

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) 2026/27

SAVINGS PROPOSALS RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE

Savings Proposals:

Transfer PSL leases to housing company - increased charges - £1,050,000

The proposal concerns transferring existing Private Sector Leases (PSL) from the Council to the Council's housing company. The company will charge higher rents aligned with the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) as tenants will be able to claim Universal Credit rather than Housing Benefit, which is capped for council-managed temporary accommodation. This approach aims to close the subsidy gap caused by outdated Housing Benefit reimbursement rates and reduce the council's net temporary accommodation (TA) costs.

The proposal is expected to have a neutral impact on groups that share protected characteristics because homeless households will continue to be placed based on statutory criteria, not company status. Higher rents are covered by Universal Credit housing costs, so tenants should not face additional personal financial burden. The council retains responsibility for ensuring accommodation meets needs related to disability, health, and other protected characteristics. The Council will provide support for UC claims, Alternative Payment Arrangements, and ongoing monitoring through equality impact reviews. Any single person households under the age of 35 years residing in PSL properties at the time of transfer to the Housing Company will be rehoused into alternative temporary accommodation or permanently rehoused if a main housing duty has been accepted. Affordability assessments will be carried out for working households and discretionary housing payments will be made where necessary to ensure the accommodation remains affordable for the household.

Additional Income from Licences - £150,000

Income has risen because of the rising number of licence renewals in line with the 5-year licensing scheme cycle. In addition, the Housing Standards team have identified non-compliance within the Selective Licensing Zone which has resulted in more applications being submitted.

This proposal has a neutral impact on groups that share protected characteristics for the following reasons. Licensing schemes are designed to raise housing standards and protect tenants, especially those at higher risk of exploitation or harm. Licensing schemes protect groups including those with protected characteristics by enforcing compliance with safety standards, ensuring landlords are suitable, ensuring repairs are carried out and amenities are adequate, prevention of overcrowding. People with protected characteristics are statistically more likely to experience poverty and poor housing conditions. Licensing income enables the Council to intervene early, preventing exploitation, and maintaining safe, decent homes. It is recognized that residents with "protected characteristics" find it more difficult to access the job market and consequently find themselves in shared dwellings including households in multiple occupation (HMOs). The licensing and inspections of such properties

leads to the identification of risk and the conditioning of such properties will improve the quality of life and living conditions of these vulnerable residents.