

Equality Analysis (EA)

Section 1 – General Information (Aims and Objectives)

Name of the proposal including aims, objectives and purpose:

(Please note – for the purpose of this doc, ‘proposal’ refers to a policy, function, strategy or project)

Tenancy Strategy

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets is required to produce a tenancy strategy as set out in the Localism Act which gained Royal Assent in November 2011. The tenancy strategy has to be published by January 2013.

Through the existing allocations system, Registered Providers including Local Authorities generally enter into lifetime tenancies with new tenants. The Government will now allow Registered Providers the flexibility to offer shorter term tenancies if they decide that it will enable them to make better use of their housing stock and assist those people with the most pressing need more effectively.

Government has protected the security and rights of existing social housing tenants, including when they move to another social rented home. However, provisions in the Localism Act allow for more flexible arrangements for people entering social housing in the future. Registered Providers will be able to grant tenancies for a fixed length of time. The minimum length of tenancy will be two years in exceptional circumstances with five years or more likely to be considered as a more normal initial agreement. There is no upper limit on the length of tenancy and Registered Providers can still offer lifetime tenancies if they wish.

Individual Councils will have to set out their approach to future tenancies in a published tenancy strategy.

The aim of government policy is that Registered Providers (including the Council) shall grant tenancies which are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of the stock.

The Council’s draft strategy will be to retain lifetime tenancies in most circumstances for new Council tenants and to encourage Registered Providers to also retain lifetime tenancies. However the Council recognises that many Registered Providers will want to make use of the new flexibilities in order to more effectively manage their stock. In setting the Tenancy Strategy for Tower Hamlets, the Council would wish to see Registered Providers who do make use of the flexibility to abide by a set of conditions to ensure that the needs of vulnerable groups are met.

This Equalities Assessment applies primarily to the Council’s preference for lifetime tenancies to be retained. It should be noted that the current ‘status quo’ position of lifetime tenancies can have a negative impact on some households such as those who are overcrowded and who have to wait longer to be rehoused under the current system.

Who is expected to benefit from the proposal?

The Government’s view is that by allowing Registered Providers the flexibility to offer shorter term tenancies if they decide that it will enable them to make better use of their housing stock and assist those people with the most pressing need more effectively. This has to be countered against enabling people who are rehoused into a community the opportunity to make a lifetime contribution to that community or neighbourhood without the possibility of having their tenancy

terminated after a fixed term. Through the introduction of fixed term tenancies it can be argued that different people will benefit at different times. For people who do not have their tenancies renewed, it is expected that the providers will assist in meeting their housing need through the offer of a more suitable property or by assisting a move into the private sector.

Service area:

Development and Regeneration

Team name:

Strategic Housing

Service manager:

Faisal Butt

Name and role of the officer completing the EA:

Martin Ling – Housing Policy Officer

Section 2 – Evidence (Consideration of Data and Information)

What initial evidence do we have which may help us think about the impacts or likely impacts on service users or staff?

Issues and options paper presented to Cabinet
Survey of Registered Providers in Borough

Statistics covering housing demand in the Borough including:

Housing Waiting list broken down by need
Data on overcrowding
Data on underoccupation
Data on medical need
Data on race of applicants for social housing
Lettings statistics for Tower Hamlets Homes
Lettings statistics for Registered Providers

Registered Providers emerging Tenancy Policies

Section 3 – Assessing the Impacts on the 9 Groups

How will what you're proposal impact upon the nine Protected Characteristics?

For the nine protected characteristics detailed in the table below please consider:-

- **What is the equality profile of service users or beneficiaries that will or are likely to be affected?**

-Use the Council's approved diversity monitoring categories and provide data by target group of users or beneficiaries to determine whether the service user profile reflects the local population or relevant target group or if there is over or under representation of these groups

- **What qualitative or quantitative data do we have?**

-List all examples of quantitative and qualitative data available

(include information where appropriate from other directorates, Census 2001 etc)

-Data trends – how does current practice ensure equality

- **Equalities profile of staff?**

-Indicate profile by target groups and assess relevance to policy aims and objectives e.g. Workforce to Reflect the Community. Identify staff responsible for delivering the service including where they are not directly employed by the council.

