

Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit

Section 1: Your details

EIA lead Officer: Emma Foley

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Assistant Director: Lisa Newman

Chief Officer: David Hughes

Directorate: Regeneration and Place

Date: 31st May 2023

Section 2: What Council proposal is being assessed?

Introduction of Selective Licensing Scheme in four designated areas

Section 2a: Will this EIA be submitted to a Committee or Policy & Resources Committee?

Yes / No **If 'yes' please state which meeting and what date**

Yes, Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee, 17th July 2023

Please select hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published on the Council's website

Section 3: Does the proposal have the potential to affect..... (please tick relevant boxes)

- Services**
- The workforce**
- Communities**
- Other** Landlords, letting agents and tenants.

If you have ticked one or more of above, please go to section 4.

- None** (please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 4:

Could the proposal have a positive or negative impact on any protected groups (race, gender, disability, gender reassignment, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership)?

You may also want to consider socio-economic status of individuals.

Please list in the table below and include actions required to mitigate any potential negative impact.

| Which group(s) of people could be affected | Potential positive or negative impact | Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact | Lead person | Timescale | Resource implications |
|---|--|---|--------------------|------------------|--|
| All | The selective licensing scheme will apply to all persons regardless of protected characteristics. Translation services are available if required. As part of the license application process landlords would need to show that they have not practiced unlawful discrimination in connection with the carrying out of any business and will have to meet licence conditions on how they manage their properties. | Evidence suggests that private landlords are less likely to spend money adapting properties to meet the needs of disabled people. One of the aims of licensing is to have a better-informed landlord and community where they are clearer about their responsibilities and provide support to disabled people. The Healthy Homes Team will ensure referrals to appropriate services such as the home adaptation service, to support those | Emma Foley | Ongoing | Associated with the Selective Licensing budget |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|------------|---------|--|
| | | with disabilities. | | | |
| Age | The licensing scheme will apply to any owner of a property irrespective of the age of that person (a person under the age of 18 is not permitted to own property in their own right in English Law). | With regards to the tenants of the properties this will have no effect other than to ensure that proper tenancy agreements are in place. A person is not eligible to hold an assured short hold tenancy under the age of 16 years old. | Emma Foley | Ongoing | Associated with the Selective Licensing budget |
| Age, Disability, Race, Gender Reassignment, Religion and Belief, Sexual Orientation | It is anticipated the licensing scheme will have a positive effect on anti-social behaviour, which may be a positive impact for older people, disabled people, people with a BME origin and those who may be persecuted for their religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender assignment. | | Emma Foley | Ongoing | Associated with the Selective Licensing budget |
| Age and Disability | The changes to the national welfare system may have a negative impact on the provision of quality housing options which could result in displacements of benefit-dependant households from high-rent areas to lower-rent areas as a result of Local Housing allowance rent caps. Licensing seeks to mitigate some of these negative consequences by driving up the quality of the private rented sector. | | Emma Foley | Ongoing | Associated with the Selective Licensing budget |
| Race and | Selective licensing will tackle overcrowding | The Council will work with | Emma Foley | Ongoing | Associated |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|--|---|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| Religion and Belief | and illegal conversions which may positively or negatively impact on large BME families. | households affected by overcrowding or illegal conversions. | | | with the Selective Licensing budget |
|---------------------|--|---|--|--|-------------------------------------|

Section 4a: Where and how will the above actions be monitored?

Selective Licensing, if the proposal goes ahead, will be monitored by performance indicators which will be implemented with SMART targets that will need to be met.

Section 4b: If you think there is no negative impact, what is your reasoning behind this?

Whilst there could be potentially some negative impacts, the Housing Strategy sets out the vision for housing in Wirral by 2026 which is to *'contribute to making Wirral an attractive place by ensuring people can access quality housing that is appropriate and affordable to their needs'*. Selective Licensing aims to assist to deliver this vision to achieve positive outcomes for all, which would assist Wirral to implement and maintain a healthy private rented sector with good quality properties and management standards. The aim is to reduce criminal damage, high turnover, empty properties and low demand.

Section 5: What research / data / information have you used in support of this process?

Wirral Council is consulting with landlords, letting agents and residents, in addition to utilising good practice and information from other Councils, namely Liverpool City Council and London Borough of Newham.

Section 6: Are you intending to carry out any consultation with regard to this Council proposal?

Yes

If 'yes' please continue to section 8.

If 'no' please state your reason(s) why:

(please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 7: How will consultation take place and by when?

Consultation will begin on 24th July 2023 until 1st October 2023. An online questionnaire will be available for residents and stakeholders to have their say. In addition, a number of drop-in sessions for residents and drop-in sessions for landlords will take place in order for further information to be dispersed and questions to be answered.

Full details will be published on Wirral Website Have you say using the following hyperlinks:

<https://haveyoursay.wirral.gov.uk/selective-licensing-residents-and-businesses>

<https://haveyoursay.wirral.gov.uk/selective-licensing-landlords>

Before you complete your consultation, please email your preliminary EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer in order for the Council to ensure it is meeting it's legal publishing requirements. The EIA will need to be published with a note saying we are awaiting outcomes from a consultation exercise.

Once you have completed your consultation, please review your actions in section 4. Then email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing.

Section 8: Have you remembered to:

- a) **Select appropriate directorate hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published** (section 2a)
- b) **Include any potential positive impacts as well as negative impacts?** (section 4)
- c) **Send this EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer?**
- d) **Review section 4 once consultation has taken place and send your updated EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer for re-publishing?**