

# Uttlesford District Council

## Fast-track equality impact assessment (EqIA) tool

### What is this tool for?


This tool will help you to assess the impact of existing or new strategies, policies, projects, contracts or decisions on residents and staff. It will help you to deliver excellent services, by making sure that they reflect the needs of all members of the community and workforce.

### What should be equality impact assessed?

You only need to equality impact assess strategies, policies, projects, contracts or decisions that are **relevant** to equality. If you are not sure whether your activity is relevant to equality take the 'relevance test' on Page 9.

### How do I use the tool?

This tool is easy to use and you do not need expert knowledge to complete it. It asks you to make judgments based on evidence.

The tool uses a system of red flags  to give you an indication of whether or not your responses are identifying potential issues. Getting a red flag does not necessarily indicate a problem, but it does mean that your assessment is highlighting issues or gaps in data that may require further investigation or action.

*If there is insufficient space to answer a question, please use a separate sheet.*


General information		
1	Name of strategy, policy, project, contract or decision.	Localisation of Council Tax Support (LCTS) Policy 2013-2014
2	What is the overall purpose of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?	To set up a fair and equitable scheme to help people with low incomes to afford their Council Tax, and in line with the Local Government Finance Bill.
3	Who may be affected by the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residents <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A specific client groups (please state): Those liable for Council Tax within the District; adults on a low income with low savings, and any authority that can levy a charge to contribute to Council Tax (Essex County Council, Essex Police and Essex Fire)
4	Responsible department and Head of Division.	Department: Revenues & Benefits Head of Division: Stephen Joyce
5	Are other departments or partners involved in delivery of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uttlesford is working with all major precepting authorities in Essex to develop an Essex-wide framework, with local variations, within constraints imposed by Government policy</li> <li>• Housing, Customer Services</li> <li>• Department for Work and Pensions</li> <li>• Department for Communities and Local Government</li> </ul>

**Gathering performance data**

6 Do you (or do you intend to) collect this monitoring data in relation to any of the following diverse groups?

- |                                     |                                 |                                     |                         |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Age                             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Disability              |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Sex                             | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Race                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Gender Reassignment             | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Sexual Orientation      |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Religion & Belief               | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Pregnancy and Maternity |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Marriage and Civil Partnerships | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Rural Isolation         |

Older people (60+) are protected in the policy which follows specific Government regulations. The policy has been specifically designed with safeguards for vulnerable people, particularly with regard to child poverty and disability. Parents will continue to receive a child allowance and family premium as part of the calculation, which is consistent with the Council's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Working parents receive a higher disregard of their earnings to reflect their childcare costs. Higher Rate Disability Benefits will continue to be disregarded thereby protecting those with specific long term conditions who fall within this group. People with disabilities will continue to receive additional premiums as part of the calculation. Without these actions, designed to protect these groups, the policy could potentially be discriminatory. People over 18 of working age will be required to pay more. Dependants under the age of 18 years old may be disadvantaged indirectly if their parents have to pay more as a result of this policy. No impact specific to Sex, Race, Sexual Orientation; Gender Reassignment; Religion and Belief; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Pregnancy and Maternity has been identified

7	How do you (or how do you intend to) monitor the impact of the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance indicators or targets <input type="checkbox"/> User satisfaction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uptake <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation or involvement <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce monitoring data <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complaints <input type="checkbox"/> External verification <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligibility criteria <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state): <input type="checkbox"/> None 
---	---	--

**Analysing performance data**

8 Consider the impact the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision has already achieved, measured by the monitoring data you collect. Is the same impact being achieved for diverse groups as is being achieved across the population or workforce as a whole?

Yes \*

No\*

Insufficient 

Not applicable 

*\*Please state your evidence for this, including full document titles and dates of publication for audit purposes. Where applicable please also state the nature of any issues identified:*

The changes impact only on working age households currently in receipt of Council Tax Benefit – about 5% of the total households in Uttlesford.

The key elements of the proposed scheme impact equally across the affected group in proportion to their Council Tax Band.

Allowances and premiums currently awarded under housing benefit rules; and certain disregarded disability benefits similar to the housing benefit rules will help mitigate the impact to disabled households; and by treating disabled households as vulnerable and exempt from the key elements of the scheme gives disabled households additional protection.

Families with pre-school and school age children will continue to have allowances and premiums currently awarded under housing benefit rules to help mitigate the impact, but child benefit income will no longer be disregarded and the disregard on maintenance will be lower.

