

Equality Impact Assessment – Council Tax Support Scheme 2017



Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	Council Tax Support Scheme 2017
Type of activity:	This is a scheme which provides assistance to people on low incomes to help them pay their Council Tax.
Lead officer:	Chris Henry, Head of Council Tax & Benefits, Exchequer & Transactional Services, oneSource
Approved by:	Sarah Bryant, Director of Exchequer & Transactional Services
Date completed:	November 2016
Scheduled date for review:	November 2017

Did you seek advice from the Corporate Policy & Diversity team?	Yes
Does the EIA contain any confidential or exempt information that would prevent you publishing it on the Council's website?	No

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1. Equality Impact Assessment Checklist

The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool to ensure that your activity meets the needs of individuals and groups that use your service. It also helps the Council to meet its legal obligation under the [Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty](#).

Please complete the following checklist to determine whether or not you will need to complete an EIA. Please ensure you keep this section for your audit trail. If you have any questions, please contact the Corporate Policy and Diversity Team at diversity@havering.gov.uk

About your activity

1	Title of activity	Council Tax Support Scheme 2017
2	Type of activity	This is a scheme which provides assistance to people on low incomes to help them pay their Council Tax.
3	Scope of activity	<p>Many people on low incomes can get Council Tax Support (CTS) to help them pay their council tax bills. The Council Tax Support Scheme is funded by the Government and the Council who pay significantly towards the scheme as well.</p> <p>The CTS grant has been rolled into the Settlement Funding Allocation which has been reduced in-line with core funding reduction. While Government funding continues to fall, the Council has committed to maintaining the current 2016 CTS scheme in 2017.</p> <p>The proposed scheme will continue to protect pensioners who will get the same level of council tax support as they do now.</p> <p>It is proposed the CTS 2016/17 Scheme remains unchanged for working age claimants in 2017/18.</p>
4a	Is the activity new or changing?	No
4b	Is the activity likely to have an impact on individuals or groups?	No
5	If you answered yes:	

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Completed by:	Chris Henry, Head of Council Tax & Benefits
Date:	November 2016

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2. Equality Impact Assessment

Background/context:

The Council proposes to maintain the Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme in place since April 2015 for 2017/18. The scheme provides assistance to people on low incomes to help them pay their Council Tax.

The CTS grant has been rolled into the Settlement Funding Allocation which has been reduced in-line with core funding reduction. While Government funding continues to fall, the Council has committed to maintaining the current 2016 CTS scheme in 2017.

The proposed scheme will continue to protect pensioners who will get the same level of Council Tax Support as they do now.

In respect of working age claimants, the proposed scheme will provide the same level of support as it does now.

At 31 October 2016, 9,268 working-age claimants and 6,909 pensionable age claimants were in receipt of Council Tax Support.

CTS changes were catered for within the package of priorities and it can therefore be seen that in general respondents were in favour of the overall priorities change and a majority of residents were not in favour of raising council tax above 2% in order not to make up reductions proposed.

Support remains in place through the Council Tax Discretionary policy for those who suffer hardship.

In terms of the number of Council Tax Support Claimants and their household and personal status, the number in each group have not changed significantly since last year.

<u>Council Tax Support Case Group Descriptions</u>	<u>Count</u>
Elderly - Non-Passported - Carer	151
Elderly - Non-Passported - Child Under 5	1
Elderly - Non-Passported - Enhanced Disability	2
Elderly - Non-Passported - Family Premium	2
Elderly - Non-Passported - Family Premium - 1 Child	9
Elderly - Non-Passported - Family Premium - 2 Child	2
Elderly - Non-Passported - Family Premium - 4 Child	1
Elderly - Non-Passported - Non Dependant	317
Elderly - Non-Passported - Other	1866

