

# Equality Impact Assessment

Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy 2021 to 2026



## Section 1: Introduction and background

<b>What is being assessed?</b>	Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy 2021 to 2026
<b>Business unit</b>	Housing
<b>Job title of assessor</b>	Housing Options Manager
<b>Strategic Management Lead</b>	Rachel O'Reilly
<b>Date of assessment</b>	20 January 2021
<b>Is this a new or existing function or policy?</b>	No

### Description of the function or policy, including:

- **The aims and scope**
- **The main beneficiaries or users**
- **The main equality issues and barriers, and the protected characteristics<sup>1</sup> they relate to (not all assessments will encounter issues relating to every protected characteristic)**

The Council is required under the Homelessness Act 2002 to have a Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy. The strategy sets out the Council's services to prevent and address homelessness. It also sets out actions to improve the service and fill gaps in the service. To inform the strategy a review is first undertaken on the levels of homelessness in the area and identifies the local services available specifically for the homeless. The 2019/20 review provides analysis on homelessness in Mole Valley and the actions taken to prevent and tackle homelessness. It also provides analysis on the ethnicity of those who approach the Council as homeless, of which the majority are white British reflecting the demographics of the area.

### Description of how the function or policy fits into the Council's Corporate Priorities or other local, regional or national plans and priorities

The strategy fits with the Council's priority on access to services. The homelessness service is available during working hours and out of hours in emergencies. Customers can make contact in person, by phone and in writing. There is also an on-line housing options tool that customers can use at any time. Interviews generally take place at the Council's offices, however during the Covid pandemic and where this is problematic they are carried out where the person is staying or other mutually convenient location.

## Section 2: Analysis and assessment

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<sup>1</sup>The protected characteristics are age, sex, disability, pregnancy and maternity, race and ethnicity, religion and belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership (Source: Equality Act 2010)

Indicate for each protected characteristic whether there may be a positive impact, negative impact, a mixture of both or no impact – using a tick  in the appropriate columns

Protected characteristics	Positive	Negative	No impact	Reason
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			The aim of the strategy is to prevent homelessness where possible and provide accommodation when required. The most vulnerable due to their age are protected by the homelessness legislation. Anyone can apply as homeless if they are over 16. Families with children or expecting a child are protected by the homelessness legislation. The review and strategy provide information on services already provided for the homeless and those services that are planned to fill gaps
Sex			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services for the homeless are provided regardless of sex
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			The homelessness legislation protects people with disabilities in that the Council must assess whether they are vulnerable and in priority need under the legislation.
Pregnancy and maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Families expecting a child are protected by the homelessness legislation.
Race and ethnicity			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services for the homeless are provided regardless of race. Monitoring shows that the majority of people who approach the Council as homeless are white British
Religion and belief			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services for the homeless are provided regardless of religion or belief
Gender reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Services for the homeless are provided regardless of gender reassignment. There would be no

				discrimination made as a result of this relevant characteristic. The legislation protects those who are considered to be vulnerable and in priority need.
Sexual orientation			x	Services for the homeless are provided regardless of sexual orientation. The legislation protects those who are considered to be vulnerable and in priority need.
Marriage and civil partnership			x	Services for the homeless are provided regardless of marital and partnership status. Single people and couples may not be protected by the homelessness legislation if they are found not to be vulnerable and in priority need. However MVDC provides free housing advice and options service and offers preventions measures for this group. It is also working towards the No Second Night Out priority for those who are rough sleeping.
<b>Other aspects to consider</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>No impact</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Carers	x			Fulltime carers, subject to assessment, will be considered as part of a homeless person's household.
Rural/urban access issues			x	Where people are not able to come to the Council's offices because of transport difficulties MVDC staff will visit them. However, it is unlikely that the Council can guarantee to house those who become homeless in rural areas in the same area, this is because of the shortage of affordable homes and private rented accommodation in MVDC

				<b>and particularly in rural areas. However, this also applies generally, as it is difficult to guarantee to any housing applicant that they will be housed in the area of their preference because of the shortage of affordable homes.</b>
HR issues (how will staff with protected characteristics be affected?)				n/a

<b>What can be done to reduce the effects of any negative impacts?</b> Where negative impact cannot be completely diminished, can this be justified, and is it lawful?
N/A

<b>Where there are positive impacts, what changes have been or will be made?</b> Who are the beneficiaries? How have they benefited?
See reasons above

### Section 3: Evidence gathering and fact-finding

<b>What evidence is available to support your views above?</b> Please include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A summary of the available evidence</li> <li>• Identification of where there are gaps in the evidence (this may identify a need for more evidence in the action plan)</li> <li>• What information is currently captured with respect to usage and take up of services.</li> <li>• What the current situation is in relation to equality and diversity monitoring (where relevant)</li> </ul>
<b>Detailed statistics to support the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy are contained in the Homelessness Review 2019/20. This includes the number of people who have identified support needs including those related to both disability and age. Gaps in services are identified in the</b>

review and carried through into the strategy although no negative impacts in relation to the EIA have been identified.

**How have stakeholders been involved in this assessment?**

Who are they, and what is their view?

Although the EIA has not been sent to partners for comment, the strategy and review has.

**Recommendations**

Summary of the main recommendations (if any) arising from the assessment

N/A

**Section 4: Action Plan**

Actions needed to implement the EqlA recommendations (if any)

Issue	Action	Expected outcome	Who	Deadline for action