

Equality Impact Assessment form

Date assessment started (MM/YY)

02/20

STAGE 1 – PRELIMINARY INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

1.1: Policy or Service being assessed

Council Tax Discretionary Discount Policy

1.2: Lead Officer(s)

Michelle LaMarre

1.2: Completed by

Michelle LaMarre

1.3: What are the aims or broad functions of the policy or service?

The aim of the policy is to provide a consistent and fair means of dealing with applications for reduction from young care leavers within the County of Essex, taking into account the effect on the council tax payers of the Maldon district, who directly fund this relief.

1.4: Which policies relate to the delivery of this service?

Care Leavers and council tax policy

1.5: Is it possible that your service could be treating members of the community less favourably and so contributing to inequality?

The policy enables consistency when dealing with applications and replicates what is being applied across the County of Essex hence it is extremely unlikely that there are any instances of inequality

1.6: What do your colleagues say about your initial view?

Consultation internally and with Essex peer group suggests that this view is correct

STAGE 2: EQUALITY RISK ASSESSMENT

2.1	Consider	Score:
Group:	Give each category a score out of 5, with 5 being very high adverse impact and 1 being very low adverse impact.	
Age	What will the impact be on age groups such as younger or older people?	3
Disability	Consider all disabilities such as hearing loss, dyslexia etc as well as access issues for wheelchair users (if applicable)	3
Gender Reassignment	What is the impact on someone going through gender reassignment?	1
Pregnancy and Maternity	Think about new and breastfeeding Mums as well as pregnancy	1

Race	This includes ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality	1
Religion or Belief	This includes not having a religion or belief	4
Sex	Is the service used more predominantly by one gender and are the sexes treated the same? Is there any impact on a particular sex?	1
Sexual Orientation	Is there a particular impact on lesbian, gay and bisexual people	1
Socio-economic group	Will people of any socio-economic background be particularly affected?	3
Total Score	Add all the category scores	19
Impact H/M/L	<p>1 – 19 = Low</p> <p>20 – 33 (or if any group scores 3 points) = Medium</p> <p>34 and above (or if any group scores 4 or 5) = High</p>	Low

2.2: Conclusion

If the impact is recorded as medium or high always continue to complete the full assessment ...

Head of Service approved by:

Richard Holmes

Date approved:**STAGE 3. IDENTIFYING ADVERSE IMPACT****3.1: What is the background/reason for the proposed change?**

The proposal was put forward by Essex CC

3.2: Service Users – Who are the users of this service? (Refer to evidence gathered from consultation or from available data)

Due to statutory and policy constraints information regarding the service users at a District level is very limited although the total across Essex that may be eligible is very low

3.3: What consultation activity have you undertaken during the last 2 years and how have you made contact with all sections of the community?

Local people and groups are consulted each year as part of budget setting process
Letters and questionnaires were sent to all ratepayers who received relief in 2011/12.
Applicants are invited to provide information from users of their service in support of their application

3.4: Appropriate services - What methods do you use to find out whether your service meets the needs of all sections of the community?

A comprehensive application form is required and the information provided is used alongside the policies to make any decision

3.5: What sectors of the community are therefore likely to be affected by this change? What are the likely impacts?

The impact of any changes would be across any/all sectors of the community as the cost of the relief is borne by all council tax payers and the range of services provided by the recipients of the relief is diverse

3.6: What can be done to improve awareness, access, appropriateness of the service and any adverse impact on particular groups? In the case of the removal/reduction of a service what can be done to lessen the impact?

Promotion of the various relief available via existing channels and MDC links – customer services, business development
 Ensure regular review of policies
 Ensure consistent and documented application and award process
 Revise application form and policy to take into account changes in Equality Act

3.7: What impact does this proposal have on the need to ...

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation,**
- **Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, and**
- **Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not**

(Known as the three Equality Aims)

Providing discretionary rate relief will provide financial help to appropriate facilities within the local community and help them to flourish. Doing so will advance equality of opportunity for those Maldon residents who may not find it so easy or convenient to travel further afield to access services (ie older and younger people, those with a disability, new mums and those with less disposable income).

3.8: What are your decisions and recommendations

Key questions	Actions
What are the main conclusions of the assessment?	That the current policies and processes enable all applications to be considered in a consistent and fair manner and do not contribute to any inequality
Which of the following courses of action should be taken? Option 1: Continue – No Discrimination or adverse impact identified Option 2: Continue – Suitable adjustments available to lessen the impact Option 3: Continue – Despite adverse	Option 1

<p>impact or missed opportunities to promote equality (show justification)</p> <p>Option 4: Stop and rethink – Actual or potential discrimination identified</p>	
<p>What are the main conclusions from the comments of advisers/stakeholders?</p>	<p>That withdrawal or reduction of relief may lead to increases in fees and charges, staff or service cuts or closure. That there are no equality issues that need to be address</p>
<p>What are the priority recommendations and actions?</p>	<p>That Maldon District Council continues to have a clear policy on its discretionary rate relief application process and that mechanisms exist to ensure it consistent application and regular review</p>
<p>What are the resource implications and how can these be addressed?</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>How can these recommendations be built in to wider planning and review processes?</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>What future monitoring and evaluation tools will be appropriate and effective?</p>	<p>Equality is considered as part of discretionary relief application process during any future review of policy</p>
<p>What indicators will you use to measure the effectiveness of the policy/service?</p>	<p>N/A</p>

STAGE 4. THE EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

4.1: Referring to Stages 1 (preliminary internal assessment), Stage 2 (equality risk assessment) and Stage 3 (equality impact assessment) please list what tasks/actions you will implement to mainstream diversity in your service area.

Task	Outcome	Lead	Resources	Deadline

Head of Service approved by:

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Committee approved by:

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Date approved:

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