

Equality Impact Assessment

Service or Policy Area:	Housing Strategy
Officer(s) completing the assessment:	Neil Hawke
Date:	23 rd February 2021
Name of service, strategy, policy, project or function being assessed:	Housing Strategy 2021- 2026

1.	<p>What are the aims, objectives, outcomes, purpose of the service, strategy, policy, project or function that you are assessing?</p>	<p>The Housing Strategy ‘Better Homes Better Lives’ is a key strategic document that sets out how the Council plans to meet all types of housing need over a 5 year period.</p> <p>Whilst it is interested in the delivery of all tenures of housing accommodation, it is primarily focused on meeting the needs of people who may otherwise struggle to access market housing and those who may be vulnerable. It includes commitments to ensuring that housing standards requirements are met, and to supporting people who may have specific mobility needs.</p> <p>The overarching aims of the Housing Strategy have been developed through data analysis, research and consultation, in order to ensure that they meet identifiable needs in the local area.</p> <p>The key strategic priorities identified are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting Balanced and Sustainable Communities - Ensuring that homes support the health and wellbeing of the area - Homes that support the health and wellbeing of our residents - Making the best use and improving the quality of existing housing <p>The fourth priority is subject to a specific strategy on</p>
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		<p>homelessness and which is also being considered as part of this EIA.</p> <p>The approach ensures the Council meets the standalone legal requirement to publish a homelessness strategy (as set out in the Homelessness Act 2002). Perhaps more importantly, however, it also ensures that tackling homelessness and rough sleeping receive a commensurate level of priority in keeping with the Council's corporate aims, and sets out a clear roadmap through which to lead local partnerships to prevent and relieve homelessness with a shared sense of responsibility across agencies and sectors.</p>
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<p>2.</p>	<p>Who implements or delivers the service, strategy, policy, project or function?</p> <p>State if this is delivered by more than one service or team, including any external partners.</p>	<p>It is not a legal requirement of the Council to have a Housing Strategy however it is best practice and considered important to setting out our plans for the local area.</p> <p>The Housing Strategy has been produced by the Council but there are a wide range of stakeholders that are critical to the successful delivery of the priorities.</p> <p>These include developers, Registered Providers, supported housing providers and a range of other statutory and voluntary sector partners.</p> <p>Within the Council, the Housing Strategy will primarily be delivered by a cross section of the organisation, led by the Head of Housing, Revenues and Benefits. Specialists from the following areas will take responsibility for delivery of specific actions within the delivery plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Management • JLP • Housing • Assets • Place <p>Devon Home Choice and other partners complete their own EIA's in respect of their activities.</p>
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3.	<p>Who will be affected by the service, strategy, policy, project or function?</p>	<p>This Strategy will affect all residents of South Hams and West Devon as well as people looking to relocate to the area.</p> <p>The identified priorities and detailed delivery plans seek to ensure appropriate local housing provision for all groups, regardless of background or type, and include some specific actions to ensure anyone who may otherwise be disadvantaged are being actively considered and supported locally. This includes (but it not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Those on low incomes or in receipt of benefits - Those at risk of becoming homeless - Those with protected characteristics <p>It is considered that the Housing Strategy will have positive impacts for the above groups and the wider community.</p>
4.	<p>What are the likely positive impacts for the protected groups (see above)?</p> <p>Are any particular groups more affected and why?</p>	<p>The Housing Strategy focuses on ensuring access to homes for everyone in our community be that Housing Association, Private Rentals, shared ownership or full ownership. As a result of the strategy, positive impacts for protected groups include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions to support all age groups, and with particular actions to support both younger and older people who may have particular needs or who may be vulnerable as a result of their age. • Actions to ensure affordable housing provision is maximised to assist those of working age and who are identifiably likely to struggle most to sustain themselves in the local housing market without support. • Actions to encourage the development of properties to a higher standard that will meet the needs of people with a range of disabilities, and as people grow and age.

