

Equality Impact Assessment

Mutual Exchange Policy

- **Background**

An Equality Impact Assessment is an improvement tool. It will assist you in ensuring that you have thought about the needs and impacts of your service/policy/function in relation to the protected characteristics. It enables a systematic approach to identifying and recording gaps and actions.

- **Legislation- Equality Duty**

As a local authority that provides services to the public, Melton Borough Council has a legal responsibility to ensure that we can demonstrate having paid due regard to the need to:

- ✓ Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation.
- ✓ Advance Equality of Opportunity
- ✓ Foster good relations

For the following protected characteristics:

- ✓ Age
- ✓ Disability
- ✓ Gender reassignment
- ✓ Marriage and civil partnership
- ✓ Pregnancy and maternity
- ✓ Race
- ✓ Religion and belief
- ✓ Sex (Gender)
- ✓ Sexual orientation

What is prohibited?

- ✓ Direct Discrimination
- ✓ Indirect Discrimination
- ✓ Harassment
- ✓ Victimisation
- ✓ Discrimination by association
- ✓ Discrimination by perception
- ✓ Pregnancy and maternity discrimination
- ✓ Discrimination arising from disability
- ✓ Failing to make reasonable adjustments

Please complete steps 1-9

● **Step 1 – Introductory information**

| No. | Item | Details |
|-----|--|------------------------|
| 1.1 | Title of the policy | Mutual Exchange Policy |
| 1.2 | Lead officer and others undertaking this assessment <i>(Check & Challenge Group are part of the sign-off process and not required to be named here)</i> | Doug Stother |
| 1.3 | Date EIA started | 30.09.2022 |
| 1.4 | Date EIA completed | 30.09.2022 |

● **Step 2 – Overview of policy/function being assessed**

| No. | Item | Details |
|-----|---|---|
| 2.1 | Outline – What is the purpose of this policy? <i>Specify aims and objectives</i> | The outline of this policy is to put into context Melton Borough Council's (MBC) legislative and tenancy responsibilities when delivering services round how we manage the process of mutual exchange for our customers. |
| 2.2 | What specific group(s) is the policy designed to affect / impact and what is the intended change or outcome for them? | This policy will impact the customers we provide these services too and the officers who implement them. It will provide both with better guidance and understanding of how we manage the process of mutual exchanges for our customers and staff. Having a policy also allows us to be clear with our customers on their expectations. It also meets our regulatory and legislative responsibilities and allows us to defend our position if challenged by customers and allow us to manage complaints more effective. |
| 2.3 | Which groups have been consulted as part of the creation or review of the policy? | Staff who will implement the policy, senior management who are responsible for the service and the portfolio holder. In future customers will be involved in the reviewing of policies and encouraged in co-creation as in line with the new regulations that are coming in to provide them with more of a voice in shaping MBC services. But it has not been possible at this time due to the need to implement a suite of policies to mitigate risks and underpin the service. |

● **Step 3 – What we already know and where there are gaps**

| No. | Item | Details |
|-----|---|--|
| 3.1 | <p>List any existing information/data you have/monitor about different diverse groups in relation to this policy. Such as in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation etc.</p> <p><i>Data/information such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consultation</i> • <i>Previous EIAs</i> • <i>Demographic Information</i> • <i>Anecdotal and other evidence</i> | <p>The council acknowledges that it has gaps in terms of data on tenants and leaseholders and their protected characteristics. Increasing the council's knowledge of its service users is identified as part of the Corporate Plan. However, a significant proportion of tenancies are created on basis of vulnerability (disability, old age for example) as there are barriers to accessing the housing market for this sector of the community.</p> <p>We are introducing a new way of allocating properties at MBC where the Housing Officers (HO) will be the responsible people for this process, and we want to look at how we can gather this sort of information so that we can offer better support/ guidance and sign posting for our customer to make tenancies more sustainable. We will also look at ways to increase the information we hold on customers to ensure we can make sure future policies and process decisions have this information to be considered.</p> <p>Any information that is provided by the tenant or leaseholder is kept within the NEC Housing data base and is given purely by the tenants' or leaseholders' permission.</p> |
| 3.2 | <p>What does this information / data tell you about diverse groups? If you do not hold or have access to any data or information on diverse groups, what do you need to begin collating / monitoring <i>(please list)</i></p> | <p>As above we will look to collect this information on our customer to ensure that we hold relevant and up to date information on our customers to be able to shape our services around them.</p> <p>We can also look to increase this data when we carry out our engagement sessions or consultations with customers.</p> |

● **Step 4 – Do we need to seek the views of others? If so, who?**

| No. | Item | Details |
|-----|--|---|
| 4.1 | <p>Considering the answers given in Step 2, do you need to consult with specific groups to identify needs / issues?</p> <p>If not explain why.</p> | <p>Currently there is no need to go out to a wider consultation currently. The reason being is that we are currently in a position where we need to increase the councils resilience operationally and ensure there is an up-to-date suite of policies to support our service be more robust for the council and our customers.</p> |

● **Step 5 – Assessing the impact**

Considering any data/consultation/information and your own knowledge, identify whether the policy has a positive or negative impact on the individuals or community groups who identify with any 'protected characteristics' and provide an explanation for your decision in the table below. Please refer to the general duties on the front page.

