



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Partial Assessment Form

Policy, practice, function or project assessed	Billing and Enforcement (Recovery)
Lead Officer	Phil Bird
Team	Revenues
Start date of assessment	25/03/10
Completion of assessment	

Please use this form to record your findings in relation to the assessment of an existing policy, function, service or practice.

A. POLICY, PRACTICE, FUNCTION OR PROJECT TO BE ASSESSED

A1. Please describe what are the main aims, objectives, purpose and intended outcomes of the policy or function?

To collect all revenue owed to the council by the public relating to Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates, Housing Rent and Miscellaneous Income

A2. Is this policy or function associated with any other Council policy or priority?

1. Legislation: Local Government Finance Acts 1988 & 1992
2. Collection & Enforcement regulations 1992
3. Corporate service plan
4. Customer Service Priorities
5. Efficiency Savings
6. Discretionary Part Occupied Relief (S44A) – in conjunction with the Valuation Office
7. Discretionary Charitable Relief
8. Discretionary Hardship Relief

A3. Who are the intended beneficiaries/stakeholders of the policy or function? How many people are affected and from what sections of the community?

All households and businesses. Currently 61,090 households and 4,293 businesses

The revenue collected is a tax that pays for the services that are to benefit all sectors of the community and contributes to some services provided at National level (County Council, Police, Fire, Parishes, central Government)

A4. Is the policy/function corporate and far-reaching?

Yes – see above & Refer to the Corporate Service Plan. The Council sets it's own level of increase, but is somewhat bound by the prospect of Council Tax capping.

A5. Are you expecting to make any significant change to the policy or service in the near future? If so, please give details.

The way we collect is defined and determined by legislation. Changes to the service are thus:

- 1) We aim to increase collection by direct debit.
- 2) We are considering phasing out payment by cheque & cash
- 3) We are considering phasing out Giro Transcash accounts
- 4) We have closed the cash office to the public but we still have a cashier

A6. Is this a new or existing policy or function?

An existing function and procedure but the first time it has become an official policy

B. EVIDENCE/ DATA and CONSULTATION

It is important to consider all information that is available in determining whether the policy or function could have a differential impact. Please attach examples of monitoring information, research or consultation reports.

B1. What monitoring or other information do you have about relevant target groups, which will show the impact of the policy or function?

1. Revenues have identified that due to the itinerant nature Gypsies and Travellers that group may not have access to the Service and uncollected Tax will impact on our Collection Figures.
2. There is no Gypsies & Traveller Liaison Officer within the Revenues department
3. Census data
4. Population projections
5. Benefit case load
6. No equalities data collected from the service users
7. Areas of multiple deprivation

B2. Have you compared the data you have with the equality profile of the local population? What does it show?

No local information. Some Census 2001 Info exists

B3. Have you identified any improvements or other changes that could be made from monitoring the data?

Equality Monitoring data from Business Users will shortly be sought.

B4. Have you consulted or involved external stakeholders about the policy or function? If so, what were their views?

No

B5. Have you undertaken any consultation with staff to assess their perception of any impacts of the policy or function? If so, what has been learnt from them?

Staff have input into the writing of the policy. Their experience of the "day job" enables us to adapt our processes accordingly but remaining within the legislation

B6. Please provide information about any other consultation, research, or involvement undertaken in relation to this impact assessment.

None

C1. IMPACT OF THE POLICY OR FUNCTION

Assess the potential impact on each of the equality strands/groups. The impact could be negative, positive or neutral. If you assess a negative impact for any of the groups then you will need to assess whether that impact is low, medium or high. Refer to the evidence you use.

DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT	Nature of Impact (Positive, Neutral, Adverse)	Extent of Impact (Low, Medium, High)
GENDER: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on men and women		
No evidence available to assess if revenues are collected equally from men or women and if liability orders are filed against more women than men or more men than women. Research. No evidence available assessing level of complaints by gender. Not aware of a South Cambs DC Citizen’s Panel to consult with	Neutral	
RACE: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different race/ethnic groups		
No translation or interpretation service provided by Revenues but is available (no demand). Benefits team use translation and interpretation service on demand, this can be 3 way telephone call or by appointment with appropriate translator. No up to date info on the demographic of the community in relation to Black & Ethnic Minority Residents. No published evidence of the cultural competencies of the Council. Gypsies & Travellers are identified as the group where collection is low. Known to be low on specific sites (Why? Are there more issues on Illegal sites? Is this down to the accessibility of Service(s)?) No data available from complaints received to determine race/ethnicity of complainant held in Revenues – Is this data held elsewhere?. Not aware of a South Cambs DC Citizen’s Panel to consult with. No publications available in ethnic minority languages. No Roma symbol evident on publications to identify the information to gypsies and travellers & Asylum Seekers and Refugees. Is there sufficient demand? Is it a requirement?	Neutral	
DISABILITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on disabled people		
Data on some disabled service users exists as council tax legislation allows for a reduction in band for properties adapted for disabled occupiers and also an exemption for the Severely Mentally Impaired. There is no discretion in awarding reductions. We do not assess data to determine the rate of collection from disabled customers. No data available to determine number of complaints from disabled customers. Not aware of a South Cambs DC Citizen’s Panel to consult with. We supply large print and Braille on request.	Neutral	

AGE: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different age groups		
Do not collect data on age of customers. If we had an age profile of the community we would be able to identify none-collection. 60% of housing rent tenants are aged 65+. This data was only available as a result of forthcoming stock transfer and NOT from specific Revenues research. No analysis available against complaints made. Not aware of a South Cambs DC Citizen's Panel to consult with. Council Tax is not payable if you are under 18, Revenues endeavours to collect data relating to those who are 17 years old. Also Committal proceedings are more stringent for those under 21, Revenues will collect this data during the process and inform the Magistrate	Neutral	
SEXUAL ORIENTATION: potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay men, bisexual or heterosexual people		
No data exists. None collected. No Census Data available. Cannot therefore assess if impact is adverse, Positive or neutral. Not aware of a South Cambs DC Citizen's Panel to consult with.	Neutral	
RELIGION/FAITH: Identify the potential impact the policy on different religious/faith groups		
No data exists. Not collected locally. Census data only. Not aware of a South Cambs DC Citizen's Panel to consult with.	Neutral	
OTHER		
Social Class, Areas of multiple Deprivation, Learning difficulties, Vulnerable Adults and Income Bracket?	Neutral	

PLEASE NOTE: Following completion of the section above, if the nature of the impact is adverse then you may need to proceed to a full equality impact assessment.

C2. Could you minimise or remove any adverse or potential impact that is high, medium or low significance, in advance of a full impact assessment? Explain how.

No

C3. Does the policy or function actively promote equal opportunities and good community relations? Or could changes be made so that it does so?

The policy is for a function that continually has to find a balance between the legislative requirements of the Council and the need of the charge payer, ratepayer and tenant

C4. Please provide any further information, qualitative or quantitative that does not fit into the questions but you feel has a likely impact on this assessment.

Lack of available data in order to provide benchmark.

D. CONCLUSIONS			
D1. Was there sufficient data to complete the partial assessment?	Yes?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If “NO”, what arrangements are in place for evidence gathering and continuing with the assessment?
	No?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D2. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have an adverse impact (medium or high impact) on one or more target group?	Yes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	If “YES”, will you proceed to a full assessment? If so, what arrangements are in place to carry out the full assessment?
	No?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
D3. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have a neutral or positive impact on equalities?	Yes?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>If “YES”, have you included proposals in the Action Plan to further improve the impact of the policy or function on equalities? Equality Monitoring data from Business Users will shortly be sought.</p> <p>Do you plan to review the service or policy again in future to assess whether there has been any change? If so, when? No, unless legislation dictates</p>
	No?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Has the Equalities Steering Group and the Consultative Forum reviewed the assessment? If so what were their comments? No</p>
D4. Do you have any other conclusions/outcomes from the partial assessment?			
<p>The policy may require further input via equalities monitoring. Therefore we will need to work with internal stakeholders to identify required data for effective monitoring against the 6 equality strands. Establishment of a Citizen’s Panel</p>			

ACTION PLAN for enhancing existing practice

Recommendation/ issue to be addressed	Planned Milestone	Planned completion of milestone (date)	Officer Responsible	Progress

RESOURCES

Does the above action plan require any additional resources?

ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING

Please give your plans for monitoring the achievement of the above actions.

SIGN OFF: The officers below confirm that this partial assessment has been completed in accordance with the Council's guidance

Signature of Lead Officer

Date:

Signature of Corporate Manager or Chief Officer:

Date:

Please retain the original form on your service area and return a copy of the completed form to the Equality & Diversity Officer.