- Actions to ensure that people with mobility needs can access support including adaptations to enable them to remain in their homes.
- Actions to assist people who may be affected by a breakdown in their relationship with their partner, family or friends, and including support for couples to secure homes.
- Actions to ensure suitable provision for couples (married or otherwise), households with dependent children and those who may be pregnant.
- Specific actions to address identifiable priorities and/or gaps in provision, for example, to support single females to prevent or relieve female rough sleeping in the borough and/or to ensure the right provision is in place to assist those who may be fleeing the effects of domestic abuse.
- Actions to ensure there is adequate temporary accommodation provision and capacity to provide support for people, including where they may be affected by other forms of violence, abuse or harassment.
- The evidence base that underpins the strategy has reviewed demographic data and compared this with the operational delivery of services, and ensured that the forward plan contained in the strategy will continue to achieve the right balance of support and assistance including for those from BME backgrounds.
- Generic actions to improve service delivery across a range of deliverables, that seek to raise the bar for all those who require help and support with housing or a related support need. This will have a positive impact on all groups.

The Housing Strategy has been designed to meet all

		types of need and support all communities in South Hams and West Devon. It is anticipated it will have a positive impact for all protected groups both directly and indirectly.
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5.	<p>What are the likely negative impacts for the protected groups (see above)?</p> <p>Are any particular groups affected more and why?</p>	<p>The strategies aim to improve the situation for people who are on low incomes or who are vulnerable, whilst not detracting from those who are able to source their own accommodation and meet their own needs.</p> <p>The way in which the Council prioritises people for housing has been considered in the interests of both ensuring that all target groups are represented and supported, whilst also actively seeking to contribute to mixed and sustainable communities.</p> <p>In the main, the EIA has found that there are no indications that the strategy will have negative impacts for any protected groups. Failure to deliver the strategy may however have negative impacts on protected groups and this will be monitored carefully through the delivery plan.</p> <p>The Strategy is designed to support social inclusion and to help all residents to thrive.</p>
6.	<p>What consultation and engagement has taken place (or is planned) with the affected groups and other interested parties?</p>	<p>Wide consultation has been undertaken with stakeholders, including partner agencies, service users, elected members and staff. The response rate was positive compared to other Councils or a similar size.</p>

7.	What plans do you have in place, or are developing, to mitigate the likely negative impacts, i.e. how will you reduce the impact on the protected groups?	<p>The strategy is designed to mitigate identifiable negative impacts.</p> <p>Ongoing service user engagement will seek views and regular forums for stakeholders will ensure any negative impacts are actively monitored and mitigated.</p> <p>Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out on specific projects and service changes delivered as part of the strategy to ensure that we fully understand and mitigate any negative impacts.</p>
8.	Please summarise or provide links to the information, data, research used in this assessment	<p>Huge amounts of data were used to inform the strategy, the data is contained within the strategy itself.</p>

What course of action does this EQIA suggest that you take? (tick one of the following options)	
Outcome 1: No major change required The EQIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.	X
Outcome 2: Adjust the policy to remove barriers identified by the EQIA or better promote equality. Are you satisfied that the policy adjustments will remove the barriers identified?	
Outcome 3: Continue the policy despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality identified. You should ensure that the EQIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with the policy. You should consider whether there are sufficient plans to reduce negative impact and/or plans to monitor the actual impact	
Outcome 4: Stop and rethink the policy when the EQIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination	

Summary of your proposals – copy and paste into any report for Cabinet, Council or General Purposes Committee

What are the key impacts – positive and negative?

What course of action are you advising as a result of this EQIA?

Are there any particular groups affected more than others?

The EQIA has identified that The strategies will impact positively on significant numbers of individuals in housing need by increasing the supply of affordable homes in the borough, preventing and relieving homelessness and rough sleeping, and creating sustainable and diverse communities.

The EQIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.

Head of Service sign off (name):

Neil Hawke

Date:

03th March 2021

Comments or any action required:

No further action however EIA's will be required for specific projects and service changes undertaken as a result of delivering the strategy.