

Uttlesford District Council

Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	<i>Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25</i>
Lead officer:	<i>Angela Knight, Director – Business Performance and People</i>
Approved by:	<i>Adrian Webb, Director of Finance and Corporate Services (S151 Officer)</i>
Date completed:	<i>25 September 2023</i>
Scheduled date for review:	<i>Reviewed annually in line with the annual consultation and scheme proposals</i>

Does the EqHIA contain any confidential or exempt information that would prevent you publishing it on the Council's website?	No
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Please note that EqHIAs are **public** documents and must be made available on the Council's [EqHIA webpage](#).

When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the activity a policy, strategy, procedure, project, new or change in service, initiative or other's file for audit purposes and in case it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

When the EqHIA is completed send a copy to the following email address - EqHIA@Uttlesford.gov.uk

1. Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

Please complete the following checklist to determine whether or not you will need to complete an EqHIA and ensure you keep this section for your audit trail. If you have any questions, please contact your Divisional Equality Lead. Please refer to the Guidance in Appendix 1 on how to complete this form. **When EqHIA is completed send a copy to the following email address EqHIA@Uttlesford.gov.uk**

About your activity

1	Title of activity	Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25		
2	Type of activity	To set the annual criteria for the scheme		
3	Scope of activity	The scheme criteria are reviewed annually, and proposals are subject to consultation with all residents and preceptors in the district.		
4a	Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?	No	If the answer to <u>any</u> of these questions is 'YES', please continue to question 5.	If the answer to <u>all</u> of the questions (4a, 4b & 4c) is 'NO', please go to question 6.
4b	Does this activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people (9 protected characteristics)?	Yes		
4c	Does the activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?	Yes		
5	If you answered YES:	Please complete the EqHIA in Section 2 of this document. Please see Appendix 1 for Guidance.		
6	If you answered NO:	<p><i>Please provide a clear and robust explanation on why your activity does not require an EqHIA. This is essential in case the activity is challenged under the Equality Act 2010.</i></p> <p><i>Please keep this checklist for your audit trail.</i></p>		

Completed by:	Angela Knight, Director – Business Performance and People
Date:	21 October 2022

2. The EqHIA – How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on people?

Background/context:

The Local Council Tax Support Scheme sets the criteria for reduced payments of council tax for households on low incomes. It also includes additional support for pensioners, vulnerable and disabled residents, and their carer's.

Who will be affected by the activity?

The scheme is available to all households in the district subject to meeting the eligibility criteria.

Protected Characteristic - Age: Consider the full range of age groups

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive

Neutral

Negative

Overall impact:

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

The scheme is available to all ages who are liable for payment of council tax.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Disability: Consider the full range of disabilities; including physical mental, sensory and progressive conditions

Please tick (✓) the relevant box:

Positive

Neutral

Overall impact:

Negative		<i>*Expand box as required</i>
Evidence:		
The scheme is available to all vulnerable and disabled residents who are liable for payment of council tax.		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Protected Characteristic - Sex/gender: Consider both men and women		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact:
Positive		
Neutral	✓	
Negative		
		<i>*Expand box as required</i>
Evidence:		
The scheme does not include any criteria relating to sex or gender.		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Protected Characteristic - Ethnicity/race: Consider the impact on different ethnic groups and nationalities		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact:
Positive		
Neutral	✓	
Negative		
		<i>*Expand box as required</i>
Evidence:		
The scheme does not include any criteria relating to Ethnicity or race.		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used:		

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Religion/faith: Consider people from different religions or beliefs including those with no religion or belief

*Please tick (✓)
the relevant box:*

Overall impact:

Positive

Neutral

✓

Negative

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

The scheme does not include any criteria relating to Religion or Faith.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Sexual orientation: Consider people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual

*Please tick (✓)
the relevant box:*

Overall impact:

Positive

Neutral

✓

Negative

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

The scheme does not include any criteria relating to Religion or Faith.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Gender reassignment: Consider people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth

*Please tick (✓)
the relevant box:*

Overall impact:

Positive

Neutral

✓

Negative		<i>*Expand box as required</i>
Evidence:		
The scheme does not include any criteria relating to Religion or Faith.		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Protected Characteristic - Marriage/civil partnership: Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact:
Positive		
Neutral	✓	
Negative		
		<i>*Expand box as required</i>
Evidence:		
The scheme does not include any criteria relating to marriage or civil partnerships.		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		

