

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Section One – Screening

Name of Policy:

Cumbria Sub Regional Choice Based Allocations Policy

Name and telephone number of officer completing assessment:

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1. What is the main aim or purpose of the Policy?

To establish a Cumbria wide choice based lettings policy for the allocation of social housing which incorporates a common housing register and common assessment criteria.

2. List the main activities or objectives of the Policy:

To improve the means by which local people in Cumbria gain access to social rented housing by providing a modern and easy to understand allocation system which is transparent, cost effective, and accountable.

To improve tenants' satisfaction with their properties and communities by increasing their, involvement, control and choice in the process and so help to sustain communities.

To make best use of the housing stock in the County by making applicants fully aware of all the housing options available.

To improve the mobility of people in the County, enabling them to move across imposed Local Authority boundaries within the agreed limits set by the local Authorities.

To ensure that the system is fully useable by all individuals and provide support to applicants where required.

To improve information on housing demand through the single register which will feed into organisations housing strategies and development plans and more accurately monitor demand.

3. Who will be the main beneficiaries of the policy and in what way?

Existing and new customers of the social housing providers involved in the scheme. This means the general public who require social rented housing.

4. Use the table below to indicate:

- a) Where you think that the policy could have a negative impact on any of the equality target groups i.e. it could disadvantage them.
- b) Where you think that the policy could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relations within equality target groups.

Note that you do not have to complete all the boxes. Only those where there is a disproportionate or greater impact either way.

		Positive impact – it could benefit	Negative impact – it could disadvantage	Reason	Level of Impact
Gender	Women				
	Men				
	Trans-gendered people				
Race	Asian or Asian British people		(i) New migrants affected by UK residency requirements. (ii) Accessibility of scheme	(i) The eligibility criteria (ii) English not the first language	HIGH
	Black or black British people		As above	As above	HIGH
	People of mixed race		As above	As above	HIGH
	Irish people				
	White people				

	Chinese people		(i) New migrants affected by UK residency requirements. (ii) Accessibility of scheme	(i) The eligibility criteria (ii) English not the first language	HIGH
	Gypsies/travellers		(i) Ability to access information about the scheme (ii) Suitability of property advertised	(i) Level of literacy and awareness of public services (ii) Different life style required.	MEDIUM
	Other minority ethnic communities not listed above		(i) New Eastern European migrants affected by UK residency requirements. (ii) Accessibility of scheme	(i) The eligibility criteria (ii) English not the first language	HIGH
Rural Parishes	Older People (50+)		Ability to access the scheme through the internet. Access to offices and scheme information.	Rural areas without internet access. Remote areas and limited public transport.	MEDIUM
Disability	Physical		Those who are housebound.	Requirement of a more active role in choosing property.	HIGH

	Sensory		Those with visual impairments	System is web and paper based.	MEDIUM
	Learning		Ability to access the scheme	Requirement of a more active role in choosing property.	MEDIUM
	Mental Health		Ability to access the scheme	Requirement of a more active role in choosing property.	MEDIUM
Sexual Orientation	Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals				
Age	Older people (50 +)		Ability to access the scheme through the internet	Difficulty in using/understanding web based system	HIGH
	Younger people (17-25), and children	Increased use of modern means of communication - internet, text.			MEDIUM
Religion or Belief	Faith groups				
Equal opportunities and /or improved relations		Improved feedback to communities about those being offered property.			HIGH

Notes:

Faith groups cover a wide range of groupings, the most common of which are Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Sikhs, Hindus. Consider faith categories individually and collectively when considering positive and negative impacts.

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 such as Bangladeshi people and to the needs of other communities such as Turkish/Turkish Cypriot, Greek/Greek Cypriot, Italian, Lithuanian and Polish that do not appear as separate categories in the census.

5. If you have indicated there is a negative impact on any group, is that impact:

Legal YES

(not discriminatory under anti-discriminatory legislation? If uncertain see guidance notes or contact Corporate Improvement Team or Legal Services)

Intended? NO

If the negative impact is possibly discriminatory and not intended **and/or** of high impact you must complete section two of this form. If not, complete the rest of section one below and consider if completing section two would be helpful in making a thorough assessment.

6. a) Could you minimise or remove any negative impact that is of low significance and if so how?

For those customers who do not have access to the internet, the scheme will also use a paper based system.

b) Could you improve the strategy/policy/project's positive impact and if so how?

Campaigns to promote the use of the web based system. Identification of training sessions on using computers. Increasing access to computers/internet – giving people access to computers/internet in public offices.

You may wish to use the action sheet at the end of Section Two.

- 7. If there is no evidence that the strategy, policy or project promotes equality, equal opportunities or improved relations – could it be adapted so that it does? How?**

- 8. Do you have data available which monitors the impact of the policy on minority groups? If not, please explain how you intend to continue monitoring the impact of this strategy/policy/project:**

No data currently available, however once the policy is in operation, the impact of the policy on all the diversity groups will be monitored. In the first year this will be on a 6 monthly basis and then yearly. The scheme will be subject to a review 6 months after its implementation.

Section Two – Full Assessment

Name of policy/project:

Cumbria Sub Regional Choice Based Allocations Policy

Date:

Part A

1. Looking back at section one of the EIA, in what areas are there concerns that the function, procedure, strategy, policy or project could have a negative impact?

Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faith	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Summarise the likely negative impacts.

Difficulty accessing the scheme for those: with no access to the internet; limited ability to use the internet; whose first language is not English; who have limited literacy; who are housebound and are less able to take an active role in 'bidding' for property.

