

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-2027

Equality Impact Assessment

1. Under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, when making decisions, Epping District Council must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, i.e. have due regard to:
 - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
 - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
 - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage/civil partnership
 - pregnancy/maternity
 - race
 - religion/belief
 - sexual orientation.
3. In addition to the above protected characteristics you should consider the cross-cutting elements of the proposed policy, namely the social, economic and environmental impact (including rurality) as part of this assessment. These cross-cutting elements are not a characteristic protected by law but are regarded as good practice to include.
4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document should be used as a tool to test and analyse the nature and impact of either what we do or are planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
5. Use the questions in this document to record your findings. This should include the nature and extent of the impact on those likely to be affected by the proposed policy or change.
6. Where this EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. All **Cabinet, Council, and Portfolio Holder reports must be accompanied by an EqIA**. An EqIA should also be completed/reviewed at key stages of projects.
8. To assist you in completing this report, please ensure you read the guidance notes in the Equality Analysis Toolkit and refer to the following Factsheets:
 - Factsheet 1: Equality Profile of the Epping Forest District
 - Factsheet 2: Sources of information about equality protected characteristics
 - Factsheet 3: Glossary of equality related terms
 - Factsheet 4: Common misunderstandings about the Equality Duty
 - Factsheet 5: Frequently asked questions
 - Factsheet 6: Reporting equality analysis to a committee or other decision-making body

Section 1: Identifying details
Your function, service area and team: Housing Strategy Manager Communities and Wellbeing
If you are submitting this EqlA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team:
Title of policy or decision: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-2027
Officer completing the EqlA: Janice Nuth Tel: 01992 564 000 Email: Jnuth@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
Date of completing the assessment: 22.02.2022

Section 2: Policy to be analyzed	
2.1	Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project? This is a review and update of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for the period 2022 -2027.
2.2	Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision): The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-2027 aims to achieve a whole systems partnership approach to preventing and relieving homelessness and to end rough sleeping in Epping Forest District in line with the Council's corporate objectives and the levelling up agenda. What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (i.e. decommissioning or commissioning a service)? The intended outcomes of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the number of people who become homeless or threatened with homelessness in the district • Increase the percentage of people to whom the council has a prevention duty that are prevented from becoming homeless • End any need to sleep rough sleeping in the district • Maximize the best use of all available accommodation and services in the context of both financial and human resources.
2.3	Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • service users • employees • the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities?

	<p>The strategy affects residents and other registered providers of housing, community groups, statutory agencies and organizations with an interest in social housing in the district.</p> <p>Will the policy or decision influence how organizations operate? The strategy will influence how organizations operate.</p>
2.4	<p>Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources? The strategy will involve substantial changes in resources by increasing access to grant funding and pooled resources through partnership working with other organizations.</p>
2.5	<p>Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes?</p> <p>The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is linked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epping Forest District Council Corporate Strategy 2018-2023 • The Social Recovery Map for Epping Forest District • The Allocations Scheme 2022-2027 (draft) • The Tenancy Policy 2022-2027 (draft) • The Overarching Housing Strategy 2022-2027 (draft) • Levelling Up Essex – An Essex White Paper 2022 • The Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2028 (which is due to be refreshed in 2022) • The Essex County Council Housing Strategy 2021-2025 • The Local Plan • The More than Bricks and Mortar Estate Improvement Program 2020 <p>The Scheme supports the following Corporate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People live longer, healthier and independent lives • Adults and children are supported in times of need • People and communities achieve their full potential • Delivering effective core services that people want • Improving the districts Housing offer

Section 3: Evidence/data about the user population and consultation¹

As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, e.g. service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

<p>3.1</p>	<p>What does the information tell you about those groups identified? The evidence to support the Council's understanding of the impact of the Strategy is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • profiling information that is routinely gathered for people who approach the Council for assistance to prevent or relieve homelessness • profiling information that is routinely gathered for people who apply to join the Housing Register and are allocated social housing in the district including mandatory statistical returns such as HClic • Government and industry publications about the characteristics of those households most in need of affordable housing, including those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and/ or to whom a reasonable preference must be given to join the waiting list • The Review of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping 2020/21(draft) • The Epping Forest Social Housing Annual Lettings Report 2020/21
<p>3.2</p>	<p>Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?</p> <p>Yes, open consultation was carried out in two stages with the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with lived experience of homelessness • Residents • The Tenant and Leaseholders Panel • Registered providers of social housing in the district • The clerks to the town councils and parish councils in the district • The Community Safety Partnership and other statutory services • Community groups including the Faith Covenant • Essex County Council and the district, borough and city councils in Essex • Third sector partners with an active interest in Housing in the district • All elected Members of the Council and Council staff <p>Stage 1 consultation sought views on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What help the Council should offer households who are threatened with homelessness to prevent them from becoming homeless • What help the Council should offer households who are homeless • What steps the Council should take to end rough sleeping <p>The report on the outcome of the Stage 1 consultation is available on the Council's website.</p> <p>This information was considered in conjunction with legislation, regulatory guidance on homelessness and rough sleeping, the Corporate strategy and management information including the Review of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping 2020/21, and the</p>

