



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Including Socio-Economic duty

Title of EqIA:

The purpose of an assessment is to understand the impact of the Council's activities* on people from protected and socio-economic disadvantaged groups and to assess whether unlawful discrimination may occur. It also helps identify key equality issues and highlight opportunities to promote equality across the Council and the community. The assessment should be carried out at the initial stages of the planning process so that findings can be incorporated into the final proposals, and where appropriate have a bearing on the outcome.

(*Activity can mean strategy, practice, function, policy, procedure, decision, project, or service)

Team	Revenues and Benefits	Assessment carried out by (name)	Chris Watchman	Is this a new or existing activity?
Activity being assessed	Council Tax Empty Homes & Second Homes premium	Date of Assessment	18.12.2023	NEW

A. Initial assessment

1) What is the aim/ objective of the activity being assessed? How do they link to wider council or strategic objectives?	To amend a Council Tax Empty Homes premium to one year or more for dwellings that are empty with effect from 1 April 2024 (previously charged after two years) and to introduce second homes premium with effect from 1 April 2025. This supports the Housing, Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy by addressing housing supply through bringing long term empty homes and second homes into use as a main dwelling.
2) Who is intended to benefit from it and how?	Residents across the district will benefit by bringing empty homes back into use and by encouraging dwellings to be used as a primary residence.

3) If your activity uses contractors, do you ensure that they comply with the Council's Equalities and Fairness policy and relevant legislation?	N/A
B. Engagement and Involvement	
4) What data do you have on how people (from different equality groups) would be affected by the activity?	Any Council Tax payer who has either an empty dwelling or a second home may be affected. No data is held relating to protected characteristics for council tax purposes.
5) What information do you have from any previous consultations and/or local/national consultations, research, or practical guidance?	No consultation is required under the legislation. Information on the number of dwellings affected has been obtained from the Council Tax Base Return (CTB1)
6) Please list any current and planned engagement, methods used and groups you plan to engage with.	All owners of properties classed as second homes will be contacted should Council agree to introduce a Second Homes Premium with full details of the premium and the exceptions. A communications campaign will also be devised during 2024/25 promoting the desired outcome of the policy to bring second homes into use as a primary residence.
C. Who will be affected? Review of equality analysis and potential actions	
7) Will the impact on people due to their racial group be: a) Positive b) Negative c) Neutral	Neutral - Any Council Tax payer who has either an empty dwelling or a second home may be affected irrespective of race.
8) Will the impact on people due to their gender be: a) Positive b) Negative c) Neutral	Neutral - Any Council Tax payer who has either an empty dwelling or a second home may be affected irrespective of gender.

<p>9) Will the impact on people due to their disability be:</p> <p>a) Positive b) Negative c) Neutral</p>	<p>Neutral - Any Council Tax payer who has either an empty dwelling or a second home may be affected irrespective of disability.</p>
<p>10) Will the impact on people due to their sexual orientation be:</p> <p>a) Positive b) Negative c) Neutral</p>	<p>Neutral - Any Council Tax payer who has either an empty dwelling or a second home may be affected irrespective of sexual orientation.</p>
<p>11) Will the impact on people due to their age be:</p> <p>a) Positive b) Negative c) Neutral</p>	<p>Neutral - Any Council Tax payer who has either an empty dwelling or a second home may be affected irrespective of age.</p>
<p>12) Will the impact on people due to their religious or other belief be:</p> <p>a) Positive b) Negative c) Neutral</p>	<p>Neutral - Any Council Tax payer who has either an empty dwelling or a second home may be affected irrespective of religious or other belief.</p>
<p>13) Will the impact on people due to their due to them having dependants/ caring responsibilities be:</p> <p>a) Positive b) Negative c) Neutral</p>	<p>Neutral - Any Council Tax payer who has either an empty dwelling or a second home may be affected irrespective of dependants or caring responsibilities.</p>
<p>14) Will the impact on people due to them being transgendered or transsexual be:</p> <p>a) Positive b) Negative c) Neutral</p>	<p>Neutral - Any Council Tax payer who has either an empty dwelling or a second home may be affected irrespective of being transgender or transsexual.</p>

<p>15) Will the impact on people due to them being socio-economically disadvantaged be:</p> <p>a) Positive b) Negative c) Neutral</p>	<p>Positive – second home ownership is demonstrated to drive up house prices in areas and as a result residents may find themselves priced out of the local housing market. Tourism destinations with higher concentration of second home ownership will be most affected.</p> <p>The implementation of premiums for empty and second homes may bring properties back into primary occupation as either home ownership or longer-term rental for the wider benefit of the Rother District community.</p> <p>Increasing housing supply locally into the current short supply within the private rental sector could benefit those of working age and on relatively low incomes who are adversely impacted by the rent gap.</p> <p>The proposals will generate additional revenue to the Council and its preceptors (?) to deliver services to the wider population including those who are socio-economically disadvantaged.</p>
<p>D. Summary of findings</p>	
<p>1) Is there any evidence that people from different groups may have different expectations of the activity being assessed?</p> <p>a) Yes b) No</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2) Could the activity have an adverse impact on relations between different groups?</p> <p>a) Yes b) No</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>3) How can the negative impacts identified in 7-15 be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for another legitimate reason?</p>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p>

4) As a result of this assessment and available evidence collected, including consultation, do you need to make any changes to the activity?	No impacts identified to make changes.
5) Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations	The impact of the policy change encourages to make more homes available as primary residences for those who live within the Rother district.

E. Action Plan of proposed changes

Recommendation	Key Activity	Timeframe	Officer Responsible	Date Completed
1.	N/A			

EqIA Sign off:

Signed (Activity Lead Officer): Chris Watchman Date: 18 December 2023.
 Position: Revenues and Benefits Manager

EqIA review date: 01.11.2024