

Equality Impact Assessment

Title of report or proposal:
Amendments to Private Sector Housing Policy

Department:	Place
Section:	Economic Development and Regeneration
Date:	October 2017

Public sector bodies need to be able to evidence that they have given due regard to the impact and potential impact on all people with 'protected characteristics' in shaping policy, in delivering services, and in relation to their own employees.

Under the Equality Act 2010, the council has a general duty to have **due regard** to the need to:

1. **eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
2. **advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
3. **foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

By completing the following questions the three parts of the equality duty will be consciously considered as part of the decision-making process.

Details of the outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment must also be included in the main body of the report.

1. Describe in summary the aims, objectives and purpose of the proposal, including desired outcomes.

Approve proposals for changes to the Private Sector Housing Policy. The policy sets out the range of financial assistance that Bolton Council will make available, together with the eligibility criteria and conditions that will be applied to each form of assistance. It also makes policy amendments to other statutory powers, in particular the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) under the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended). The policy is flexible dependent on the financial assistance available and if further amendments to the policy can be accommodated.

Central Government made a commitment to increasing the DFG budget in recognition of the preventative role the provision of DFG's can have in supporting health and social care integration and keeping people out of hospital. To strengthen this relationship and encourage integration, the budget was moved to the Department of Health and now forms part of the Better Care Fund. This means that the way the money is spent is no longer solely the Council's decision but shared with the Clinical Commissioning Group. Both organisations have delegated this duty to Bolton's Joint Commissioning Partnership Board using a Section 75 agreement with the council and CCG both holding one vote each.

The policy amendments take account of the greatly increased national DFG budget and subsequent increase in Bolton. The additional funding we have in Bolton is an opportunity to be innovative, test out new approaches and apply the principles of DFG to other living environments, whilst continuing the successful delivery of our core adaptations service. An additional amendment in relation to tackling empty properties is included.

2. Is this a new policy / function / service or review of existing one?

Amendment to existing policy.

3. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the proposal?

Residents of Bolton
Executive Members
Department of People's services
Bolton at Home/ Care and Repair service
Contractors

In summary, what are the anticipated (positive or negative) impacts of the proposal?

- 4.** The amendments are anticipated to improve the service for people living with disabilities by removing time consuming processes and making Disabled Facilities Grants more accessible and responsive to customer needs.

5. What, if any, cumulative impact could the proposal have?

This is an impact that appears when you consider services or activities together. A change or activity in one area may create an impact somewhere else.

This could potentially increase demand, however budgets are available to support this. It should improve quality of life for disabled people and enable them to live independently for longer in their

own homes, reducing the pressure and costs on residential care, nursing homes and hospital admissions. This is because DFG's have been proven to reduce falls and costs to the wider health and social care system.

6. With regard to the stakeholders identified above and the diversity groups set out below:

Consider:

- How to avoid, reduce or minimise negative impact (if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately).
- How to **advance equality of opportunity**. This means considering the need to:
 - Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people with protected characteristics due to having that characteristic.
 - Take steps to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics that are different from people who do not have that characteristic
 - Encourage protected groups to participate in public life and in any other activity where participation is disproportionately low
- How to **foster good relations**. This means considering the need to:
 - Tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

	Is there any potential for (positive or negative) differential impact? Could this lead to adverse impact and if so what?	Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group, or for any other reason? Please state why	Please detail what actions you will take to remedy any identified adverse impact i.e. actions to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations
Race (this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality, and caste, and includes refugees and migrants; and gypsies and travellers)	No	N/A	N/A
Religion or belief (this includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief. The Act also covers lack of	No	N/A	N/A

religion or belief)			
Disability (a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)	Please see other comments.	Please see other comments.	Please see other comments.
Sex / Gender	No	N/A	N/A
Gender reassignment / Gender identity (a person who's deeply felt and individual experience of gender may not correspond to the sex assigned to them at birth, they may or may not propose to, start or complete a process to change their gender. A person does not need to be under medical supervision to be protected)	No	N/A	N/A
Age (people of all ages)	No	N/A	N/A
Sexual orientation - people who are lesbian, gay and bisexual.	No	N/A	N/A

Marriage and civil partnership (Only in relation to due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination)	No	N/A	N/A
Caring status (including pregnancy & maternity)	No	N/A	N/A
Socio-economic	Please see other comments.	Please see other comments.	Please see other comments.
Other comments or issues.	The amendments are anticipated to improve the service for people living with disabilities by removing time consuming processes and making Disabled Facilities Grants more accessible and responsive to customer needs. This includes the removal of the meanstest and increase of 'top up' grants to ensure that those people who may be on the borderline of being able to afford an adaptation but it would leave them in a position with little income afterwards are able to access the grant quickly and in a timely manner. These have been designed to reduce barriers and promote equality.		
Please provide a list of the evidence used to inform this EIA, such as the results of consultation or other engagement, service take-up, service monitoring, surveys, stakeholder comments and complaints where appropriate.	<i>Service monitoring</i> <i>Stakeholder comments</i> <i>Service take up</i> <i>Budget monitoring</i>		

This EIA form and report has been checked and countersigned by the Departmental Equalities Officer before proceeding to Executive Member(s)

Please confirm the outcome of this EIA:

No major impact identified, therefore no major changes required – proceed	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>
Adjustments to remove barriers / promote equality (mitigate impact) have been identified – proceed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Positive impact for one or more groups justified on the grounds of promoting equality - proceed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continue despite having identified potential for adverse impact/missed opportunities for promoting equality – this requires a strong justification	<input type="checkbox"/>
The EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination - stop and rethink	<input type="checkbox"/>

Report Officer

Name: Michelle Horrocks

Date: 4/1017

Departmental Equalities Lead Officer

Name: _____

Date: _____