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Elderly - Non-Passported - Severe Disability	375
Elderly - Non-Passported - War Pensioners	21
Elderly - Non-Passported - Working	87
Elderly - Passported - Carer	163
Elderly - Passported - Child Under 5	1
Elderly - Passported - Enhanced Disability	1
Elderly - Passported - Family Premium	9
Elderly - Passported - Family Premium - 1 Child	16
Elderly - Passported - Family Premium - 2 Child	3
Elderly - Passported - Family Premium - 3 Child	1
Elderly - Passported - Family Premium - 4 Child	0
Elderly - Passported - Non Dependant	497
Elderly - Passported - Other	2513
Elderly - Passported - Severe Disability	854
Elderly - Passported - Working	17
TOTAL (Elderly) = 6,909 (43%)	
Working Age - Non-Passported - Carer	102
Working Age - Non-Passported - Child Under 5	403
Working Age - Non-Passported - Disability	117
Working Age - Non-Passported - Disabled Child Premium	25
Working Age - Non-Passported - Enhanced Disability	258
Working Age - Non-Passported - Family Premium	118
Working Age - Non-Passported - Family Premium - 1 Child	674
Working Age - Non-Passported - Family Premium - 2 Child	497
Working Age - Non-Passported - Family Premium - 3 Child	184
Working Age - Non-Passported - Family Premium - 4 Child	37
Working Age - Non-Passported - Family Premium - 5 and above	8
Working Age - Non-Passported - Lone Parent Child Under 5	395
Working Age - Non-Passported - Non Dependant	38
Working Age - Non-Passported - Other	165
Working Age - Non-Passported - Severe Disability	120
Working Age - Non-Passported - War Pensioners	5
Working Age - Non-Passported - Working	433
Working Age - Passported - Carer	438
Working Age - Passported - Child Under 5	115
Working Age - Passported - Disability	157
Working Age - Passported - Disabled Child Premium	25
	1259
Working Age - Passported - Enhanced Disability	
Working Age - Passported - Family Premium	63
Working Age - Passported - Family Premium - 1 Child	416
Working Age - Passported - Family Premium - 2 Child	207
Working Age - Passported - Family Premium - 3 Child	67
Working Age - Passported - Family Premium - 4 Child	10
Working Age - Passported - Family Premium - 5 and Above	1

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Working Age - Passported - Lone Parent Child Under 5	973
Working Age - Passported - Non Dependant	260
Working Age - Passported - Other	900
Working Age - Passported - Severe Disability	751
Working Age - Passported - Working	48
TOTAL (Working Age) = 9, 268 (57%)	
Grand Total Working Age & Elderly	16,177

Age: Consider the full range of age groups	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall impact:	
There are no changes proposed to the CTS 2017 Scheme.	
The impact of this scheme, as compared to the scheme available in 2015/16, remain the same as in the Equality Impact Analysis prepared in January 2015	
Evidence:	
Sources used:	

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Disability: Consider the full range of disabilities; including physical mental, sensory and progressive conditions	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall impact: There are no changes proposed to the CTS 2017 Scheme. The impact of this scheme, as compared to the scheme available in 2015/16, remains the same as in the Equality Impact Analysis prepared in January 2015.	
Evidence:	
Sources used:	

Sex/gender: Consider both men and women	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall impact: There are no changes proposed to the CTS 2017 Scheme. The impact of this scheme, as compared to the scheme available in 2015/16, remains the same as in the Equality Impact Analysis prepared in January 2015.	
Evidence:	
Sources used:	

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Ethnicity/race: Consider the impact on different ethnic groups and nationalities		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact:
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Information: The tables below show the projected figures for the breakdown of Havering by ethnicity/race and for Benefits claimants where they have supplied this information. The data is difficult to compare due to the different classifications of ethnicity used.		
2014 (projection)	Number	Percentage of population (%)
All ethnicities	246,269	100.00
White	211,126	85.7
Black Caribbean	3,335	1.4
Black African	9,485	3.9
Black Other	4,524	1.8
Indian	5,813	2.4
Pakistani	1,820	0.7
Bangladeshi	1,205	0.5
Chinese	1,662	0.7
Other Asian	4,467	1.8
Other	2,833	1.2
<i>BAME¹ Total</i>	<i>35,144</i>	<i>14.3</i>

¹The GLA define BAME differently to the ONS. The GLA does not include a 'White Other' Group. Instead they have one category 'White' that includes 'White British' and 'White Other'.

