

**Coventry City Council
Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) Form**

In line with the principles of decision making outlined in the City Council Constitution, the Council will ensure that its decision making is open and transparent, and that due regard is given to the Council's obligations and desire to promote equality of opportunity and equal treatment.

Form 1

This part must be completed and before formal consultation is undertaken and must be available during the consultation stage.

Author of this document: Faye Griffiths

Name of ECA and Service: Selective Licensing

Head of Service: Andrew Walster

Date of completion: December 2018

Background to the planned changes

1. What is the background to the planned changes? Why is this change being considered?

The Housing Act 2004 gave Local Housing Authorities the power to introduce Selective Licensing within part or all of their area.

The Council has produced a Housing Strategy which recognises that, amongst other things, there is limited social affordable housing available in the city, and that therefore the Private Rented Sector (PRS) will need to play a greater role in meeting housing needs in the city. We know that often, people from protected characteristic groups live in the PRS and therefore are affected by the issues related to this.

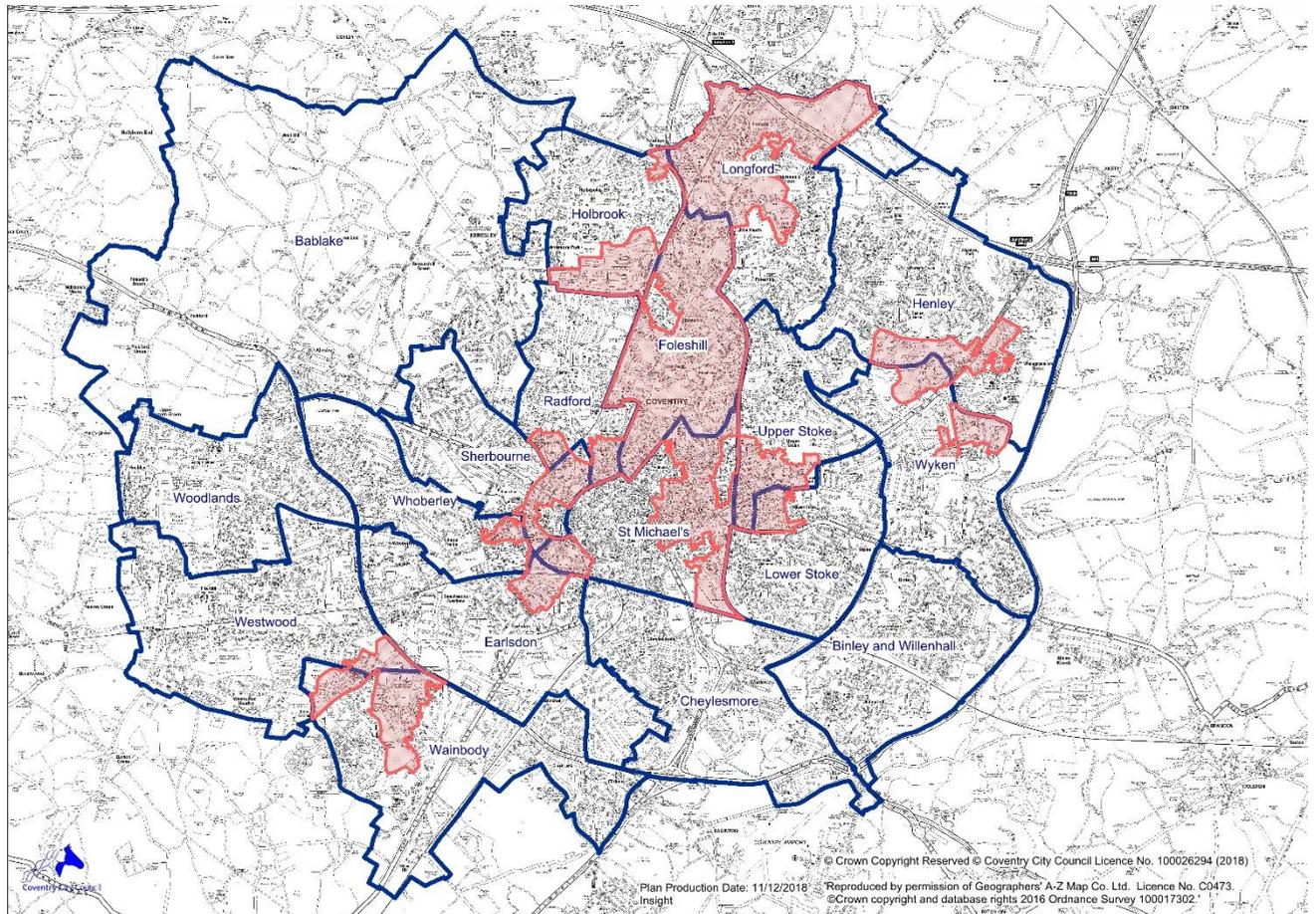
In areas where Selective Licensing applies, landlords must apply for a licence if they want to rent out a property. This means the council can check whether they are a "fit or proper person" to be a landlord, as well as making other stipulations concerning management of the property and appropriate safety measures.

