

# Appendix 3

## Initial Equalities Impact Assessment screening form

1. Within the aims and objectives of the policy or strategy which group (s) of people has been identified as being potentially disadvantaged by your proposals? What are the equality impacts?

Council Tax Reduction is claimed by low income households in the city. The following groups are over represented in this cohort compared to the general population:

Women

Single parent households

Ethnic Minorities

People with a disability or lifelong illness

2. In brief, what changes are you planning to make to your current or proposed new or changed policy, strategy, procedure, project or service to minimise or eliminate the adverse equality impacts?

Please provide further details of the proposed actions, timetable for making the changes and the person(s) responsible for making the changes on the resultant action plan

The 2020/21 Council Tax Reduction Scheme has been informed by a consultation process. This included:

- Uprate the income bands for Universal Credit claimants in line with previous years
- Changes that affect CTR to be applied from the date of the change, rather than the Monday after the change. This mirrors how the daily charge for Council Tax works and the cost of doing this will net itself. There may be some gainers and losers depending on the change reported
- Leaving a claim open for 6 months whilst there is a Universal Credit claim in place
- To consider whether or not to introduce a banded income approach for working age claimants, the same as the Council currently does for UC claimants from 2021/22

Within the existing Council Tax regulations, there is provision for discretionary payments to be made to people experiencing hardship. Anyone disadvantaged by the Council Tax Reduction scheme can apply for help from this scheme.

Changes will take effect from 1 April 2020 unless otherwise stated

3. Please provide details of whom you will consult on the proposed changes and if you do not plan to consult, please provide the rationale behind that decision.

Please note that you are required to involve disabled people in decisions that impact on them

The Council have consulted via our website, electronically with major preceptors and advice agencies, placed paper copies in surgeries and libraries, and invited people to respond via email straplines. The Council also targeted Universal Credit claimants on the income banded scheme via email.

4. Can the adverse impacts you identified during the initial screening be justified without making any adjustments to the existing or new policy, strategy, procedure, project or service?

Please set out the basis on which you justify making no adjustments

Within the existing Council Tax regulations, there is provision for discretionary payments to be made to people experiencing hardship. Anyone disadvantaged by the Council Tax Reduction scheme can apply for help from this scheme.

5. You are legally required to monitor and review the proposed changes after implementation to check they work as planned and to screen for unexpected equality impacts.

Please provide details of how you will monitor/evaluate or review your proposals and when the review will take place.

The impact will be monitored via applications for discretionary support. This should highlight any areas of concern.  
The Council will also continue to ensure that it promotes the CTR scheme to anyone moving onto Universal Credit, as it will need to be by a separate application.

As the changes will be rolled out on a gradual basis, as people see changes in their circumstance, there will be an opportunity to revise the scheme in future years, if there is an unexpected negative impact on certain groups of customers.

Lead officer responsible for signing off the EqIA: Tanya Bandekar

Role: Service Manager, Revenues & Benefits

Date: 13/11/19

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