

Equality Impact Assessment Form

When completing this form you will need to provide evidence that you have considered how the ‘protected characteristics’ may be impacted upon by this decision. In line with the General Equality Duty the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard for the need to:

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This form should be completed in conjunction with the guidance document available on the Intranet or by contacting the Corporate Support Team ext. 2607.

1. Persons responsible for this assessment:

Names: Paul Jones and Sue Pangbourne	
Date of assessment: 12 February 2015	Telephone: 01242 775154 01594 812501 Email: paul.jones@fdean.gov.uk sue.pangbourne@fdean.gov.uk

2. Name of the policy, service, strategy, procedure or function:

Council Tax Discounts on Empty Properties
Is this a new or existing one? New /Existing (please delete as appropriate) Revised policy recommended by Cabinet to be approved by Council on 26 February 2015.

3. Briefly describe its aims and objectives

<p>Change the level of discount for class C (empty and unfurnished) empty properties to 25% for the 6 months. The discount had previously been 100% for the first month and 25% for the following 5 months.</p> <p>Confirm 6 weeks as the minimum required period of reoccupation before a further empty property discount will apply.</p> <p>This change is being introduced as a measure to help bring empty properties back into use more quickly, bring consistency to the discount in order to reduce disputes between landlords and tenants and to increase council tax income.</p>

4. Are there any external considerations? (e.g. Legislation/government directives)

The Council has a discretionary power under the Local Government Finance Act 2012 to set levels of council tax discount awarded in respect of certain categories of empty properties between zero and 100%.

5. What evidence has helped to inform this assessment?

Source	✓	If ticked please explain what
Demographic data and other statistics, including census findings	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Recent research findings including studies of deprivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Results of recent consultations and surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Results of ethnic monitoring data and any equalities data	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Anecdotal information from groups and agencies within Gloucestershire	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Comparisons between similar functions / policies elsewhere	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comparison with other Gloucestershire District Councils
Analysis of audit reports and reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Survey visits in Autumn 2014 to properties thought to be empty to check whether they were occupied – focused on long-term empty properties.

6. Please specify how intend to gather evidence to fill any gaps identified above:

7. What level of impact either directly or indirectly will the proposal have upon the general public / staff? (Please quantify where possible)

Level of impact	Response
NO IMPACT – The proposal has no impact upon the general public/staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
LOW – Few members of the general public/staff will be affected by this proposal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

MEDIUM – A large group of the general public/staff will be affected by this proposal	<input type="checkbox"/>
HIGH – The proposal will have an impact upon the whole community/all staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Comments: e.g. Who will this specifically impact?</p> <p>Landlords of private rented properties will become liable for a small charge when properties are empty for short periods between tenants. However, the consistent level of discount will reduce the disputes between landlords and tenants regarding responsibility during the first month that the property is empty.</p>	

8. Considering the available evidence, what type of impact could this function have on any of the protected characteristics?

	Potential Negative	Potential Positive	Neutral	Reasons	Options for mitigating adverse impacts
Age – Young People			✓		
Age – Old People			✓		
Disability			✓		
Sex – Male			✓		
Sex – Female			✓		
Race including Gypsy and Travellers			✓		
Religion or Belief			✓		
Sexual Orientation			✓		
Gender Reassignment			✓		
Pregnancy and maternity			✓		
Geographical impacts on one area			✓		
Other Groups –	✓			Landlords of Class C properties that become empty.	

9. Action plan (add additional lines if necessary)

Action(s)	Lead Officer	Resource	Timescale

Declaration

I/We are satisfied that an equality impact assessment has been carried out on this policy, service, strategy, procedure or function and where an negative impact has been identified actions have been developed to lessen or negate this impact. We understand that the Equality Impact Assessment is required by the District Council and that we take responsibility for the completion and quality of this assessment.

Completed By:	Sue Pangbourne	Role:	Head of Paid Service	Date:	25 February 2015
Line Managers signature:				Date:	
Reviewed by Corporate Equality Officer Group:				Date:	

Please forward an electronic copy to the Corporate Support Team – corporatesupport@fdean.gov.uk.