

Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment for removing Risk Based Verification of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support new claims

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

The separate EIA guidance notes outline what should be included for each section. Please read them before you begin. If you have any queries, contact your Corporate Equality Group rep, or the Engagement Team on 643 2828.

1. Author, service area, date

Andy Scott, Senior Client Manager Revenues, Benefits & Customer Services, 13 September 2019

2. Who else has been involved in writing this EIA?

Tracy Hunter, Client Manager Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services

3. What proposal is this EIA assessing?

To consider implementing Council Tax Premiums to long term empty properties. .

4. What is the purpose of your proposal and what is it expected to achieve?

The purpose of the proposal is to incentivise owners of long term empty properties to bring them back in to use. The majority of long term empty properties in North Tyneside are in the lowest Council Tax band, often in more deprived areas of the borough. If these were brought back in to occupation it would offer a useful source of more affordable housing.

5. Is there any relevance to the aims of the public sector equality duty? *Write your answers in the table*

Aim	Yes, No, or N/A	Details if 'yes'
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment	N/A	
Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected	Yes	This should prove positive for groups more likely to experience housing issues such as younger people, single residents and single person families. This decision may lead to positive impacts in terms of age, sex and potentially pregnancy/maternity

characteristic and those who do not		
Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	N/A	

6. Analysis by characteristic *Write your answers in the table*

Protected characteristic	Potential positive or negative impact?	Explanation and evidence
All protected characteristics	Negative	There is potential for negative financial impact on some individuals where they will be required to pay more Council Tax if they own a property which has been empty for more than two years.
Age	Positive	The proposal to introduce Empty Homes Premiums should incentivise owners to bring long term empty properties back in to use. This will potentially boost the supply of properties available to buy or rent, leading to a positive impact on our Housing and Homeless Strategies. This should prove positive for groups more likely to experience housing issues such as younger people, single residents and single person families. This decision may lead to positive impacts in terms of age, sex and potentially pregnancy/maternity.
Disability	No impact	
Gender	Positive	The proposal to introduce Empty Homes Premiums should incentivise owners to bring long term empty properties back in to use. This will potentially boost the supply of properties available to buy or rent, leading to a positive impact on our Housing and Homeless Strategies. This should prove positive for groups more likely to experience housing issues such as younger people, single residents and single person families. This decision may lead to positive impacts in terms of age, sex and potentially pregnancy/maternity.
Gender reassignment	No impact	
Marriage and civil	No impact	

partnership status		
Pregnancy and maternity	Positive	The proposal to introduce Empty Homes Premiums should incentivise owners to bring long term empty properties back in to use. This will potentially boost the supply of properties available to buy or rent, leading to a positive impact on our Housing and Homeless Strategies. This should prove positive for groups more likely to experience housing issues such as younger people, single residents and single person families. This decision may lead to positive impacts in terms of age, sex and potentially pregnancy/maternity.
Race	No impact	
Religion or belief	No impact	
Sexual orientation	No impact	

7. Have you carried out any engagement in relation to this proposal? If so, what?

- We have discussed the process internally with the Head of Finance and the Lead member for Finance and Resources has also been consulted.
- We have discussed impacts with the other 11 North East regional authorities.
- We are seeking permission from Cabinet to consult externally by way of an online questionnaire, liaison with national landlords association and our Community and Voluntary Sector Partners.

8. Is there any information you don't have that you need to find?

No

9. What actions are already in place, or will be taken, to remove or reduce potential negative impacts? (add more lines to the table if you need to) *Write your answers in the table*

Action	Responsibility	Timescale

10. Are there any potential negative impacts that cannot be removed or reduced? If so, why is this?

No negative impacts have been identified. We will carry out regular reviews of this process to ensure that no negative impacts emerge.

11. Based on your conclusions from this assessment, what are your next steps?

Cabinet will consider the report on the 14 October 2019

12. How will the impact of this proposal be monitored after it is introduced?

We will have regular review meetings to discuss outcomes of this proposal if the premiums are ultimately introduced to identify any emerging issues.

13. When will this EIA be reviewed?

The EIA will be reviewed annually commencing in October 2020.