

Equality Impact Assessment : Screening Pro Forma

Section	Housing Advice Services	Officer responsible for the screening/scoping	Susie Jones – Homeless Projects Officer		
Name of Policy to be assessed	Housing Solutions: Housing Advice & Homelessness Prevention Strategy (HSS) 2007 – 2012 - Action Plan	Date of Assessment	13 October 2010	Is this a proposed new or existing policy/procedure/practice?	Existing
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/procedure/practice?	To summarise and progress actions identified in the HSS to improve the prevention of homelessness services in Guildford Borough. To ensure that the Council complies with current and future homelessness legislation.				
2. Are there any associated or specific objectives of the policy/procedure/practice? Please explain.	To reduce incidents of homelessness within the Borough through proactive homelessness prevention interventions. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, to ensure that appropriate advice and assistance is available including assistance under relevant homelessness legislation.				
3. Who is intended to benefit from this policy and in what way?	Any member of the community experiencing housing issues including : Any person, including single person households, at risk of or experiencing homelessness, to prevent or resolve their homelessness.				
4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy/procedures/practice?	That key homelessness prevention and resolution targets identified within the action plan are achieved within the set timescales.				
5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	Lack of resources affecting both the Council and partnership agencies ability to deliver key targets Lack of suitable and affordable social and private sector accommodation Economic climate incl: changes to benefits LHA, JSA, ESA etc increase in numbers of households becoming homeless through repossession				

6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?	All sectors of the community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service users • Agencies working with people affected homelessness including: social and health services including services for people needing support with drug & alcohol misuse, physical and mental illness and learning disability services working with offenders including police, probation and other community safety agencies • outreach and floating support agencies • social and private sector housing providers • education services incl schools • voluntary and community groups. 	7. Who implements the policy, and who is responsible for the policy?	Guildford Borough Council, Housing Advice Services Staff
8. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact on racial groups?	Y	N	
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Some BME groups are ineligible for assistance via HSS Action Plan targets due to immigration restrictions although all remain eligible for advice. Along with the other publications available via the Housing Advice Centre the HSS Action Plan is not currently available in any format or language other than English, although an interpreting/translation service is available if required.		
9. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to gender?	Y	N	
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Services identified within the HSS Action Plan are non gender specific. Exceptions to this are some restrictions around females accessing specific town centre hostels and males accessing some domestic abuse targeted services.		
10. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to disability?	Y	N	

<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>Legislation provides specific assistance to people at risk of homelessness with a disability although there continues to be a shortfall of short and long term housing for disabled people living within the community. There are no single person hostels which are accessible to people with mobility issues. Along with the other publications available via the Housing Advice Centre the HSS Action Plan is not currently available in other formats such as large print, braille etc although this may be arranged if required.</p>
<p>11. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?</p>	<p>Y N</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>Services identified within the HSS Action Plan are available to all service users regardless of sexual orientation, however further work to monitor the declared sexuality of housing applicant's users is being undertaken.</p>
<p>12. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to their age?</p>	<p>Y N</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>Legislation provides specific assistance to people at increased risk of harm through homelessness due to old age or being under 18 years. Generally services identified within the HSS Action Plan are not age specific with the exception of some services which are restricted for use by people over 60 and some for young people age 16 to 30.</p>
<p>13. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to their religious belief?</p>	<p>Y N</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>Services identified within the HSS Action Plan are available to all service users regardless of religious belief, however further work to monitor the declared religion of housing applicant's is being undertaken.</p>
<p>14. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them having dependants/caring responsibilities?</p>	<p>Y N</p>

<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>Homeless legislation provides specific assistance to households in which there is someone with a disability. However there continues to be a shortfall of short and long term housing for disabled people living within the community. There are no single person hostels that can accommodate couples, including someone acting as a carer. In certain circumstances arrangements can be made to accommodate them separately within the same scheme to enable them to continue to provide care and support. In practice few people with disabilities that require a carer will be assisted through hostels other than in an emergency.</p>	
<p>15. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them have an offending past?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>Options to prevent or resolve homelessness for some offenders is limited as some services exclude offenders with specific convictions i.e. arson. There is a local joint protocol as well as multi agency groups working to identify suitable services for hard to accommodate offenders.</p>	
<p>16. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them being transgender or transsexual?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>Services identified within the HSS Action Plan are available to all service users regardless of whether they identify themselves as transgendered or transsexual. However work to monitor the number of housing applicant's declaring themselves as transgender or transsexual is currently being undertaken.</p>	
<p>17. Could the differential impact identified in 8-16 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy/procedure/practice?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>18. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason?</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>N</p>

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24. If No, are there any changes required to the policy to improve it around the equality agenda?	Y	N								

Signed
(completing officer)

Date

Signed
(Head of Section)

Date

Countersigned
(member of Equality Action Group)

Date