

HRA Equality Impact Assessment

Carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will help the County Council to meet its Public Sector Equality Duties (Equality Act 2010).

The duties which need to be considered when making decisions are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Failure to assess the equality impact may increase the risk of making an unfair decision which could potentially be discriminatory. It also prevents us from identifying opportunities to promote equality and therefore leaves the County Council open to potential legal challenge.

Using this EIA template will help to ensure that a decision is made in a fair way, based on evidence. It provides a clear and structured method to assess the potential impact on protected groups.

<p>Title of policy or proposal</p>	<p>HRA Budget and MTFP report for 2024-25 (assessment of overall impacts of the package of proposals that have been put forward as part of the budget report for 2024-25).</p>
<p>Briefly describe the aims of the policy change, decision or proposal, the likely outcomes and the rationale for it</p>	<p>The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) has a statutory duty to set a budget and maintain positive reserves and balances. The Budget sets out the plans for the medium term along with a 30-year business plan.</p> <p>Key proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To approve an increase Council housing rents and service charges by CPI 6.7% plus 1% from April 2025. • To approve a £41.434m Capital Investment Programme. • To approve a hardship fund of £0.350m • To maintain a balanced HRA Budget for 30 years • To maintain Council Housing to the Decent

	Homes standard.
<p>Consider the potential impact on any member of staff or member of the public with the following protected characteristics:</p> <p>Age, Disability, Gender identity/Gender reassignment, Race, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual orientation, Women who are pregnant or have recently had a baby.</p> <p>Also, for issues affecting staff, consider employees who are married or in a civil partnership.</p>	
<p>What information is already held or have you obtained through consultation or engagement activity?</p>	<p>Age: The budget implications do not affect any age group over another.</p> <p>57% of tenants are aged over 50.</p> <p>21% of tenants are aged over 70.</p> <p>A distinctive feature of Northumberland is that it has an above average proportion of older people in its population, and the projection is for a higher than average increase in this proportion over the coming decade. Included in the HRA Affordable Housing Programme we have specific aims to build dementia friendly bungalows identified for older tenants.</p> <p>Disability: Within the HRA budget, we allocated a budget to cover adaptations to Council properties to enable practical living solutions for anyone with a disability.</p> <p>Gender identity/Gender reassignment: We have limited information regarding Gender identity/Gender reassignment in Council Tenants.</p> <p>Race: The budget implications do not affect any group over another</p> <p>Within the Capital Programme we are bringing 13 additional properties into the HRA specifically for the Afghan refugees with grant support from the Local Authority Housing Fund.</p> <p>Religion or belief: We have limited information</p>

	<p>regarding religion or belief.</p> <p>Sex: The budget implications do not affect any group over another</p> <p>56% of tenants are female</p> <p>41.4% of tenants are male</p> <p>2 tenants have indicated they are non-binary</p> <p>1 tenant has indicated they are transgender</p> <p>Sexual orientation: We have limited information about differences in overall Council Tenants by sexual orientation.</p> <p>Women who are pregnant or recently had a baby:</p> <p>The Council regularly publishes an analysis of its equality information. The most recent report is available on the Equality in Northumberland page of the Council’s website.</p>
<p>After considering the information, which protected groups may potentially be affected?</p>	<p>Potentially affected:</p> <p>Age</p> <p>Disability</p> <p>Gender identity/Gender reassignment</p> <p>Race</p> <p>Religion or belief</p> <p>Sex</p> <p>Sexual orientation</p> <p>Not potentially affected:</p> <p>The HRA Budget adversely does not affect any protected group over another.</p>
<p>Using the information you have, give details of any potential positive and negative impacts on protected groups likely to be affected by the policy change, decision or proposal</p>	<p>Age: No issues have currently been identified to people with different religions or beliefs might be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by this budget</p> <p>Disability: No issues have currently been identified to people with different religions or beliefs might be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by this budget</p> <p>Gender identity/Gender reassignment: No issues have currently been identified to people with different</p>

	<p>gender identities or who have transitioned or are transitioning would be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by this budget, though the question will be considered during further development of further budgets. The Council is continuing to work to promote awareness and provide support to people with different gender identities or who have changed from the gender they were assigned at birth.</p> <p>Race: No significant differential impact on specific national or ethnic minorities protected by the Equality Act 2010 has been identified in preparing the budget. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will need to consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts.</p> <p>Religion or belief: No issues have currently been identified to people with different religions or beliefs might be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by this budget</p> <p>Sexual orientation:</p> <p>The budget proposals planned for 2024-25 currently appear unlikely to have a differential impact. Where necessary, further assessment of the impact on people with different sexual orientations will be linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals.</p> <p>Women who are pregnant or recently had a baby:</p> <p>The risk that pregnant women or those with children under 26 weeks could be disproportionately disadvantaged will need to be considered where relevant in carrying out detailed EIAs required to support the implementation of specific budget proposals.</p> <p>No significant risk has been identified that the budget proposals will affect public attitudes towards pregnant women or those with children under 26 weeks.</p>
<p>Give details of any Human Rights implications and actions that may be needed to</p>	<p>Human rights issues have been considered in EIAs of specific budget proposals, and no unacceptable implications have been identified. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific</p>

safeguard Human Rights.	budget proposals will consider potential human rights issues.
Give details of any actions that can be taken to promote equality or to lessen any potential adverse impact on protected groups.	There are no adverse impacts.
What plans are there to monitor and review the actual impact of the policy change, decision or proposal on equality of opportunity?	Monitoring arrangements have been/will be considered in EIAs for specific budget proposals. The Council carries out an annual equality information analysis, which provides a regular overview of significant equalities issues across services, including any issues which emerge as a result of budget changes.
When will follow up review be done?	Follow up reviews will be done for individual EIAs for specific proposals as these are developed and implemented. Further reviews of specific proposals will be done if these are identified during the annual equality information analysis.
Based on a consideration of all the potential impacts, mark one of the following as an overall summary of the outcome of this assessment:	
x	The equality analysis has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.
	The equality analysis has identified risks or opportunities to promote better equality; the change, decision or proposal will be adjusted to avoid risks and ensure that opportunities are taken.
	The equality analysis has identified risks to equality which will not be eliminated, and/or opportunities to promote better equality which will not be taken. Acceptance of these is reasonable and proportionate, given the objectives of the change, decision or proposal, and its overall financial and policy context.

	The equality analysis shows that the change, decision or proposal would lead to actual or potential unlawful discrimination or would conflict with the Council's positive duties to an extent which is disproportionate to its objectives. It should not be adopted in its current form.
Explain how the judgement above was reached and summarise steps which will be taken to reduce any negative or to enhance any positive impacts on equality	The opportunity to increase the rent by CPI 6.7% plus 1% from April 2025 and to invest in Capital Schemes will not adversely affect our tenants or provide any issues around equality.
Name(s) and job title(s) of person (people involved in) carrying out this assessment	Susan Ogle
Authorising director or head of service	Rob Murfin
Date authorised	30 November 2023
The completed equality impact assessment must be attached to the report that will be considered by the decision maker or decision makers to enable them to give due regard to the impact of the policy, decision or proposal on protected groups.	