The Council acknowledges that many landlords provide decent, well-managed and well maintained accommodation, which does not cause any problems for the local community. There are, however, also properties that are poorly managed, suffer from overcrowding, or provide unsafe accommodation. These properties have a negative effect on the local area.

Coventry City Council is proposing to designate the areas identified in pink shown in Figure 1 (over), subject to Selective Licensing.

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Figure 1



2. Who do you need to consider as part of this ECA?

- Accredited landlords/letting agents
- Cabinet Member
- CABs
- Community Safety
- Council for the disabled/access groups
- Disability Forums
- Existing tenants
- Landlords
- Lead Party Members
- Local media
- Local people
- Members of Parliament
- National and Regional landlord agencies, Eg. National Landlord Association, Guild of Residential Landlords, Association of Residential Rights, Residential Landlord Association
- Opposition Members
- Public Health

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- Registered Social Landlords
- Resident Associations
- Specialist press
- Statutory stakeholders
- Students
- Universities
- Voluntary Action Coventry
- Voluntary/community organisations
- West Midlands Combined Authority
- West Midlands Fire Service
- West Midlands Police

Pre-Consultation Engagement

This section refers to any activities that took place (such as briefings, meetings, workshops, scoping exercises etc) with stakeholders before the formal consultation period.

3. What engagement activities took place prior to formal consultation and what feedback (if any) was received in relation to equality issues?

None yet. A formal stakeholder and public consultation will take place between 9 January 2019 and 20 March 2019.

A wide range of data has been analysed to provide an objective geographical appraisal of the city and those areas which may benefit from the implementation of a Selective Licensing scheme using the criteria set out in the guidance provided by Government for designating selective licensing areas. The detailed analysis was based on the following themes set around the criteria set by Government.

Low Housing Demand

Lack of Mixed Communities – Proportion of tenure mix
Average House Sale Price
Count of Empty Properties
Count of Total Crimes
Count of Criminal Damage
Count of Burglary
Count of Robbery
Count of Theft
Count of Vehicle Crime
Proportion of families on Low Income.

ASB

Count of Total ASB
Count of Nuisance ASB
Count of Personal ASB
Count of Environmental ASB

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Count of Flytipping
Count of Rubbish Accumulations
Count of Graffiti cleared

Property Conditions

Proportion of Private Rented Sector Stock with a Category 1 hazard
Proportion of Private Rented Sector Stock with a Category 2 hazard
Count of Housing Complaints

Migration

Count of Population change between 2011 to 2013
Count of New build Completions

Deprivation – 2015 Indices of Multiple Deprivation

Lack of Mixed Communities – Proportion of tenure mix
Overall Deprivation score
Employment Deprivation score
Income Deprivation score
Health Deprivation score
Access to Education, Training and Other Services score
Indoors Sub Domain score
Living Environment score
Levels of Crime score

Crime

Lack of Mixed Communities – Proportion of tenure mix
Count of Total crime
Count of Criminal Damage
Count of Burglary
Count of Robbery
Count of Theft
Count of Vehicle Crime
Rate of Crime per 1000 population
% Comparison to National Average

Analysis of Impact

- 4. Outline below how this proposal/review could impact on protected groups positively or negatively, and what steps/mitigations (if any) could be taken to reduce any negative impact that has been identified.**

The positive and negative impacts in respect of protected characteristic groups are shown below. The proposals recognise that one of the city's strengths is its diversity and to ensure that there is equality and fairness for all. In this regard, we will adopt an inclusive and principally locality driven approach to the implementation of the licensing as well as focusing on the issues faced by protected characteristic groups.

