

ANNEX F Community Impact Assessment Form (CIA)



The council's vision is to promote **equal life outcomes¹ for everyone** living, working and visiting York, through inclusive design in everything the council does. This is to ensure that no-one is unintentionally excluded in York because of specific personal characteristics. In the council, we call these characteristics "Communities of Interest or Identity" – "Cols" for short.

To help realise the vision, council officers are required by Cabinet to assess the impact of council policies, processes and behaviours on customers and staff from the Communities.

This process was previously called Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). To stress the importance of assessing the impact of everything we do on people from the Communities, starting June 2012, we have renamed the process Community Impact Assessment (CIA).

The assessment **should be done at the development stage** of any policy, review, project, service change etc, **before any decision is taken**. It should also be done every time there are changes to policies and practices, **before the changes are finally agreed** by decision makers.

In addition, the Equality Act 2010 came into force on the 1st October 2010. Under the Act the council has a legal duty to show that our policies, practices etc further the aims below:

- Actively and proactively eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share an identity and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share an identity and those who do not.

In completing **Community Impact Assessments (CIAs)** officers are also required to state how what they are assessing meets and contributes to these aims.

¹ In health, safety and security, personal freedom and choice, housing, education and lifelong learning, jobs and leisure activities and the infrastructure that supports these outcomes.

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1	Name and Job Title of person completing assessment	<p>David Walker Head of Financial Procedures</p>
2	Name of service, policy, function or criteria being assessed	<p>Local Council Tax Support (LCTS)- Was Council Tax Benefit</p>
3	What are the main objectives or aims of the service/policy/function/criteria?	<p>Implementation of a local scheme in line with the Governments Finance Bill and Welfare Reforms as set out below:</p> <p>In the 2010 Spending Review the Government announced that it would localise support for council tax from 2013-14, reducing expenditure by 10 per cent.</p> <p>The Government is committed to retaining council tax support for the most vulnerable in society and taking forward plans for councils to develop local council tax reduction schemes. The Welfare Reform Act 2012 contains provisions for the abolition of Council Tax Benefit (CTB), paving the way for new localised schemes (LCTS).</p> <p>This reform is part of a wider policy of decentralisation, giving councils increased financial autonomy and a greater stake in the economic future of their local area.</p> <p>Lifting the poorest off benefits, by supporting them into work is a key Government objective. Local authorities will have a strengthened financial stake in ensuring local schemes support this aim and help to deliver the positive incentives to work that will reduce poverty and reliance on support for council tax in the long term.</p> <p>The Government believes that it is right to protect council tax support for pensioners and that this group should not be affected as a result of the introduction of this reform. Pensioners cannot go back to work – they have saved and worked hard all their lives: they deserve dignity and security in retirement.</p> <p>The Local Government Finance Bill (hereafter ‘the Bill’) was introduced to Parliament on 19 December 2011. The Bill makes provision for the localisation of council tax support in England by imposing a duty on billing authorities to make a localised council tax reduction scheme by 31 January 2013 and to consult with major</p>

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		<p>precepting authorities and such other persons as it considers likely to have an interest in the scheme about the scheme.</p> <p>The Government has also taken powers in the Bill to prescribe certain <i>classes</i> or groups who must receive reductions. This includes eligible pensioners, based on the same factors that have determined pensioner eligibility and award under the existing CTB scheme.</p> <p>Further powers in the Bill allow the Government to prescribe a <i>default scheme</i> which will take effect if a billing authority has not made a scheme by 31 January 2013, so that they can still administer council tax reductions.</p> <p>This CIA has been written in respect of City of York Council's LCTS Scheme which will come into force with effect from 1st April 2013.</p> <p>It is important to note that all claimants of working age (i.e. 18 – 61) will be adversely affected by this change. The observations below indicate if the listed Community of Interest / Identity will be disproportionately affected either positively or negatively.</p>
4	Date	13 Aug 2012 – 4TH Nov 2012

Stage 1: Initial Screening

5	<p>What evidence is available to suggest that the proposed service, policy, function or criteria could have a negative or positive effect on quality of life outcomes² for people (both staff and customers) from the communities? Document the source of evidence in the columns below. You can find evidence via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data from the Business Intelligence Hub - http://colin.york.gov.uk/beSupported/business_intelligence_hub/ • Council Consultation and Engagement Calendar – contact Sophie Gibson, 551022. • Council consultation - http://colin.york.gov.uk/beSupported/inhouse_services/research_consultation/ • Workplace Wellbeing Survey – contact the Health and Safety team for more info – 554131. CaN results are here:
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² See appendix 1

