

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

TITLE: Council Tax Support Scheme

VERSION CONTROL

Date	Version	Author	Description of Changes
16.6.19	1	Alison Edwards	

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Stage 1 Description: Fact finding (about your policy / service /

Department	Corporate		Lead officer responsible for assessment		Alison Edwards	
Service	Benefits		Other members of team undertaking assessment			
Date	16.6.19		Version		1	
Type of document (mark as appropriate)	Strategy	Plan	Function	Policy	Procedure	Service
Is this a new/ existing/ revision of an existing document (please mark as appropriate)	New		Existing		Revision	
Title and subject of the impact assessment (include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate and how it fits in with the wider aims of the organisation) Please attach a copy of the strategy/ plan/ function/ policy/ procedure/ service	<p>Council Tax Support Scheme</p> <p>The Cheshire East CTS scheme for working age residents is intended to help those on low income/low earnings meet their Council Tax liability, reducing debt and poverty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To incentivise those who can work to do so • To reward those who are in work, on a low wage • For those with capital to meet the liability • To encourage those on low income to downsize and move to more affordable housing (lower banded) <p>The original scheme was designed as draft and consulted on. The consultation feedback was considered, the scheme reviewed then approved by Cabinet and came into place on 1 April 2013.</p> <p>The proposed changes to the scheme are to enable a simplification of the administration processes rather than any reduction in the cost of the scheme itself.</p>					
Who are the main stakeholders and have they been engaged with? (e.g. general public, employees, Councillors, partners, specific audiences, residents)	<p>The proposals for the changes to the scheme are to be consulted on with all our stakeholders and partners. General public, Councillors, Welfare Groups, employees, local charities.</p>					

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What consultation method(s) did you use?	<p>The consultation is to be shared with the community via the Cheshire East website and the Connected Community Centres via the Partnerships Team.</p> <p>Requests will be made to the members of Cheshire East Welfare Rights Forum and Registered Providers Forum. Direct requests will be made to the Cheshire East Digital Panel Consultation.</p> <p>Face to face consultation will take place in both Macclesfield Town Hall and Delamere House</p>
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Stage 2 Initial Screening

Who is affected and what evidence have you considered to arrive at this analysis? (This may or may not include the stakeholders listed above)	<p>The proposals will only affect those of Working age resident within Cheshire East who have a Council Tax liability. 26% of the CTS caseload (4,810 households) are Working Age and not in receipt of a 'passported' benefit and are therefore affected by the changes proposed.</p>
Who is intended to benefit and how?	<p>The scheme is designed to benefit those of working age who have a low income or low earnings.</p>
Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups?	<p>Some groups may be affected differently – specific assistance is being targeted towards those in receipt of disability benefits, Carer's allowance and working</p>
Does it include making decisions based on individual characteristics, needs or circumstances?	<p>Each CTS decision is made specifically on the circumstances of the individual claimants.</p>
Are relations between different groups or communities likely to be affected? (eg will it favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others?)	<p>It is unlikely that this scheme will have any affect on relationships between different groups or communities.</p>
Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality? Is there a history of unequal	<p>The scheme will take into account the household income of those applying for support. Each claim is considered based on it's own merits. There is no history of unequal outcomes</p>

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outcomes (do you have enough evidence to prove otherwise)?									
Is there an actual or potential negative impact on these specific characteristics? (Please tick)									
Age	Y	N	Marriage & civil partnership	Y	N	Religion & belief	Y	N	
Disability	Y	N	Pregnancy & maternity	Y	N	Sex	Y	N	
Gender reassignment	Y	N	Race	Y	N	Sexual orientation	Y	N	
What evidence do you have to support your findings? (quantitative and qualitative) Please provide additional information that you wish to include as appendices to this document, i.e., graphs, tables, charts							Consultation/ involvement carried out		
							Yes	No	
Age	The scheme only affects working age residents – pension age applicants are still protected under the original national Council Tax Benefit scheme						Yes		
Disability	The allowances for claimants in receipt of disability benefits are proposed to be altered to a flat rate disregard from the disability income – comments to be sought from relevant groups in respect of this change – DIB etc						Yes		
Gender reassignment	No affect in relation to gender reassignment						Yes		
Marriage & civil partnership	No direct affect in relation to marriage or civil partnership – scheme considers single, lone parents and couples and their specific income						Yes		
Pregnancy & maternity	No affect in relation to pregnancy or maternity						Yes		
Race	No affect in relation to race – decisions not impacted by race						Yes		
Religion & belief	No affect in relation to religion/belief – decisions not impacted by either						Yes		
Sex	No affect in relation to sex – the income of single applicants regardless of sex is used						Yes		
Sexual orientation	No affect in relation to sexual orientation – this information has no impact of an application						Yes		

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Proceed to full impact assessment? (Please tick)	Yes	No	Date 16.6.19
Lead officer sign off	<i>A Edwards</i>	Date 16.6.19	
Head of service sign off	<i>[Signature]</i>	Date 25.7.19	

If yes, please proceed to Stage 3. If no, please publish the initial screening as part of the suite of documents relating to this issue

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Stage 3 Identifying impacts and evidence

This section identifies if there are impacts on equality, diversity and cohesion, what evidence there is to support the conclusion and what further action is needed

Protected characteristics	<p>Is the policy (function etc....) likely to have an adverse impact on any of the groups?</p> <p>Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations</p> <p>List what negative impacts were recorded in Stage 1 (Initial Assessment).</p>	<p>Are there any positive impacts of the policy (function etc....) on any of the groups?</p> <p>Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations</p> <p>List what positive impacts were recorded in Stage 1 (Initial Assessment).</p>	<p>Please rate the impact taking into account any measures already in place to reduce the impacts identified</p> <p>High: Significant potential impact; history of complaints; no mitigating measures in place; need for consultation</p> <p>Medium: Some potential impact; some mitigating measures in place, lack of evidence to show effectiveness of measures</p> <p>Low: Little/no identified impacts; heavily legislation-led; limited public facing aspect</p>	<p>Further action (only an outline needs to be included here. A full action plan can be included at Section 4)</p> <p>Once you have assessed the impact of a policy/service, it is important to identify options and alternatives to reduce or eliminate any negative impact. Options considered could be adapting the policy or service, changing the way in which it is implemented or introducing balancing measures to reduce any negative impact. When considering each option you should think about how it will reduce any negative impact, how it might impact on other groups and how it might impact on relationships between groups and overall issues around community cohesion. You should clearly demonstrate how you have considered various options and the impact of these. You must have a detailed rationale behind decisions and a justification for those alternatives that have not been accepted.</p>
Age				
Disability				
Gender reassignment				
Marriage & civil partnership				
Pregnancy and				

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maternity				
Race				
Religion & belief				
Sex				
Sexual orientation				
<p>Is this change due to be carried out wholly or partly by other providers? If yes, please indicate how you have ensured that the partner organisation complies with equality legislation (e.g. tendering, awards process, contract, monitoring and performance measures)</p>				

Summary: provide a brief overview including impact, changes, improvement, any gaps in evidence and additional data that is needed			
Specific actions to be taken to reduce, justify or remove any adverse impacts	How will this be monitored?	Officer responsible	Target date
Please provide details and link to full action plan for actions			
When will this assessment be reviewed?			
Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?			
Lead officer sign off		Date	
Head of service sign off		Date	

Please publish this completed EIA form on the relevant section of the Cheshire East website