- **Barriers?**

-What are the potential or known barriers to participation for the different equality target groups? Eg, communication, access, locality etc

- **Recent consultation exercises carried out?**

-Detail consultation with relevant interest groups, other public bodies, voluntary organisations, community groups, trade unions, focus groups and other groups, surveys and questionnaires undertaken etc. Focus in particular on the findings of views expressed by the equality target groups. Such consultation exercises should be appropriate and proportionate and may range from assembling focus groups to a one to one meeting.

- **Additional factors which may influence disproportionate or adverse impact?**

-Management Arrangements - How is the Service managed, are there any management arrangements which may have a disproportionate impact on the equality target groups

- **The Process of Service Delivery?**

-In particular look at the arrangements for the service being provided including opening times, custom and practice, awareness of the service to local people, communication

Please also consider how the proposal will impact upon the 3 One Tower Hamlets objectives:-

- Reduce inequalities
- Ensure strong community cohesion
- Strengthen community leadership.

Please Note -

Reports/stats/data can be added as Appendix

	<p>Impact – Positive or Adverse</p> <p>What impact will the proposal have on specific groups of service users or staff?</p>	<p>Reason(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and, • Please describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform decision making <p>Please also how the proposal with promote the three One Tower Hamlets objectives?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reducing inequalities -Ensuring strong community cohesion -Strengthening community leadership
	<p>Retaining Lifetime Tenancies</p>	<p>Introducing Fixed Term Tenancies</p>
<p>Race</p>	<p>No Impact - In retaining lifetime tenancies for Council tenants and where Registered Providers also retain lifetime tenancies, the strategy will have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group as the current position will not change. It can be argued that lifetime tenancies enhance community cohesion by enabling households to settle and contribute to their local community.</p>	<p>Positive - Where Registered Providers choose to introduce fixed term tenancies in order to reduce under occupation, opportunities to speed up the rehousing process for overcrowded families in the longer term could be realised. Data shows that Bangladeshi households are more likely to be overcrowded and could therefore benefit from such policies.</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>No Impact - In retaining lifetime tenancies for Council tenants and where Registered Providers also retain lifetime tenancies, the strategy will have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group as the current position will be not change. It can be argued that lifetime tenancies enhance community cohesion by enabling households to settle and contribute to their local community.</p>	<p>Positive - Where Registered Providers or the Council choose to introduce fixed term tenancies in order to provide improved access to homes that have had adaptations for disabled people this could result in disabled people being rehoused more quickly to suitable housing.</p> <p>Adverse: If fixed term tenancies were introduced for disabled people it could have a significant impact on their sense of security and ability to create local and reliable support networks. The Council therefore urges Registered Providers to offer lifetime tenancies to people with longer term disabilities.</p>
<p>Gender</p>	<p>No Impact - In retaining lifetime tenancies for Council tenants</p>	<p>No impact - Where Registered Providers or the Council</p>

	and where registered providers also retain lifetime tenancies, the strategy will have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group as the current position will be not change. It can be argued that lifetime tenancies enhance community cohesion by enabling households to settle and contribute to their local community.	choose to introduce fixed term tenancies, the policy should have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group.
Gender Reassignment	No impact - In retaining lifetime tenancies for Council tenants and where Registered Providers also retain lifetime tenancies, the strategy will have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group as the current position will be not change. It can be argued that lifetime tenancies enhance community cohesion by enabling households to settle and contribute to their local community.	No impact - Where Registered Providers or the Council choose to introduce fixed term tenancies, the policy should have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group.
Sexual Orientation	No impact - In retaining lifetime tenancies for Council tenants and where Registered Providers also retain lifetime tenancies, the strategy will have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group as the current position will be not change. It can be argued that lifetime tenancies enhance community cohesion by enabling households to settle and contribute to their local community.	No impact - Where Registered Providers or the Council choose to introduce fixed term tenancies, the policy should have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group
Religion or Belief	No impact In retaining lifetime tenancies for Council tenants and where Registered Providers also retain lifetime tenancies, the strategy will have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group as the current position will be not change. It can be argued that lifetime tenancies enhance community cohesion by enabling households to settle and contribute to their local community.	No impact - Where Registered Providers or the Council choose to introduce fixed term tenancies, the policy should have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group.
Age	No impact - In retaining lifetime tenancies for Council tenants and where Registered Providers also retain lifetime tenancies, the strategy will have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group as the current position will be not change. It can be	Positive / Adverse - Where partners choose to introduce fixed term tenancies in order to reduce underoccupation, opportunities to speed up the rehousing process for overcrowded families in the longer term could be realised.

