed and Breakfast accommodation, especially for single pregnant females and family / single parents. The 3 years has seen a progressive reduction in the use of Bed and Breakfast type accommodation and number of nights within our temporary homeless hostel [Cheshire East Homelessness Strategy 2018-2021]. As such, the Strategy's aims and objective is to continue this proactive approach to such use, as it has a detrimental affect on individual's health, wellbeing and quality of life.		✓
Race	The Housing Strategy has a positive impact on race. Through the base of evidence supporting the Housing Strategy, for example the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan, provides an understanding of migration patterns in terms of age, access to employment, and, in particular, affordability levels. Quality of life and environment affects everyone and whilst this is a key issue for businesses / employers, the availability of low cost, decent quality housing with access to work in an attractive job market provides a benefit across different cultures/ethnic groups and other equality groups. Therefore, the Strategy proactively works towards the provision of affordable housing and access to measure to support quality of life in support of the Black and Minority Ethnic community.		✓

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	Moreover, as the Strategy outlines, we will continue to maintain and review the Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment which identified no need for permanent pitches in the Borough. Continuing to work with partners to provide housing and support for refugees under the government's Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme. Furthermore, it is clear that there is a need to continue to improve how we capture and monitor client data, to ensure that we have a good sense of the profile of our customers and how this might be changing over time, and whether particular equalities groups might be being disadvantaged.		
Religion & belief	No differential impact identified		✓
Sex	No differential impact identified		✓
Sexual orientation	No differential impact identified.		✓
Carers	The Housing Strategy has a positive impact on carers. Through our direct partnership working with Adults, Children and Family Services and other stakeholders, the Strategy highlights the opportunities to ensure that carers have the ability to be supported through		✓
Socio-economic status	People on low incomes are finding it increasingly difficult to find housing in Cheshire East. Residents on a low income or in receipt of benefits may face a number of challenges through the national programme of welfare Reform. For example, those in receipt of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates, which are used to calculate the amount of housing benefit which can be paid to claimants in private rented housing – are considerably lower than rents, with the tenant having to make up the shortfall. As such, there is a challenge that the situation is likely to continue to worsen as rent levels continue to rise and working age benefits are frozen for four years. Further welfare reforms are compounding the issue, including: social housing tenants receiving lower benefits if they are deemed to have spare bedroom; reducing the overall amount of certain benefits that a household can receive (the 'benefit cap'); limiting Local Housing Allowance for single people under 35 to the shared accommodation rate; limiting housing benefit for tenants in social housing to Local Housing Allowance Rates; the rolling out of Universal Credit as a single benefit payment made direct to tenants.		✓
Proceed to full impact assessment? (Please tick)		Yes	No ✓
		Date	

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Lead officer signoff:		Date	22 November 2017
Head of service signoff:		Date	22 November 2017

