

EQUALITY ANALYSIS

This Equality Analysis considers the effect of Bury Council/ Bury CCG activity on different groups protected from discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. This is to consider if there are any unintended consequences for some groups from key changes made by a public body and their contractor partners organisations and to consider if the activity will be fully effective for all protected groups. It involves using equality information and the results of engagement with protected groups and others, to manage risk and to understand the actual or potential effect of activity, including any adverse impacts on those affected by the change under consideration.

For support with completing this Equality Analysis please contact corporate.core@bury.gov.uk / 0161 253 6592

SECTION 1 – RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	
<i>Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page 4</i>	
1.1 Name of policy/ project/ decision	Removal of Council Tax discount applied to empty properties or second homes.
1.2 Lead for policy/ project/ decision	Benefits Operations Manager
1.3 Committee/Board signing off policy/ project/ decision	Cabinet
1.4 Author of Equality Analysis	<i>Name: Andrew Eland Role: Benefits Operations Manager Contact details: a.eland@bury.gov.uk</i>
1.5 Date EA completed	<i>7th January 2022</i>
1.6 Quality Assurance	<i>Name: Sam McVaigh Role: Director of People and Inclusion Contact details: s.mcvaigh@bury.gov.uk Comments:</i>
1.7 Date QA completed	<i>7th January 2022</i>
1.8 Departmental recording	
1.9 Next review date	<i>1st July 2022</i>

SECTION 2 – AIMS AND OUTCOMES OF POLICY / PROJECT	
<i>Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page 5</i>	
2.1 Detail of policy/ decision being sought	<p>Council Tax is charged on each domestic property in Bury. The Council Tax charge can be reduced by a series of discounts and reductions some being statutory but some being local discounts. The ability to apply discounts where a property becomes unoccupied and unfurnished is a local discount</p> <p>The intention is to remove local discounts for empty and unfurnished properties to support the Councils budget position</p>

2.2 What are the intended outcomes of this?	<p>The proposal would bring the Council into line with neighbouring authorities in Greater Manchester who no longer provide discounts on empty properties or second homes.</p> <p>Efficiencies generated through this change of approximately £750K would contribute to the Council's budget savings targets.</p>

SECTION 3 – ESTABLISHING RELEVANCE TO EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

Refer to Equality Analysis guidance pages 5-8 and 11

Please outline the relevance of the activity/ policy to the Public Sector Equality Duty

General Public Sector Equality Duties	Relevance (Yes/No)	Rationale behind relevance decision
3.1 To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by Equality Act 2010	Yes	There is a risk that, without appropriate equality consideration, the proposal could have a differential impact on protected groups and contravene the Public Sector Equality Duty requirement to eliminate discrimination.
3.2 To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.	Yes	There is a potential for the removal of discounts (particularly in relation to second homes) to bring more houses onto the market and hence support improved and equitable access to housing in the borough.
3.3 To foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	No	The proposal is not relevant to this duty.
3.4 Please outline the considerations taken, including any mitigations, to ensure activity is not detrimental to the Human Rights of any individual affected by the decision being sought.		
The proposals do not contravene human rights expectations. Consideration has been given across the six FREDA principles and no detrimental impact identified.		

SECTION 4 – EQUALITIES DATA

Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page 8

Protected characteristic	Outcome sought	Base data	Data gaps (to include in Section 8 log)
4.1 Age	Through the cessation of discounts, no differential impact on this characteristic.	There is no data in relation to the protected characteristics of the Council Tax Base.	The lack of base data on current recipients of the discount means that it is not possible to provide any analysis of
4.2 Disability			
4.3 Gender			
4.4 Pregnancy or Maternity			
4.5 Race			

4.6 Religion and belief			<p>differential impact by characteristic. The proposals are, however not directly related to an individuals characteristic and the alternative assistance provided through remaining statutory discounts should provide a mitigation in key areas.</p> <p>The Council has seen no evidence which suggests a disproportionate impact in relation to protected groups of the number of second homes / empty properties more broadly.</p>
4.7 Sexual Orientation			
4.8 Marriage or Civil Partnership			
4.9 Gender Reassignment			
4.10 Carers			
4.11 Looked After Children and Care Leavers			
4.12 Armed Forces personnel including veterans			
4.13 Socio-economically vulnerable			

