

## Chelmsford City Council Equality Impact Assessment

This form enables an assessment of the impact a policy, strategy or activity on customers and employees.

A: Assessor Details	
Name of policy / function(s):	Consultation on the Co-Living Housing Planning Advice Note
Officer(s) completing this assessment:	Liz Harris-Best
Date of assessment:	30 January 2025

B: Summary Details	
Description of policy, strategy or activity and what it is aiming to do	<p>This Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared to assess the content of the consultation on the Co-Living Housing Planning Advice Note.</p> <p>The Co-Living Housing Advice Note has been prepared to offer greater clarity and guidance for when the Council may need to consider planning proposals for co-living housing. As this type of housing does not neatly fit into other definitions and types of housing, existing planning policy does not adequately cover this housing type. The draft Planning Advice Note focusses on guidance to help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define co-living housing</li><li>• Quantify and assess the need and demand for co-living housing</li><li>• Define locational requirements for co-living housing</li><li>• Apply of existing affordable housing planning policies</li><li>• Define design standards</li><li>• Codify management arrangements</li></ul>

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	<p>This consultation will be facilitated through Objective Keystone – a third party platform, contracted through the Council that facilitates public consultations. Consultees will be able to submit representations through completion of a form either online or on paper.</p> <p>The consultation of the draft Planning Advice Note will run alongside that being undertaken for the review of Chelmsford Local Plan (Pre-Submission Regulation 19) and revisions to Chelmsford’s Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Notifications will be sent to residents, statutory bodies, other local authorities and agencies, developers, landowners, promoters of land and housing providers.</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> new                      OR    <input type="checkbox"/> existing (<i>If existing, when was the last assessment? .....</i>)  <input type="checkbox"/> internal                      OR    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> external (i.e. public-facing)  <input type="checkbox"/> statutory                      OR    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> non-statutory         </p>
<p><b>Policy Owner (service)</b></p>	<p><b>Spatial Planning Services</b></p>
<p><b>Scope:</b> Internal - Service/Directorate/Council wide</p>	<p><b>Internal – Directorate of Sustainable Communities – Development Management, Strategic Housing, Public Health and Protection Services</b></p>

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### C: Assessment of impact

Using the information above, assess if the policy / function could potentially disproportionately impact on different protected groups. Specify if the potential impact is positive, could adversely impact or if there is no impact. If an adverse impact, indicate how the impact will be mitigated.

Characteristic	Positive impact	Could adversely impact	No impact	How different groups could be affected	Actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact
<b>Age</b> What will the impact be on different age groups such as younger or older people?	Yes	Yes	No	Co-living housing is likely to offer younger adults a new type of housing designed to meet a potential demand for a managed housing product typically near to city centres attractions and amenities. The draft Planning Advice Note identifies that this type of housing does not comply with other existing planning policies that require a mix of sizes and types of housing to create mixed communities that have the potential to accommodate a wide range of age groups.	The draft Planning Advice Note sets out that applications for co-living housing would need to demonstrate how the benefits of proposals for co-living housing outweigh policy requirements for a mix of size and type of housing to create mixed communities.

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Characteristic	Positive impact	Could adversely impact	No impact	How different groups could be affected	Actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact
<p><b>Disability</b> Consider all disabilities such as hearing loss, dyslexia etc as well as access issues for wheelchair users where appropriate</p>	Yes	Yes	No	<p>The built environment can have a significant impact on people with mental and physical disabilities. Co-Living housing provide communal space for cooking, socialising laundry etc. The number, accessibility and location of these facilities within development, that are more likely to be multi-storey, could affect people with more limited mobility. The rooms sizes will limit the capabilities of the accommodation offer to provide accessible and adaptable accommodation that complies with Building Regulations.</p>	<p>The draft Planning Advice Note sets out design standards to ensure that the right level and location of communal facilities are provided. Specific reference is also made to the ensure that communal areas and circulation space are accessible to wheelchair users and people with more limited mobility.</p>
<p><b>Pregnancy and maternity</b> Pregnant women and new and breastfeeding Mums</p>	No	Yes	No	<p>The private areas of Co-living housing tend to be small, relying on more communal areas for day to day living. Pregnant and breastfeeding women may not have the access to</p>	<p>The draft Planning Advice Note sets out design standards to ensure minimum space standards are applicable to the private areas of co-living housing proposals.</p>

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<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Could adversely impact</b>	<b>No impact</b>	<b>How different groups could be affected</b>	<b>Actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact</b>
				levels of privacy available in other types of housing.	
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> Could this policy discriminate on the grounds of marriage or civil partnership	No	No	Yes	N/A	N/A
<b>Sex</b> Is the service used by more than one gender and are the sexes given equal opportunity	No	No	Yes	N/A	N/A
<b>Gender reassignment</b> Is there an impact on people who are going through or who have completed Gender Reassignment?	No	No	Yes	N/A	N/A
<b>Religion or belief</b> Includes not having religion or belief	No	No	Yes	N/A	N/A
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> What is the impact on heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual people?	No	No	Yes	N/A	N/A
<b>Race</b>	No	No	Yes	N/A	N/A