	<p>argued that lifetime tenancies enhance community cohesion by enabling households to settle and contribute to their local community.</p>	<p>This is likely to bring a better focus on the needs of underoccupying households who are more likely to be older people. This could lead to improved consideration of the offer to older persons and potentially a better choice if the policy is introduced sensitively.</p> <p>Adverse: If fixed term tenancies were introduced for disabled people it could have a significant impact on their sense of security and ability to create local and reliable support networks. The Council therefore urges Registered Providers to offer lifetime tenancies to people over 60 years of age.</p> <p>The policy could have a negative impact on older people who may have to leave their family home once their family has moved out. It should be noted that the policy will need to be introduced with care – If unsuitable offers were made to older persons at the end of fixed term tenancies there could be an adverse impact but the Council will work with partners to ensure the policy does have such adverse impacts with safeguards Introduced</p> <p>Children and young people who rehoused from overcrowded households will also benefit from the draft tenancy strategy where it is used to tackle this are of housing need.</p>
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnerships.</p>	<p>No impact - In retaining lifetime tenancies for Council tenants and where Registered Providers also retain lifetime tenancies, the strategy will have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group as the current position will be not change. It can be argued that lifetime tenancies enhance community cohesion by enabling households to settle and contribute to their local community</p>	<p>No impact - Where Registered Providers or the Council choose to introduce fixed term tenancies, the policy should have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group.</p>
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>	<p>No impact - In retaining lifetime tenancies for Council tenants and where Registered Providers also retain lifetime tenancies, the strategy will have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group as the current position will be not change. It can be argued that lifetime tenancies enhance community cohesion</p>	<p>No impact - Where Registered Providers or the Council choose to introduce fixed term tenancies, the policy should have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group.</p>

	<p>by enabling households to settle and contribute to their local community.</p>	
<p>Other Socio-economic Carers</p>	<p>No impact - In retaining lifetime tenancies for Council tenants and where Registered Providers also retain lifetime tenancies, the strategy will have neither a positive or adverse impact on this group as the current position will be not change. It can be argued that lifetime tenancies enhance community cohesion by enabling households to settle and contribute to their local community.</p>	<p>Positive - Where partners or the Council choose to introduce fixed term tenancies in order to provide improved access to homes for people with support needs and accommodation for carers, the policy could enable improved access and support for both the person requiring the support and the carer in both the short and longer term.</p>

Section 4 – Mitigating Impacts and Alternative Options

From the analysis and interpretation of evidence in section 2 and 3 - Is there any evidence of or view that suggests that different equality or other protected groups (inc' staff) could have a disproportionately high/low take up of the new proposal?

No, access to housing will be maintained at similar levels for all groups.

However as some Registered providers may introduce fixed term tenancies, the Council will expect them to introduce a minimum set of conditions and safeguards where these tenancies are granted.

If yes, please detail below how evidence influenced and formed the proposal? For example, why parts of the proposal were added/removed?

(Please note – a key part of the EA process is to show that we have made reasonable and informed attempts to mitigate any negative impacts. AN EA is a service improvement tool and as such you may wish to consider a number of alternative options or mitigation in terms of the proposal.)

