

Equality Impact Assessment [version 2.9]



Title: Increasing income through enforcement action to fund a post [CC10868] and Using additional income to support Housing Options funding pressures [CC10868]	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Budget Proposal GR008 and GR009	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changing
Directorate: Growth and Regeneration	Lead Officer name: Tom Gilchrist
Service Area: Private Housing	Lead Officer role: Manager

Step 1: What do we want to do?

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment is to assist decision makers in understanding the impact of proposals as part of their duties under the Equality Act 2010. Detailed guidance to support completion can be found here [Equality Impact Assessments \(EqIA\) \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

This assessment should be started at the beginning of the process by someone with a good knowledge of the proposal and service area, and sufficient influence over the proposal. It is good practice to take a team approach to completing the equality impact assessment. Please contact the [Equality and Inclusion Team](#) early for advice and feedback.

1.1 What are the aims and objectives/purpose of this proposal?

Briefly explain the purpose of the proposal and why it is needed. Describe who it is aimed at and the intended aims / outcomes. Where known also summarise the key actions you plan to undertake. Please use [plain English](#), avoiding jargon and acronyms. Equality Impact Assessments are viewed by a wide range of people including decision-makers and the wider public.

Budget context:

Bristol City Council is required by law to set a balanced budget however we face a potential gap in our core budget of around £23.1 million next year. With such a significant challenge the budget cannot be balanced without additional funding, making greater efficiencies (doing the same for less money) or by transforming the way we do things.

The Council has defined statutory responsibilities, but deliver against a far broader agenda, providing universal services benefiting the whole community, and targeted services aimed at individuals, communities with particular needs, and businesses – administered by our workforce, city partners, stakeholder organisations and commissioned services.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been far reaching, with a lasting impact on our people and our economy. Our finances are stretched to the limit, and the UK Government has stopped funding local COVID-19 responses. Up and down the country councils are facing this funding crisis with less money to keep services going. This is because more money is needed to: help citizens with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; support low-income households and local businesses in need of support post-COVID-19; support more people than ever with mental health and social care services; and meet the rising need and cost of home to school transport for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) etc. At the same time, the pandemic saw us receive less income from business rates, commercial rentals, parking, sports facilities, and our museums, shops and cafes.

The [Medium Term Financial Plan](#) underpins the Council's financial planning process and outlines the approach we will take to meet the challenges presented by focusing primarily on delivering efficiencies, service re-design programmes which cut across directorate boundaries, and increasing external income and Invest to Save revenue.

This proposal:

- These combined proposals include opportunities to increase the current level of housing enforcement activity and other income generating opportunities to ensure one post in the service is paid for plus additional income is generated to offset cost pressures in Housing Options.

Description

Additional income can be generated through a variety of sources including:

- Increasing enforcement action on poor quality rented accommodation using various financial penalties to generate income, such as: Rent Repayment Orders, Civil Penalty Notices and Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard financial penalties. This will focus on those landlords who repeatedly disregard safety requirements.
- Charging for the service of Housing Act, legal notices

Generate additional income through a variety of opportunities:

- Restart the Landlord EXPO event in 2022 which was suspended in 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid Pandemic.
- Increase income from charging to access the Private Housing Procedure Manuals

Current arrangements

- Since these new enforcement powers have been available in the Housing and Planning Act the service has only used these powers in limited ways.
- Generating income from these other sources in the last few years has been limited due to the pandemic.

1.2 Who will the proposal have the potential to affect?

<input type="checkbox"/> Bristol City Council workforce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service users	<input type="checkbox"/> The wider community
<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioned services	<input type="checkbox"/> City partners / Stakeholder organisations	
Additional comments:		

1.3 Will the proposal have an equality impact?

Could the proposal affect access levels of representation or participation in a service, or does it have the potential to change e.g. quality of life: health, education, or standard of living etc.?

If 'No' explain why you are sure there will be no equality impact, then skip steps 2-4 and request review by Equality and Inclusion Team.

If 'Yes' complete the rest of this assessment, or if you plan to complete the assessment at a later stage please state this clearly here and request review by the Equality and Inclusion Team.

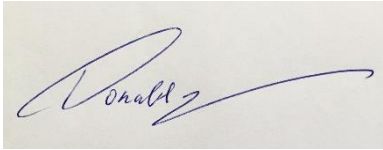
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	[please select]
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We have not identified any significant equality impact from the two proposals as the service offer to private tenants and landlord will not change. The service will just be increasing our enforcement activities for serious offense, in a slightly different way, using financial penalties rather than prosecution. When a local authority establishes a housing offence has been committed, they have two options if an informal resolution cannot resolve the problem. The two options are either prosecuting the offender or issuing a financial penalty. This proposal will result in the service using the option of a financial penalty first, for less serious offences. Serious offenses will still result in prosecutions.

By reinstating the landlord Expo our service offer, this will improve the level of support and guidance provided to the landlord and agent sector in the City.

Step 5: Review

The Equality and Inclusion Team need at least five working days to comment and feedback on your EqIA. EqIAs should only be marked as reviewed when they provide sufficient information for decision-makers on the equalities impact of the proposal. Please seek feedback and review from the Equality and Inclusion Team before requesting sign off from your Director¹.

Equality and Inclusion Team Review: <i>Reviewed by Equality and Inclusion Team</i>	Director Sign-Off: Donald Graham, Director-Housing and Landlord Services 
Date: 21/12/2021	Date: 21/12/2021

¹ Review by the Equality and Inclusion Team confirms there is sufficient analysis for decision makers to consider the likely equality impacts at this stage. This is not an endorsement or approval of the proposal.