

## Equality Impact Assessment Summary

### Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2017/18

To be completed for ALL assessments Stage 1 and Stage 2.

<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Council Tax Reduction scheme 2017/18</b>
<b>Relevance</b> <i>Summary - of Stage 1- Screening</i>	Changes to the working age scheme affect adults of all ages (below the state pension age) equally irrespective of any other equalities factors.
<b>Likely impact</b> <i>Please summarise your conclusions on the proposal's likely impact –negative, positive, or neutral. Please also include a brief explanation of how the proposal was assessed?</i>	The proposals may mean financial hardship for those on low incomes and who could struggle to pay their council tax liability. There is potential for additional costs to be added to residents bills should further recovery action be needed to collect outstanding monies.
<b>Positive or Neutral Impact :</b> <i>If you consider the outcome of this matter will have a Positive or Neutral impact, no further action is required at this time.</i>	
<b>Negative Impact :</b> <b>Proceed to EIA Stage 2</b> <i>List the actions that you intend to take to prevent or limit any potential adverse or negative effects on different community groups.</i>	Advice and support will be available to claimants from several sources including: Citizen's Advice Bureau – available to all residents they will be the main avenue of support for tenants in the private rented sector Step change – debt advice Hambleton District Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support for people in difficulty with Council Tax payments</li> <li>• Council Tax Support Discretionary Hardship payments, where the need for additional financial support is demonstrated</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring</b> <i>Please summarise the action you intend to take to monitor the actual impact of the policy.</i>	Monitoring of accounts will be through performance statistics such as collection rates and discretionary hardship policies.
<b>EIA Completed by</b>	Sue Grant
<b>SERVICE MANAGER</b>	Taxation and Benefits
<b>Date</b>	18 /07 /2016
<b>EIA Approved by</b>	
<b>SERVICE DIRECTOR</b>	Louise Branford-White <i>Head of Service – Finance (s151 Officer)</i>
<b>Date</b>	22/07/2016

## EIA Stage 1 – Screening (Partial Assessment)

Keep all versions of your EIA. An EIA should be finalised once a final decision is taken.

Guidance Notes	EIA Stage 1 – Screening (Partial Assessment)
	1.1 Council Tax Reduction Scheme
<p><i>Include its main aim(s); activities and beneficiaries</i></p>	<p>1.2 The aim of the scheme is to provide financial support to residents of the district who find it difficult to pay their Council Tax liability. The scheme is means tested and supports those on low incomes.</p> <p>The pensioner scheme regulations are prescribed by central government. Billing authorities have a duty to provide a local scheme for those of working age</p>
<p><i>Will the proposed decision have consequences for local communities or the people that we employ?</i></p> <p><i>Is the proposed policy likely to affect either our relations with certain groups or the relationship between different groups?</i></p>	<p>1.3 Is the proposed product, project or policy relevant to the Council’s general objective to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different community groups?</p> <p>The council has a statutory duty to provide a scheme for the residents of the district.</p>
<p><i>Could these consequences differ for different groups?</i></p> <p><i>Do people of different groups have different expectations of the policy?</i></p>	<p>1.4 Is the equality impact of this proposal likely to be positive or neutral? <i>If the answer is yes, submit this report &amp; summary to Management Team.</i></p> <p>The impact will be on working age residents only and only those who will qualify for any support.</p>
<p><i>Is there any evidence that any part of the proposed policy could discriminate unlawfully, directly or indirectly, against particular groups of people?</i></p> <p><i>Please explain why.</i></p>	<p>1.5 This proposal will equally affect working age persons who are affected by the changes irrespective of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• Gender reassignment</li> <li>• Marriage and civil partnership</li> <li>• Pregnancy and maternity</li> <li>• Race</li> <li>• Religion or belief</li> <li>• Sex</li> <li>• Sexual orientation</li> </ul>

## EIA Stage 2 – Full assessment

Keep all versions of your EIA. An EIA should be finalised once a final decision is taken.

Guidance Notes	EIA Stage 2 – Full assessment
	<p><b>2.1 Council Tax Reduction scheme – revised scheme for 2017/18</b></p>
<p><i>What are the aims of the policy?</i>  <i>What is it designed to achieve?</i>  <i>Why is it needed?</i>  <i>What outcomes are expected? Who are the main beneficiaries? How will outcomes be measured? What are the risks, and do any of them relate to the Council's objective to promote equality?</i></p>	<p>The Council Tax benefit scheme was abolished by the Welfare Reform Bill from April 2013 and replaced with the Council Tax Reduction scheme. The pensioner scheme is a nationally prescribed scheme but the working age is a locally designed scheme. The scheme is means tested and provides financial support to residents of the district who are on a low income to help pay their council tax liability</p> <p>The government is continuing with a national programme of welfare reform and it is appropriate to consider whether some of the changes to other welfare systems should be reflected in the Councils CTR scheme</p>
<p><i>Could the proposed policy affect different groups in society differently?</i>  <i>Will the policy or its implementation break the law or have the potential to break the law?</i>  <i>Is there a public concern (in the media etc) that this function or policy is discriminatory?</i>  <i>What do stakeholders think?</i>  <i>What does available data, information, research, or consultation responses reveal about the likely impact of the policy?.</i></p>	<p>Pensioners are unaffected by the proposed changes to the Council's Working Age Council Tax Support Scheme.</p> <p>Overall working age people are negatively impacted by the proposed changes to the scheme.</p> <p>Changes to the working age scheme affect adults of all ages (below the state pension age) equally irrespective of any other equalities factors. The proposed changes are relatively small in financial terms.</p> <p>The consultation outlining the proposed changes has been undertaken and is attached at Appendix A.</p> <p>Further information detailing the likely impact of the proposed scheme is attached at Appendix C.</p>
<p><i>Will it promote equality?</i>  <i>Cite the evidence to support your</i></p>	

<b>Guidance Notes</b>	<b>EIA Stage 2 – Full assessment</b>
<i>conclusion</i>	
<p><i>How was this EIA completed?</i></p> <p><i>How did you engage or involve stakeholders like the staff diversity networks?</i></p>	<p>The current caseload data was used to model the different proposed scenarios to establish the impact where possible.</p> <p>Consultation on the proposed changes available to residents of the district</p>
	<p>The proposed changes mirror those already taken place within the HB and Universal Credit schemes and EIA undertaken by DWP. The Governments welfare reform program to encourage people into work will mitigate some of the financial impacts</p>
<p><i>What measures do you intend to take mitigate any negative or adverse impact on particular groups?</i></p>	<p>Any savings to the CTR scheme must be made to working-age customers. For this reason the scheme has a negative impact on working-age customers. This is mitigated in part with providing budgeting and money advice support and having an Exceptional Hardship Fund to help our most vulnerable customers cope with the changes.</p>
<p><i>Indicate how you intend to evaluate the successful implementation of the proposal?</i></p> <p><i>How will this evaluation assess impact on equality?</i></p>	<p>Through quarterly management information on the amount of Council Tax Reduction paid to residents and applications for exceptional hardship. Also through Council Tax collection statistics</p>