

Uttlesford District Council

Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	<i>Rent and Service Charge Setting 2023-24</i>
Lead officer:	<i>Adrian Webb, Director of Finance and Corporate Services</i>
Approved by:	<i>Judith Snares, Housing Strategy & Operations Manager</i>
Date completed:	<i>13 January 2023</i>
Scheduled date for review:	<i>11 October 2023</i>

Does the EqHIA contain any confidential or exempt information that would prevent you publishing it on the Council's website?	No
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Please note that EqHIAs are **public** documents and must be made available on the Council's [EqHIA webpage](#).

When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the activity a policy, strategy, procedure, project, new or change in service, initiative or other's file for audit purposes and in case it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

When the EqHIA is completed send a copy to the following email address - EqHIA@Uttlesford.gov.uk

1. Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

Please complete the following checklist to determine whether or not you will need to complete an EqHIA and ensure you keep this section for your audit trail. If you have any questions, please contact your Divisional Equality Lead. Please refer to the Guidance in Appendix 1 on how to complete this form. **When EqHIA is completed send a copy to the following email address EqHIA@Uttlesford.gov.uk**

About your activity

1	Title of activity	Rent and Service Charge Setting 2022-2023		
2	Type of activity	To establish the rent and service charge levels for 2022-2023		
3	Scope of activity	To identify the changes in dwelling rents, garage rents, housing related support (HRS) charges and service charges required for the new financial year		
4a	Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?	No	If the answer to <u>any</u> of these questions is 'YES', please continue to question 5.	If the answer to <u>all</u> of the questions (4a, 4b & 4c) is 'NO', please go to question 6.
4b	Does this activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people (9 protected characteristics)?	Yes		
4c	Does the activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?	Yes		
5	If you answered YES:	Please complete the EqHIA in Section 2 of this document. Please see Appendix 1 for Guidance.		
6	If you answered NO:	Please provide a clear and robust explanation on why your activity does not require an EqHIA. This is essential in case the activity is challenged under the Equality Act 2010. <i>Please keep this checklist for your audit trail.</i>		

Completed by:	Adrian Webb, Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Date:	13/01/2023

2. The EqHIA – How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on people?

Background/context:

Rent and service charge setting is carried out annually. Rents are set in line with Government policy and to that end the council's social and affordable rents have been modelled at the 7% cap for 2023/24

All other Housing related support charges and service charges are increased in line with estimated costs.

**Expand box as required*

Who will be affected by the activity?

An increase in rents and service charges will affect all tenants in council owned properties. Rents are kept within the housing allowances for the areas and will therefore be covered for those on benefits.

A significant increase in service charges, in particular the heating element, which is not eligible for housing benefit support will impact on people's finances, although this is mitigated in part by various Government grants.

An increase in services charges will also affect owners of ex Council owned properties, purchased through the RTB, which benefit from any continuing services provided by the Council, as stipulated in the lease or transfer deed

Protected Characteristic - Age: Consider the full range of age groups

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Overall impact:

Increasing rents and service charges will enable the Council to continue to provide safe affordable housing for rent

Negative impact on those living in sheltered accommodation.

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

The increase in the heating element of the service charge for 2023-24 will have an adverse impact on those people living in sheltered accommodation.

Protected Characteristic - Disability: Consider the full range of disabilities; including physical mental, sensory and progressive conditions	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Overall impact:</p> <p>Increasing rents and service charges will enable the Council to continue to provide safe affordable housing for rent</p> <p>The predicted impact of the rent and service charge setting for 2023-24 on people with disabilities is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	
<p>Evidence:</p> <p>The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that they get value for money. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey</p>	
<p>Sources used:</p> <p>Tenant and Leaseholder Panel Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data Office for National Statistics (ONS) data CORE data</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	

Protected Characteristic - Sex/gender: Consider both men and women	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Overall impact:</p> <p>Increasing rents and service charges will enable the Council to continue to provide safe affordable housing for rent</p> <p>The predicted impact of the rent and service charge setting for 2023-24 on all genders is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	
<p>Evidence:</p> <p>The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that they get value for money. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	
<p>Sources used:</p> <p>Tenant and Leaseholder Panel Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data Office for National Statistics (ONS) data CORE data</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	

Protected Characteristic - Ethnicity/race: Consider the impact on different ethnic groups and nationalities

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact:
Positive		Increasing rents and service charges will enable the Council to continue to provide safe affordable housing for rent The predicted impact of the rent and service charge setting for 2023-24 on ethnicity/race is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination <i>*Expand box as required</i>
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Evidence:

The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that they get value for money. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

Tenant and Leaseholder Panel
 Tenant Satisfaction Survey
 Census 2021 data
 Office for National Statistics (ONS) data
 CORE data

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Religion/faith: Consider people from different religions or beliefs including those with no religion or belief

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact:
Positive		Increasing rents and service charges will enable the Council to continue to provide safe affordable housing for rent
Neutral	✓	

Negative		<p>The predicted impact of the rent and service charge setting for 2023-24 on religion/faith is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>
<p>Evidence:</p> <p>The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that they get value for money. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Expand box as required</i></p>		
<p>Sources used:</p> <p>Tenant and Leaseholder Panel Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data Office for National Statistics (ONS) data CORE data</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>		

<p>Protected Characteristic - Sexual orientation: Consider people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual</p>		
<p><i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i></p>		<p>Overall impact:</p>
<p>Positive</p>		<p>Increasing rents and service charges will enable the Council to continue to provide safe affordable housing for rent</p>
<p>Neutral</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>The predicted impact of the rent and service charge setting for 2023-24 on sexual orientation is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination</p>
<p>Negative</p>		<p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>
<p>Evidence:</p> <p>The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that they get value for money. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>		
<p>Sources used:</p> <p>Tenant and Leaseholder Panel Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data Office for National Statistics (ONS) data CORE data</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>		

