



Equality Analysis (EA) (formally Equality Impact Assessment) Record Form 2022/23

Department: Benefits

Team or Service Area Leading Assessment: Benefits Team

Title of Policy/ Service or Function: Working Age Council Tax Support Scheme Equality Assessment

Lead Officer: Louise Jones

STEP 1 - IDENTIFYING THE PURPOSE OR AIMS

1. What type of policy, service or function is this?

Existing policy

2. What is the aim and purpose of the policy, service or function?

From April 2013, as part of the government's Welfare Reform agenda, Council Tax Benefit was abolished and replaced with a locally determined Council Tax Reduction (CTR) Scheme. Pensioners continue to be protected at their existing levels of benefit under a national scheme whilst new schemes were set up for Working Age customers at a Local Authority level. Under this system, it is billing authorities who will decide who is eligible to get support and the support will be awarded by way of a Section 13A Council Tax discount. The grant provided by the Government continues to be reduced; Local Authorities therefore have to manage the reduction in funding in developing local Council Tax Reduction Schemes and have to ensure that their scheme also covers the impact of any future increase in Council Tax Reduction recipients.

Fylde Council will need to operate under three major constraints:

1. The cut in funding (which may in practice be higher if demand for support increases in the future).
2. The desire to protect vulnerable groups and the exhortation to do this by the Government (as set out in "Localising Support for Council Tax: Vulnerable people – key local authority duties" published by the Department of Communities and Local Government in May 2012).
3. The desire to incentivise work and not contradict the incentives to work in Universal Credit (as set out in "Localising Support for Council Tax: Taking work incentives into account" published by the Department of Communities and Local Government in May 2012).

The Government has stated (in the above document on vulnerable people) that they do not intend to prescribe the protection that local authorities should provide for vulnerable groups other than pensioners. Rather the guidance reminds local authorities to have due regard to how their local scheme may impact on people based on the following:

- Age
- Disability

- Sex and sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief

The above guidance refers to specific legislation that local authorities should have due regard to when designing their local scheme. This includes:

- The Equality Act 2010 (particularly the Public Sector Equality Duty)
- The Child Poverty Act 2010 (duty to mitigate the effects of child poverty)
- The Housing Act 1996 (duty to prevent homelessness)

In addition, it advises that local authorities consider the impact under The Armed Forces covenant published in May 2011.

The local scheme sets out:

- the classes of person who are entitled to a reduction
- the reductions which are to apply to those classes
- the procedure by which a person may apply for a reduction.

The timetable for development of the 2022/23 Equality Analysis is shown below and this document is reviewed and updated annually to consider the impact of the Scheme and any changes to it.

Action	Timescale
Develop first draft of the proposed schemes	Jun 2021 -Jul 2022
Review EA document based on proposed scheme	Jul 2021-Oct 2022
Develop EA action plan to mitigate impact of the changes EA with Council Report to decide the scheme	Oct 2021
Send EA with Council Report to decide the scheme	Nov 2021

3. Please outline any proposals being considered.

The Council is considering continuing with the existing 2021/22 scheme, ensuring the scheme is cost neutral to the Council with continued reduced support for working age claimants of 22.7%.

4. What outcomes do we want to achieve?

A framework to provide Council Tax Reduction with the following objectives:

- The scheme is similar to the old national scheme in terms of eligibility criteria to determine who will receive support.
- Supports work incentives and in particular, avoid disincentives to move into work.
- Achieves the required savings and allows room for future take-up of the discount.
- The scheme is cost effective to administer.
- The impact of the scheme can be assessed and future adjustments can be made.

