

Diversity impact assessment

TITLE

Name / description of the issue being assessed

Tenant Incentive Scheme policy

DATE

Date the DIA is completed

20.08.18

LEAD OFFICER

Name, title and dept of person responsible for carrying out the DIA.

Katherine Bishop – Business Development Officer

1 Summary description of the proposed change

- What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed?
- How does it compare with the current situation?

The Tenant Incentive policy provides an incentive for tenants to transfer to a council, social landlord or private sector property more suitable for their household size. This policy will also be applied to offer alternative accommodation to those tenants living in a disabled adapted property that they no longer require.

The Policy has been updated at section 5.7 to provide information regarding Mutual Exchange.

Where a tenant is downsizing via a mutual exchange (moving from a property they are under occupying by bedroom size) and they are affected by the under occupation size criteria charge (spare room subsidy) as a result of Welfare Reform changes. Medway Council will use its discretion in meeting the costs of removals and any other moving expenses, up to a maximum allowance of £500 per household.

Tenants moving via a mutual exchange that are subject to under occupation size criteria charge (spare room subsidy) will also be entitled to a downsizing incentive payment. The rates are the same as apply to downsizing transfer applicants. To be eligible for this incentive, the exchange must be to a property where no size criteria charge applies at the time of the move.

2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment

- Eg: Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user records etc.
- Eg: Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile

As at 13/08/2018 HRA housing had 2,977 tenanted properties, analysis has shown that 563 out of 2,977 (19%) of HRA properties are under occupied. Of the properties that are under occupied, it is estimated that there are a total of 743 spare bedrooms.

Table 1: Number of under occupied properties by property type and number of bedrooms.

Diversity impact assessment

Table 1

Prop type	Bedrooms in property			Total
	2	3	4	
Bungalow	8			8
Flat	80	26		106
House	140	299	6	445
HFIL	4			4
Total	232	325	6	563

The table above shows that houses are the most under occupied property type. Although they make up 42% of the overall HRA stock, houses account for 79% of under occupied property types. The majority of properties that are under occupied are 3-bed houses.

3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

- Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't?

(insert ✓ in one or more boxes)

Protected characteristic groups	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age			
Disability	✓		
Gender reassignment			
Marriage/civil partnership			
Pregnancy/maternity			
Race			
Religion/belief			
Sex			
Income	✓		
Sexual orientation			

4 Summary of the likely impacts

Diversity impact assessment

Income

The properties will have to be in good decorative order to be considered for the incentive scheme. Some tenants may consider this to be a disadvantage if they feel that they are unable to keep the property in good decorative order due to lack of financial funds.

The scheme will also be available only to those who have a clear rent account or have an agreement in place to clear arrears.

Tenants who owe current rent arrears and former tenant debts or a sundry debt to the council, and where reasonable repayment of the debt cannot be negotiated will not be eligible for the scheme.

Disability

If a tenant applies for the cash incentive to move from an adapted property and/or requires an adapted property to move into, then this would be identified as part of the application process. This may disadvantage some disabled tenants, due to the number of adapted properties available.

Access to information

Those with learning difficulties or visual impairments or for tenants whose first language is not English may find it difficult to read the policy.

5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

Income

Some discretion will be used in determining eligibility against criterion, as individual tenants' circumstances will have to be taken into account.

Any arrears will be cleared from money due under the Tenants Incentive Scheme.

Council tenants who joined the Housing Register to downsize, whose rent accounts are in arrears only due to the Welfare Reform (size criteria) changes, will be eligible for the scheme.

An additional maximum £500 will be paid to tenants to help towards moving costs.

Diversity impact assessment

Disability

Depending on the adaptations required, these could be looked at as part of the offer process to an alternate property. It is therefore expected that disabled tenants with disabilities may benefit as the property they would be entering would be suitably adapted, and they may wish to sacrifice a property that is too big for one which can be adapted.

Access to information

It has been identified that some residents will need additional support and advice regarding the policy, as there may be difficulty in interpreting, or accessing information. Additionally some residents may need the information in a different format or language.

6 Action plan

- *Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence*

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
The council to ensure that information is provided in a variety of formats, including Easy Read, Braille or Audio if required.	Housing Manager	Ongoing

7 Recommendation

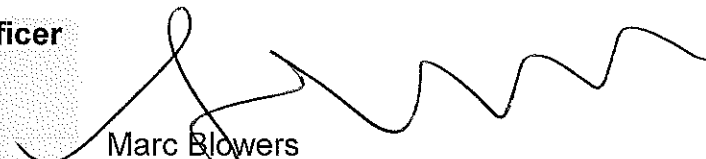
To proceed with the implementation of the revised policy.

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that:

- *the recommendation can be implemented*
- *sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned*
- *the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored*

Authorising Officer



Marc Blowers
Head of Housing Management

Date

6-11-14

Contact your Performance and Intelligence hub for advice on completing this assessment

RCC:	phone 2443	email: annamarie.lawrence@medway.gov.uk
C&A: (Children's Social Care)	contact your normal P&I contact	
C&A (all other areas):	phone 4013	email: chrismckenzie@medway.gov.uk
BSD:	phone 2472/1490	email: corppl@medway.gov.uk
PH:	phone 2636	email: david.whiting@medway.gov.uk

Diversity impact assessment

Send completed assessment to the Corporate Performance & Intelligence Hub (CPI) for web publication
(corppi@medway.gov.uk)