Households with the very lowest incomes and savings will not have a greater than 20% reduction in council tax support

9	<p>Is uptake of any services, benefits or opportunities associated with the strategy, policy, project, contract or decision generally representative of <u>diverse groups</u>?</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 40px; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Yes *</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>No*</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Insufficient </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Not applicable </td> </tr> </table> <p><i>*Please state your evidence for this, including full document titles and dates of publication for audit purposes. Where applicable please also state the nature of any issues identified:</i></p> <p>Northgate modeling tool          "R:\Local Council Tax\cabinet 2 Aug 2012\working papers\CTS-19JUL2012.xlsm"          "R:\Local Council Tax\cabinet 2 Aug 2012\working papers\impact max-min and average.xls"</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes *	<input type="checkbox"/>	No*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insufficient	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes *									
<input type="checkbox"/>	No*									
<input type="checkbox"/>	Insufficient									
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable									

**Checking delivery arrangements**


10	<p>You now need to check the accessibility of your delivery arrangements against the requirements below. Click on the hyperlinks for more detailed guidance about the minimum criteria you should meet.</p> <p><i>If assessing a proposed strategy, policy, project, contract or decision, indicate 'Yes' if you anticipate compliance by launch of implementation.</i></p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 60%;"></th> <th style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">Yes</th> <th style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">No </th> <th style="width: 20%; text-align: center;">N/A</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>The <a href="#">premises</a> for delivery are accessible to all.</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox" value="Y"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><a href="#">Consultation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox" value="Y"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>all claimants will receive a letter, stakeholders will be given an opportunity to comment</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><a href="#">Participation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox" value="Y"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>If you answered 'No' to any of the questions above please explain why giving details of any legal justification.</p>		Yes	No	N/A	The <a href="#">premises</a> for delivery are accessible to all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox" value="Y"/>	<a href="#">Consultation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.	<input type="checkbox" value="Y"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	all claimants will receive a letter, stakeholders will be given an opportunity to comment				<a href="#">Participation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.	<input type="checkbox" value="Y"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Yes	No	N/A																			
The <a href="#">premises</a> for delivery are accessible to all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox" value="Y"/>																			
<a href="#">Consultation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.	<input type="checkbox" value="Y"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																			
all claimants will receive a letter, stakeholders will be given an opportunity to comment																						
<a href="#">Participation</a> mechanisms are inclusive of all.	<input type="checkbox" value="Y"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																			

Due to the challenging timeline for consultation, evaluation of responses; cabinet and full council approval before budget setting, consultation will be limited to a 6/8 week period. As this is part of an Essex framework, we will be expected to keep our consultation period in line with other Essex authorities. We are required to consult with major pre-empting authorities prior to public consultation.

### Checking information and communication arrangements

11 You now need to check the accessibility of your information and communication arrangements against the requirements below. Click on the hyperlink for more detailed guidance about the minimum criteria you should meet.

*If assessing a proposed strategy policy, project, contract or decision, indicate 'Yes' if you anticipate compliance by launch of implementation.*

	Yes	No 	N/A
<a href="#">Customer contact</a> mechanisms are accessible to all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electronic, web-based and paper information is accessible to all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publicity campaigns are inclusive of all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Images and text in documentation are representative and inclusive of all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>


If you answered 'No' to any of the questions above please explain why, giving details of any legal justification.


### Future Impact

12 Think about what your strategy, policy, project, contract or decision is aiming to achieve over the long term and the ways in which it will seek to do this. This is your opportunity to take a step back and consider the practical implementation of your strategy, policy, project, contract or decision in the future. As well as checking that people from diverse groups will not be inadvertently excluded from or disadvantaged by any proposed activities, it is also an opportunity to think about how you can maximize your impact, reach as many people as possible and really make a difference to the lives of everyone in Uttlesford regardless of their background or circumstances.

Is it likely to inadvertently exclude or disadvantage any diverse groups?

No


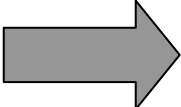


Yes \* 

Insufficient evidence 

#### OVERVIEW

**70,000 residents**  
Demographic make up according to diverse groups.

**As the changes are to low income households, and the reduction in Government funding will be passed to working age only; working age households on low incomes will be impacted most.**

*Please state any potential issues identified.	
<b>Improvement actions</b>	
13	<p>If your assessment has highlighted any potential issues or red flags, can these be easily addressed?</p> <p>In cases of exceptional hardship a small sum will be made available for discretionary awards.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No* </p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not applicable</p> <p><i>*If Yes, please describe your proposed action/s, intended impact, monitoring arrangements implementation date and lead officer:</i></p>
<b>Making a judgement – conclusions and next steps</b>	
14	<p>Following this fast-track assessment, please confirm the following:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> There are no inequalities identified that cannot be easily addressed or legally justified  No further action required. Complete this form and implement any actions you identified in Q13 above</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> There is insufficient evidence to make a robust judgement.  Additional evidence gathering required (go to Q17 on Page 7 below).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Inequalities have been identified which cannot be easily addressed.  Action planning required (go to Q18 on Page 8 below).</p>
15	<p>If you have any additional comments to make, please include here.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> None</p>
<b>Completion</b>	
16	<p>Name and job title (Assessment lead officer)</p> <p>Ann Parry-Jones Project Officer</p>
	<p>Name/s of any assisting officers and people consulted during assessment:</p> <p>Sue Mustill, Sue Ellis, Stephen Joyce</p> <p>Date: Date of next review:</p> <p>July 2012 October 2012</p> <p><i>For <b>new</b> strategies, policies, projects, contracts or decisions this should be one year from implementation.</i></p>