5. Who is the policy, service or function intended to help/ benefit?

Each billing authority in England must design a scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to amounts of council tax support payable in respect of dwellings situated in its area by:

- Persons of working age whom the authority considers to be in financial need; or
- Persons of working age in classes consisting of persons whom the authority considers to be, in general, in financial need

6. Who are the main stakeholders/ customers/ communities of interest?

The main stakeholders are:

- The Preceptors e.g. Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service, Lancashire Police Authority, Lancashire County Council
- Any resident who is liable to pay Council Tax
- Any current Working Age Council Tax Reduction customers
- A range of 3rd party organisations providing support and advice to a wide range of customers

7. Does the policy, service or function have any existing aims in relation to Equality/ Diversity or community cohesion?

The main scheme will continue to apply the same percentage reduction to all Working Age customers.

STEP 2 - CONSIDERING EXISTING INFORMATION AND WHAT THIS TELLS YOU

8. Please summarise the main data/ research and performance management information in the box below.

Data/ information

The main performance information to assist in the design of the Council Tax Reduction scheme will be databases and statistics held for the following purposes:

- Billing and Recovery of Council Tax
- Awarding Council Tax Reduction
- Census data including index of deprivation
- Benefits caseload data to establish trends
- Information held by the Office of National Statistics

Research or comparative information

Local authorities have clearly defined responsibilities in relation to, and awareness of, the most vulnerable groups and individuals other than pensioners in their areas. This includes responsibilities under:

- The **Child Poverty Act 2010**, which imposes a duty on local authorities to have regard to and address child poverty and their partners, to reduce and mitigate the effects of child poverty in their local areas.
- The **Disabled Persons Act 1986**, and **Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970**, which include

a range of duties relating to the welfare needs of disabled people.

- The **Housing Act 1996**, which gives local authorities a duty to prevent homelessness with special regard to vulnerable groups.

Figures quoted below were correct as at Oct 2015.

Population

Fylde has a resident population of 77,000, some 20,100 (26%) are aged over 65. Fylde has just under 35,000 households. It is an affluent area with low levels of unemployment, quality housing and crime rates.

Deprivation

Fylde has 21 wards broken down into 51 lower-layer super output areas (LSOA's) of which only 1 is in the most deprived 10% and over a third of which are in least deprived 30% nationally. Fylde ranks, 217th out of 326 local authorities for average deprivation score. **Health deprivation** is lower than average.

Housing

The number of households in Fylde was just under 35,000 with a higher percentage of owner occupied dwellings than England and a lower proportion of social housing:

- 73% - owner occupied (England: 63%)
- 17% - privately rented (England: 17%)
- 7% - social rented (England: 18%)

Household Composition

The households in Fylde have slightly higher proportions of lone adults over 65 and a lower proportion of lone parents than England.

Household types:

- 17% - lone adults over 65 years (England: 12%)
- 18% - lone adults under 65 years (England: 18%)
- 9% - lone parent families (England: 11%)
- 12% - single families with all adults over 65 (England: 8%)
- 40% - single families with all adults under 65 (England: 43%)

Disability

2,650 (5.9%) of working age residents claim employment support allowance/incapacity benefit and a further 510 claim disability living allowance (1.1%). These are both slightly lower proportions than England as a whole.

Child Poverty

11% of children in Fylde live in low income families, around 1,500 children overall.

Pension Credit

Fylde has 2,170 claimants in receipt of Pension Credit Guarantee Credit only, or both Guarantee Credit and Savings Credit, equivalent to 78% of claimants (Nationally 80%)

Means-tested claimants in receipt of Pension Credit 'Savings Credit' only is much lower at 610 claimants compared, equivalent to 22% of claimants (Nationally 20%)

As a proportion of the population, 14% of the 65+ age group claim pension credit, much higher than England at 19%.

National Data

As Council Tax Reduction is a locally administered scheme, no national statistics are collated so reference must be made to old Council Tax Benefit statistics.

According to the Single Housing Benefit Extract, as at January 2011 there were 3.1 million Council Tax Benefit claimants under 65 in the United Kingdom.

