



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Partial Assessment Form

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Policy, practice, function or project assessed | Affordable Warmth Strategy |
| Lead Officer | Anita L Goddard |
| Team | Property Services |
| Start date of assessment | 4th February 2011 |
| Completion of assessment | 7th February 2011 |

Please use this form to record your findings in relation to the assessment of an existing policy, function, service or practice.

A. POLICY, PRACTICE, FUNCTION OR PROJECT TO BE ASSESSED

A1. Please describe what are the main aims, objectives, purpose and intended outcomes of the policy or function?

The Affordable Warmth Strategy aims to ensure that the Council maximises the effectiveness of their investment in properties to ensure expenditure is targeted to increase the thermal efficiency of homes. By increasing the thermal efficiency tenants will experience greater thermal comfort. The strategy also aims to ensure that the Council meets its targets to reduce CO2 emissions in the built environment.

The strategy, whilst targeting resources effectively, aims to take account of whole communities and their needs. As a rural authority many of our villages are isolated and have no access to gas heating. Research shows that living in a rural setting can be significantly more expensive than living in an urban setting. Fuel poverty and affordable warmth are an existing and growing issue in our homes therefore the strategy aims to ensure we tackle these issues as early and as effectively as possible.

A2. Is this policy or function associated with any other Council policy or priority?

Is this policy or function associated with any other Council policy or priority?

It is associated with meeting the Council's response repairs and voids obligations, the Resident Involvement Strategy, the Aids and Adaptations Policy, the ASB Family Intervention Project, the Asset Management Strategy, Fuel Poverty initiatives, FIT and RHI projects, the Voids policy, the 5 year planned maintenance programme, and the Governments Decent Homes Standard.

The function meets 4 of the 5 Council aims in that it is accessible to all, committed to ensuring the SC continues to be a safe and healthy place for families to live, committed to making SC a place residents can feel proud to live in and committed to providing a voice for rural life.

A3. Who are the intended beneficiaries/stakeholders of the policy or function? How many people are affected and from what sections of the community?

The beneficiaries are existing and future tenants. It potentially affects all 5800 tenants and leaseholders of SCDC which equates to approximately 9,000 adults. This can affect large parts of the community as the Councils stock is varied and dispersed through 94 villages within the district.

From a tenants survey in December 2009 there was a 37% response rate; 41% of our tenants class themselves as disabled and 66% are over 60 years of age. This would indicate that a high proportion is older and disabled. 97.7% of respondents classed themselves, as white British and 1.6% were either White Irish or White Other. All other BME accounted for 0.1% of respondents. As we have a significant number of tenants who are older and disabled the dependence on state benefits is high and with the rising cost of fuel the incidence of fuel poverty is high and will continue to rise with the cost of fuel.

The strategy aims to impact on whole communities by working in partnership with Parish Councils and voluntary agencies engaged with the most vulnerable groups of residents in communities.

A4. Is the policy/function corporate and far-reaching?

The policy is one that is required by the Council to ensure that its properties are effectively managed, and investment maximises the thermal efficiency of properties and reduces CO2 emissions in the built environment. This strategy is integral to the meeting of the Council's 10/10 obligations.

A5. Are you expecting to make any significant change to the policy or service in the near future? If so, please give details.

No however there are anticipated changes to the HRA that could result in the Council taking on a very sizeable debt that could amount to £243,000,000. A robust business plan will be required to pay this back which will impact on the expenditure available to not only manage the stock but meet the expenditure associated with affordable warmth, fuel poverty and condensation etc

A6. Is this a new or existing policy or function?

New

B. EVIDENCE/ DATA and CONSULTATION

It is important to consider all information that is available in determining whether the policy or function could have a differential impact. Please attach examples of monitoring information, research or consultation reports.

B1. What monitoring or other information do you have about relevant target groups, which will show the impact of the policy or function?

We monitor the performance against targets but all tenants are treated the same. The initial target group will be those tenants living in the hardest to treat properties i.e. those off gas grid with solid wall construction and older vulnerable tenants living in bungalows with old electric heating

We send out satisfaction surveys for all areas of work which show very high levels of satisfaction overall.

We collect ethnic monitoring at letting and send it to Core. The information for this year has as yet to be published but is expected to continue to show a low BME population and our tenants as more likely to be older, disabled and potentially economically inactive

B2. Have you compared the data you have with the equality profile of the local population? What does it show?

The equality profile of our recent survey of tenants matches that of the overall district profile.

No however the latest annual report (2009) details BME Households Access to Services and reports that the Council can demonstrate that it is achieving access to key housing services for all ethnic groups in the local community in line with its statutory obligations and the Council's commitment included in its aims and objectives to deliver services that are accessible to our community.

B3. Have you identified any improvements or other changes that could be made from monitoring the data?

No

B4. Have you consulted or involved external stakeholders about the policy or function? If so, what were their views?

We have consulted tenants and looked at good practice documents to draw the strategy together. In particular tenants were consulted on the 5 year planned maintenance programme and endorsed an emphasis on insulation and heating.

B5. Have you undertaken any consultation with staff to assess their perception of any impacts of the policy or function? If so, what has been learnt from them?

The views of staff are that there are no cases of racial or other discrimination that come to their attention. The area where there needs to be special attention is where we have older and vulnerable tenants experiencing fuel poverty in the hardest to treat properties in remote village locations.

All 1-2-1s with staff address equality and diversity issues arising.

B6. Please provide information about any other consultation, research, or involvement undertaken in relation to this impact assessment.