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As part of the licence application process, landlords will need to show that when carrying out their business they have not (amongst other things) practised unlawful discrimination and must meet licence conditions on how they manage their properties. The licensing scheme should have a positive effect on anti-social behaviour, and this may have a positive impact for protected characteristic groups.

Coventry is the second largest city in the region by population, with a population estimated to be in excess of 366,800. The city is also the 9th largest in England, and its population places it as the 12th largest in the UK.¹

Between 2012 and 2013, the city's population increased by over 2%. A significant number of migrants have contributed to the city's population, which is expected to continue as Coventry will see steady population increases.

Census 2011 data suggests that Coventry's population has a much younger age profile than England in general; it is the younger population that is on the increase with a decline in the over 75's.

Age – The English Housing Survey 2016/17 (EHS) reported, that the PRS has now grown to 20%, up from 19% in 2013-14 and 11% in 2003 and that a larger proportion of 25- to 34-year-olds now rent their home.

Selective Licencing will have a positive effect on young people as rising house prices have seen many young people priced out of buying a home which is apparent from the results of the EHS which acknowledges that *“While the under 35s have always been overrepresented in the private rented sector, over the last decade or so the increase in the proportion of such households in the private rented sector has been particularly pronounced. In 2006-07, 27% of those aged 25-34 lived in the private rented sector. By 2016-17 this had increased to 46%. Over the same period, the proportion of 25-34 year olds in owner occupation decreased from 57% to 37%. In other words, households aged 25-34 are more likely to be renting privately than buying their own home, a continuation of a trend first identified in 2012-13. As with those aged 35-44, the proportion of 25-34 year olds in the social rented sector did not change”*.

The average age of Coventry's residents is 33 years, notably lower than the England average of 40 years, and is falling. In 2007 when the Coventry population started to grow the average age was 36 years. The young average age is partly because the city is home to two large universities - Coventry is one of the top 20 towns and cities in the UK in terms of the proportion of the population who are students (source: Census 2011).

Disability – Selective Licensing will have a positive effect on disabled people as tenants with disabilities often face problems when renting properties. They may particularly have problems with security of tenure. Landlords are reluctant to facilitate property adaptations. Tenants with health issues are also much more likely to be affected by problems with damp and housing disrepair issues and may face

¹ <https://www.ukpopulation.org/coventry-population/>

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problems with getting repairs done more quickly. Disabled tenants are much more impacted by the cold and issues such as no heating or hot water affect them more. Disabled tenants who have assistance dogs also have more problems renting properties as these are seen as pets. Selective licencing will help to overcome these issues.

Gender reassignment - Although the proposals are not believed to have adverse impacts on this group, we do know that this is a group that experiences discrimination and this may impact on their ability to rent property.

Marriage/Civil Partnership – There is not believed any impact on this group.

Pregnancy/Maternity – Although it is not believed there is any significant impact on this group, people with children can find renting a property an issue.

Race – Property investment by the Asian community is widespread and often a means to support their families both within the UK and in Pakistan and India. There may be a negative impact on this group of Landlords as the cost of the scheme may affect their property portfolios.

However, Selective Licensing will have a positive effect on race as rented accommodation will be improved in the areas of Selective licensing. This is significant as the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported in 2014 that overall for the UK as a whole, the proportion of the population born outside of the UK was 13% (8.3 million of 63.7 million). In Coventry the figures for 2014/15 were reported to be 24% non UK born, almost twice the national average.

According to the 2011 Census, Coventry as a local authority has experienced the greatest migration since 2001 - second only to London.