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Council Tax Support/Housing Benefit Claimants where Equalities information provided August 2016

	Number	Percentage of claimants who provided information
White: British	6507	67.68%
White: Irish	131	1.36%
White: Any Other	786	8.18%
Mixed: White & Black Caribbean	128	1.33%
Mixed: White & Black African	69	0.72%
Mixed: White and Asian	38	0.40%
Mixed: Any Other	76	0.79%
Asian/Asian British: Indian	104	1.08%
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	136	1.41%
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	141	1.47%
Asian/Asian British: Any Other	81	0.84%
Black/Black British: Caribbean	266	2.77%
Black/Black British: African	759	7.89%
Black/Black British: Any Other	111	1.15%
Chinese	17	0.18%
Any Other	150	1.56%
Gypsy/Traveller	7	0.07%
Arab	23	0.24%
Asian/Asian British Indian	36	0.37%
Asian/Other	14	0.15%
Claimant Declined	34	0.35%
Total	9614	100%

From the data provided above, it would appear that there is a disproportionate impact on BME claimants. 85.7% of Havering's population are defined as White (including the 'White: Other' category such as Eastern Europeans), compared to 75.8% of benefit claimants who define themselves as White (including 'White: Other').

Sources used:

*

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Religion/faith: Consider people from different religions or beliefs including those with no religion or belief	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	Overall impact: There are no changes proposed to the CTS 2017 Scheme
Neutral	
Negative	
Evidence:	
Sources used:	

Sexual orientation: Consider people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	Overall impact: Not known There is no information available to make an assessment on the impact of the proposals on this protected characteristic.
Neutral	
Negative	
Evidence:	
Sources used:	

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Gender reassignment: Consider people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	Overall impact: There are no changes proposed to the CTS 2017 Scheme. The impact of this scheme, as compared to the scheme available in 2015/16, remains the same as in the Equality Impact Analysis prepared in January 2015.
Neutral	
Negative	
Evidence:	
.	
Sources used:	

Marriage/civil partnership: Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	Overall impact: There are no changes proposed to the CTS 2017 Scheme. The impact of this scheme, as compared to the scheme available in 2015/16, remains the same as in the Equality Impact Analysis prepared in January 2015.
Neutral	
Negative	
Evidence:	
Sources used:	

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Pregnancy, maternity and paternity: Consider those who are pregnant and those who are undertaking maternity or paternity leave	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	Overall impact: There are no changes proposed to the CTS 2017 Scheme The impact of this scheme, as compared to the scheme available in 2015/16, remains the same as in the Equality Impact Analysis prepared in January 2015.
Neutral	
Negative ✓	
Evidence:	
Sources used:	

Socio-economic status: Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	Overall impact: There are no changes proposed to the CTS 2017 Scheme. The impact of this scheme, as compared to the scheme available in 2015/16, remains the same as in the Equality Impact Analysis prepared in January 2015.
Neutral ✓	
Negative	
Evidence:	
Sources used:	

Action Plan

In this section you should list the specific actions that set out how you will address any negative equality impacts you have identified in this assessment.

Protected characteristic	Identified negative impact	Action taken to mitigate impact*	Outcomes and monitoring**	Timescale	Lead officer
		<p>The Discretionary Policy has been in place since 2013 and is available to residents who are experiencing hardship.</p>	<p>In 2015, two applications were made under the Discretionary Policy. One application was paid and discharged the remaining council tax liability for a working age applicant. The other application was withdrawn by the applicant who recognised their income was significantly high.</p> <p>During 2016, only one application has been received which was granted to the same applicant from 2015 whose circumstances had not changed since 2015.</p>		

Protected characteristic	Identified negative impact	Action taken to mitigate impact*	Outcomes and monitoring**	Timescale	Lead officer
			The fact that there has been no increase in applicants with disabilities presenting to the Discretionary Scheme would indicate that the 15% Council Tax charge is being managed by this group.		

Review

In this section you should identify how frequently the EIA will be reviewed; the date for next review; and who will be reviewing it.

The EIA will be reviewed at annual intervals or earlier if the Council Tax Support scheme is reviewed earlier than September 2016.