

Colchester Borough Homes

Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy/ decision to be assessed: **Value for Money, Technology & Investment Plan 2018 - 2022**

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

This plan is a key element in developing a smarter approach to the way we work, which we have identified as an important factor in achieving our mission to deliver great value services that make a difference. It sets out our approach to be the trusted choice for local housing, property and community services

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

Our challenge over the next 5 years will be to achieve savings, efficiencies and additional income that will allow us to invest in our services for the benefit of our residents, potential new business partners and staff. Our aim is that by focusing on value for money, investment and technology we will maintain costs per property in the lowest 25% in the Eastern region between now and 2022. To deliver this we will need to demonstrate that:

- We achieve better outcomes for our customers through investment
- We use technology to work better
- We provide high quality, cost-effective services

We plan to achieve our aim of maintaining the cost per unit at or below current levels by:

- Investing for the benefit of customers and communities
- Using technology to work smarter
- Basing decisions on business intelligence
- Directing resources to where they are needed most

- Ensuring our processes are efficient
- Supporting and a culture of high performance and continuous improvement.

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so what are they?

No

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

- All customers, staff, board & partners/stakeholders

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

Our aim is that by focusing on value for money, investment and technology we will maintain costs per property in the lowest 25% in the Eastern region between now and 2022.

To deliver this we will need to demonstrate that:

- We achieve better outcomes for our customers through investment
- We use technology to work better
- We provide high quality, cost-effective services

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below:

- All service areas of CBH
- CBH Board & management team
- CBC (client function, community, Estates, housing, commercial)
- Colchester commercial companies (Colchester Amphora Commercial, Colchester Amphora Homes)
- Recipients of grant funding from CBH (e.g. Beacon House, Youth Enquiry Service, Open Road etc.)

- Public sector organisations (e.g. Essex County Council, NHS)
- Third sector organisations (charities, community enterprises)

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff?

- Working Smarter strategy
- Strategic plan consultation summary
- Repairing & improving your homes survey
- Working Smarter digital skills survey
- Strategic plan survey
- STAR survey
- Medium Term Delivery plan
- Transactional surveys
- Complaints

If so provide details and include a link to the document or source where available.

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'¹ and those who do not²
- (c) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not³

Not all policies help us to meet the 'general duty', but most do.

¹ The Equality Act's 'protected characteristics' include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

² This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

³ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to meet the ‘general duty’:

The policy helps us to ‘eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation’ in the following way(s):

- Equality and diversity training for all staff and contractors
- Actions within the Social Housing Equality Framework action plan
- Review of complaints and outcomes reviewed by board

The policy helps us to ‘advance equality of opportunity...’ in the following way(s):

- Investing for the benefit of customers and communities
- Directing resources to where they are needed most

The policy helps us to ‘foster good relations...’ in the following way(s):

- Investing for the benefit of customers and communities
- Directing resources to where they are needed most

9. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the ‘protected characteristics’.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

‘Protected characteristic’ group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Age	Older people (60+)		None identified		None identified
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)		None identified		None identified

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Disability	Physical		None identified		None identified
	Sensory		None identified	X	People with a sensory disability may have difficulties accessing this plan
	Learning		None identified	X	People with a learning disabilities may have difficulties in understanding this document
	Mental health issues		None identified		None identified
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Ethnicity ⁴	White		None identified		None identified
	Black		None identified		None identified
	Chinese		None identified		None identified
	Mixed Ethnic Origin		None identified		None identified
	Gypsies/ Travellers		None identified		None identified
	Other – <i>please state</i>				
Language	English not first language		None identified	X	The plan is only published in English
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks		None identified		None identified
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)		None identified		None identified
Sex	Men		None identified		None identified
	Women		None identified		None identified
Gender Reassignment ⁵	Transgender/ Transsexual ⁶		None identified		None identified

⁴ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian (Asian or Asian British), African, Caribbean, Other Black (Black or Black British), White and Black African, White and Asian, White and Black Caribbean (Mixed), British, Irish, Other White (White), Chinese, Other (Other Ethnic Group).

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian		None identified		None identified
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership		None identified		None identified

10. If you have identified any negative impacts (above) how can they be minimised or removed?

- The plan is only published in English. The plan will be published on CBH's website. Customers can use the google translate feature to convert this into their chosen language.
- People with a sensory disability may have difficulties accessing these plans. Browse aloud is enabled on the website where these plans are published for those with a visual impairment. Text Talk is also available for people with a hearing impairment.
- People with a learning disability may have difficulty understanding this document. This document has been written in plain English with those with learning disabilities in mind.

11. Could the policy discriminate⁷ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly⁸? **No**

⁵ The protected characteristic of gender reassignment is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as "a person proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex." This is a personal process that may involve medical interventions such as counselling, psychotherapy, hormone therapy or surgery, but does not have to.

⁶ It is generally held that people who are *transgender* disguise their features or clothing to resemble their preferred sex, whereas people who are *transsexual* wish to change their body to completely resemble their preferred sex.

⁷ The Council has a general duty to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their 'protected characteristic' whether on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity; religion or belief; sex (gender), sexual orientation, or marriage and civil partnership. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would nevertheless disadvantage people on the grounds of their 'protected characteristic'.

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

12. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
No negative impacts have been identified <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed X	Sign off screening and finish.
Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

13. Name and job title of person completing this form:

- Sharon Stephens, Head of Finance

14. Date of completion:

- February 2018

15. Date for update or review of this screening:

- On expiry of plan (2022)

⁸ If you answer 'yes' to question 11 (above) you will need to complete this section *and* go on to complete Section 2 in order to conduct a full Equality Impact Assessment.