

Stage 1 Equality Impact Assessment – Start Up

1.	Title of Proposal:	Scottish Borders Local Housing Strategy 2017 – 2022
2.	Service Area: Department:	<p>Housing Strategy and Services Place</p> <p>While Scottish Borders Council has statutory responsibility for the development of the strategy, its implementation is dependent on partnership working with a whole range of external organisations. Key partners include housing associations (RSLs), housing developers, private and voluntary sector service providers including information and advice providers, Care and Repair, housing support providers, estate agents, letting agents and private landlords.</p>
3.	Description:	<p>The Housing (Scotland) 2001 Act makes it a statutory requirement for all Scottish local authorities to prepare and submit a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) to Scottish Ministers. The LHS sets the strategic direction to tackle housing need and demand in the Scottish Borders and informs future investment in housing and related services across the Scottish Borders. The LHS is regularly reviewed and updated every five years.</p> <p>The LHS is Scottish Borders Council’s primary strategic document on housing. It sets out the vision for housing in the Scottish Borders that <i>‘Every person in the Scottish Borders lives in a home that meets their needs’</i> There are four priorities that will help to achieve this vision, these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The supply of housing meets the needs of our communities • More people live in good quality, energy efficient homes • Less people are affected by homelessness • More people are supported to live independently in their own homes

	There are numerous strategies and plans that sit under the LHS that feed into the strategy, these include; Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP), Homelessness Delivery Plan, Temporary Accommodation Strategy, Fuel Poverty Delivery Plan.
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4.	Relevance to the Equality Duty.		
	Do you believe your proposal has any relevance to the following duties of the Council under the Equality Act 2010?		
	Duty		Yes/No
	Elimination of discrimination (both direct & indirect), victimisation and harassment.		Yes. The implementation of the LHS will have an impact on the whole population of the Scottish Borders as everyone needs a home
	Promotion of equality of opportunity?		Yes. The development and implementation of the LHS and the action plan will identify and promote equality of opportunity
Foster good relations?		Yes. The implementation of the LHS is dependent on partnership working and requires engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. Through implementation there is also the potential to engage further and to build new relationships	

5.	Which groups of people may be impacted (both positively and negatively) if the proposal is advanced?				
	Equality Characteristic	Impact			Description
		No Impact	Possible Positive Impact	Possible Negative Impact	
Age		X		The LHS is inclusive to all individuals regardless of age. Supply of new affordable housing that meets the needs of the communities should provide a range of choice of housing for families, which in turn should benefit the health and well-being of children, young people and older people. There are a number of actions set out in the Homelessness Delivery Plan to tackle youth homelessness and to support young people to sustain their tenancies. Older people are one of the key client groups identified in the Independent Living objectives of the strategy. It clearly identifies the projected growth of people over 75 is expected to increase by 95% and identifies actions which should help meet the housing needs of older people. This will require effective joint working with Social Work, NHS Borders, RSLs and other private and voluntary sector organisations. Older and other vulnerable	

				people are prioritised for assistance and grants for housing improvement, and Care and Repair. SBC will be starting work on an Older Peoples Housing Strategy once the LHS has been finalised.
Disability		X		<p>The LHS is inclusive to all individuals regardless of disability. There are numerous plans linked to the LHS that focus on disability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SESplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment identify the need for specialist housing but identified that more work needs to be carried out in this area. • Housing Contribution Statement – sets out how work by the council’s housing department as well as RSLs will contribute to the delivery of the Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan. • Priority Client Group Delivery Plan – The Priority Client Groups delivery plan considers how appropriate and good quality accommodation can help vulnerable groups live with a good quality of life, as independently as they choose, and contribute to improving health and wellbeing. This plan was super succeeded by the Housing Contribution Statement
Gender		X		<p>There is no impact on gender in new housing supply and investment in existing housing. Access to social rented housing by gender is recorded by RSLs and is monitored by the SHR. The Council has no enforcement powers over RSL access and housing management policies. The Council delivers the homelessness service and records access and outcomes by gender – the strategy includes an assessment of the incidence of homelessness by male/female, but as yet no needs assessment has been undertaken by transgender/transsexual people. Private sector services and housing support services delivered by the Council record applications and outcomes by gender including transgender and transsexual people. However, there is scope to record this information at the Homeless assessment stage, prior to referral to support services and this has been identified. During the previous LHS, the Homelessness Service worked (and continue to work) in partnership with RSLs and the Safer Communities Team to implement a unified domestic abuse policy. Providing a consistent, co-ordinated and responsive approach by Borders housing providers to addressing the housing needs of women and men who suffer domestic abuse.</p> <p>The LHS improves access to housing for all and so there is likely to be a positive impact. This will be monitored throughout the life of the LHS</p>
Race Groups		X		<p>Information on people of different nationalities and ethnic origins are included in the strategy. Access to social housing is recorded by the RSLs and monitored through the Scottish Social Housing Charter. The Homelessness Service records ethnicity through data collection systems. All information and advice is available in alternative formats or translated upon request as is Council policy.</p> <p>Through the development of the SESplan Housing Need and Demand Assessment No. 2 identified that there is limited data available to quantify the level and type of housing required to meet specific housing needs and understands the importance of strengthening the evidence base to measure the housing need and demand of</p>