Protected Characteristic - Pregnancy, maternity and paternity: Consider those who are pregnant and those who are undertaking maternity or paternity leave		
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact:
Positive		
Neutral	✓	
Negative		
		<i>*Expand box as required</i>
Evidence:		
The scheme does not include any criteria relating to pregnancy, maternity or paternity		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		
Sources used:		
<i>*Expand box as required</i>		




Socio-economic status: Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	Overall impact:
Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	
<i>*Expand box as required</i>	
Evidence:	
<p>The scheme is focused on supporting households who are on low incomes.</p> <p>The cost of living crisis is causing more households in the middle income bracket to suffer financial hardship. To help address this the council has set up a new one year Council Tax Support Fund, this runs alongside the current Exceptional Hardship Fund (EHF), both funds are open to all residents who find themselves struggling financially.</p>	
<i>*Expand box as required</i>	
Sources used:	
<i>*Expand box as required</i>	

Health & Wellbeing Impact: Consider both short and long-term impacts of the activity on a person's physical and mental health, particularly for disadvantaged, vulnerable or at-risk groups. Can health and wellbeing be positively promoted through this activity? Please use the Health and Wellbeing Impact Tool in Appendix 2 to help you answer this question.	
<i>Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:</i>	Overall impact:
Positive	✓
Neutral	
Negative	✓
<i>*Expand box as required</i>	
Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment? Please tick (✓) the relevant box	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Evidence:	
<p>The scheme provides financial support to low-income households which is aimed at reducing the financial burden and stress on households who are struggling financially.</p>	
<i>*Expand box as required</i>	
Sources used:	
<i>*Expand box as required</i>	

3. Outcome of the Assessment

The EqHIA assessment is intended to be used as an improvement tool to make sure the activity maximises the positive impacts and eliminates or minimises the negative impacts. The possible outcomes of the assessment are listed below and what the next steps to take are:

Please tick (✓) what the overall outcome of your assessment was:

	1. The EqHIA identified <u>no significant concerns</u> OR the identified <u>negative concerns</u> have already been <u>addressed</u>		Proceed with implementation of your activity
	2. The EqHIA identified some <u>negative impact</u> which still needs <u>to be addressed</u>		COMPLETE SECTION 4: Complete action plan and finalise the EqHIA
	3. The EqHIA identified some <u>major concerns</u> and showed that it is <u>impossible to diminish negative impacts</u> from the activity to an acceptable or even lawful level		Stop and remove the activity or revise the activity thoroughly . Complete an EqHIA on the revised proposal.

4. Action Plan

The real value of completing an EqHIA comes from the identifying the actions that can be taken to eliminate/minimise negative impacts and enhance/optimize positive impacts. In this section you should list the specific actions that set out how you will address any negative equality and health & wellbeing impacts you have identified in this assessment. Please ensure that your action plan is: more than just a list of proposals and good intentions; sets ambitious yet achievable outcomes and timescales; and is clear about resource implications.

Protected characteristic / health & wellbeing impact	Identified Negative or Positive impact	Recommended actions to mitigate Negative impact* or further promote Positive impact	Outcomes and monitoring**	Timescale	Lead officer
Health & Wellbeing Impact	Both positive and negative	<p>The scheme aims to support households on low income, so provides a positive impact although there are some households who do not qualify but may still be struggling financially</p> <p>The council has set up a new one year Council Tax</p>	<p>The outcome is to support low income households in payment of council tax and minimise council tax arrears and residents' debt levels.</p> <p>This is monitored quarterly by the KPI/PI's on collection rates and debt levels. Also, data on the number of claims for additional support.</p>	The indicators are monitored quarterly and the scheme is reviewed annually.	Angela Knight – Director – Business Performance and People

		Support Fund to run alongside the current Exceptional Hardship Fund (EHF) which is open to all households who find themselves struggling financially.			
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Add further rows as necessary

* You should include details of any future consultations and any actions to be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts

** Monitoring: You should state how the impact (positive or negative) will be monitored; what outcome measures will be used; the known (or likely) data source for outcome measurements; how regularly it will be monitored; and who will be monitoring it (if this is different from the lead officer).

5. Review

In this section you should identify how frequently the EqHIA will be reviewed; the date for next review; and who will be reviewing it.

Review:

The review will be conducted annually in line with the review of the scheme proposals and consultation process.

Scheduled date of review:

October 2023

Lead Officer conducting the review:

Angela Knight – Assistant Director – Business and Change Management