

Shropshire Council Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessment (ESIIA)
Part One Screening Record

A. Summary Sheet on Accountability and Actions

Name of proposed service change
Shropshire Housing Strategy 2020-2025 Draft Documentation

Name of lead officer carrying out the screening
Maria Howell Enabling and Development Officer
Carol Clarke Enabling and Development Officer

Decision, review and monitoring

Decision	Yes	No
Part One ESIIA Only?	X	
Proceed to Part Two Full Report?		X

If completion of a Part One assessment is an appropriate and proportionate action at this stage, please use the boxes below and sign off as indicated. If a Part Two report is required, please move on to separate full report stage.

Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change in terms of equality and social inclusion considerations

The Planning Policy team is currently working on draft Housing Strategy, the proposed vision is;

“All homes are well designed, high quality decent homes, which will protect Shropshire's unique urban and rural environments and ensure it is a great place to live. That all Shropshire residents have access to the ‘right home in the right place’ to support and promote their health and wellbeing throughout their lives”

Based on the information available at this time, the draft Housing Strategy is likely to have a positive impact on Shropshire communities as a whole and groupings within the community.

Due to the national and local importance of housing, Shropshire Council is required to produce a strategy which will outline our housing priorities for the coming years, show how we are going to meet our objectives and how we are going to deliver the housing and housing related services over the next 5 years. The strategy will have regard to issues such as affordability, Homelessness, an aging profile, the retention of young skilled and essential workers, empty properties and climate change.

It is hoped therefore that the strategy will have a positive effect on both young and older residents, those that require some additional support and all those residents who are finding it

difficult to afford a decent home in the right location. It should also have a positive impact on wider issues such as economic growth with the provision of homes for workers and the reuse of empty properties.

As the Strategy will be published for full public consultation, the aspiration is that all residents and stakeholders can comment on the document before a final report is brought back to Cabinet for approval. At this stage we will review whether we have reached the required groupings and received a spread of responses, from across our large rural county and from groupings within the community, for example from young people, to assist in assessing the strategy proposals in terms of equality impacts whether negative or positive.

The service area is setting out to involve communities and partners during the consultation period on the Strategy. Subject to Cabinet approval, this will run for 6 weeks. Responses will be analysed, and changes made to the draft Strategy if required. This will have a positive impact on the residents and would be residents of Shropshire providing the Right Home in the Right Place. Using the opportunities outlined in the strategy the Council will be able to enhance the social impacts and impacts on health and wellbeing.

Actions to review and monitor the impact of the service change in terms of equality and social inclusion considerations

This first ESIIA will try to reach a range of people, with a focus on either end of the age spectrum, those in need of a home or an affordable home and on finding out about all needs across our rural county

We will continue to engage with all Members as community leaders, and through Cabinet and our Portfolio Holder, which will help the service area and therefore the Council to ensure that information, feedback and concerns are raised through a variety of channels and that actions may then be identified as necessary to seek to mitigate any negative impacts for any Protected Characteristic groupings within the community, and to enhance positive impacts across communities and across our rural county as a whole.

A further screening ESIIA is recommended to be carried out after the completion of the consultation process to identify if we have reached as many groupings as possible and taken on board their feedback in the development and production of the final Housing Strategy.

Associated ESIIAs

There are related ESIIAs which refer to the Local Plan Partial Review and the Council's Economic Growth Strategy. These screening assessments accompanied reports to Cabinet. Other relevant Strategies are for Temporary Accommodation, The London Road Self-build site, the Great Outdoors Strategy and the Climate Change Strategy.

Actions to mitigate negative impact, enhance positive impact, and review and monitor overall impacts in terms of any other considerations

There are positive impacts anticipated in terms of economic growth and in terms of efficient energy usage, whilst mitigating action will be taken to minimise the impact on the environment.

The Strategy in its final form should also have a positive impact on wider issues such as economic growth with the provision of homes for workers and the reuse of empty properties.

Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
Lead officer carrying out the screening Carol Clarke/ Maria Howell Housing Enabling and Development Officer		
Any internal support*		
Any external support** Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist		13 th March 2020

*This refers to other officers within the service area

**This refers either to support external to the service but within the Council, e.g. from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist, or support external to the Council, e.g. from a peer authority

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
Lead officer's name Maria Howell/ Carol Clarke		
Accountable officer's name* Gemma Davies		

*This may either be the Head of Service or the lead officer

B. Detailed Screening Assessment

Aims of the service change and description

The Shropshire Council Planning Policy Team are proposing to adopt a new Housing Strategy, the proposed vision is;

“All homes are well designed, high quality decent homes, which will protect Shropshire's unique urban and rural environments and ensure it is a great place to live. That all Shropshire residents have access to the ‘right home in the right place’ to

support and promote their health and wellbeing throughout their lives”

Producing a Housing Strategy for Shropshire will bring all the different housing functions and objectives together in one document that will highlight the issues and priorities for the Council to achieve its objectives over the coming years.

Although there is no statutory obligation to produce a housing strategy, the importance of housing nationally and relevance locally has never been more recognised or acutely felt by the Council and residents of Shropshire, particularly with regard to:

1. Affordability – inability of households with median gross household incomes to purchase a home; for example, in Shrewsbury there is a multiplier of 6.7 to purchase a median house price home. In Oswestry the figure is 5.4. The generally accepted mortgage multiplier is 4 times household income
2. Rise in homelessness – rise of 24.5% in the previous 2 years
3. Aging profile – by 2041 over a third of residents will be above 65 years of age. 35% of the population live in rural area and 61% of these residents are between 65 – 79 age group. High cost of housing challenges the ability for essential workers to be able to support older people.
4. Ensuring that young, skilled, essential workers and families can find an affordable home in Shropshire, which supports the economic growth priorities
5. There are 1,731 long term empty properties in the County
6. Climate change impacts and opportunities and new technology including advanced methods of construction

It is therefore important that in considering and addressing these fundamental difficulties, we articulate through a strategy our objectives and develop the necessary framework on how the Council will engage and work with our many stakeholders and partners to deliver housing and housing related services.

The aim is that Shropshire’s Housing Strategy 2020 – 25 will benefit all our residents, our focus is not only addressing housing need, but on the role that housing can play in meeting the economic, social and environmental aspirations of the County, which is why it is important to widely consult on our priorities and how we intend to deliver them.

The proposed Housing Strategy will demonstrate how the Council will:

- Target housing solutions within the Council area.
- Broaden the housing range for residents.
- Highlight to tenants and residents the forthcoming challenges which both the Council and they themselves will face.
- Structure the Council’s approach to housing, in particular as relevant to the Local Development Plan.
- Meet its housing legal requirements

The 6 proposed priorities are:

1. To meet the overall current and future housing needs of Shropshire’s growing population by addressing the housing needs of particular groups within communities

2.To ensure people whose housing needs are not met through the local open market housing can access housing that meets their needs

3.Working to reduce and prevent households from becoming homeless and where this is not possible ensuring they have safe, secure and appropriate accommodation until they are able to resettle

4.To ensure people can access a mix of housing options within Shropshire's urban and rural landscape, that best meets their needs in terms of tenure, safety, size, type, design and location of housing.

5.To minimise the environmental impact of existing housing stock and future housing development in the interest of climate change. To work with policy makers, developers and private and social landlords to maximise resource efficiencies and to ensure optimum use of sustainable construction techniques.

6.To support the drive for economic growth by ensuring that there is enough housing supply to enable businesses to attract and retain the local workforce that they need.

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

The following target groups are important in the development and realisation of the Housing Strategy. The intended audience is everyone who lives in Shropshire or wants/needs to live in Shropshire. The list is not exhaustive or in any order of priority and can be added to at any time.

- Armed Forces
- Care leavers
- Central government departments and agencies
- Educational establishments
- Elected Members
- Homes England
- Housing Associations
- Householders or those currently living in Shropshire
- Landlords
- Local Authorities
- Local business involved in the house building sector
- Local Employers
- People requiring a home in Shropshire
- Shropshire MPs
- Strategic partnerships, including the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)
- Those who require additional care or support
- Town and Parish Councils

The draft strategy is being presented to Cabinet on the 25th March after which the public consultation shall begin.

