

Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment for Council Tax Support Scheme 2018/19

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?

Andrew Scott, Client Manager Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service

3. What proposal is this EIA assessing?

The review of the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2018/19

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

To carry out the annual review the Council Tax Support Scheme and to consider the options of change to the maximum level of support for working age claimant's. This will help inform Cabinet as to what change to the Scheme should be proposed to Council on 18 January 2018. The following options are being considered:

Scheme 1 – Reduce the Maximum Council Tax Support that working age claimants can claim from 87.5% to 85% of their Council Tax liability

Scheme 2 - Reduce the Maximum Council Tax Support that working age claimants can claim from 87.5% to 82.5% of their Council Tax liability

Scheme 3 - Reduce the Maximum Council Tax Support that working age claimants can claim from 87.5% to 80% 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 claimants.
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><u>Scheme 1, 2 and 3</u></p> <p>The changes proposed under:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme 1 (reduce the maximum Council Tax Support available to working age claimants to 85%) • Scheme 2 (reduce the maximum Council Tax Support available to working age claimants to 82.5%), and • Scheme 3 (reduce the maximum Council Tax Support available to working age

		claimants to 80%), will all 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 their Council Tax liability than pensionable age CTS claimants.
Age	Yes	Schemes 1, 2 and 3 are more favourable and therefore more positive towards pensionable age claimants as is the current scheme as each scheme allows up to 100% CTS for pensionable age CTS 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 scheme options will start once Cabinet considers and agrees to this on 11th September 2017.*
- *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

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
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 being considered by Cabinet	Andrew Scott/ Tracy Hunter	Mid September through to November
Communication Strategy will be developed on the change to the level of support that is proposed by Cabinet and if accepted by Council. Any change agreed by Council will be affected from April 2018.	Andrew Scott/ Tracy Hunter	From 19 January 2018

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 significant and this will impact *on the amount of funding available for the CTS Scheme.*

Prescribed regulations ensure that pensioners must have entitlement based on 100% and this has an impact on the amount of funding remaining for working age claimants.

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

Cabinet will hear a report on 11 September 2017 which will recommend all options above to be consulted on. The consultation exercise will be carried out and outcomes from the consultation will then be reported to Cabinet in December 2017. Cabinet will consider the outcomes and the funding available to it and propose a revision it feels appropriate to Council in January 2018 who will consider the proposal and either accept the proposed revision or not.

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. The caseload is reducing but 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. This will take place September 2018.