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Characteristic	Positive impact	Could adversely impact	No impact	How different groups could be affected	Actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact
Includes ethnic or national origins					
<p><b>Are there any other groups who could find it difficult to access or make use of the policy / function?</b></p> <p>For example: low income / people living in rural areas / single parents / carers and the cared for / past offenders / long-term unemployed / housebound / history of domestic abuse / people who don't speak English as a first language / people without computer access etc.</p>	Yes	Yes	No	<p>There is minimal capacity for the built environment to address belief-based, transgender and transitioning, pregnancy based, sexual orientation and racial inequalities. Co-Living housing will provide wider housing opportunities for those with incomes which might not have the resources to secure self-contained accommodation and other groups within a managed housing setting. However, appropriate management controls are required to support groups of people that might need extra support.</p>	<p>The draft Planning Advice Note sets out the requirement for co-living housing to contribute toward affordable housing and provide management plans.</p>

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**D: Consultation process, information used to analyse the effects on protected groups/equality and key findings**

Please describe the consultation process and evidence gathered. You may attach copies or links to the data / research you are using.

<b>1.</b>	<p><b><u>Consultation/engagement</u></b>  <b>What consultation or engagement has been undertaken regarding this policy?</b>  <i>[Please summarise what, when and who was involved]</i></p>	<p>Feedback was sought on an initial draft of the Co-living Housing Planning Advice Note from City Council’s Development Management, Planning Policy, Housing and Environmental Protection teams to sense check content and approach taken.          As detailed above, further consultation is planned to obtain views from stakeholders.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b><u>Key findings</u></b>  <i>(Summarise the key findings of your consultation in relation to protected groups as outlined above).</i></p>	<p>N/A – will be better understood following consultation with stakeholders.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b><u>Data/Information</u></b>  <b>What relevant data or information is currently available about the customers and employees who may use this service or could be affected by this policy?</b>  <i>(For example: equality monitoring, surveys, demographic data, research, evidence about demand/ take-up/satisfaction etc).</i></p> <p><b>What additional information could be collected which would increase your understanding about the potential impact of the policy?</b>  <i>(What involvement or consultation with affected groups is still needed?)</i></p>	<p>It is not fully evidenced the need or demand for co-living housing in Chelmsford. Undertaking consultation on the Planning Advice Note with interested stakeholders enables us the opportunity to gather additional views, opinions and information on the subject matter. All representations that are made will be considered to assess whether any alterations to the drafting is required before the Note is presented to Cabinet for adoption.</p>

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<b>4.</b>	<p><b>For existing policies, strategy, activity only:</b> <b>What has changed since the last assessment?</b> <i>(For example: evidence of public concern or complaints / new information has come to light / changes in service provision / changes in service users/ assessed impact on protected groups etc)</i></p>	N/A
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<b>E: Relevance to the Equality Duty Aims:</b>		
<i>Consider how the policy relates to the aims below (directly or indirectly), and if it could be adjusted to further meet these equality aims.</i>		
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation</b></p>	As detailed above, it is acknowledged that there is a risk that the consultation will be seen as an opportunity for consultees to submit discriminative comments. All comments received will be reviewed and any offensive or discriminative comments will be redacted/removed and the consultee notified.
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not</b> <i>(This means removing or minimising disadvantages, taking steps to meet needs of different people and encouraging participation. It can involve treating people better than others, e.g. disabled people).</i></p>	The Co-living Housing Planning Advice Note seeks to ensure that provision of this type of housing has minimum internal space standards and designed to create meaningful and convenient communal areas. It also clarifies the Council’s position regarding the application of its affordable housing planning policies.
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>To foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. If so, how?</b> <i>(This means promoting understanding between different groups and tackling prejudice)</i></p>	The Co-living Housing Planning Advice Note seeks to guide all parties who may be involved in site development to ensure that in the absence of existing policies, development proposals do not create sub-standard housing or environments that could create disharmony for future residents of the development and/or the wider community.



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F: Conclusion	
Decision:	Explanation:
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Continue the policy with no changes</b> <i>[For example: evidence suggests no potential for discrimination / all opportunities have been taken to advance equality.]</i>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Continue the policy with adjustments</b> <i>[For example: Low risk of negative impact / actions or adjustments would further improve positives or remove a potential negative impact.]</i>	<p><b>The draft Planning Advice Note is seeking to address the main risks of a negative impacts. This is required as at present there is no policy or guidance covering this subject area.</b></p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Adverse impact but continue</b> <i>[For example: Negative impact has been objectively justified.]</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Suspend or withdraw the policy for further review / consideration of alternative proposals</b> <i>[For example: High risk of negative impact for any group / insufficient evidence / need to involve or consult with protected groups / negative impact which cannot be mitigated or justified / unlawful discrimination etc.]</i>	

**Approved by:**

Lead Officer / Responsible officer: *Liz Harris-Best*, Principal Planning Officer (Housing Policy)

Date: 30/1/2025

Senior Manager: *Jeremy Potter*, Spatial Planning Services Manager

Date: 30/1/2025