Evidence used for screening of the service change

National legislation and guidance and the Sub-regional Strategic Housing Market Assessment has shaped the way the strategy has evolved, the main evidence base has come from 3 main areas. The first from meetings, discussions and a workshop with other Shropshire Council Departments. This identified each sections priorities and objectives to be addressed in the Strategy. The second was data from National Statistics and Internal Intelligence who provided information on demographics, affordability etc. The third was data from our Homepoint register, Right Home Right Place survey results and the Shropshire Self-build Register which has given us the housing needs data for Shropshire. We also engaged with External stakeholders to test our priorities and objectives and the data we have used.

Specific consultation and engagement with intended audiences and target groups for the service change

The internal consultation started with a workshop for all housing related departments which was followed up with individual meetings with any department that has a housing function. This was followed by meetings with Related businesses and External support agencies and organisations. This included educational institutes, Age UK and Agents and Developers. Separate meetings were held with Registered Housing Providers.

Once a first draft was established this was then presented at both Member briefings and Directors briefings and discussed with Economic Development and our Climate Change colleagues.

Efforts have focussed on ensuring that the Housing Strategy will be aligned to the Council's adopted planning policies and the statutory procedures and processes and that it is seen as an integral component of related polices around economic growth and around environmental sustainability. As such the document will be subject to a full consultation process for a period of 6 weeks, during which all, not only residents and community and voluntary sector groups, but also those with economic interests including partner organisations, developers and Housing Associations will be able to comment on the strategy, through a number of communication mechanisms including mailings to the Shropshire Community and Voluntary Sector Assembly and to all town and parish councils, and press releases on the Council website.

Initial assessment for each group

Protected Characteristic groups and other groups in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>
Age (please include children, young people, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group e.g. child for whom there are safeguarding concerns e.g. older person with disability)			X	
Disability (please include: mental health conditions and syndromes including autism; physical disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; HIV)			X	
Gender re-assignment (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X
Pregnancy & Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X
Race (please include: ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, gypsy, traveller)				X
Religion and belief (please include: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Non-conformists; Rastafarianism; Sikhism, Shinto, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)				X
Sex (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				X
Sexual Orientation (please include associated aspects: safety; caring responsibility; potential for bullying and harassment)				X
Other: Social Inclusion (please include families and friends with caring responsibilities; people with health inequalities; households in poverty; refugees and asylum seekers; rural communities; people for whom there are safeguarding concerns; people you consider to be vulnerable)			X	

Identification of likely impact of the service change in terms of other considerations

The Housing Strategy will have an effect on the number and location of houses provided, this will have an impact on services, roads and have an environmental impact. All these will be assessed and mitigated through the planning process.

The Climate Change considerations, as identified in the report to Cabinet, are as follows:

Climate Change Appraisal

- **Energy and fuel consumption:** Positive effect. One of the key priorities of the Housing Strategy is to minimise the environmental impact of existing housing stock and to positively influence the design of future housing development to maximise resource efficiencies and to ensure optimum use of sustainable construction techniques. Maximising energy efficiency in new and existing housing will also contribute positively by reducing energy costs for occupiers, particularly those on limited incomes;
- **Renewable energy generation:** Positive effect. The Housing Strategy will provide opportunities to foster the generation and storage of renewable energy as part of the refurbishment of existing housing stock and the design of new housing;
- **Carbon offsetting or mitigation:** Positive effect. The Housing Strategy will provide opportunities to foster the capture and storage of carbon emissions as part of the design of sustainable urban drainage and open space integral to the design of new housing schemes;
- **Climate Change resilience and adaptation:** Positive effect. The Housing Strategy will provide positive opportunities to ensure that the foster the refurbishment of existing housing stock and the design of new housing deliver accommodation which is resilient to more extreme weather events and enables occupiers to adapt to the changing climate;

Guidance Notes

1. Corporate and Service Area Policy and Practice on Equality and Social inclusion

This involves taking an equality and social inclusion approach in planning changes to services, policies or procedures, including those that may be required by Government.

The decisions that you make when you are planning a service change need to be recorded, to demonstrate that you have thought about the possible equality impacts on communities and to show openness and transparency in your decision-making processes.