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http://colin.york.gov.uk/beConnected/about_CYC/structure/CAN/can_healthwellbeing_results/

- Staff Equalities Reference Group – See feedback reports here - http://colin.york.gov.uk/beSupported/equalities_inclusion/SERG/
- Equality Advisory Group (a customer group) - <http://democracy.york.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=445>
- EIA Fairs Feedback Newsletters - http://colin.york.gov.uk/beSupported/equalities_inclusion/EIAs/consultation_feedback/
- Previous EIAs – see annual EIA lists - http://colin.york.gov.uk/beSupported/equalities_inclusion/EIAs/

Community of Interest/Identity	Source of evidence that there is or is likely to be a negative or positive impact:			
	Staff		Customers/Public	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Race	N	N	N	N
Religion / Spirituality /Belief	N	N	N	N
Gender	N	N	N	Y

Gender Negative

The Government's reduction in funding by 10% of the grant they will provide to local authorities for LCTS will see the council having to pass these cuts on to Working Age customers (pensioners are protected).

One of the key points of the Government's policy is to encourage customers back into work. This will be harder for one parent families than for couples or single people as they will need to find child minding support which can often be expensive. Over 90% of one parent customers are female which means they are likely to find it more difficult to enter work. The overall make up of the current caseload is as follows:

43.7% of working age customers are single

21.6 % of working age customers are couples

34.7% of working age customers are lone parents

This information is taken for our current records of Council Tax Benefit customers

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Disability	N	N	N	Y
<p>Disability: The reduced support provided by LCTS will potentially have an adverse affect on this category. It will depend on the nature of the customer's disability but this category may find it more difficult to find work than those who are more able. However, those who currently receive additional CTB because of their disability (by way of 'premiums' used in the calculation) will benefit from the retention of these disability premiums under LCTS as will new pensioner claimants. There is no new disproportionate disadvantage in the new scheme.</p> <p>This information come from discussions with customers during the councils consultation sessions and information we already hold on customers.</p>				
Sexual Orientation	N	N	N	N
Age	N	N	N	Y
<p>Age: Pensioners are outside the scope of the LCTS scheme. Existing and future qualifying pensioners are protected from the reductions imposed under LCTS. The full impact of cuts passed on by reductions in LCTS will be borne by customers of working age. However older people could be adversely affected if their carer can no longer care for them as they need to work more to make up for their reduction in council tax support.</p> <p>There is a disproportionate impact on claimants under 25 because the existing CTB scheme (as well as national DWP administered benefits such as Income Support and Job Seekers Allowance) is less generous to this group. As this feature will remain under LCTS this means that the amount of council tax they are required to pay because of LCTS is likely to be a higher proportion of their total income.</p> <p>This information comes in part from the impact of the cuts and again was a recurring issue raised during consultation.</p>				
Pregnancy/maternity	N	N	N	N
Gender Reassignment	N	N	N	N
Marriage and Civil Partnership	N	N	N	N

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Carers of older and disabled people	N	N	N	Y
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Carers of older and disabled people: As with loner parent families customers who are carers will find it more difficult to move into work in order to increase their income in order to pay more council tax and still care for an older or disabled person.

If there is **no** evidence the service/policy/function will affect **any of the communities**, please proceed to section 9.

If there **is** evidence the service/policy/function will affect **one or more of the communities**, continue to Stage 2, Full Impact Assessment.

Stage 2: Full Impact Assessment

6	How could different communities be affected by the proposed or reviewed service/policy/function/criteria? Record negative and positive effects below. Expand the boxes to take up as much room as you need. See the 2 EIA Guidance documents on Colin for help about effects to consider.	
A1	Public/customers – positive effects	The increase in the amount of money that customers will be required to pay towards their council tax may work as a catalyst in terms of them actively seeking employment or increasing their hours. Reducing the number of customers reliant on LCTS may allow for the residual customer group to benefit financially in the longer term.
A2	Public/customers – negative effects	All customers of working age who claim LCTS whether on low income or Income Support or similar benefit will be required to pay more council tax in 2013/14, some for the first time. As these customers are already means tested to receive CTB it will have a detrimental affect on their standard of living and that of their family by reducing the financial help they will get towards their council tax. There will be no change in any other benefits they may receive to compensate for the reduced support provided by LCTS. In fact some customers will be affected by other reductions in benefit such as Housing Benefit thereby increasing the financial burden on them.
B1	Staff – positive effects	There are no positive effects on staff
B2	Staff – negative effects	Staff are likely to receive a number of queries from potentially angry, stressed and upset customers.