SECTION 5 – STAKEHOLDERS AND ENGAGEMENT		
<i>Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page 8 and 9</i>		
	Internal Stakeholders	External Stakeholders
5.1 Identify stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff within relevant teams within Finance Elected Members 	All Bury residents, including specifically those in receipt of the discount at present
5.2 Engagement undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers of the Finance Department and other Departments Discussion and endorsement of the proposal as a basis for consultation at Cabinet on 17 November 2021 	Public consultation open to all with owners of properties that were either currently empty, or second homes, specifically targeted and sent a letter containing details of the online survey (One Community allows respondents to translate a page/survey/documents in to other languages. One community also meets all current accessibility requirements) and hard copies provided on request.
5.3 Outcomes of engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement that this is a viable financial saving Agreement to proceed with public consultation to inform the decision to implement and that consultation would be targeted to those who would be affected most, including letters to homes 	<p>There were 254 visitors to the survey, 197 contributors leaving 201 contributions. – Full details are provided in the main report.</p> <p>The consultation included demographic questions. Analysis shows no difference in the nature of</p>

	receiving the discount and an article in the VCFA newsletter to engage groups offering support to vulnerable people.	responses based on protected characteristics.
5.4 Outstanding actions following engagement (include in Section 8 log)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further engagement with members via January Cabinet meeting • Clear communication to Members on decision and approach to implementation to support resident engagement. 	Consultation did not identify any areas for further engagement

SECTION 6 – CONCLUSION OF IMPACT

Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page 9

Please outline whether the activity/ policy has a positive or negative effect on any groups of people with protected inclusion characteristics

Protected Characteristic	Positive/ Neutral Negative/	Impact (include reference to data/ engagement)
6.1 Age	Neutral	No differential impact identified – Legislation sets out a range of exemptions which will continue to be applied which will mitigate any differential impact due to age. This includes: Class E (Hospital patient/ person in care home (permanently)) and Class T (Unoccupied Granny Annex).
6.2 Disability	Neutral	No differential impact identified. – Legislation sets out a range of exemptions which will continue to be applied which will mitigate any differential impact due to disability. This includes: Class E (Hospital patient/ person in care home (permanently)) and Class I (Left to receive care).
6.3 Gender	Neutral	No differential impact identified
6.4 Pregnancy or Maternity	Neutral	No differential impact identified
6.5 Race	Neutral	No differential impact identified
6.6 Religion and belief	Neutral	No differential impact identified – Legislation sets out a range of exemptions which will continue to be applied which will mitigate any differential impact due to religion or belief. This includes: Class H (Left Empty for Minister of religion).
6.7 Sexual Orientation	Neutral	No differential impact identified
6.8 Marriage or Civil Partnership	Neutral	No differential impact identified
6.9 Gender Reassignment	Neutral	No differential impact identified
6.10 Carers	Neutral	No differential impact identified - Legislation sets out a range of exemptions which will continue to be applied which will mitigate any differential impact due to caring. This includes: Class J (Left to provide care).

6.11 Looked After Children and Care Leavers	Neutral	No differential impact identified
6.12 Armed Forces personnel including veterans	Neutral	No differential impact identified - Legislation sets out a range of exemptions which will continue to be applied which will mitigate any differential impact due to military service. This includes: Class E (Left empty by armed forces personnel)
6.13 Socio-economically vulnerable	Neutral	Council Tax Support is available for people in financial difficulty and resident in a property, whilst this excludes the empty property it may assist with the charge at their new home.
6.14 Overall impact - What will the likely overall effect of your activity be on equality, including consideration on intersectionality?	Neutral	

SECTION 7 – ACTION LOG

Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page 10

Action Identified	Lead	Due Date	Comments and Sign off (when complete)
7.1 Actions to address gaps identified in section 4			
Strengthening equality data around affected individuals to track the impact of this change and identify and respond to any disproportionate impact.	Andrew Eland	Mid February 2022	
7.2 Actions to address gaps identified in section 5			
Following decision, inclusive and accessible communications will be issued to all current recipients.	Andrew Eland	Mid February 2022	
Communications will be shared with members to support their engagement with residents.	Andrew Eland	Early February 2022	
7.3 Mitigations to address negative impacts identified in section 6			
Planned communication will include details of remaining discretions, in particular those which mitigate equality impact.	Andrew Eland	Mid February 2022	
7.4 Opportunities to further inclusion (equality, diversity and human rights) including to advance opportunities and engagements across protected characteristics			
N/A			

SECTION 8 - REVIEW

Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page 10

Review Milestone	Lead	Due Date	Comments (and sign off when complete)
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Implementation	Andrew Eland	April 2022	
Initial impact and feedback	Andrew Eland	July 2022	

Please make sure that every section of the Equality Analysis has been fully completed. The author of the EA should then seek Quality Assurance sign off and departmental recording.

SECTION 9 – QUALITY ASSURANCE		
<i>Refer to Equality Analysis guidance page x</i>		
Consideration	Yes/ No	Rationale and details of further actions required
Have all section been completed fully?	Yes	
Has the duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimization and other conducted prohibited by the PSED and Equalities Act been considered and acted upon?	Yes	
Has the duty to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not been considered and acted upon	Yes	
Has the duty to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, been consider and acted upon	Yes	
Has the action log fully detailed any required activity to address gaps in data, insight and/or engagement in relation to inclusion impact?	Yes	
Have clear and robust reviewing arrangements been set out?	Yes	
Are there any further comments to be made in relation to this EA	Yes	