

# Diversity impact assessment

<b>TITLE</b>
Private Sector Licensing - Additional and selective licensing scheme
<b>DATE 21 October 2025</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER.</b>
Paul Salter Private Sector Housing and Adaptations Manager
<b>1 Summary description of the proposed change</b> What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed? How does it compare with the current situation? <p>The recommendation is for cabinet to agree to formally commence consultation for the recommended Additional and Selective Licensing Scheme in the nominated wards (Chatham Central &amp; Brompton, Fort Pitt, Gillingham North, Gillingham South, Luton and Watling) and Selective Licensing Scheme in the recommended wards (Chatham Central &amp; Brompton, Fort Pitt, Gillingham North, Gillingham South, Luton, Strood North &amp; Frindsbury and Watling).</p> <p>This is to support Priority 5 – Living in Good Quality Affordable Homes within the One Medway Council Plan, by supporting the reduction of anti-social behaviour in privately rented areas by holding landlords accountable for their tenants' actions and promoting better property management practices. The scheme will also require landlords to meet specific standards and conditions for rental properties in the nominated wards.</p>
<b>2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment</b> E.g. Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user. E.g. Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile <p>A software package (Metastreet) was commissioned in 2024 to assist with undertaking a review of the private rented housing stock within Medway against housing stressors related to key tenures. This information allowed for progression of a feasibility study into whether or not the introduction of discretionary licensing scheme would be viable in Medway – this was concluded in July 2025.</p> <p>Current legislation and the consultation for the licencing regulations has indicated that there are often additional factors needing to be taken into account. An example is the quality and type of support, where the property is designated as supported housing as a requirement of a licence being issued, not just property standards. This requires a multidisciplinary team with the relevant skills and knowledge to assess applications from landlords, inspect where relevant, and issue licencing accurately.</p>

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## What is likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age		✓	
Disability		✓	
Gender reassignment		✓	
Marriage/civil partnership			
Pregnancy/maternity		✓	
Race		✓	
Religion/belief		✓	
Sex		✓	
Sexual orientation		✓	
Care experience		✓	
Other (e.g. low income groups)		✓	

## 4 Summary of the likely impacts

Who will be affected?

How will they be affected?

Anyone who lives, owns or manages private rented accommodation [including commissioned accommodation services and nightly paid temporary accommodation] in the Medway wards highlighted above. The impacts have a potential to be positive or negative depending on whether the impact is on the tenant or managing agent/owner and the extent to which the parties are willing to comply with the terms of the licencing.

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The potential impacts are already reflected in the existing mandatory licensing scheme in operation e.g. for large Houses in Multiple Occupation [Housing Act 2004]

## **5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?**

What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?

Are there alternative providers?

Can demand for services be managed differently?

All the impacts foreseen by introducing Additional and Selective Licensing in the wards advised above, can be mitigated in the same manner as the impacts of mandatory licensing, this includes housing advice, housing standards and licensing conditions, inspections, financial penalties, improvement notices and other legislative action. The introduction of the new licensing scheme will support the improvement of housing standards and reduce anti-social behaviour in the private rented sector, ensuring that residents have access to a better quality of private rented accommodation.

A communication strategy will be developed to support the consultation and implementation of the Additional and Selective Licensing.

This will mean that providers will have a less arduous experience of applying for a licence and have the information to be prepared for any negative outcomes ahead of the licencing regulations, which in turn reduces any insecurity of provision for the vulnerable residents already living in these accommodations.

This may encourage responsible landlords to lease to One Medway Lettings as a way of mitigating the responsibility falling solely on them.

## **6 Action plan**

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
N/A		

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## 7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

The recommendation is for cabinet to agree to the formal commencement of consultation for the recommended Additional and Selective Licensing Scheme in the nominated wards to start the direction of travel towards improving the quality of private sector housing in the Medway area.

## 8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

### Assistant Director

Mark Breathwick

### Date of authorisation

29.09.25