

## PART B – Equality Analysis Form

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

This form:

- Can be used to prompt discussions, ensure that due regard has been given and remove or minimise disadvantage for an individual or group with a protected characteristic
- Involves looking at what steps can be taken to advance and maximise equality as well as eliminate discrimination and negative consequences
- Should be completed before decisions are made, this will remove the need for remedial actions.

Note – An Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A) should be completed prior to this form.

When completing this form consider the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc. – see page 11 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

<b>1. Title</b>	
<b>Equality Analysis title: HRA Business Plan 2022-23</b>	
<b>Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 28/09/21</b>	
<b>Directorate: ACH &amp; PH</b>	<b>Service area: Housing Services</b>
<b>Lead Manager: Paul Elliott, Interim Head of Housing Operational Services</b>	<b>Contact number: 01709 822494</b>
<b>Is this a:</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Strategy / Policy</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Service / Function</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b>
<b>If other, please specify</b>	

**2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance**

Name	Organisation	Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)
Paul Elliott	RMBC	Manager
Kath Andrews	RMBC	Finance Manager
Asim Munir	RMBC	Tenant Involvement Co-ordinator

**3. What is already known? - see page 10 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance**

**Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known)**

This may include a group/s identified by a protected characteristic, others groups or stakeholder/s e.g. service users, employees, partners, members, suppliers etc.)

The annual HRA Business Plan which sets out all proposed income and expenditure for the HRA for the next 30 years as required by HRA Self-financing.

Strategic allocation of resources within the HRA for period of 30 years.

Specifically responding to changes in government policy, macro-economic environment and gearing towards housing growth.

HRA Business Plan for 2022-23 provides information on the positioning of the HRA Business Plan as a driver of housing growth to assist in meeting the Council's housing objectives. In essence the overall approach is to make savings where it is feasible to do so these can be invested in future housing growth and to position the housing service so it is best placed to respond to future challenges that arise.

Proposals are designed to ensure:

There is a significant contribution to housing growth and support to the Council Plan.

Whilst savings are made no action is taken that will undermine the Council's longer term ability to react to changes.

Provision is made to ensure there are sufficient resources available to invest in services where there is an identified need .

The longer term viability of the HRA Business Plan is maintained.

Budgets remain flexible to react to any significant changes in property numbers currently expected or further government policy changes.

No early repayment of debt is made.

Commence delivery toward achieving net zero carbon

**What equality information is available? (Include any engagement undertaken)**

The Council currently owns circa 20,000 homes, 544 leasehold homes and 3,375 garages with a turnover from rents and other sources approaching £84m per annum.

Circa 264,000 people live in Rotherham Borough, about half living in and around the main urban area of Rotherham. The remainder live in smaller towns such as Wath, Dinnington and Maltby, and in numerous large villages and rural communities, all of which have their own distinct identities.

120,600 Rotherham residents are in employment whilst 106,000 people have workplaces in the Borough, giving a net outflow of 14,700 workers. One in five workers who live in Rotherham are employed in Sheffield and another one in five work elsewhere outside Rotherham.

45,259 children attend 117 Rotherham schools.

Rotherham has a similar age profile to the national average and in common with the national trends, the population is ageing. Central Rotherham has a younger population than average whilst the more suburban and rural areas, mainly in the south of the borough, have older age profiles.

One in four residents (25.2%) are aged 60 years or over and 22,500 people (8.5%) are aged 75 years or over. Rotherham has 56,900 children aged 0-17 (21.6% of the population).

Rotherham's Black and minority ethnic (BME) population was 8.1% in 2011 and is now estimated at around 11%. The central area of Rotherham is far more ethnically diverse than the rest of the Borough. The largest minority ethnic group is Pakistani & Kashmiri (4% of the population), followed by the Slovak & Czech Roma (1.5% of the population). Rotherham also has smaller Black African, Indian, Chinese, Irish and Arab communities, all with between 500 and 2,000 people.

The 2011 Census showed that 56,588 (22%) of Rotherham's population had a long term health problem or disability and 11.3% said their day-to-day activities were limited a lot by long term conditions (8.3% nationally). In November 2016, 30,306 Rotherham residents (11.6%) claimed Disability Living Allowance (16,680), Personal Independence Payment (6,100) or Attendance Allowance (7,516).

One in six homes is rented from the council and although house prices have risen over the years, they are about half the national average.

Rotherham Borough has 63 councillors representing 21 wards. 43% of councillors are women and 5% are BME.

There are 30 parish councils in Rotherham covering half the population.