None

C1. IMPACT OF THE POLICY OR FUNCTION

Assess the potential impact on each of the following protected characteristics. The impact could be negative, positive or neutral. If you assess a negative impact for any of the groups then you will need to assess whether that impact is low, medium or high. Refer to the evidence you use.

| DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT | Nature of Impact (Positive, Neutral, Adverse) | Extent of Impact (Low, Medium, High) |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| AGE: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different age groups. | Positive | |
| Older people living in bungalows with oil or electric heating will benefit from PV FIT where appropriate and insulation measures (NB; This is within the constraints of a limited budget) | | |
| DISABILITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on disabled people. | Positive | |
| Disabled people living in houses and bungalows with oil or electric heating will benefit from PV FIT where appropriate, RHI heating initiatives and insulation measures. (NB; This is within the constraints of a limited budget) | | |

| | | |
|---|----------------|--|
| GENDER REASSIGNMENT: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people that have changed gender identity. | Neutral | |
| The Affordable Warmth Strategy will benefit those who have changed gender identity but is not specific to a change of gender identity. | | |
| MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people who are married or in a civil partnership. | Neutral | |
| As above | | |
| PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on pregnant or maternal mothers and those women who wish to breastfeed. | Neutral | |
| As above | | |
| RACE: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different ethnic groups, including national origins, colour and nationality. | Neutral | |
| As above | | |
| RELIGION/BELIEF: Identify the potential impact the policy or function on different religious/faith groups. | Neutral | |
| As above | | |
| SEX: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on men and women. | Neutral | |
| As above | | |
| SEXUAL ORIENTATION: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on lesbian, gay men, bisexual or heterosexual people. | Neutral | |
| As above | | |

| OTHER CHARACTERISTIC SPECIFIC TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE – RURALITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on people who are rurally isolated. | Positive | |
|--|-----------------|--|
| The Council recognises the specific challenges facing our tenants who live in rural communities. The cost of living in rural communities is higher than in towns therefore the incidence of fuel poverty in off-grid villages is likely to be higher. The Affordable Warm Strategy is aimed specifically at tackling insulation and fuel poverty and enabling the Council to position itself to take advantage of new initiatives that will ultimately benefit tenants. | | |

PLEASE NOTE: Following completion of the section above, if the nature of the impact is adverse then you may need to proceed to a full equality impact assessment.

| |
|--|
| <p>C2. Could you minimise or remove any adverse or potential impact that is high, medium or low significance, in advance of a full impact assessment? Explain how. N/A .</p> |
| <p>C3. Does the policy or function actively promote equal opportunities and good community relations? Or could changes be made so that it does so? It does promote good community relations as all contractors are closely monitored for equality of service delivery and satisfaction.</p> |
| <p>C4. Please provide any further information, qualitative or quantitative that does not fit into the questions but you feel has a likely impact on this assessment.</p> <p>This EIA links into the EIAs for Response Repairs, Aids and Adaptations, The Garage Strategy, the Asset Management Strategy, the ASB strategy and policy and Gypsies and Travellers Communities Strategy.</p> |

| D. CONCLUSIONS | | | |
|---|------|-------------------------------------|---|
| D1. Was there sufficient data to complete the partial assessment? | Yes? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | If “NO”, what arrangements are in place for evidence gathering and continuing with the assessment? |
| | No? | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| D2. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have an adverse impact (medium or high impact) on one or more target group? | Yes? | <input type="checkbox"/> | If “YES”, will you proceed to a full assessment? If so, what arrangements are in place to carry out the full assessment? |
| | No? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |

| | | | |
|--|------|-------------------------------------|---|
| D3. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have a neutral or positive impact on equalities? | Yes? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | If “YES”, have you included proposals in the Action Plan to further improve the impact of the policy or function on equalities? Yes |
| | No? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you plan to review the service or policy again in future to assess whether there has been any change? If so, when? Yes Has the Equalities Steering Group and the Consultative Forum reviewed the assessment? If so what were their comments? No |

D4. Do you have any other conclusions/outcomes from the partial assessment?

The policy/procedure is customer focussed in meeting needs and delivering a service to tenants. This is a wide area of work and links into all aspects of housing work including lettings, resident involvement, leaseholders, repairs, voids, fuel poverty, aids and adaptations, and Gypsies and Travellers.

Affordable Warmth initiatives will involve a significant number of contracts that we are required to ensure operate to the standards expected in terms of service delivery and compliance with Councils Equality and Diversity policy.

ACTION PLAN for enhancing existing practice

| Recommendation/ issue to be addressed | Planned Milestone | Planned completion of milestone (date) | Officer Responsible | Progress |
|--|--------------------------|---|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Review when HRA reform is finalised | November 2011 | March 2012 | AG | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

RESOURCES

Does the above action plan require any additional resources?

No however if there is an income stream diverted to this work there may be a need for a tenant liaison project officer to co-ordinate it and ensure understanding of tenants and the wider community

ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING

Please give your plans for monitoring the achievement of the above actions.

The strategy is monitored by the Asset Manager through fortnightly 1-2-1 meetings with the Housing Operational Services Manager where Equality and Diversity are addressed

SIGN OFF: The officers below confirm that this partial assessment has been completed in accordance with the Council's guidance

Signature of Lead Officer

Anita L Goddard

Date:

Signature of Corporate Manager or Chief Officer:

Date:

Please retain the original form on your service area and return a copy of the completed form to the Equality & Diversity Officer.