3. a) What previous or planned consultation on this topic/policy area/project has taken place/will take place with groups/individuals from equality target groups?

Consultation meetings and ongoing contact with AWAZ to consider black and minority ethnic communities. Three stakeholder events in October that considered the accessibility of the project, with representation from age concern, action for blind, disability groups and the statutory agencies working with young people. Stakeholder event in November with input from the rural groups and disability groups. Further 3 events planned in April with stakeholders. Future meetings planned with those groups not specifically represented in meetings. This would be specifically to consult with transgender people, lesbian, gay man and bisexuals.

b) If there has already been consultation what does it indicate about negative impact of this function/procedure/strategy/policy/project?

Equality target groups	Summary of consultation carried out or planned
Women	Stakeholder events raised no negative impact for this group – further consultation planned.
Transgender people	Further consultation events planned as well as a specific meeting to consult with this group.
Black and minority ethnic communities	Consultation with AWAZ highlighted impact of scheme where English not the first language and/or migrants subject to residency requirements.
Disabled people	Stakeholder events highlighted issues for those who are housebound. Raised need to ensure disabled people informed and given access to adapted properties. Concerns for those with learning difficulties understanding and accessing the scheme.
Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals	Further consultation events planned as well as a specific meeting to consult with this group.
Older people	Stakeholder events raised difficulties of web based scheme and how older people would access property adverts.
Young people/children	Stakeholder events raised no negative impact for this group – further consultation planned.
Faith groups	Further consultation events planned but no specific issues raised.

4. What consultation has taken place or is planned with Council staff – including staff that have, or will have, direct experience of implementing the function/procedure/strategy/policy/working on the project?

Staff have been kept fully aware of the development of the new Policy/CBL Scheme through their own organisations and the project newsletter. They will receive full training on the scheme nearer the date of implementation.

5. Check that research /studies/reports concerning the equality target groups and the likely impact have been used to plan the project and guide it or indicate what research you intend to carry out.

Reference has been made to the Housing Corporation's Good Practice Note 12 to develop and plan the scheme; its accessibility in relation to both the ICT web based system and the paper based systems. Note has also been taken of the guidance given in to liaise and work with other agencies in developing the scheme and planning the continued and regular contacts with all the stake holders. A contact list of all stakeholders in the County has been compiled and regular contact is made and will continue to be maintained during the implementation of the Project and the following 2 years to ensure stakeholders are provided with regular updates and feedback.

Equality target groups	Research
Women	Let Go
Transgender people	OutReach Cumbria
Black and minority ethnic communities	AWAZ (Cumbria) regular contact for identifying any barrier or issues to monitor the impact of CBL during first 2 years
Disabled people	Regular contact with the Project Manager – Disabled Facilities Grant. Stakeholder events with those representing different groups.
Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals	OutREACH Cumbria regular contact for identifying any barrier or issues to monitor the impact of CBL during first 2 years
Older people	Age Concern – consultation events
Young people/children	Cumbria Youth Alliance
Faith groups	Cumbria Interfaith Forum

6. If there are gaps in your previous or planned consultation and research, are there any experts/relevant groups that you already know of that can be contacted to get further views or evidence on the issues?

YES ✓ (*Please list them and explain how you will obtain their views*)

See above

Part B

Complete this section when consultation and research has been carried out

6. a) As a result of this assessment and available evidence collected, including consultation, state whether there will need to be any changes made/planned to the function/procedure/strategy/policy/project.

See Action Plan at the end of the Form.

b) As a result of this assessment and available evidence is it important that the Project commissions specific research on this issue or carry out monitoring/ data collection? No

8. Will the changes planned ensure that negative impact is:
Legal (*not discriminatory under anti-discriminatory legislation*)? ✓

Intended?

Low impact? ✓

Unknown at this time.

9. a) Have you set up a monitoring/evaluation/ review process to check the successful implementation of the procedure/strategy/policy/project?

Yes – there will be a range of reports set up within the ICT system to regularly monitor the outcomes of the policy.

b) How will this monitoring/evaluation further assess the impact on the equality target groups and ensure the policy/procedure/project is non-discriminatory?

Six month review of the scheme to assess if any changes to the project/policy are required and an update of the action plan if necessary.

Monitoring will be used to assess the impact of the policy on the identified minority groups to confirm that they are as successful as others in gaining access to housing.

10. Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Please list below any recommendations for action that you plan to take as a result of this impact assessment.

Issue	Action required (Lead Officer and Timescale)	Resource implications (Comments)
Monitor and review access and different methods of contact by groups identified as having potential difficulties accessing the scheme	Review of Scheme 6 months after implementation by the strategic project board (September 2011 – Dec 2011)	Unknown
Monitor and review the success in gaining housing of those groups identified as having potential difficulties using the scheme	Review of Scheme 6 months after implementation by the strategic project board (September 2011 – December 2011)	Unknown
Promotion of the web based service.	Campaign to promote the web based system before implementation – Project Manager (Jan 2011)	Literature and advertising costs
Use of test alerts to rural areas, those with hearing impairments	Consult with IT provider as to possibility of this service – Project Manager (Jan 2011)	Costs to be identified
Promote links with BME groups and other specialist services/agencies to display property adverts	Establish list of agencies able to distribute literature about the scheme and who will accept emailed newsletters for display in offices/community centres. Project Manager (November 2010)	None Identified
Investigate use of sign	Initial investigation by	Costs to be identified

language inserts in the web based service	Project Manager with ICT provider – continued by Project Board after implementation. (Summer 2011)	

