

City of York Council
Equalities Impact Assessment

Who is submitting the proposal?

Directorate:	Customer & Communities		
Service Area:	Customer & Communities		
Name of the proposal :	Household Support Fund		
Lead officer:	David Walker		
Date assessment completed:			
Names of those who contributed to the assessment :			
Name	Job title	Organisation	Area of expertise
David Walker	Head of Customer & Exchequer Services	CYC	Welfare Benefits, Government Covid Grants
Susan Wood	Welfare Benefits Strategic Partnership Manager	CYC	Welfare Benefits, Government Covid Grants

Step 1 – Aims and intended outcomes

1.1	What is the purpose of the proposal? Please explain your proposal in Plain English avoiding acronyms and jargon.
	To deliver a Household Support Fund to financially vulnerable residents as set out by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). The funding is intended to provide financial support for Food, Clothing and Utilities with at least 50% of the funding going to families with children. The funding is available 6 th October to 31 st March 2022 no funding can be carried forward beyond these dates.

1.2	Are there any external considerations? (Legislation/government directive/codes of practice etc.)
	The Government (DWP) have set out the broad rules for the scheme the council has some discretion on how the scheme can be delivered and the level of support within the overall budget provided.

1.3	Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests?
	The key stake holders are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council in providing financial support using the government funding to alleviate hunger and fuel poverty across its most vulnerable residents.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financially vulnerable residents of the city who will benefit from any support provided • Third sector organisations with the same purpose in trying to alleviate poverty
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1.4	What results/outcomes do we want to achieve and for whom? This section should explain what outcomes you want to achieve for service users, staff and/or the wider community. Demonstrate how the proposal links to the Council Plan (2019- 2023) and other corporate strategies and plans.
	The outcomes that the council want to achieve are to maximise the Government funding to deliver support to the city's most financially vulnerable residents. In doing so reduce food and fuel poverty across the winter period and by providing this support reduce stress and mental health issues within our communities.

Step 2 – Gathering the information and feedback

2.1	What sources of data, evidence and consultation feedback do we have to help us understand the impact of the proposal on equality rights and human rights? Please consider a range of sources, including: consultation exercises, surveys, feedback from staff, stakeholders, participants, research reports, the views of equality groups, as well your own experience of working in this area etc.	
	Source of data/supporting evidence	Reason for using
	Advice York network consultation	Advice York network were invited to a consultation meeting regarding the proposals for the scheme. We asked for feedback on whether this was the right approach, whether there were concerns about the approach, whether the approach would be effective in reaching the target groups.

	<p>7 members provided feedback, all was positive regarding the overall proposals. The concerns raised were regarding making sure people were not excluded from applying/receiving grants due to the online application process.</p> <p>It was confirmed people would be able to apply by phone through CYC customer services and people would be directed to support available through community venues and support organisation, as well as access to PC's at Explore libraries.</p>

Step 3 – Gaps in data and knowledge

3.1	What are the main gaps in information and understanding of the impact of your proposal? Please indicate how any gaps will be dealt with.		
Gaps in data or knowledge		Action to deal with this	
<p>This is the third grant following the Winter Support Grant and Local Covid Support Grant announced by Government. On each occasion these are ‘one off’ time limited grants which do not allow any longer term solutions to the ongoing poverty issues in York. They are welcome payments and do help our communities however the drivers causing poverty e.g. High rent costs, increasing utility costs, increased taxation and child minding costs along with low wages cannot be resolved by this grant.</p>		<p>The council needs to continue to work with its third sector partners and use what influence it can in trying to improve the longer term problems giving rise to poverty.</p>	

Step 4 – Analysing the impacts or effects.