Most neighbourhoods in Rotherham offer a good living environment and 78% of adults are satisfied with their local area as a place to live.

Despite improvements overall, some areas of Rotherham are affected by high economic and social deprivation. Rotherham is the 52nd most deprived district in England according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015, which showed 19.5% of residents living in the 10% most deprived areas nationally.

Central Rotherham forms the main area of high deprivation although there are also pockets in Maltby, Rawmarsh, Dinnington, Thurgroft, Wath, Swinton and Aston. The main forms of deprivation affecting Rotherham are low levels of qualification, poor health, high rates of disability and high worklessness, notably long term sickness.

Adult qualification levels in Rotherham are below average, including the proportion of the population with higher qualifications which reflects Rotherham's industrial legacy. However, most pupils attending Rotherham's schools have attainment slightly above the national average. Rotherham colleges provide good quality further education and the new University Centre offer higher education courses

The Housing Service undertook a survey of tenants' views in 2019, referred to as the Star (Standard Tenant Assessment Response) Survey which supports how resources are targeted and allows the Council to benchmark satisfaction with other social housing providers. The most recent survey found:

- 80% of tenants are satisfied with the overall service provided
- 80% of tenants are satisfied with the quality of their home
- 78% of tenants believe their rent provides value for money
- 48% of tenants were satisfied that their views were listened to and acted upon
- Satisfaction with grounds maintenance and estate services were varied across the borough

The HRA Business Plan responds to the above concerns by continuing to invest in Tenant Involvement Services and capacity in the housing management teams.

Members have been consulted on various aspects of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan. Seminars and Workshops have been held on Housing Growth, Repairs and Maintenance, Universal Credit and Housing Policy updates. This has helped inform the proposed Business Plan.

**Are there any gaps in the information that you are aware of?**

Do not collect data on gender reassignment or religion and belief at sign up.

**What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?**

Allocation of properties are monitored by protected characteristics.  
Rent arrears are monitored by age, gender, disability.

<p><b>Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)</b></p>	<p>A meeting will take place with the Housing Involvement Panel on 24 November 2021 (Housing Involvement Panel) to seek support for proposals to focus on housing growth so improving housing options available to vulnerable groups in need of housing.</p>
<p><b>Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)</b></p>	<p>Meeting with M3 managers and email seeking feedback into the business plan throughout August to November 2021.</p> <p>The plan has been developed with support from Council Officers and input from the Strategic Leadership Team.</p> <p>Councillors, staff and partners play a vital role in the review of the business plan.</p> <p>Following approval the will be effectively communicated to staff and members and training will be undertaken in-house.</p>

#### 4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)

**How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups?** (Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance)

The HRA Business Plan responds to some of the above concerns by increasing investment in Supervision and management allowing the service to increase capacity in the housing management teams to deal with issues of ASB, financial inclusion and engaging with under-represented groups.

The Business plan maintains investment in housing stock which ensures investment in properties to install insulation, new heating systems etc. which tackle fuel poverty agenda.

The Business plan responds to the needs of communities for affordable housing through gearing funds towards building circa 1000 new properties over the next 6 years. The tenure, size and type of accommodation (including Disabled person units) has been informed by the Strategic Housing Market assessment.

**Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups?**

The proposed rent increase of 4.1% may affect low income groups in or out of work as both pay and benefits have increased at or below CPI inflation. This is most likely to be the disabled.

**Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers?**

Vulnerable people are offered and provided with tenancy support which is tailored to individual needs to help them sustain their tenancy and live in the community. Support available in Rotherham includes:

- RMBC Tenancy Support Service – provides practical support on all tenancy related issues including debt and budgeting. The team have access to funds to support people in crisis i.e. no gas/electric. Tenants must be actively working with the team to receive financial benefit
- Age UK Age Related Benefit Advisory Service – provide support and guidance to residents age 65 and over to claim all age related benefits to maximise income. They all provide holistic support in other areas of concern i.e. fuel poverty/home insulation etc
- RMBC DHP Fund- residents with rent arrears can apply to the RMBC Discretionary Housing Payment Fund for assistance to clear or reduce their debt subject to criteria
- ESF/RMBC Pathways and Inspire Employment Projects – provide support and assistance to people looking to access training and employment in order to better their financial situation. The team also have access to funding to help people in crisis i.e. no food/heating. Participants must be actively working with the team to receive financial benefit
- RMBC Household Support Fund – still in development it is believed the fund will be used to support vulnerable people through the provision of food vouchers, help with energy costs and financial support to buy essential items such as cookers/fridge freezers etc.
- RMBC Advocacy and Appeals Team – providing people with practical support to maximise their income by claiming any benefits they are entitled too. The Team can assist with application and also with mandatory reconsideration and appeals/tribunals.
- Foodbanks – provided through Liberty Church, the Trussell Trust and Rotherham Foodbank. Vulnerable tenants can be supported through the provision of free food parcels in times of crisis. Referrals have historically been made through the RMBC Community Hub