				<p>particular needs groups and / or for specialist housing provision. Further work is required of the following groups:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Households with particular needs (including older people; people with a physical disability; mental health and learning disabilities); 2. Gypsy Travellers and Travelling Show-people; and 3. Demand for below market rent housing, with emphasis on first time buyers. <p>Through the development of the LHS it will be identified if this will impact negatively on this group.</p>
People with Religious or other Beliefs		X		The LHS is fully inclusive to all religions and beliefs (including non-belief). The LHS improves the range and supply of affordable housing and access to housing and support services to all. There is likely to be a positive impact on these groups, and outcomes will be monitored through the life span of the LHS and through the delivery of specific housing and support services.
Pregnancy and Maternity		X		The LHS improves the range and supply of affordable housing and access to housing and support services to all. There is likely to be a positive impact on this group, and outcomes will be monitored through the life span of the LHS and through the delivery of specific housing and support services. The Homelessness Service has specific working procedures in place for expectant mothers and those with children. There has been a significant amount of work carried out through the Home Energy Advice Service to provide information and advice on fuel poverty and energy efficiency to Bump and Baby Groups.
Sexual Orientation		X		The LHS is fully inclusive to all irrespective of a person's sexual orientation. The LHS improves access to housing and support services for all and there is likely to be a positive impact on this group through its implementation. Outcomes for this group will be monitored throughout delivery of the LHS and associated services.
Carers		X		The LHS is inclusive to all those with caring responsibilities. The Housing Contribution Statement identifies carers as one of the priorities; Promote visiting support services such as befriending and carers support services particularly in rural villages to prevent social isolation and increase/ maintain social networks of vulnerable people and their carers Information on carers will be included in the Older Peoples Housing Strategy which will be developed in 2016/17
Poverty		X		The LHS sets out priority areas for investment in housing, including rural areas. The LHS recognises the needs of those on low income through the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment, identifying the number of households unlikely to be able to afford market housing and projecting the number of households that require affordable housing solutions. The strategy considers the needs of those in fuel poverty and sets out the services and actions required to tackle fuel poverty. This includes information and advice on income maximisation and energy efficiency. Income maximisation and welfare benefits advice is integral to the homeless service and private housing sector services provided by the Council.
Employees	X			No impact. Housing staff will continue to fulfil their regular duties and responsibilities in terms of delivering and implementing the Local Housing Strategy, as well as providing the other statutory housing support, advice and

				information functions.
6.	Mitigation			
	Characteristic	Mitigation		
	Race	Further work will be carried out to strengthen the evidence base to measure the housing need and demand of particular needs groups and/ or for specialist housing provision. This work will be separate to the LHS but will feed into the monitoring of the LHS in the future.		
	All	The implementation of the LHS will bring many positive outcomes for all communities in the Scottish Borders. The LHS is a high level strategic document, therefore, there are specific strategies that feed into the LHS that cover the four priorities, these include SHIP, Fuel Poverty Plan, Health and Homelessness Strategy, Older Peoples Housing Strategy and Housing Contribution Statement. Throughout the development of the LHS any gaps in evidence/ data will be identified and steps will be put in place to ensure these are monitored within the strategy.		

7.	How certain are you of the answers you have given?	
	Answer	Tick One
	Certain - I have populated the evidence base to support my answers.	✓
	Fairly Certain – but don't have concrete evidence to support my answers so would recommend further assessment is conducted if the proposal is progressed.	
	Not Certain – further assessment is recommended if proposal is progressed.	

Completed By			
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