

Equality Impact Assessment

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to improve the work of Orkney Islands Council by making sure it promotes equality and does not discriminate. This assessment records the likely impact of any changes to a function, policy or plan by anticipating the consequences, and making sure that any negative impacts are eliminated or minimised and positive impacts are maximised.

1. IDENTIFICATION OF FUNCTION, POLICY OR PLAN	
Name of function/policy/plan to be assessed	Charging for Sheltered Housing
Service/service area responsible	Housing Services
Name of person carrying out the assessment and contact details	Frances Troup, Ext 2177 E-mail frances.troup@orkney.gov.uk
Date of assessment	21 August 2012
Is the function/policy/plan new or existing? (Please indicate also if the service is to be deleted, reduced or changed significantly)	New

2. INITIAL SCREENING	
What are the intended outcomes of the function/policy/plan?	Currently no charge is levied in respect of the cost of housing support in sheltered housing. Given the legal advice provided there is a need to add a nominal charge for new tenants to prevent them having an assurance of not being charged in the future.
State who is, or may be affected by this function/policy/plan, and how	New tenants of sheltered housing and potentially new tenants of supported housing (see separate consultation on use of Rae's Close, Stromness). No charge will be levied for existing tenants.
How have stakeholders been involved in the development of this function/policy/plan?	A Member/Officer Working Group on Charging for Council Services were involved from the outset. Development Sessions on Local Housing Strategy development and a range of related strategies including the Older Persons' Housing Strategy were run during April 2011 and these link closely. This included other Council Services including Education

	<p>and Recreation, Planning and Corporate Policy and other agencies including Orkney Health and Care, Orkney Housing Association Ltd, Sacro, Orkney CAB, Advocacy Orkney and Relationships Scotland.</p> <p>These stakeholders were then involved in the consultation once a document outlining detailed information on charging for sheltered housing had been drafted. Survey monkey was also used.</p> <p>The consultation included existing tenants, their carers/power of attorneys etc, public members and staff. In addition it included people on the waiting list for sheltered/supported housing. The consultation included a press release and an article in Housing News. The written information and survey was available from the Council's website at www.orkney.gov.uk and was available in hard copy at the Council's offices and libraries.</p> <p>Housing staff were also involved. A meeting was held at the residents' lounges ahead of the consultation being launched. This involved staff, residents and their advocates etc.</p> <p>The quality of Housing Services is assessed through our internal procedures and also a range of Questionnaire. This includes a satisfaction survey for sheltered housing tenants.</p> <p>In August 2012 there was a consultation with existing tenants and advocates. Residents were reassured that future charges would not apply to them. They understood the issue and agreed the proposal was an appropriate solution.</p>
<p>Is there any existing data and/or research relating to equalities issues in this policy area? Please summarise.</p> <p>e.g. consultations, national surveys, performance data, complaints, service user feedback, academic/consultants' reports, benchmarking (see equalities resources on OIC information portal)</p>	<p>The Scottish Government has a range of research into the housing needs of older people. Its National Strategy for Older People links closely to our Older Persons' Housing Strategy. Research including Wider Planning for an Ageing Population and Reshaping Care for Older People is central to the document.</p>
<p>Could the function/policy have a differential impact on any of the following equality strands?</p>	<p>(Please provide any evidence – positive impacts/benefits, negative impacts and reasons)</p>
<p>1. Race: this includes ethnic or national groups, colour and nationality</p>	<p>The proposed charge itself will have no impact. If there was a language barrier our Accessibility Policy is specifically intended to address this. We keep service records which include records of any requirements for information in different formats and languages.</p>

2. Sex: a man or a woman	No differential impact.
3. Sexual Orientation: whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes	No differential impact.
4. Gender Reassignment: the process of transitioning from one gender to another	No differential impact.
5. Pregnancy and maternity	No differential impact.
6. Age: people of different ages	Yes. Sheltered housing is used by older people and people with disabilities.
7. Religion or beliefs or none (atheists)	No differential impact.
8. Caring responsibilities	No differential impact. The nominal sum is not enough to deter people from becoming tenants so there should be no impact on carers.
9. Marriage and Civil Partnership	No differential impact.
10. Disability: people with disabilities (whether registered or not)	Yes. Sheltered housing is used by older people and people with disabilities.

3. IMPACT ASSESSMENT	
Does the analysis above identify any differential impacts which need to be addressed?	<p>Language barriers are a possibility in relation to different ethnic groups.</p> <p>Any new tenants will be older people and/or people with disabilities who will experience an impact as they will be required to pay the nominal charge.</p>
How could you minimise or remove any potential negative impacts?	<p>Potential language barriers and issues arising as a result of age, caring responsibilities and disabilities can be addressed through normal working arrangements and our Accessibility Policy.</p> <p>The proposed charge is restricted to a nominal level of £1. If this were to be increased in the future a further consultation would be carried out as well as an assessment of the impact on the equality groups</p>
Do you have enough information to make a judgement? If no, what information do you require?	Yes

4. CONCLUSIONS AND PLANNED ACTION	
Is further work required?	No

What action is to be taken?	N/A
Who will undertake it?	N/A
When will it be done?	N/A
How will it be monitored? (e.g. through service plans)	Monitoring will be three yearly as part of Housing Services' rolling review programme.

Signature

Date

21 August 2012

Name FRANCES TROUP
(BLOCK CAPITALS)

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send a copy to Corporate and Community Strategy. It should also be emailed to Corporate and Community Strategy.