

Equality Analysis for a Policy, Project or Report

What is the name of your policy, project, or report? Options for introducing further controls on the quality of Houses in Multiple Occupation: Additional or Selective Licensing Regimes	Month/Year August 2020
Name and job title of lead officer: Nat Slade Group Head of Technical Services	
<p>Briefly describe the aims of your policy, project, or report.</p> <p>At the meeting of Full Council on 25 February 2020 a motion was received from the Liberal Democrat Group in accordance with Council procedure 14.1 and 14.2 which stated: -</p> <p>“The Council is asked to support a request for officers to explore what options might exist for introducing further controls on the definition, number and quality of homes in Multiple Occupation and prepare appropriate reports for the relevant decision body of the Council</p> <p>The report provides information and looks at the options to introduce an additional licensing scheme for houses in multiple occupation or a selective licensing scheme for the private rented sector as a means of addressing the quality of houses in multiple occupation. The advantages and disadvantages of these schemes are explored within the report and recommendations are made in relation to the most appropriate course of action.</p>	

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination, both in the workplace and in wider society. It covers 9 specific groups of people who share 1 or more of these protected characteristics; age; disability; gender; gender reassignment; marriage & civil partnership; pregnancy & maternity; race; religion or belief; and sexual orientation.

As a local authority Arun District Council (and any other organisation that is carrying out a public function on our behalf) is further bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty. This means that we have to consider **all** individuals in their day-to-day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to our own employees.

The Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it – this means removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics and encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it – this involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Having due regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making. This means that consideration of equality issues must influence the decisions reached by public bodies – such as in how they act as employers; how they develop, evaluate and review policy; how they design, deliver and evaluate services, and how they commission and procure from others.

The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Duty involves consciously thinking about the three aims as part of the process of decision-making. Doing this will entail understanding the potential effects of the organisation’s activities on different people. Keeping a simple record of how decisions were reached will help public bodies show how they considered the Duty. Producing an Equality Impact Assessment after a decision has been reached will not achieve compliance with the Equality Duty.

Analysis

Consider what it is that you are trying to achieve and write a brief equality analysis in the box below. You should mention each of the nine protected groups, plus any others (e.g. families, people on low incomes, people in remote areas, etc) who may be affected. The following questions should help shape your thought process and subsequent decision making.

- Who will benefit most from this? Will anyone be treated more favourably as a result?
- Is there any evidence to suggest that your action or policy could have an adverse impact on some groups of people and specifically those with a protected characteristic? Does it present barriers or problems for any groups or communities?
- Is there any data, research or other evidence available to help or support your decisions?
- Have you considered any existing examples of good practice.
- How do you intend to deal with any adverse impact, or lessen it?
- Who else will you need to be working with to do this e.g. partners, contractors etc and what is their approach? How will this help?

The potential introduction of additional HMO licensing or selective licensing regimes is determined by the type of property and its condition but would take account of all the specific groups age; disability; gender; gender reassignment; marriage & civil partnership; pregnancy & maternity; race; religion or belief; and sexual orientation, whether they are the tenants of such properties, landlords or neighbouring residents.

If a decision is taken to introduce one of these licensing schemes, meaningful consultation is required as part of this process with those likely to be affected and also includes those who live, work or operate a business in adjoining local authority areas where they will be affected. Therefore there would be an opportunity to seek views and address any comments that may arise in regard to equalities or discrimination.