Protected Characteristic - Gender reassignment: Consider people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact:
Positive		Increasing rents and service charges will enable the Council to continue to provide safe affordable housing for rent The predicted impact of the rent and service charge setting for 2023-24 on people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination <i>*Expand box as required</i>
Neutral	✓	
Negative		
Evidence: The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that they get value for money. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey <i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used: Tenant and Leaseholder Panel Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data Office for National Statistics (ONS) data CORE data <i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Protected Characteristic - Marriage/civil partnership: Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact:
Positive		Increasing rents and service charges will enable the Council to continue to provide safe affordable housing for rent
Neutral	✓	The predicted impact of the rent and service charge setting for 2023-24 for marriage/civil partnership is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination
Negative		<i>*Expand box as required</i>

Evidence:

The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that they get value for money. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

Tenant and Leaseholder Panel
Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data
Office for National Statistics (ONS) data
CORE data

Protected Characteristic - Pregnancy, maternity and paternity: Consider those who are pregnant and those who are undertaking maternity or paternity leave

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact:
Positive		Increasing rents and service charges will enable the Council to continue to provide safe affordable housing for rent
Neutral	✓	The predicted impact of the rent and service charge setting for 2023-24 for pregnancy, maternity and paternity is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination
Negative		

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that they get value for money. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

Tenant and Leaseholder Panel
 Tenant Satisfaction Survey
 Census 2021 data
 Office for National Statistics (ONS) data
 CORE data

**Expand box as required*

Socio-economic status: Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds

<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact:
Positive		For most people, who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds, social housing is the only available option. Increasing rents and service charges will enable the Council to continue to provide safe affordable housing for rent.
Neutral		
Negative	✓	The predicted impact of the rent setting for 2023-24 for those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds, living in general needs accommodation, is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination.

		<p>Rents are kept within the housing allowances for the areas and will therefore be covered for those on benefits</p> <p>Guidance and support will be given to those tenants who have problems managing their finances</p> <p>Negative impact for those living in sheltered accommodation facing the higher heating element of the service charge. This is however offset by various Government grants.</p>
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**Expand box as required*

<p>Evidence:</p> <p>The increase in the heating element of the service charge for 2023-24 will have an adverse impact on those people living in sheltered accommodation.</p> <p>The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that they get value for money. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey</p>		
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**Expand box as required*

<p>Sources used:</p> <p>Tenant and Leaseholder Panel Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data Office for National Statistics (ONS) data CORE data</p>		
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**Expand box as required*

Health & Wellbeing Impact: Consider both short and long-term impacts of the activity on a person's physical and mental health, particularly for disadvantaged, vulnerable or at-risk groups. Can health and wellbeing be positively promoted through this activity? Please use the Health and Wellbeing Impact Tool in Appendix 2 to help you answer this question.

<i>Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:</i>		<p>Overall impact:</p> <p>Increasing rents and service charges will enable the Council to continue to provide safe affordable housing for rent.</p> <p>Negative impact for those living in sheltered accommodation facing the higher heating element of the service charge. This is however offset by various Government grants.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p> <p>Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment?</p>
Positive		
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

No

Evidence:

There should be a positive health & wellbeing impact on people's personal circumstances, access to services and social factors relating to housing.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:




Health & wellbeing impact tool

**Expand box as required*

3. Outcome of the Assessment

The EqHIA assessment is intended to be used as an improvement tool to make sure the activity maximises the positive impacts and eliminates or minimises the negative impacts. The possible outcomes of the assessment are listed below and what the next steps to take are:

Please tick (✓) what the overall outcome of your assessment was:

	1. The EqHIA identified <u>no significant concerns</u> OR the identified <u>negative concerns</u> have already been <u>addressed</u>		Proceed with implementation of your activity
	2. The EqHIA identified some <u>negative impact</u> which still needs to be <u>addressed</u>		COMPLETE SECTION 4: Complete action plan and finalise the EqHIA
	3. The EqHIA identified some <u>major concerns</u> and showed that it is <u>impossible to diminish negative impacts</u> from the activity to an acceptable or even lawful level		Stop and remove the activity or revise the activity thoroughly . Complete an EqHIA on the revised proposal.

4. Action Plan

The real value of completing an EqHIA comes from the identifying the actions that can be taken to eliminate/minimise negative impacts and enhance/optimize positive impacts. In this section you should list the specific actions that set out how you will address any negative equality and health & wellbeing impacts you have identified in this assessment. Please ensure that your action plan is: more than just a list of proposals and good intentions; sets ambitious yet achievable outcomes and timescales; and is clear about resource implications.

Protected characteristic / health & wellbeing impact	Identified Negative or Positive impact	Recommended actions to mitigate Negative impact* or further promote Positive impact	Outcomes and monitoring**	Timescale	Lead officer
Age	Heating element of the service charge for those living in sheltered accommodation	Proactive engagement with the Housing Team to identify and support those most affected	Those at risk identified through rent arrears monitoring, tenant meetings and general interaction with sheltered unit residents	12 months	Judith Snares

Add further rows as necessary

* You should include details of any future consultations and any actions to be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts

** Monitoring: You should state how the impact (positive or negative) will be monitored; what outcome measures will be used; the known (or likely) data source for outcome measurements; how regularly it will be monitored; and who will be monitoring it (if this is different from the lead officer).

5. Review

Review:

Annual review

Scheduled date of review: 11/10/23

Lead Officer conducting the review: Assistant Director Housing Health and Communities

**Expand box as required*

In this section you should identify how frequently the EqHIA will be reviewed; the date for next review; and who will be reviewing it.