

Local Housing Allowance Safeguarding

Evidence based equality analysis

Main aims, purpose and outcomes and how does it fit in with the wider aims of the organisation:

Housing Benefit (called Local Housing Allowance for private tenants) is normally paid to private tenants rather than to their landlords. The Safeguarding Policy helps to protect vulnerable customers who are have rent arrears or who are not likely or able to pay the rent from their Housing Benefit.

Local Housing Allowance is the amount the government says should be used in calculating Housing Benefit for people living in privately rented accommodation. The amounts used are fixed by the Valuation Office according to the average rents in the area. Housing Benefit for private tenants must be paid to the tenants rather than the landlord except in two circumstances which are:

- Rent arrears of 8 weeks or more
- Where the tenant is unable to manage their money

The policy stipulates that proof of rent arrears must be provided.

Lead officer: Susan Taylor

Stakeholders: West Cheshire Homes, private sector landlord team, Citizen's Advice Bureau.

Equality analysis is a valuable tool to help embed equality into everything we do

While process is important, equality analysis is essentially about outcomes

Lack of evidence of discrimination is not evidence of a lack of discrimination

It is not acceptable to say that a policy is applied uniformly to all groups and is therefore fair and equal. Applying a policy or procedure consistently may result in differential outcomes for different groups.

For each of the areas below, an assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a positive, negative or neutral impact, and brief details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation should be included. Where the impact is negative, this needs to be given a high, medium or low assessment. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact –some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

	Neutral	Positive	Negative
Target group / area			
Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers, asylum seekers etc.)		Policy supports vulnerable people in arrears, and provides a home visit to identify further support.	
Disability (as defined by the Equality Act - a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)		Policy supports vulnerable people in arrears, and provides a home visit to identify further support.	
Gender		Policy supports vulnerable people in arrears, and provides a home visit to identify further support.	
Gender reassignment		Policy supports vulnerable people in arrears, and	

		provides a home visit to identify further support.	
Religion and belief		Policy supports vulnerable people in arrears, and provides a home visit to identify further support.	
Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual)		Policy supports vulnerable people in arrears, and provides a home visit to identify further support.	
Age (children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults aged 25 – 50, younger older people aged 51 – 75/80; older people 81+. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs)		Policy supports vulnerable people in arrears, and provides a home visit to identify further support.	
Rural communities		Policy supports vulnerable people in arrears, and provides a home visit to identify further support.	
Areas of deprivation		Policy supports vulnerable people in arrears, and provides a home visit to identify further support.	
Human rights			
Health and wellbeing (consider both the wider determinants of health such as education, housing,		Policy supports vulnerable people in arrears, and provides a home visit to identify further support.	

employment, environment, crime and transport, as well as the possible impacts on lifestyles and the effect there may be on health and care services)			
Procurement/partnership (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance)		N/A	

Evidence:

Copy of policy available on request to equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk, telephone 01244 976008.
 Analysis of payments made under the scheme shows 77% of payments were made to claimants, 23% to landlords

Action plan:

Actions required	Key activity	Priority	Outcomes required	Officer responsible	Review date
Website to be updated with policy changes		High		Sandra Baguley	August 2016
Review of policy		Medium		Susan Taylor	July 2019

Sign off	
Lead officer:	Susan Taylor

Approved by Head of Service:	
Moderation and/or Scrutiny – moderated at Chief Executive’s Portfolio Equality Group	
Date: 12 July 2016	
Date analysis to be reviewed based on rating (high impact – review in one year, medium impact - review in two years, low impact in three years)	July 2019