The 2011 Census tells us that 1 in every 5 people living in Coventry (21%) were born outside the UK. People move in and out of the city every year, including students studying at the city's two universities from both the UK (37,580) as well as an estimated 19,160 overseas students (2016-2017 figures)². 14,035 students enrolled from Non-EU countries and 5,125 from EU countries. Therefore, Selective Licensing will have a positive effect on those living in Coventry who were born outside the UK from different ethnic minorities and will add to measures that address migrant health issues that is a clear priority for the city's Marmot role.

Religion/belief – Some religions are unable to receive interest from investments and this proposal may impact on members of those religions.

² <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/11-01-2018/sfr247-higher-education-student-statistics/location>

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Sex – There are not believed to be any specific impacts on this group. However, if landlords increase rents to cover the cost of the licence, this will impact all renters.

Sexual orientation - Although the proposals are not believed to have adverse impacts on this group, we do know that this is a group that experiences discrimination and this may impact on their ability to rent property.

5. Are there any other vulnerable groups that could be affected?

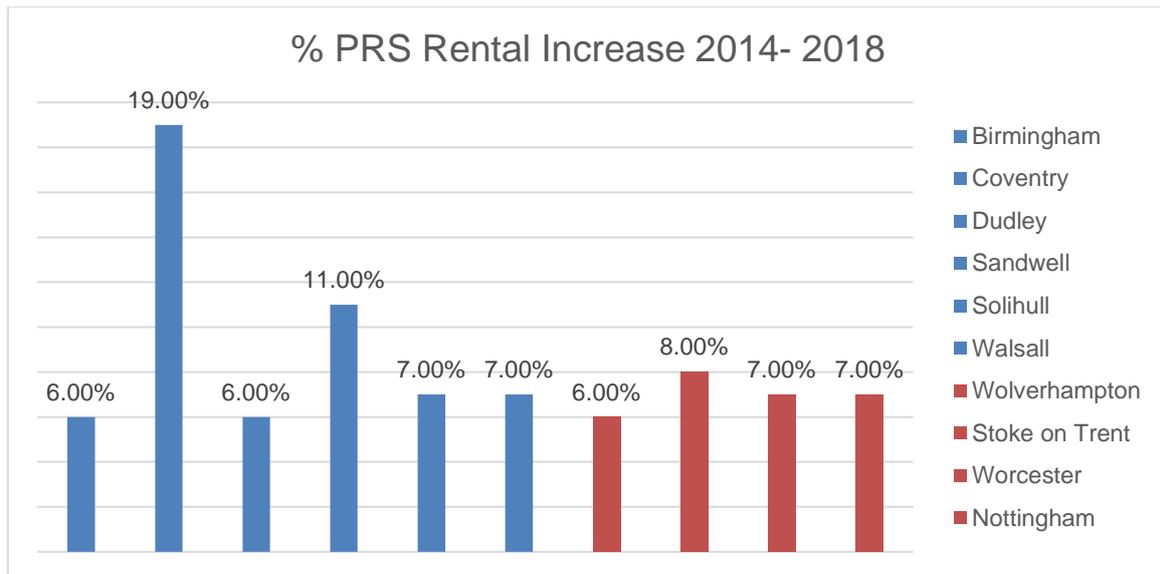
Socio-economic - Selective Licensing will have a positive effect on people in lower socio-economic groups, those in routine/semi routine jobs and those who are long term unemployed or have never worked are often those most impacted by poor quality accommodation. They are also more likely to live in private rented accommodation.

However, this group could be negatively affected if landlords increase rent to cover the cost of the licence or improvements required to comply. the Council has conducted some research into this area of increased rents and has made a comparison of rents from 2014- 2018 between areas in England that had discretionary licensing schemes and those that did not, in order to establish if there was any evidence to show that discretionary licensing increases rent.

As can be seen from Figure 2 below rental values increased in Coventry, on average by 19% between 2015 and 2018 compared to 11% in the West Midlands and 8% England over the same period. The increases in rent occurred in Coventry without the existence of a licensing scheme whilst lesser increases occurred across areas of the West Midlands where licensing is in operation – those shown in red (Wolverhampton 6%, Stoke 8%, Worcester 7% & Nottingham 7%). The evidence therefore suggests that despite the perception that licensing increase rents it is not the main contributing factor.

