

Equality Impact Assessment Template

Before carrying out an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA), you should familiarise yourself with the [guidance](#). This document should be in **plain English**, include **Stakeholder** involvement and be able to stand up to **scrutiny** (local and/or court) if/when challenged to ensure we have met the councils public sector equality duty.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) should be completed when you are considering:

- developing, reviewing or removing policies
- developing, reviewing or removing strategies
- developing, reviewing or removing services
- developing, reviewing or removing a council function/system
- commencing any project/programme

Assessor(s) Name and job title:

Erin Rhodes, Benefits Assistant Manager

Directorate and Team/School Name:

Benefits, Corporate Services

Name, aim, objective and expected outcome of the programme/ activity:

Name: Isle of Wight Council local Housing Benefit scheme

Aim: The Housing Benefit scheme is a national scheme that is administered locally by the council on behalf of central government. The majority of this scheme is mandatory, but government gave councils the discretion to implement a local scheme which allows certain prescribed incomes to be disregarded in the calculation of Housing Benefit such as War Disablement and War Widow's Pensions. The Isle of Wight Council previously decided to disregard the incomes in full under its local discretionary scheme.

Objective: This discretionary local scheme enables the Isle of Wight Council to support vulnerable residents who claim Housing Benefit and are in receipt of the prescribed incomes. It also aligns with the council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant to offer support to local Armed Forces residents and their families and to give special consideration to those who have been injured or bereaved as a result of service.

Expected outcome: to review the scheme and to continue the current level of disregard applied to the prescribed incomes in the calculation of Housing Benefit.

Reason for Equality Impact Assessment (tick as appropriate)

This is a new policy/strategy/service/system function proposal	
This is a proposal for a change to a policy/strategy/service/system function proposal function (<i>check whether the original decision was equality impact assessed</i>)	X local scheme to be reviewed
Removal of a policy/strategy/service/system function proposal	
Commencing any project/programme	

Equality and Diversity considerations

Describe the ways in which the groups below may be impacted by your activity (**prior to mitigation**). The impact may be negative, positive or no impact.

Protected Characteristic	Negative, positive or no impact (before mitigation/intervention) and why?	Does the proposal have the potential to cause unlawful discrimination (is it possible that the proposal may exclude/restrict this group from obtaining services or limit their participation in any aspect of public life?)	How will you advance the equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.	What concerns have been raised to date during consultation (or early discussions) and what action taken to date?	What evidence, analysis or data has been used to substantiate your answer?	Are there any gaps in evidence to properly assess the impact? How will this be addressed?	How will you make communication accessible for this group?	What adjustments have been put in place to reduce/advance the inequality? (<i>Where it cannot be diminished, can this be legally justified?</i>)
Age (restrictions/difficulties both younger/older)	No impact	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Disability a) Physical b) Mental health (must respond to both a & b)	No impact – the recommendation is to make no change to the scheme, as it is designed to support residents who receive	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

	<p>War Disablement Pensions and who have sustained long-term health issues as a result of their service. However, if a change were to be made to reduce the disregarded amount, this would negatively impact these residents who receive Housing Benefit and would not support the Armed Forces Covenant.</p>							
<p>Race (including ethnicity and nationality)</p>	No impact	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<p>Religion or belief (different faith groups/those without a faith)</p>	No impact							
<p>Sex (Including Trans and non-binary – is your language inclusive of trans and non-binary people?)</p>	No impact							
<p>Sexual orientation (is your language inclusive of LGB groups?)</p>	No impact							
<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p>	No impact							
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership</p>	No impact – the recommendation is to make no change to the current scheme.							

	However, if a change were to be made, it would negatively impact partners of those residents who served in the Armed Forces and receive payment of a War Widow's Pension and claim Housing Benefit. It would also not support the Armed Forces Covenant.							
Gender reassignment	No impact							

In order to identify the needs of the groups, you will need to review data, statistics, user feedback, population data, complaints data, staffing data (SAPHRreports@iow.gov.uk), community/client data, feedback from focus groups etc. When assessing the impact, the assessment should come from an evidence base and not through opinion or self-knowledge.


H. Review

How are you engaging people with a wide range of protected characteristics in the development, review and/or monitoring of the programme/ activity?

Date of next review:

H. Sign-off

Head of Service/Director/Headteacher sign off & date:


 Name:
 Date: 09 January 2023

Legal sign off & date:

Name: Judy Mason
 Date: 09 January 2023