	<p>Social Housing Annual Report 2020/21 to produce a draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy along with a draft Allocations Scheme, and a draft Tenancy Policy for 2022-2027.</p> <p>Stage 2 consultation sought detailed consideration of five proposed priorities and themes for the Allocations and Rough Sleeping Strategy and invited contributors to work in partnership with the Council to formulate the delivery plan agree SMART targets and take collective responsibility for achieving the outcomes.</p> <p>The report of the outcome of the Stage 2 consultation is currently in draft form and will be published alongside this Equalities Impact Assessment subject to approval by Stronger Communities Select Committee and Cabinet in March 2022.</p>
3.3	<p>If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary:</p>

Section 4: Impact of policy or decision

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

The proposed priorities, themes and actions included in the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2022-2027 have been specifically designed to level up the effect of inequalities that are known to contribute to homelessness and the risk of homelessness and rough sleeping.

These inequalities which include people with one or more protected characteristic have been further highlighted during the pandemic. This strategy takes a whole systems approach to improve the health, wellbeing and resilience of residents across the district

Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
Age	<p>Positive – The impact of a whole systems approach to homelessness particularly with regards to building resilience for the individuals affected is in turn likely to have a positive impact on the wellbeing of their dependents such as children and/or elderly relatives.</p> <p>Early intervention and the increased focus on single homeless households and hidden homeless is likely to improve access to services for younger adults under 24.</p> <p>Reducing digital exclusion will have a positive impact on the over 65's who require access to services and are statistically more likely to require support to access on-line services than people of working age</p>	H
Disability	<p>Positive- more than half the households who approached the Council for help to prevent or relieve homelessness had one or more support needs, including mental health, physical disability, and or learning disability.</p> <p>Each of the five priorities incorporates housing related aspects of the National Disability Strategy, and staff development will include a greater understanding of neurodiversity and mental health.</p>	H
Gender	Positive – the commitment to pursuing Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Accreditation will have a positive impact	H

	victims and survivors of domestic abuse who are predominantly women and their dependents	
Gender reassignment	Neutral – There is limited data to evaluate the impact of the Scheme on people with this defined characteristic.	L
Marriage/civil partnership	Positive – The focus on early intervention improved health and wellbeing, substance misuse and debt management are likely to have a positive impact on relationships between couples who are married or in civil partnerships	L
Pregnancy/maternity	Positive – Improved access to services through the use of Frontline, and increasing the choice that is available to homeless women who are pregnant or with an infant child is likely to have a positive impact on their wellbeing during this vulnerable period.	M
Race	Positive – the partnership working with the Gypsy and Traveler Unit and members of the Health and Wellbeing Board will have a positive effect on those Gypsies and Travelers who are victims or survivors of domestic abuse, or homeless and do not approach the Housing Needs service.	M
Religion/belief	Positive – Lived experiences of people with a range of religious (or other) beliefs will have a positive impact on the Councils understanding and response to varied belief systems when seeking to prevent or resolve homelessness.	H
Sexual orientation	Neutral – There is limited data to evaluate the impact of the scheme on people with this defined characteristic.	L


Section 5: Conclusion			
		Tick Yes/No as appropriate	
5.1	Does the EqlA in Section 4 indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	No
			If ' YES ', use the action plan at Section 6 to describe the adverse impacts and what mitigating actions you could put in place.

Section 6: Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

What are the potential adverse impacts?	What are the mitigating actions?	Date they will be achieved.

Section 7: Sign off

**I confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately.
(A typed signature is sufficient.)**

Signature of Head of Service: 	Date: 23.02.22
Signature of person completing the EqIA: Janice Nuth	Date: 22.02.22

Advice

Keep your director informed of all equality & diversity issues. We recommend that you forward a copy of every EqIA you undertake to the director responsible for the service area. Retain a copy of this EqIA for your records. If this EqIA relates to a continuing project, ensure this document is kept under review and updated, e.g. after a consultation has been undertaken.