Figure 2 - Comparison of Rents in Areas with and without Licensing

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Health – Selective Licensing will have a positive effect on health. It is well reported that poor housing conditions, including overcrowding and homelessness, are associated with an increased health risk, specifically of cardiovascular diseases, respiratory conditions and mental health problems. In Coventry, as of the 2011 census, 61% of homes were owner occupied (69% in 2001) and 17% were rented from the Housing Association or a Social Landlord (18% in 2001). In addition, 9.5% of housing was deemed overcrowded.

6. What are the gaps in evidence? Can this be addressed during the consultation stage?

There is limited data on inequalities in the private rented sector related to marriage/civil partnership issues. It is unlikely that additional data will be gathered on this during the consultation stage, this will be considered as part of future information gathering exercises.

7. What are the likely impacts of this project/review on staff from protected groups? None

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Form 2

This section should be completed AFTER any consultation has been concluded.

Author of this document: Adrian Chowns

Date of completion: September 2019

Potential Impacts – further information

8. Referring to the information detailed in question 4 of ECA Form 1, state if the potential impacts have been confirmed. Also detail below any additional information about potential impacts that has been highlighted during any consultation.

A consultation was carried out for a period of 10 weeks between the 19 January 2019 and the 20 March 2019. The consultation incorporated a range of methods for conducting the consultation, including:

- Online questionnaires – 301 responses
- Drop in sessions – attended by 119 people
- Focus Groups – attended by 29 people
- Tenants and residents groups – attended by 17 people
- Landlords Forums – attended by 245 people
- Flyers and questionnaires were handed out at various locations

No specific equalities issues were raised during the consultation.

Generally, there was support for the proposals but there were several reservations around the potential impact this could have on the cost of accommodation. It was clear that tenants felt there was a need to retain cheap accommodation even if it meant that it was slightly below standard as this was the only option for some. There was also some confusion about why certain areas had been included/excluded. There was also concern regarding the fee structure.

Voluntary organisations, such as the Frontline Network and Citizens Advice were in support of the aim of Selective Licensing but had reservations about whether this could be delivered effectively, the validity of the data and whether the Council had a contingency plan if the scheme was not successful.

Following consultation, it has been recommended that Selective Licensing is not introduced in the city at the current time and this will be considered by Cabinet.

Outcome of equality impact

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9. Indicate which of the following best describes the equality impact of this project/review:

There will be **no** equality impact if the proposed option is implemented

There will be **positive** equality impact if the proposed option is implemented

There will be **negative** equality impact if the proposed option is implemented but this can be objectively justified

There will be both **positive and negative** impacts if the proposed option is implemented

Summary of ECA

Write a paragraph below which summarises the key aspects of this ECA.

The Council has produced a Housing Strategy which recognises that, amongst other things, there is limited social affordable housing available in the city, and that therefore the Private Rented Sector (PRS) will need to play a greater role in meeting housing needs in the city. We know that often, people from protected characteristic groups live in the PRS and therefore are affected by the issues related to this.

In areas where Selective Licensing applies, landlords must apply for a licence if they want to rent out a property. This means the council can check whether they are a “fit or proper person” to be a landlord, as well as making other stipulations concerning management of the property and appropriate safety measures.

The analysis suggests that the introduction of Selective Licensing would have a positive impact on those in protected characteristic groups who may often face particular problems when renting properties. They may particularly have problems with security of tenure.

Consultation showed general support for the proposal but concern regarding the data and the suggested locations and the proposed fee structure.

It will be recommended to Cabinet that the scheme is not implemented at the current time.

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Approvals from Director and Cabinet Member

Name of ECA Author: Adrian Chowns

Date: 16th October 2019

Director: Andrew Walster

Cabinet Member: Councillor Tariq Khan

Please detail below any committees, boards or panels that have considered this analysis.

Name	Date	Chair	Decision taken
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Next steps

Please send this completed ECA to the Insight Team as follows:

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