

## **Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment for Council Tax Support Scheme 2017/187** **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

The separate EIA guidance notes outline what should be included for each section. Please read them before you begin. If you have any queries, contact your Corporate Equality Group rep, or the Engagement Team on 643 2828.

**1. Author, service area, date**

*Tracy Hunter, Finance*

**2. Who else has been involved in writing this EIA?**

*Anne Foreman, Policy Research and Data Analyst*

**3. What proposal is this EIA assessing?**

*The review of the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2017/18*

**4. What is the purpose of your proposal and what is it expected to achieve?**

*To consider whether to review the Council Tax Support Scheme and make changes to the way working age claimant's entitlements is calculated. This will help inform Cabinet as to whether changes to the Scheme should be proposed to Council on 19 January 2017. The following options are being considered:*

**Scheme 1** - Continue to allow working age claimants to claim up to the maximum level of Council Tax Support which is 90% of their Council Tax liability

**Scheme 2** – Reduce the Maximum Council Tax Support that working age claimants can claim from 90% to 87.5% of their Council Tax liability

**Scheme 3** - Reduce the Maximum Council Tax Support that working age claimants can claim from 90% to 85% of their Council Tax liability

**5. Is there any relevance to the aims of the public sector equality duty? Write your answers in the table**

Aim	Yes, No, or N/A	Details if 'yes'
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment	N/A	
Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	Yes	By considering the different characteristics and needs of people in the scheme, in order to ensure that the scheme is fair to all residents.
Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	N/A	

**6. Analysis by characteristic Write your answers in the table**

Protected characteristic	Potential positive or negative impact?	Explanation and evidence
All protected characteristics	Yes	<p><b><u>Scheme 2 and 3</u></b></p> <p>The changes proposed under Scheme 2 (reduce the maximum Council Tax Support available to working age claimants to 87.5%) and Scheme 3((reduce the maximum Council Tax Support available to working age claimants to 85%) will impact negatively on working age claimants only as working age claimants will be able to claim less entitlement. Working age claimants will be expected to contribute more to</p>

		their Council Tax liability.  <b>Option 1</b> Scheme 1 is the current scheme and therefore there are no changes to the scheme.
Age	Yes	Schemes 2 and 3 are more favourable towards pensionable age claimants as is the current scheme under Scheme 1.  Changes under Scheme 2 and 3 are negative towards working age claimants (see above). Scheme 2 and 3 are positive for pensionable age claimants.
Disability	Yes	Potential negative impacts around consulting and communicating the change to claimants.
Gender	No	
Gender reassignment	No	
Marriage and civil partnership status	No	
Pregnancy and maternity	No	
Race	Yes	Potential negative impact around consulting and communicating the change to claimants.
Religion or belief	No	
Sexual orientation	No	

**7. Have you carried out any engagement in relation to this proposal? If so, what?**

- *Engagement around consulting residents on the potential schemes will start once Cabinet considers and agrees to this on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016.*
- *SLT, LMB and \Cabinet member and Mayor.*

**8. Is there any information you don't have that you need to find?**

*Consultation feedback will need to be considered when outcomes are known.*

**9. What actions are already in place, or will be taken, to remove or reduce potential negative impacts? (add more lines to the table if you need to) Write your answers in the table**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
The current Discretionary Support Scheme can be used to support people in exceptional circumstances	Andrew Scott/ Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources	In place
Engagement Strategy to consult on changes considered by Cabinet	Andrew Scott/ Tracy Hunter	Mid September through to November
Communication Strategy will be developed to share the decision made by Council on the Scheme to be put in place from April 2017	Andrew Scott/ Tracy Hunter	From 20 January 2017

**10. Are there any potential negative impacts that cannot be removed or reduced? If so, why is this?**

Government funding reductions to North Tyneside continue to be quite significant and this will impact *on the amount of funding available this scheme.*

*Prescribed regulations ensure that pensioners must have entitlement based on 100% and this impacts on the amount of funding remaining for a working age scheme.*

**11. Based on your conclusions from this assessment, what are your next steps?**

*Cabinet on 12 September 2016 will recommend options to be consulted on. The consultation exercise will be carried out and outcomes from the consultation will then be reported to Cabinet who will propose their recommendation to Council.*

**12. How will the impact of this proposal be monitored after it is introduced?**

*The number of claimants claiming is monitored and compared against the previous year's trends. Should any significant change be identified this and claimant's characteristics will be investigated.*

**13. When will this EIA be reviewed?**

*The EIA is carried out at the annual review unless no changes are proposed as part of the next review.*