- Social Supermarket – Rotherham Minster and VAR supporting residents through the provision of a social supermarket that allows members to pay £3 a week for a maximum of 3 months to allow them to shop in their store. This service transitions people from foodbank dependency and promotes empowerment through teaching budgeting skills
- Rotherfed ‘Making your money go further’ project – This project works with communities to deliver bespoke advice on how tenants and residents can save money and survive on a limited income.
- Citizens Advice Rotherham – providing advice and guidance to all residents on money management and debt solutions enabling clients to resolve the cycle of debt. They also provide support to residents with energy issues through seasonal funded projects such as energy best deal. Historically they have been able to support vulnerable residents through the provision of fuel vouchers. This year’s energy campaign is yet to be announced however the **Winter Energy Fund** will provide up to £10 million which will be distributed through eligible charities this winter. It is dedicated to pre-payment meter customers who are at risk of self-disconnection.

The increase in funding for new build housing will assist vulnerable groups on the housing register as it will increase the supply of new council housing so reducing the use of temporary accommodation for such groups when they are homeless. It will also increase the number of Disable person units so meeting the needs of disabled tenants.

**What affect will the Policy/Service have on community relations?** (may also need to consider activity which may be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another)

It is not envisaged that the HRA Business Plan will negatively impact on community relations.

The Council will closely monitor the viability of the HRA Business Plan; by building a HRA Business Plan monitoring report to monitor key variables such as:

- Number of homes
- Rental income
- Rent arrears and bad debts
- Voids and void rent loss
- Debt levels and repayment
- Reserve levels, and
- Maintenance backlog

Please list any **actions and targets** that need to be taken as a consequence of this assessment on the action plan below and ensure that they are added into your service plan for monitoring purposes – see page 12 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

## **5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan**

If the analysis is done at the right time, i.e. early before decisions are made, changes should be built in before the policy or change is signed off. This will remove the need for remedial actions. Where this is achieved, the only action required will be to monitor the impact of the policy/service/change on communities or groups according to their protected characteristic - See page 11 of the Equality Screening and Analysis guidance

<b>Title of analysis: HRA Business Plan 2022-23</b>
<b>Directorate and service area: ACH &amp; PH – Housing Services</b>
<b>Lead Manager: Paul Elliott, Interim Head of Housing Operational Services</b>
<b>Summary of findings:</b>
<p>The HRA Business Plan responds to some of the above concerns by increasing investment in Supervision and management allowing the service to increase capacity in the housing management teams to deal with issues of ASB, financial inclusion and engaging with under-represented groups.</p> <p>The Business plan maintains investment in housing stock which ensures investment in properties to install insulation, new heating systems etc. which tackle fuel poverty agenda.</p> <p>The Business plan responds to the needs of communities for affordable housing through gearing funds towards building circa 1000 new properties over the next 6 years. The tenure, size and type of accommodation (including Disabled person units) has been informed by the Strategic Housing Market assessment.</p> <p>The proposes rent increase of 4.1% may affect low income groups in or out of work as both pay and benefits have increased at or below CPI inflation. This is most likely to be the disabled.</p>

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Monitor the demographics of tenants in rent arrears on a bi-annual basis	A,D,S,GR,RE,SO,RoB	30.06.22
Monitor the impact of the build houses by analysis the number of lettings according to the tenants protected characteristic	A,D,S,GR,RE,SO,RoB	31.03.23
Collect protected characteristics at tenancy sign up	A,D,S,GR,RE,SO,RoB	30.06.22

\*A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups

## 6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Name	Job title	Date
Paul Walsh	Interim Assistant Director of Housing	25/11/2021

## 7. Publishing

The Equality Analysis will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this Equality Analysis relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy should also be sent to [equality@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk) For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the

Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.	
<b>Date Equality Analysis completed</b>	29/10/21
<b>Report title and date</b>	HRA Business Plan 2022-23
<b>Date report sent for publication</b>	
<b>Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement</b> <a href="mailto:equality@rotherham.gov.uk">equality@rotherham.gov.uk</a>	