According to the Family Resources 2009/10 Survey data, of these:

- 48% of households have at least 1 adult or child who is disabled
- 18% of households have at least 1 adult with caring responsibilities
- 17% of households have at least 1 adult requiring informal care

Information from administrative sources can also provide more limited information on carers and disabled people and shows the number of Council Tax Benefit claimants who were carers or households in receipt of a disability premium and not passported onto full Council Tax Benefit. At January 2011:

- 34,790 non-passported under 65 Council Tax Benefit claimants were carers
- 219,580 non-passported under 65 Council Tax Benefit claimants were in receipt of a disability premium

Since some of the passported claimants are also likely to be carers or receiving a disability premium this underestimates the total number that could be affected.

9. What are the impacts or effects for Key Protected Characteristics?

Age

Older People of pension age

Potential Impact

The Department for Communities and Local Government has stated that pensioners must receive the same level of support under the new scheme as they received under the Council Tax Benefit scheme. They will therefore be treated more favourably than other groups under the proposed changes.

In Fylde we currently have 5517 Council Tax Reduction recipients of whom 1789 are single and of pension age. In addition we have 587 couples over 60 in receipt of Council Tax Reduction. Of these 24 have child dependents.

Eligible 'pensioners' can be divided into the three groups below:

PASSPORTED CLAIMANTS

Those in receipt of Pension Credit Guarantee Credit

Pension Credit 'Guarantee Credit' acts as a passport to maximum Council Tax Reduction support. Pensioners apply to the Pension Service and if successful are prompted to apply for Council Tax Reduction by the Local Authority.

MEANS-TESTED CLAIMANTS

Means-tested claimants in receipt of Pension Credit 'Savings Credit' Only

Pension Credit applicants may be awarded 'Savings Credit' only. This group are also prompted to apply for

Council Tax Reduction by the Local Authority.

Other means-tested claimants

Customers can also apply directly. Claimants who have attained the qualifying age for State Pension Credit are means-tested by the Local Authority on application, to determine eligibility for support. The exact amount of support needed will depend on a range of factors, such as age, income, capital, the personal circumstances of the individual and the Council Tax band their home falls into.

We currently do not have data that would allow us to break the Fylde Council figures down into the categories above.

People of Working Age (over 25)

Potential Impact

People under pension age will be treated less favourably under the scheme than pensioners. In addition it is possible that some people in this group will be affected more because of the greater difficulties they may face in finding paid employment e.g. over the age of 55.

People of Working Age (under 25)

Potential Impact

Under the current Council Tax Reduction scheme the system of applicable amounts differentiate between those under and over 25. Claimants who are under 25 have a lower applicable amount and are treated as having lower living costs than those aged 25 and over. In addition, young single people may be more at risk of becoming homeless and/or there will be pressure on these people to return or remain in the family home.

There is a recognition that Working Age customers in receipt of Council Tax Reduction have been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic e.g. working reduced hours, their businesses have closed, been furloughed etc. Whilst financial assistance was provided to all Working Age recipients of Council Tax Reduction by way of a grant of up to £150, it is not available for 2022/23. If residents find themselves in financial difficulty, they could be assisted through the Council Tax Reduction hardship fund.

Current Welfare Reforms in Housing Benefit will affect the same group of Working Age customers.

Disability

Potential Impact

The definition of disability used is based on entitlement to certain state benefits or to entitlement to a Council Tax disabled band reduction. This can reflect the circumstances of any member of the claimant's household.

The relevant benefits/additions to benefit include:

- Disability Living Allowance
- Personal Independence Payments
- Universal Credit
- Employment Support Allowance

- Disability Premium
- Severe Disability Premium
- Enhanced Disability Premium
- Disabled Child Premium
- Disabled Earnings Disregard
- Carers Allowance
- War Disablement Pension
- War Widows Pension
- Council Tax Disability Reduction

It is possible that some people in this group will be affected less favourably because of the greater difficulties they may face in coping with the changes, for example by finding paid employment. This may result from their reduced capacity to work due to the nature of their disability and/or discrimination based on the perceptions of employers or the fact that the place of work has not been adapted to meet the needs of disabled people.