Table 5.1

| Protected Characteristic | Positive / Negative Impact and Explanation |
|--|--|
| Age | The policy can be provided in a variety of formats should the need arise, such as large print, braille or as a talking document, etc. |
| Disability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical Visual Hearing Learning Disabilities Mental Health | The policy can be provided in a variety of formats should the need arise, such as large print, braille or as a talking document, etc. |
| Gender Reassignment (Transgender) | There is no evidence that that the framework will have an impact on any specific gender reassignment / transgender group |
| Race | There is no evidence that that the framework will have an impact on any specific race. |
| Religion or Belief (Includes no belief) | There is no evidence that that the framework will have an impact on any specific religion or belief |
| Sex (Gender) | There is no evidence that that the framework will have an impact on any specific sex (gender) |
| Sexual Orientation | There is no evidence that that the framework will have an impact on any specific sexual orientation |
| Other protected groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pregnancy & maternity Marriage & civil partnership | There is no evidence that that the framework will have an impact on any specific protected groups |
| Other socially excluded groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carers Low literacy Priority neighbourhoods Health inequalities Rural isolation Asylum seeker and refugee communities Current and ex-armed HM forces personnel (Veterans) | There is no evidence that that the framework will have an impact on any specific socially excluded groups and will be available via different formats for them be able to access. i.e. on MBC's website. |

| No. | Item | Details |
|-----|--|---|
| 5.2 | <p>Where potential barriers and negative impacts have been identified, and/or barriers or impacts are unknown, please outline how you propose to minimise all negative impact or discrimination.</p> <p><i>If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately.</i></p> <p><i>Additionally, if you have identified adverse impact that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people.</i></p> | <p>When housing officers identify specific needs, such as no digital accessibility, we will ensure that the framework should it be asked for, will be provided in a printed format.</p> <p>As part of our ongoing commitment to engagement and consultation, we will always take an individuals' needs in to account, to do deliver on effective communication We will provide any documentation upon request in the tenant or leaseholder's preferred language. Where there is a disability need for the documentation to be in a bigger font or in braille, or as a talking document, this will be provided</p> |
| 5.3 | <p>Summarise your findings and give an overview as to whether the policy will meet the Council's responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity</p> <p><i>(Please refer to the general duties on page 2)</i></p> | <p>The policy will demonstrate the Council's commitment to the elimination of discrimination. There is no evidence to suggest this will impact on any specific person based on this characteristic. Reasonable adjustments will be made to mitigate an impact identified on a case-by-case basis</p> |

● **Step 6- Monitoring, evaluation, review**

| No. | Item | Details |
|-----|--|---|
| 6.1 | <p>Are there processes in place to review the findings of this assessment and make appropriate changes?</p> <p>How will you monitor potential barriers and any positive/ negative impact?</p> | <p>Any findings from the review will be introduced into the policy and we will review how we can make changes to it and the Tenancy Agreement if needed.</p> |
| 6.2 | <p>How will the recommendations of this assessment be built into wider planning and review processes?</p> <p>For example, policy reviews, annual plans and use of performance management systems</p> | <p>The policy has a built-in review of every 3 years or:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following information/ suggestions that the policy is not effective. • To reflect any service enhancements; and/ or, • Following the introduction of any relevant new legislation, regulations, or guidelines. |

- **Step 7- Action Plan**

Please include any identified concerns/actions/issues in this action plan. The issues identified should inform your Service Plan and, if appropriate, your Consultation Plan.

Table 7.1

| Ref. No. | Action | Responsible Officer | Target Date |
|----------|--|--------------------------|-------------|
| 1.1 | Once approved, add to the list to ensure future 3-year review is booked in | Tenancy Service Manager | 01.12.2022 |
| 1.2 | Publish on internal and external internet sites | Tenancy Service Manager | 01.12.2022 |
| 1.3 | Provide training to team that will implement policy | Tenancy Service Manager | 01.12.2022 |
| 1.4 | To commit to a more inclusive review process with customers in 2025 | Tenancy Services Manager | Oct 2025 |

- **Step 8 - Who needs to know about the outcomes of this assessment and how will they be informed?**

Table 8.1

| | Who needs to know | How will they be informed (We have a legal duty to publish EIAs) |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Employees | Yes | Updated via team meeting, and circulated and added to internal intranet. |
| Service Users | Yes | Will be signed off via SLT and cabinet for approval and published on website |
| Partners & Stakeholders | No | |
| Others | N/A | |

| No. | Item | Details |
|-----|--|---------|
| 8.2 | To ensure ease of access, what other communication needs / concerns are there? | None |

- **Step 9 – Please forward your completed assessment to checkandchallenge@melton.gov.uk for scrutiny and approval**

- **Step 10 - Conclusion (to be completed and signed by the Service Head) following internal scrutiny by the Check & Challenge group**

I agree with this assessment (*Please delete as appropriate*)

If disagree, state action/s required, reasons and details of who is to carry them out



Signed: _____

Date: 07.10.22

Name: Aysha Rahman

Once approved, notify the person who completed the EIA to arrange for publishing on the council's website