4.1	Please consider what the evidence tells you about the likely impact (positive or negative) on people sharing a protected characteristic, i.e. how significant could the impacts be if we did not make any adjustments? Remember the duty is also positive – so please identify where the proposal offers opportunities to promote equality and/or foster good relations.		
Equality Groups and Human Rights.	Key Findings/Impacts	Positive (+) Negative (-) Neutral (0)	High (H) Medium (M) Low (L)

Age	n/a		
Disability	n/a		
Gender	n/a		
Gender Reassignment	n/a		
Marriage and civil partnership	n/a		
Pregnancy and maternity	n/a		
Race	n/a		
Religion and belief	n/a		
Sexual orientation	n/a		
Other Socio-economic groups including :	Could other socio-economic groups be affected e.g. carers, ex-offenders, low incomes?		
Carer	No		
Low income groups	Yes	+	High
Veterans, Armed Forces Community	No		
Other			

Impact on human rights:			
List any human rights impacted.	None		

Use the following guidance to inform your responses:

Indicate:

- Where you think that the proposal could have a **POSITIVE** impact on any of the equality groups like promoting equality and equal opportunities or improving relations within equality groups
- Where you think that the proposal could have a **NEGATIVE** impact on any of the equality groups, i.e. it could disadvantage them
- Where you think that this proposal has a **NEUTRAL** effect on any of the equality groups listed below i.e. it has no effect currently on equality groups.

It is important to remember that a proposal may be highly relevant to one aspect of equality and not relevant to another.

<p>High impact (The proposal or process is very equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is significant potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or public facing The proposal has consequences for or affects significant numbers of people The proposal has the potential to make a significant contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights.</p>
<p>Medium impact (The proposal or process is somewhat equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is some evidence to suggest potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or across services, but mainly internal The proposal has consequences for or affects some people The proposal has the potential to make a contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights</p>
<p>Low impact (The proposal or process might be equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is little evidence to suggest that the proposal could result in adverse impact The proposal operates in a limited way The proposal has consequences for or affects few people The proposal may have the potential to contribute to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights</p>

Step 5 - Mitigating adverse impacts and maximising positive impacts

5.1	Based on your findings, explain ways you plan to mitigate any unlawful prohibited conduct or unwanted adverse impact. Where positive impacts have been identified, what is been done to optimise opportunities to advance equality or foster good relations?
<p>The scheme is aimed at reducing food and fuel poverty across the winter months. This is direct financial support to residents and is a 'one off' Government funded scheme. The money cannot for example be used for debt advice so the positive impacts will potentially be ephemeral. It will provide some welcome breathing space to financially vulnerable families following the end of UC uplift, furlough support and the substantial increase in utility costs.</p>	

Step 6 – Recommendations and conclusions of the assessment

6.1	Having considered the potential or actual impacts you should be in a position to make an informed judgement on what should be done. In all cases, document your reasoning that justifies your decision. There are four main options you can take:
<p>- No major change to the proposal – the EIA demonstrates the proposal is robust. There is no potential for unlawful discrimination or adverse impact and you have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitor and review.</p>	

- **Adjust the proposal** – the EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. This involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance quality or to foster good relations.
- **Continue with the proposal** (despite the potential for adverse impact) – you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and how you believe the decision is compatible with our obligations under the duty
- **Stop and remove the proposal** – if there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you should consider stopping the proposal altogether. If a proposal leads to unlawful discrimination it should be removed or changed.

Important: If there are any adverse impacts you cannot mitigate, please provide a compelling reason in the justification column.

Option selected	Conclusions/justification
No major change to the proposal.	The proposal continues existing measures the council has been using to support financially vulnerable residents throughout the covid pandemic. These are also aligned to other local authorities nationally and their experiences.

Step 7 – Summary of agreed actions resulting from the assessment

7.1 What action, by whom, will be undertaken as a result of the impact assessment.			
Impact/issue	Action to be taken	Person responsible	Timescale
N/a			

Step 8 - Monitor, review and improve

8. 1	How will the impact of your proposal be monitored and improved upon going forward? Consider how will you identify the impact of activities on protected characteristics and other marginalised groups going forward? How will any learning and enhancements be capitalised on and embedded?
	As currently happens all actions that are quantifiable are measured and reported back through Financial Inclusion Steering Group (FISG) and its mid-year and outturn financial inclusion reports to elected members.