Other welfare reforms may further impact on some members of this group and also some of the services that members of this group receive are being reduced under austerity measures. It should also be noted that in some cases (depending on the nature of the disability) there may be potential communication issues where information available in standard formats is not the best method of communicating with benefit recipients. This may cause greater difficulty in understanding their changed liability. This may lead some to fall into arrears more easily with all the associated problems this can cause.

It is not anticipated that the proposed scheme will have any other adverse effect on this group as any Working Age claimant sin receipt of certain benefits will be paying less.

Some individuals in this group who also receive Social Care support from Lancashire County Council may be able to have the extra Council Tax they could be expected to pay deducted from their income for fairer charging purposes (unless they pay the full cost because they have capital over the current threshold). It is acknowledged that this will not help disabled people who do not receive chargeable support from Lancashire County Council. However, the most severely disabled are likely to receive this support.

Extensive consultation was carried out prior to the introduction of the 2013/14 scheme with specific disabled stakeholder groups i.e. the Disability Partnership Forum, the Learning Disabilities Self Advocacy Forum and the Disability First open day in order to make them aware of the changes, help them to understand the potential impact and to discuss any support mechanisms that can be built in for affected groups. As the proposed 2022/23 scheme is the same as 2021/22 scheme, no further specific consultation has been carried out with these groups.

Fylde Council's preferred option continues to be a bottom slice i.e. maintaining the current benefit rules but reducing the level of council tax reduction by the same amount for all working age Council Tax Reduction recipients. This will be a fairer option for all affected customers and would enable disability benefits to continue to be disregarded in the calculation of Council Tax Reduction. However, someone with a disability would still have something to pay under the new scheme.

It is recognised that the level of a customer's disability could mean they are more disadvantaged over another disabled customer. There may be the opportunity for a less disabled person to increase their income in order to pay for the increase in Council Tax whereas this may not be an option for a more severely disabled person. Because of this issue, the action plan will contain potential areas that could be considered to mitigate the impact of the scheme. Applications can be made to the Council Tax Reduction hardship scheme for anyone who is struggling to pay their Council Tax and an income and expenditure calculation will be completed.

<p><i>Gender Reassignment</i></p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>No information is collected on the gender reassignment status of Council Tax Reduction claimants. However, it is acknowledged that transgender people experience higher levels of disadvantage and social/financial exclusion and therefore may face greater difficulties in responding to the changes, for example by finding work. The proposed scheme will have a negative impact on all working age single people and couples who are recipients of Council Tax Reduction, regardless of their gender identity.</p>
<p><i>Marriage and Civil Partnership</i></p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The latest figures show that there are 1120 couples in receipt of Council Tax Reduction. Of these, 374 (33%) had child dependents and 746 (67%) had no child dependents.</p> <p>There are 557 couples in receipt of Council Tax Reduction who are of working age, of whom 352 (63%) had child dependents and 205 (37%) had no child dependents.</p> <p>The proposed scheme impacts on working age families/couples whether they are living together/married or in civil partnerships but will not treat marriage or civil partnership any differently. Married couple and civil partnerships are recognised equally in the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme as people are living together as if they are in such legal partnerships.</p> <p>Families with a large number of children are more likely to live in a bigger property and therefore one with a higher Council Tax Band. The proposed scheme for 2022/23 would ensure that these customers would not be disadvantaged over smaller families as the Council Tax Reduction would be based on the actual Council Tax band for the property and the percentage reduction would be the same across all groups of claimants.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the continuation of the scheme will have any other adverse effect on this group.</p>
<p><i>Pregnancy and Maternity</i></p> <p>The proposed scheme will have a negative impact on all working age single people and couples who are recipients of Council Tax Reduction regardless of whether they are pregnant/recently given birth or not.</p> <p>Whilst at this moment we consider that this impact is unlikely to be disproportionately greater on households where a member is pregnant or recently given birth, we acknowledge that they may face greater difficulties in responding to the changes, for example by finding work.</p> <p>In addition, women on maternity leave may find that they now have to pay an increased amount of Council Tax Reduction on a reduced income with little prospect of increasing their income in the short term.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the continuation of the scheme will have any other adverse effect on this group.</p>
<p><i>Race</i></p> <p>Potential Impact</p> <p>The proposed scheme will have a negative impact on all working age single people and couples who are recipients of Council Tax Reduction regardless of race or ethnicity. We do not have any data regarding the</p>

