

## Equality Impact Assessment Template – Stage Two

<b>Name of item being assessed:</b>	<b>Charging Policy for Bed &amp; Breakfast Temporary Accommodation</b>
<b>Version and release date of item:</b>	
<b>Owner of the item being assessed:</b>	Mel Brain
<b>Name of assessor:</b>	Mel Brain
<b>Date of assessment:</b>	10/11/11

### 1 What are the main aims of the item?

To update the charging policy to recover the costs of bed & breakfast accommodation provided under the Council's homelessness duties.

### 2 What research will you undertake to inform this assessment?

(for example, who, how and when will you consult? What existing information is available either internally or externally? Are there complaints, comments received that will inform this assessment? Are there any local groups you can talk to? Etc)

Use this space to set out your activity.

**The Housing Service has a breadth of contact with applicants who will be affected by the change. Existing information is available through case files, complaints and local/national statistics**

### 3 What are the results of your research?

**Note which groups may be affected by the item, consider how they may be affected and what sources of information have been used to determine this.**

**(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)**

<b>Group Affected</b>	<b>What might be the effect?</b>	<b>Information to support this.</b>
Age Disability Pregnancy &	Applicants within these groups may fall within a priority need group under the Housing Act 1996, which specifies the circumstances in which the Council must provide temporary accommodation.	

Maternity	<p>Applicants who fall within the identified groups are not treated differently or subject to any adverse effect.</p> <p>They would be subject to the charges in the policy. The Council always seeks to place applicants in their own temporary accommodation stock and B&amp;B placement is emergency accommodation of the last resort.</p>	
<b>Further Comments relating to the item:</b>		
<p>Whilst certain groups may be entitled to a duty under the Housing Act 1996, the proposed policy does not disadvantage them: they would need to pay for accommodation if it was secured elsewhere and the Council is seeking reasonable accommodation costs for accommodation that it is providing. The policy that is being changed is to introduce <b>consistency in the way charges are made to clients</b> and it is bringing emergency B&amp;B accommodation into line with Council owned temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Paying reasonable accommodation costs is also important in preparing homeless households to manage future accommodation.</p>		

<b>4 What actions will be taken to address any negative effects?</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When?</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Ensure that the policy levies an affordable accommodation charge by restricting charges to Housing Benefit levels, with the remainder being subsidised by the Council	Mel Brain	Completed	Ensures that accommodation costs charged are affordable to households on low incomes.
Provision to be made within policy for applicants who are unable to pay the charges in advance	Mel Brain	Completed	Ensures that no households is left without resources to pay for necessities e.g. food.
Ensure ineligible charges are affordable and are	Mel Brain	Completed	Ensures that accommodation costs charged are affordable

not higher than the applicant would reasonably pay for utilities/food in their own accommodation.			to households on low incomes
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**5 What was the final outcome and why was this agreed?**

(Was the item adjusted, rewritten or unchanged?)

The Policy had already mitigated against the impacts by restricting charges to Housing Benefit levels and ensuring that alternative arrangements could be put in place for households without the financial means to pay the charges in advance.

**6 What arrangements have you put in place to monitor the impact of this decision?**

The Housing Service has procedures in place for monitoring rental payments and follows an arrears procedure where payments are not made. Clients are assisted with benefit claims and each account is reviewed weekly. Financial assessments in respect of transport or advanced charges will be considered at the housing options interview where the decision to place is made.

**7 What date is the Equality Impact Assessment due for Review?**

The B&B Charging Policy, and this associated EIA, will be reviewed 6 months after implementation.

Signed: Mel Brain

Date: 10/11/11

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Please now forward this completed template to the Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) for publication on the WBC website.