

**COUNCIL – 10.10.2012 – ITEM 13**

**Brief Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix B)**

This form is designed to briefly highlight the potential impacts of minor and operational changes to Stevenage Borough Council services and functions on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. The impact of proposed changes should be thoroughly considered so that well-informed decisions can be made and action is taken to mitigate any potential adverse impacts. For guidance refer to the intranet (under Equality and Diversity Toolkit) or talk to the Programme Co-ordinator (Equality and Diversity), equalities@stevenage.gov.uk ext 2363).

Service area	Housing/Finance		
Decision or change being considered	<p>Sector Treasury Management Services (The Council's Treasury Management Advisors) have developed a national scheme, initially in conjunction with the Lloyds Banking Group, to allow councils to provide support to first-time buyers. The scheme provides help for potential buyers who can afford mortgage payments – but not the initial deposit – to get on to the property ladder.</p> <p>Currently, home mortgage lenders are typically prepared to lend a maximum of 75-80% loan to value, even if the applicant can afford a 95% mortgage. The applicant therefore requires a substantial deposit. Many potential first-time home-buyers do not have the funds needed for such a deposit. As part of this scheme the council will indemnify the deposit. The adoption of the LAMS scheme will contribute to the fulfilment of the council's strategic aims and objectives by enabling first-time buyers to enter the housing market within the district, and subsequently to contribute to its social, environmental and economic well-being. It is a customer and community focused initiative, providing practical assistance to first-time buyers, whilst freeing up social housing for those in greater need. Potential buyers who qualify under the criteria for LAMS will approach the lender directly and the lender will deal with the council. The council will not know the identity of the individuals concerned and will have no role in approving individual mortgages.</p>		
Date of full EqIA on wider service area (planned or completed)	N/A – new scheme, full EqIA not appropriate.		
Form completed by	Clare Fletcher	Date	1 September 2012

Who are the users of this service/function? Who is affected by it and by the way it is carried out? Note any evidence of adverse or disproportionate impact on any particular groups of people.

The scheme will benefit first time buyers who can afford the mortgage payments but not an initial deposit of 25%. This can be an individual or a couple if one of the couple is a first time buyer. The maximum loan size will enable up to a three bedroom property to be purchased, (based on July 2012 data).

Consider the impact of the change to the function/service on groups relating to the following factors. If impact is unknown or not fully understood, consider consulting the group on the likely impact.

	Possible negative impact	Possible positive impact
Age		LAMS will give the opportunity to all sectors of the community – provided they are a first-time buyer – to purchase a property in Stevenage. This is irrespective of their protected characteristic, and the anonymity of applicants to the council removes the potential for any bias (both positive and negative).
Gender		
Ethnicity		
Disability		
Sexual orientation		
Religion/belief		
Transgender		
Pregnancy/maternity		
Socio-economic		By providing opportunities for people to purchase property in Stevenage, there is potential to free-up currently occupied social housing for tenants on our housing and mutual exchange waiting lists
Other		

If a negative impact has been identified, consider actions to mitigate this impact and integrate these actions into planning. In addition, consider actions to further positively impact on equality groups.

Action	Who is responsible? How will the impact and the action be monitored?	Timeline for implementation
NA		

If significant negative impacts have been identified, consider the completion of a full Equality Impact Assessment (available on the intranet).

**Date completed: 1 September 2012**

**Signed by Head of Service: Clare Fletcher**