ethnicity of Council Tax Reduction recipients in Fylde Council. However, national data shows that 90% of households who received Council Tax Benefit pre April 2013 were white, and 10% were ethnic minorities. This compared to a total population of 91% white and 9% ethnic minorities.

At the moment we do not consider that the impact of the scheme will be disproportionately greater on households of different ethnicity within the working age group. There will be no difference in the way ethnic groups are treated under any new Council Tax Reduction scheme. However, some ethnic groups experience different levels of disadvantage and therefore they may find it more difficult to cope with the changes. This may be because they face unofficial discrimination in the job market and possibly because of access to skills including language skills are limited in some cases.

There may also be potential communication issues where English is not the benefit recipient's first language and where documents printed in Standard English is not the optimum method of communicating.

Claimants whose first language is not English may have greater difficulty in understanding their changed level of Support, particularly if they are being asked to pay some Council Tax for the first time. This may lead some to fall into arrears more easily leading to the associated problems this can cause.

This targeted approach could be face to face, by telephone or by utilising translation services, if appropriate.

Religion and Belief

Potential Impact

The proposed scheme will have a negative impact on all working age single people and couples who are recipients of Council Tax Reduction regardless of religion or belief. We do not have any data regarding the religion or beliefs Council Tax Reduction recipients in Fylde Council. We do not envisage that the proposed scheme for 2022/23 will adversely impact people with particular religions or beliefs.

Sex

Potential Impact

The latest figures show that in Fylde there are 4397 single people in receipt of Council Tax Reduction. Of these, 2818 (64%) are female, and 1579 (36%) are male.

Of the 2818 female recipients, 858 (30%) are lone parents and of the 1579 male recipients, 103 (7%) are lone parents.

If we look only at those of working age, 57% of all single working age female recipients are lone parents. Of the male recipients 10% of all single working age male recipients are lone parents.

Of all lone parents in Fylde in receipt of Council Tax Reduction, 89% are female and 11% are male.

On the face of it we will continue to treat both men and women equally in the proposed main Council Tax Reduction scheme from 1st April 2021. However, given the higher number of female recipients (64%), changes to the current Council Tax Reduction scheme could impact on women more than men. National data does confirm that more women than men experience financial deprivation. In addition, because many more female claimants will be lone parents, they may be treated less favourably indirectly because lone parents may face greater difficulties in responding to the changes, including by finding work.

It is not anticipated that the proposed scheme will have any other adverse effect on this group.

Sexual Orientation

Potential Impact

The proposed scheme will have the same level of impact on all working age single people and couples who are recipients of Council Tax Reduction regardless of their sexual orientation. We have no data on the sexual orientation of Council Tax Reduction claimants locally and at this moment we consider that the impact is unlikely to be disproportionately greater on recipients with different sexual orientations. However, national data demonstrates that some Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual people experience higher levels of disadvantage and financial exclusion than other groups and therefore may face greater difficulties in responding to the changes, for example by finding work.

Other Relevant Groups

Potential Impact

Troubled Family Programme

The 'Troubled Families' programme is a national program where families with specific circumstances are provided intensive support and advice. Further consideration of targeted communication to the Troubled Families service will be undertaken, if required.

Child Poverty

The impact of the proposed scheme on Child Poverty has been considered and it is believed that by continuing to disregard Child Benefit and Child Maintenance consideration of this area has been sufficiently taken into account.

