

Community and Equality Impact Assessment

As an authority we have made a commitment to apply a systematic screening process to both new policy development or changes to services.

This is to determine whether the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on different groups within our community.

This process has been developed, together with [full guidance \(PDF\)](#), to support officers in meeting our duties under the:

- Equality Act 2010.
- The Best Value Guidance
- The Public Services (Social Value) 2012 Act

In addition the guidance supports officers to consider our commitments set out in the [Thurrock Joint Compact](#) with the voluntary sector.

As well as supporting you to look at whether there is, or will be, a significant impact, the guidance will also consider ways in which you might mitigate this in the future.

About the service or policy development

Name of service or policy	Fixed Term Secure tenancies
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Why is this service or policy development/review needed?

The legislation has changed, making it mandatory for all local authorities to issue Fixed Term Secure Tenancies, starting 1 April 2017.

1. Community impact (this can be used to assess impact on staff although a cumulative impact should be considered).

What impacts will this service or policy development have on communities?
Look at what you know? What does your research tell you?

Consider:

- National and local data sets – for example, [key statistics and ward profiles](#)
- Complaints
- Consultation and service monitoring information
- Voluntary and Community Organisations
- The Equality Act places a specific duty on people with ‘protected characteristics’. The table below details these groups and helps you to consider the impact on these groups.

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	What are the positive and negative impacts?	How will benefits be enhanced and negative impacts minimised or eliminated?
Local communities in general	Y		Y	Communities will be more cautious that their tenancy may not be renewed if the terms and conditions of the tenancy are not adhered to. They may feel that they need to prove they are a good tenant, which will result in a positive impact.	The qualities of good behaviour such as paying rent on time and respecting others in the community will be highlighted within the policy and reiterated when tenancies are given so that tenants are aware of how their behaviour will be measured.

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				<p>On the other hand, if tenancies are issued for a shorter timeframe, they may deflect from building sustainable communities. Tenants may feel that they are not able to settle and feel at home due to the possibility of moving in a few years.</p>	<p>It is important that the timeframes for fixed term tenancies do not compromise building sustainable communities. Therefore thought must be given to various groups and their future needs to move. For example a young family may not need to move for a number of years, therefore consideration should be given to maximising tenancies for households with children. On the other hand, an older couple living in a single bedroom property may also not need to move for a number of years, therefore they should be encouraged to settle and enjoy their home without the threat of being moved within a short timeframe.</p>
Age	Y		Y	<p>Older people in larger properties than they need have been left alone to manage their tenancies unless it has been highlighted that they require support. Although this is positive and allows them to build local</p>	<p>The review at the end of the tenancy could assess the size of the property they are living in and also initiate the conversation, if they require support in moving to a smaller property or wish to move to a different</p>

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			<p>connections, it can also have a negative impact, in that they are coping in a bigger property than they need and possibly paying higher rent as a result. It could also result in them not needing early intervention of support, which may result in more drastic intervention at crisis point.</p> <p>Younger families, with children of school age could benefit from having a stable home until their children reach 19, which will allow them to embed themselves in the local community and have stability of remaining in the same home.</p>	<p>area.</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>There are positive and negative aspects for disabled individuals, however these are similar to other groups without disabilities. For example fixed term tenancies will facilitate a regular review of housing needs and any additional support the local authority can offer. However it will not necessarily be a “home for life” as needs may change</p>	<p>Thurrock needs to be very clear at the beginning of the tenancies what issues will be reviewed and that there may be a possibility that a tenant may need to move either through bad behaviour or changed housing requirements. This will allow for a better management of expectation.</p>

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				over time.	
Gender reassignment		Y			
Marriage and civil partnership		Y			
Pregnancy and maternity		Y			
Race (including Gypsies, Roma and Travellers)		Y			

Religion or belief		Y			
Gender		Y			
Sexual orientation		Y			
Any community issues identified for this location? <i>See above link to ward profiles.</i> If the project is based in a specific location please state where, or whether Borough wide. Please note any detail of relevance e.g. is it an area with high unemployment, or public transport limited?					

2. Consultation.

Provide details of what steps you have taken or plan to take to consult the whole community or specific groups affected by the service or policy development e.g. on-line consultation, focus groups, consultation with representative groups?

This is a vital step – see [full guidance \(PDF\)](#).

- A letter highlighting the consultation has been sent to all current tenants with their rent statement in July 2016
- A message highlighting the consultation has been sent to all current applicants on the housing register in July 2016.
- All staff forums have been sent details of the consultation along with the link in July 2016.
- The new legislation and consultation has been shared at the Mental Health Forum on 27 July 2016.
- The consultation has been highlighted on the Thurrock Council website.
- The consultation has been circulated to all Housing staff to gain their views, in light of their experiences on 27 July 2016.
- The new legislation and consultation has been shared with the Tenants Excellence panel on 23 August 2016.

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This is a vital step – see [full guidance \(PDF\)](#).

- The new legislation and consultation has been shared with members on 29 September 2016

3. Monitoring and Review

How will you review community and equality impact once the service or policy has been implemented?

*These actions should be developed using the information gathered in **Section 1 and 2** and should be picked up in your departmental/service business plans.*

Action	By when?	By who?
The Fixed term Tenancies will be reviewed every time the tenancy comes to an end. In addition the Tenancy Management Team will deal with any issues as and when they happen.	Tenancy Management Team	Ongoing

4. Next steps

It is important the information gathered is used to inform any Council reports that are presented to Cabinet or Overview and Scrutiny committees. This will allow Members to be furnished with all the facts in relation to the impact their decisions will have on different equality groups and the community as a whole.

Take some time to précis your findings below. This can then be added to your report template for sign off by the Community Development and Equalities team at the consultation stage of the report cycle.

Implications/ Customer Impact

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There will be a shift in the way social housing is allocated and managed. It will be more needs based, rather than homes issued “for life”. We anticipate more movement within housing stock as a result, however this will be gradual, as all current secure tenants will remain secure. In addition all of those on Introductory tenancies will be given secure tenancies until the new policy comes into effect. For example, if a new tenant is given an Introductory Tenancy before April 2017, they will be granted a secure tenancy when their introductory comes to an end. Those Introductory Tenancies issues after April 2017 will then be given a fixed term tenancy once their year is over.

As this change will only affect new tenants, it will be easier to manage expectation, as they will be clear from the start that the tenancy is only for a fixed period of time Thereafter it will be reviewed as will be highlighted in the policy.

5. Sign off

The information contained in this template should be authorised by the relevant project sponsor or Head of Service who will be responsible for the accuracy of the information now provided and delivery of actions detailed.

Name	Role (e.g. project sponsor, head of service)	Date