

CAB 103: Local Council Tax Support Scheme

Pre Screening Equality Impact Assessment (also see 4 December 2012 Cabinet Report)

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Name of policy/service/function	Local Council Tax Support Scheme				
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function?	New Policy				
<p>Brief summary/description of the main aims of Policy being screened.</p> <p>Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations</p>	<p>Local Council Tax Support (CTS) schemes were introduced from 1 April 2013, replacing the existing national scheme of Council Tax Benefit (CTB) to help those on low incomes with their Council Tax bills.</p> <p>Each council is free to design their own CTS scheme although certain parameters have been set by Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pensioners must be protected from any reduction in support • Vulnerable groups must be considered for protection from any reduction in support • Work incentives should be promoted <p>Government have also reducing the funding available for CTS schemes by 10% in 2013/2014. From 2014/2015 the funding is rolled into the council's formula funding and not identified separately. As pensioners are protected from any reduction this becomes nearly a 25% reduction in support for working age people.</p> <p>The 2015/2016 CTS scheme for the Borough was agreed on 24 January 2015 and includes protection for the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pensioners • Households with a child under 5 • People entitled to the Disability Premium in CTB • People in receipt of Carer's Allowance <p>The 2016/2017 CTS scheme is a continuation of the 2015/2016 CTS scheme</p>				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age		√		
	Disability	√			

Please tick the relevant box for each group. NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.	Gender				√
	Gender Re-assignment				√
	Marriage/civil partnership				√
	Pregnancy & maternity				√
	Race				√
	Religion or belief				√
	Sexual orientation				√
	Other (eg low income)		√		
Question	Answer	Comments			
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	Yes	<p>The legislation for local CTS schemes states pensioners must be protected from any reduction in the level of support they receive. As the funding has been reduced this means a bigger cut falls on working age people.</p> <p>The legislation also compels councils to have regard to the impact on vulnerable groups and the promotion of work incentives</p>			
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	Yes	See 2			
4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	Yes	<p>Pensioners are protected as they are not expected to return to work to increase their income to pay for any reduction in council tax support.</p> <p>Children under 5 are protected in accordance with Child Poverty.</p> <p>Those entitled to the Disability Premium in CTB are protected to reflect their higher living costs.</p> <p>People receiving Carer's Allowance are protected as it is harder for them to take on work or work extra hours to increase their income</p> <p>Work Incentives are promoted to encourage people back into work to increase their income. This is in line with the government's welfare reform principles.</p>			
5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section	No	<p>Actions:</p> <p>A full EIA has been completed as part of the Cabinet Report of 4 December 2012</p>			

		Actions agreed by EWG member:
Assessment completed by: Name	Joanne Stanton	
Job title	Revenues and Benefits Manager	
Date	3 November 2015	