Homelessness

The impact of the proposed scheme on the Council's Homelessness Strategy has been considered and by continuing to work the Housing team, sufficient promotion of how the scheme will work will be available. Targeted communication to other Council Services to promote the final scheme will also be undertaken.

Armed Forces Covenant

The impact of the proposed scheme on the Armed Forces has been considered and it is believed that by continuing to disregard War Disablement Pension, War Widow's Pension and War Widower's Pension consideration of this area has been sufficiently taken into account.

Note 1

Other relevant benefit changes that apply from April 2022

The 2022/23 Council Tax Reduction scheme will come in from 1st April 2022. At the same time continuing and planned changes to the benefit and tax systems will continue to affect people in receipt of/potentially eligible for Council Tax Reduction. The other changes include the following:

- 1. Working age benefit rates (Tax Credits, applicable amounts) continue to be frozen.*
- 2. The continued rollout of Universal Credit full service in Fylde.*

10. What do you know about how the proposals could affect community cohesion?

- There may be an effect on community cohesion as pensioners are not being affected by the new Local Council Tax Reduction scheme and will continue to receive their current levels of support whilst Working Age customers will have reduced levels of help. Whilst we recognise the inequalities of the two schemes (Working Age and Elderly), we are unable to do anything about them but will monitor the impact of the scheme between age groups during consultation to ensure any comments are recorded.
- If any other protections are made within the working age group, some groups may feel they are “shouldering the burden” of the scheme more than others.
- There may be an increase in transience, as people move to more affordable accommodation in order to be able to afford to pay for their increased contribution to Council Tax.
- There could be an increase in the number of people leaving Fylde Council to move to a neighbouring authority with a more generous Council Tax Reduction scheme.

STEP 3 - ANALYSING THE IMPACT

11. Is there any evidence of higher or lower take-up by any group or community, and if so, how is this explained?

- There was traditionally a lower take up of Council Tax Benefit from pensioners, however, as pensioner support is now being delivered through a national framework of criteria and allowances and is a discount rather than a benefit, take up could be reasonably expected to increase.
- Within some other community groups there is traditionally a low take up because individuals either do not need support or do not like to claim benefit. To mitigate this, there will be a programme of marketing and communication which will include liaison to target hard to reach groups.

12. Do any rules or requirements prevent any groups or communities from using or accessing the service?

There will be an initial eligibility criteria for Fylde Council’s Council Tax Reduction scheme (in line with the Council Tax Benefit scheme), which will exclude the following:

- Any person who is not a Council Tax payer as they do not need to pay Council Tax
- Anyone who is not able to claim state benefits in accordance with the Central Government regulations in the Local Government Finance Bill
- If the property is a second home

Once the eligibility criteria have been established, there will be a means tested assessment of entitlement to Council Tax Reduction, which could mean that some people are not entitled but this is the case now also.

13. Does the way a service is delivered/ or the policy delivered create any additional barriers for any groups of disabled people?

Access

The scheme will offer the same level of access to the service as there is within the current system of Council Tax Reduction, as follows:

- Face to face access
- Telephone access
- Home visit, if required
- Online claim form

Policy

Disabled people may not be exempt for the purposes of calculating Council Tax Reduction. The rationale behind this is:

- The scheme will support people on a low income and will be means tested. Disabled people receive additional income for disabilities and Fylde Council’s options allow for the continued disregard of disability incomes in the calculation.
- Disability relief, which is a reduction in the amount of Council Tax payable, applies where adaptations have been made to a property to accommodate a disabled person. Exempting disability benefits in the calculation of Council Tax Reduction would put those people at a financial advantage.
- The Council Tax Reduction Scheme must continue to cost less than the Council Tax Benefit regime. The saving would be unachievable if disabled applicants were disregarded.
- Disability Benefits are disregarded in DWP assessment therefore issues of vulnerability have been addressed prior to our calculation.