This is where Equality and Social Inclusion Impact Assessments (ESIAs) come in. Where you carry out an ESIA in your service area, this provides an opportunity to show:

- What evidence you have drawn upon to help you to recommend a strategy or policy or a course of action to Cabinet;
- What target groups and audiences you have worked with to date;
- What actions you will take in order to mitigate any likely negative impact upon a group or groupings, and enhance any positive effects for a group or groupings; and
- What actions you are planning to review the impact of your planned service change.

The formal template is there not only to help the service area but also to act as a stand alone for a member of the public to read.

The approach helps to identify whether or not any new or significant changes to services, including policies, procedures, functions or projects, may have an adverse impact on a particular group of people, and whether the human rights of individuals may be affected.

This assessment encompasses consideration of social inclusion. This is so that we are thinking as carefully and completely as possible about all Shropshire groups and communities, including people in rural areas and people we may describe as vulnerable, for example due to low income or to safeguarding concerns, as well as people in what are described as the nine 'protected characteristics' of groups of people in our population, e.g. Age. We demonstrate equal treatment to people who are in these groups and to people who are not, through having what is termed 'due regard' to their needs and views when developing and implementing policy and strategy and when commissioning, procuring, arranging or delivering services.

When you are not carrying out an ESIA, you still need to demonstrate that you have considered equality in your decision-making processes. It is up to you what format you choose.-You could use a checklist, an explanatory note, or a document setting out our expectations of standards of behaviour, for contractors to read and sign. It may well not be something that is in the public domain like an ESIA, but you should still be ready for it to be made available.

Both the approaches sit with a manager, and the manager has to make the call, and record the decision made on behalf of the Council. Help and guidance is also available

via the Commissioning Support Team, either for data, or for policy advice from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist. Here are some examples to get you thinking.

Carry out an ESIIA:

- If you are building or reconfiguring a building;
- If you are planning to reduce or remove a service;
- If you are consulting on a policy or a strategy;
- If you are bringing in a change to a process or procedure that involves other stakeholders and the wider community as well as particular groupings

For example, there may be a planned change to a leisure facility. This gives you the chance to look at things like flexible changing room provision, which will maximise positive impacts for everyone. A specific grouping that would benefit would be people undergoing gender reassignment

Carry out an equality and social inclusion approach:

- If you are setting out how you expect a contractor to behave with regard to equality, where you are commissioning a service or product from them;
- If you are setting out the standards of behaviour we expect from people who work with vulnerable groupings, such as taxi drivers that we license;
- If you are planning consultation and engagement activity, where we need to collect equality data in ways that will be proportionate and non-intrusive as well as meaningful for the purposes of the consultation itself;
- If you are looking at services provided by others that help the community, where we need to demonstrate a community leadership approach

For example, you may be involved in commissioning a production to tour schools or appear at a local venue, whether a community hall or somewhere like Theatre Severn. The production company should be made aware of our equality policies and our expectation that they will seek to avoid promotion of potentially negative stereotypes. Specific groupings that could be affected include: Disability, Race, Religion and Belief, and Sexual Orientation. There is positive impact to be gained from positive portrayals and use of appropriate and respectful language in regard to these groupings in particular.

2. Legal Context

It is a legal requirement for local authorities to assess the equality and human rights impact of changes proposed or made to services. It is up to us as an authority to decide what form our equality impact assessment may take. Carrying out ESIIAs helps us as a public authority to ensure that, as far as possible, we are taking actions to meet the general equality duty placed on us by the Equality Act 2010, and to thus demonstrate that the three equality aims are integral to our decision making processes. These are: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations.

Service areas would ordinarily carry out a screening assessment, or Part One equality impact assessment. This enables energies to be focussed on review and monitoring and ongoing evidence collection about the positive or negative impacts of a service change upon groupings in the community, and for any adjustments to be considered and made accordingly.

If the screening indicates that there are likely to be significant negative impacts for groupings within the community, the service area would need to carry out a full report, or Part Two assessment. This will enable more evidence to be collected that will help the service area to reach an informed opinion. Please contact the equality policy lead within the Council for more advice and guidance in this regard, as per details below.

For further information on the use of ESIIAs: please contact your head of service or contact Mrs Lois Dale, Rurality and Equalities Specialist and Council policy support on equality, via telephone 01743 258528, or email lois.dale@shropshire.gov.uk.