

Resident Involvement Strategy Appendix 4

Appendix Four: 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, ie 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: Function: Housing Management ~ Resident Involvement for Property & Housing Service Service Area: Property & Housing Services
	If you are submitting this EqIA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team: As above
	Title of policy: Property & Housing Services Resident Involvement Strategy Decision: That the Communities Select Committee (i) considers and recommends that the draft Property & Housing Services Resident Involvement Strategy be agreed at Cabinet, as set out at Appendix Three of this report. (ii) recommends that a Senior Resident Involvement Officer be appointed to drive delivery of the Strategy
	Officer completing the EqIA: Mrs Rachel Smith Tel: 01992 562701 Email: rsmith@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
	Date of completing the assessment: 23 08 22
	Section 2: Policy to be analysed
2.1	Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project? New Strategy
2.2	Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision): To agree a new strategy and framework for involving residents, which recognises the positive role that our residents play in the design and improvement of our Property & Housing Service, which supports our wider commitment toward the empowerment of residents and communities, ensures compliance with the current and future regulatory requirements of social housing providers and supports the Council's ambition to create great places where people want to live. What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (ie decommissioning or commissioning a service)? As above
2.3	Does or will the policy or decision affect: service users, employees, the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities? Yes, the strategy will affect all tenants, leaseholders and residents accessing services provided by the Council's Property & Housing Service. It will affect all employees working in the Property & Housing Service, particularly those working in customer facing roles. Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?

	Residents will be central partners when decision making.
2.4	<p>Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?</p> <p>Yes</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 Council's mission for the District is to work together to serve our community, putting our customers at the heart of everything we do and focusing on the things that matter most to local people (EFDC Corporate Plan 2018 – 2023, refers). The Council's key corporate objectives are that:</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 district housing offer <p>The Council produces a Housing Strategy which is kept under review, and sets out priorities and objectives for Housing Services, including tenant and leaseholder involvement. The vision for the overarching Housing Strategy (2022-2027) is that "Epping Forest will be a place that has safe, decent and good quality housing, of an appropriate mix of sizes, types and tenure, that meet the local needs of those who want to live in the District". Its key priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the supply of affordable housing: • Promoting health wellbeing and independence • Economic growth and regeneration • Quality and standards • Protecting and enhancing the environment <p>The draft RI Strategy supports the Council's corporate and service wide ambitions.</p>
	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, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).
3.1	<p>What does the information tell you about those groups identified?</p> <p>The Property & Housing Service undertook a customer satisfaction survey between January 2020 – April 2020 using the industry Star methodology.</p>

This survey focused specially on our Tenants and Leaseholders.

The results from the 2020 STAR survey were positive, with the survey finding high levels of satisfaction with a number of aspects of the Service including the value for money of the rent (90%), and that EFDC Housing Service provides homes that are safe and secure (91%) – all of which are reflected in the finding that 87% of tenants are satisfied with the overall services provided by EFDC Housing Service.

Slightly lower levels of satisfaction were found particularly relating to communication issues, with opportunities to make views known, listening to views and acting upon them among the lower ratings. Eight out of ten tenants (81%) were satisfied that the Housing Service kept them informed about things which might affect them. However, fewer tenants were satisfied with opportunities to make views known (68%) or that the Council listens to their views and acts upon them (57%).

Tenants were also asked if they wanted to be involved with the EFDC Housing Service. Whilst 82% said they did not want to be involved, a number of tenants did express an interest in the following options:

Method or Involvement	% of Resident respondents
Not interested in getting involved	82
Armchair Reviewer	10
Mystery shopper	9
Tenant & Leaseholder Panel	9
Tenant Working Party	7
Website	6
Social Media	6
Other	5

The survey found that half of the tenants surveyed used the internet on a daily, or almost daily basis (52%) with a further 11% using it weekly. Whilst some use it less frequently, in all, 72% of tenants use it at some time. However, there was a marked difference between the tenures. 74% of general needs tenants said they used the internet (54% daily), whilst just 47% of sheltered tenants use the internet (30% daily). When asked why tenants didn't use the internet, 259 tenants gave an answer, and of those, 107 told us they did not want to use it. A similar number gave 'other' reasons such as old age, and 22 said they lacked the skills, but very few cited cost of equipment or connection as the reason. Overall, insight from the Star Survey highlighted a need to rethink our approach to involvement to ensure that it is fit for the future and designed with residents and their voice at its heart.

3.2

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?

During the period October 2020 – September 2021, Officers worked with colleagues across the Service and with residents to understand what 'good' involvement looks like, to identify opportunities for involvement and to further our understanding of how EFDC residents prefer to be involved.

	<p>Officers joined a best practice networking group and attended relevant conferences, taking time to understand best practice within the sector. Interested residents volunteered to join a Resident Involvement Co-Creation group to help shape a new model of resident involvement which better meets the needs and wants of customers and the business, as well as fulfilling current and future regulatory requirements. Alongside this, a combination of digital and 'in person' involvement opportunities were piloted to help inform our future approach.</p> <p>The draft RI strategy has been created collaboratively with the Resident Involvement Co-creation Group, who are a group of residents and staff, passionate about resident involvement, sharing a desire to continuously improve the way our residents are involved. The draft RI strategy is endorsed by the Tenant and Leaseholder Panel.</p> <p>Managers, staff and Members were consulted on the draft strategy between 7 – 28 November 2022.</p> <p>The wider public was consulted on the draft strategy between 2 December 2022 – 22 January 2023.</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> <p>No</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.			
	Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
	Age	Positive	H
	Disability	Positive	H
	Gender	Positive	H
	Gender reassignment	Neutral	
	Marriage/civil partnership	Neutral	
	Pregnancy/maternity	Neutral	
	Race	Positive	H
	Religion/belief	Positive	H
	Sexual orientation	Neutral	
Section 5: Conclusion			
		Tick Yes/No as appropriate	
5.1	Does the EqIA in Section 4 indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?	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.
	<p>Section 7: Sign off I confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately. (A typed signature is sufficient.)</p>		
Date	Signature of Director of Property and Housing: S BALU		
Date	Signature of person completing the EqIA: C WALSH		

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.