However, we recognise that even within the category of disability, some people will be more affected than others in that they will be unlikely to be able to increase their income and therefore policies need to be established to mitigate the impact of the scheme. The Council Tax Reduction Hardship Fund would provide a mechanism for additional support for disabled people.

STEP 4 - DEALING WITH ADVERSE OR UNLAWFUL IMPACT

14. What can be done to improve the policy, service, function or any proposals in order to reduce or remove any adverse impact or effects identified?

No adverse impact has been identified for the proposed 2022/23 scheme.

15. What would be needed to be able to do this? Are the resources likely to be available?

Not applicable

16. What other support or changes would be necessary to carry out these actions?

Not applicable

STEP 5 - CONSULTING THOSE AFFECTED FOR THEIR VIEWS

17. What feedback or responses have you received to the findings and possible courses of action? Please give details below.

2022/23 Scheme

No changes are proposed therefore no public consultation undertaken and no comments.

18. If you have not been able to carry out any consultation, please indicate below how you intend to test out your findings and recommended actions.

N/A

STEP 6 - ACTION PLANNING

Please outline your proposed action plan below.

2022/23

Issues/ adverse impact identified	Proposed action/ objectives to deal with adverse impact	Targets/Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility	Indicate whether agreed
Customers may end up suffering severe financial hardship	Review Discretionary Discount Guidance for staff and provide training to staff to identify cases where there is an issue	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Ensure the Council’s hardship scheme is still available 2.Review criteria to apply the fund for Owner Occupiers 3. Review criteria to apply the fund for tenants 4.Ensure debt advice and benefit maximisation assistance is available 5.Review and possibly reduce recovery of other Council bills e.g. Sundry Debts, Housing Benefit overpayment 6.Ensure a DHP award cannot be made 7.Ensure all available help from Housing team has been explored 	<p>Jan 22</p> <p>Jan 22</p> <p>Jan 22</p> <p>Apr 22 – Mar 23</p> <p>Apr 22 – Mar 23</p> <p>Apr 22 – Mar 23</p> <p>Apr 22 – Mar 23</p>	Benefits Service Discretionary Team Advice team	Agreed
Monitor legislation progress in case there are changes to the proposed amendments to Housing Benefit, in which case alignment to HB rules may not apply	If this client group is no longer impacted by the changes the EA will need to be revisited	1.Review Equality Analysis in light of any legislation changes	Apr 22 – Mar 23	Benefits Service	Agreed

Issues/ adverse impact identified	Proposed action/ objectives to deal with adverse impact	Targets/Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility	Indicate whether agreed
Take Up Campaign	There will be a number of customers who are not claiming the other Benefits they should be doing therefore a take-up campaign is proposed to help them increase their income.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All frontline staff are aware of the potential that customers are not claiming all the benefits they are entitled to and where to signpost customers to. 2. Increased take up of Council Tax Reduction by Universal Credit customers by proactively working with other agencies and groups e.g. Job Centre Plus to ensure take up of all benefits is maximised 	Jan 2022 – Mar 2023	Benefits Service	Agreed

STEP 7 - ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND REVIEW

Please outline your arrangements for future monitoring and review below.

Agreed action	Monitoring arrangements	Timeframe	Responsibility	Added to Service Plan etc.
Review of scheme and it's impact	Establish baseline position for review Review impact of scheme on protected characteristic groups Review collection rates amongst affected customers Consider whether discretionary policy is sufficiently robust	Apr 2022 - Mar 2023	Benefits Service	Ongoing
Potentially propose changes to the scheme as a result of the review and the impact of the scheme and other proposed welfare reforms	Consider consultation requirements Report to Full Council to formally adopt any recommended changes to the scheme for 2022/23	May 2022 – Jul 2022 Nov 2022	Benefits Service	

Date completed:

25th October 2021

Signed:



Name:

Louise Jones

Position: Head of Revenues and Benefits (Shared Service)