The Council is required to give direction to Registered Providers on how it expects their tenancy policies to operate in the borough and RPs must have 'due regard' to this direction. A number of RPs in the Borough have already progressed their tenancy policies which will include letting some properties on assured shorthold tenancies on a fixed term basis. The Council's draft tenancy strategy whilst in favour of lifetime tenancies recognises that many Registered Providers will want to make use the new flexibilities in order to more effectively manage their stock. In setting the draft tenancy strategy for Tower Hamlets, the Council would wish to see Registered providers who do make use of the flexibility to abide by a set of conditions to ensure that the needs of vulnerable groups are met.

These conditions are set out in the tenancy strategy and can be summarised as follows:

Tenancies:

The following categories of households will be offered lifetime tenancies:

Person over 60 years of age

People with a long term disability

All transferring secure tenants of homes managed by Tower Hamlets Homes and tenant whose homes were transferred under the Housing Choice programme.

Fixed term tenancies of 10 years or more should be offered to the following categories of households:

Households containing one or more children under 10 years old.

Section 5 – Quality Assurance and Monitoring

Have monitoring systems been put in place to check the implementation of the proposal and recommendations?

No

How will the monitoring systems further assess the impact on the equality target groups?

The draft policy recommends that the policy is kept under constant review by all partners to measure its impact on lettings patterns including how they impact on target groups. The tenancy strategy will not come into force until 2013 but initial impacts will be monitored where partners have already started to introduce fixed term tenancies.

The reports will track the proportion of life time/fixed tenancies being granted over coming years, and track these by relevant groups (ie: those where we've identified a potential impact on equality, older people) and a further equalities assessment will be carried out as part of the review process.

Does the policy/function comply with equalities legislation?
(Please consider the [OTH objectives](#) and [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) criteria)

Yes

If there are gaps in information or areas for further improvement, please list them below:

None

How will the results of this Equality Analysis feed into the performance planning process?

The Council's Housing Options section and Tower Hamlets Homes will take part in the monitoring of the proposals and feed the outcomes into their performance planning process. This work will also feed into the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum Common Housing Register group's action plan.

Section 6 - Action Plan

*As a result of these conclusions and recommendations what actions (if any) **will** be included in your business planning and wider review processes (team plan)? Please consider any gaps or areas needing further attention in the table below the example.*

Recommendation	Key activity	Progress milestones including target dates for either completion or progress	Officer responsible	Progress
Example				
1. Better collection of feedback, consultation and data sources	1. Create and use feedback forms. Consult other providers and experts	1. Forms ready for January 2010 Start consultations Jan 2010	1.NR & PB	
2. Non-discriminatory behaviour	2. Regular awareness at staff meetings. Train staff in specialist courses	2. Raise awareness at one staff meeting a month. At least 2 specialist courses to be run per year for staff.	2. NR	

Recommendation	Key activity	Progress milestones including target dates for either completion or progress	Officer responsible	Progress
Monitoring of partner tenancy policies and equality assessments	Survey of all agreed Registered Provider policies	Survey completed by April 2013	Martin Ling	
Monitoring of lettings patterns and take up of fixed term tenancies through Housing Options	Analysis of lettings data and reports to Common Housing Forum	Consideration of impact of Tenancy Strategy and flexibilities allowed by the Localism Act to be considered in standard reports	Rafiqul Hoque / Martin Ling	
Monitoring of impact on	Equalities Analysis of lettings data	Consideration of impact of	Rafiqul	

equalities.	and reports to Common Housing Forum	Tenancy Strategy and flexibilities allowed by the Localism Act to be considered in standard reports	Hoque / Martin Ling	
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Section 7 – Sign Off and Publication

<p>Name: (signed off by)</p>	
<p>Position:</p>	
<p>Date signed off: (approved)</p>	

Section 8 Appendix – FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

This section to be completed by the One Tower Hamlets team

Policy Hyperlink :

Equality Strand	Evidence
Race	
Disability	
Gender	
Gender Reassignment	
Sexual Orientation	
Religion or Belief	
Age	
Marriage and Civil Partnerships.	
Pregnancy and Maternity	
Other Socio-economic Carers	

Link to original EQIA	Link to original EQIA
EQIAID	

(Team/Service/Year)	
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