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		<p>Staff are trained to deal with these issues and the awareness and consultation sessions (See section 8) as well as publicity should mitigate the volume of queries through raising awareness in advance of the scheme being implemented.</p> <p>Staff within the service area and other areas that may be affected by this change are being given more training in relation to debt advice. There are also two additional staff being employed in Housing to help provide debt support and advice to customers. Staff dealing directly with LCTS will be trained in more detail about the scheme once it has been approved by Full Council.</p>
7	<p>Can any negative effects be justified? For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As a proportionate means to achieve a legitimate aim ▪ In support of improving community cohesion ▪ To comply with other legislation or enforcement duties ▪ Taking positive action to address imbalances or under-representation ▪ Because of evidence-based need to target a particular community or group e.g. younger/older people. <p>NB. Lack of financial resources alone is NOT justification!</p>	<p>As a council we must protect our key services to all members of the community and communities of interest. As the Government is reducing expenditure there are no other options open to us than to pass on the reduced funding to working age LCTS customers. The reduction will fall proportionately across the whole working age LCTS customer group ensuring that protections that are already in the CTB scheme (for example how certain benefits, income, disability and family size) is treated will continue to ensure that no one person is affected disproportionately to another by the change. As noted above pensioners do not fall within the scheme and so are not affected.</p>
8	<p>What changes will you make to the service/policy/function/criteria as result of information in parts 5 & 6 above?</p>	<p>There is little very little that we are able to do in terms of passing on the reductions. However the scheme was discussed through a 12 week consultation period that assisted in informing customers of LCTS and this CIA well in advance of the implementation on 1st April 2013. This includes:</p>

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- An interactive website with calculators and survey questionnaire
- Press release
- Radio interviews
- 12 Public Consultation events including 6 in the community
- Posters to advertise the change and invite customers to the 12 public consultation sessions
- Invites to all working age customers affected (6k+)
- Invites to key partners including CAB and CVS
- Additional two phone lines in YCC for queries and over the phone completion of survey
- Two additional temporary staff recruited and trained for phone line
- Phone line includes typetalk
- Public consultation events to consider equality issues as part of the format

9 What arrangements will you put in place to **monitor impact, positive and negative**, of the proposed service/policy/function/criteria on individuals from the communities?

The impact will be monitored through our own management information and analysis of data regarding issues such as council tax arrears, recovery rates, levels of customer contact and applications made to any hardship fund that the council may set up. Information from other service areas such as Housing as well as external bodies such as the CAB and other agencies who support customers will help monitor.

10 List below actions you will take to **address any unjustified impact and promote equality of outcome (as in appendix 1)** for staff, customers and the public from the communities. The action could relate to:

- Procedures
- Service delivery
- Training
- Improvement projects

Action	Lead	When by?
If the council adopts a discretionary hardship fund this will be delivered to those most in need of additional financial assistance by way of a short term increase in LCTS awards.	David Walker	1/4/13

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<p>Financial Inclusion policy and strategy to provide city wide support to financially vulnerable customers</p> <p>Economic inclusion to try to ensure the write skills are developed to engage all residents in current and future employment opportunities</p>	<p>Ina Floyd</p> <p>Economic Development</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
11	Date CIA completed	
<p>Author: John Madden Position: Strategic Welfare Benefits & Partnerships Manager Date: 12 November 2012</p>		
12	Signed off by	
<p>I am satisfied that this service/policy/function has been successfully impact assessed.</p> <p>Name: David Walker Position : Head of Financial Procedures Date: 15 November 2012</p>		
<p>Please send the completed signed off document to equalities@york.gov.uk. It will be published on COLIN as well as on the council website.</p>		

Appendix 1 - Quality of Life Indicators (also known as “the 10 dimensions of equality”)

Think about the positive and negative impact in these areas:

- ❑ Access to services and employment
- ❑ Longevity, including avoiding premature mortality.
- ❑ Physical security, including freedom from violence and physical and sexual abuse.
- ❑ Health, including both well-being and access to high quality healthcare.
- ❑ Education, including both being able to be creative, to acquire skills and qualifications and having access to training and life-long learning.
- ❑ Standard of living, including being able to live with independence and security; and covering nutrition, clothing, housing, warmth, utilities, social services and transport.

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- Productive and valued activities, such as access to employment, a positive experience in the workplace, work/life balance, and being able to care for others.
- Individual, family and social life, including self-development, having independence and equality in relationships and marriage.
- Participation, influence and voice, including participation in decision-making and democratic life.
- Identity, expression and self-respect, including freedom of belief and religion.
- Legal security, including equality and non-discrimination before the law and equal treatment within the criminal justice system.

Indicators from: The Equalities Review 2007 and the Equality Framework for Local Government.