

Change Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

1. Proposal details		
Name of the policy/project/process being assessed (subsequently referred to as project)	Cost of Living Support Spend in 2024-2026	
Purpose of project	This Project is to manage the distribution of the Household Support Fund and the criteria to be applied when considering claims for residents for a payment from the Household Support Fund grant for 2024/25 and 2025/26 and the use Authority's Poverty Intervention Fund.	
Who is the project intended to benefit?	<p>Customers</p> <p>To provide a fair and accessible opportunity for customers to apply for support, and for the authority to provide automatic financial support to residents to alleviate poverty where the criteria applies.</p> <p>The Authority</p> <p>By utilising the Household Support fund grant to supplement the Poverty Intervention Fund to deliver identified priorities of support to residents in poverty, will allow the optimisation of the council's finances.</p>	
What outcomes should be achieved?	Those on lowest incomes will be supported with their household finances as outlined in the Delegated Decision report,	
. Version of EqIA	1	
Date this version created	10.12.1024	
Confidential	no	
Directorate	Corporate Strategy and Customer Services	
Service	Customer Service and Digital Strategy	
	Name	Service or organisation
Principal author	Tracy Hunter	

Additional authors		
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2. Groups impacted		
Does the project impact upon?		If yes, what is the estimated number impacted and the level of impact this will have on the group (high, medium, low)?
Service users	yes	Service users will have various support available to them.
Carers or family of service users	yes	As above
Residents	yes	As above
Visitors	yes	As above
Staff	no	Staff may be asked to provide signposting to different support that is best for their circumstances
Partner organisations	no	As above

3. Evidence gathering and engagement		
	Internal evidence	External evidence
What evidence has been used for this assessment?	Data from our own records from: Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit Free School Meal Households. Information from Welfare Provision from our welfare provision team on types of support provided.	Information from government around the Winter Fuel Payments and who is now excluded. JRF- UK Poverty 2023
Have you carried out any engagement in relation to this proposal?	yes	
If yes of what kind and with whom? If no, why not?	Consultation has taken place with the Director of Resources, Deputy Mayor, Interim Director for Corporate Strategy and Customer Service, Cabinet Member for Resources and Cabinet Member responsible for Public Health, Safety and Wellbeing.	

Is there any information you don't have?	no
If yes, why is this information not available?	<p>External Partners have been consulted with regard to the aims of the Poverty Intervention Fund as part of the Cabinet Report in June 2020, and these are still relevant.</p> <p>External consultation has taken place with certain partners such as Age UK and Citizens Advice around certain aspects of the current initiatives proposed.</p>

4. Impact on groups with different characteristics			
Legally protected characteristics	Potential positive impact identified	Potential negative impact identified	Description of the potential impact and evidence used in the assessment (mitigations are not included here)
Age	yes	yes	<p>Nationally 27% of children (especially young children and those in families with 3 or more children), 20% of working age adults and 15% of pensioners live in poverty.</p> <p>The fund is used to support all age groups, with an emphasis on households with children, especially those receiving free school meals, and older people.</p> <p>The fund provides a warm clothing grant for school children and supermarket vouchers for families where children receive free school meals.</p> <p>Use council data to identify target groups, and promote through the schools and the Holiday Activities Fund.</p> <p>There are less claims from older customers for welfare support.</p> <p>Some older people may not be able to make claims on line.</p>

			<p>There is also a positive impact as some older customers meeting the criteria will be provided with automatic financial support through PayPoint Vouchers.</p> <p>Partner organisations are also promoting and assisting customers to make claims for support. Some of these partners work with older people to improve take up among older people.</p>
Disability	yes	yes	<p>Nationally, the poverty rate for disabled people is 29%. The poverty rate for people who live in families where some one is disabled is 28% – 9 percentage points higher than those who live in families where no one is disabled.</p> <p>Opportunities to access the funds are promoted by the council, Care and Connect and VCS partners.</p> <p>Negative – Some disabled people may not be able to make claims on line.</p>
Gender reassignment	no	no	
Marriage & civil partnership	no	no	
Pregnancy & maternity	no	no	
Race	yes	no	<p>Nationally, poverty rates for Bangladeshi (51%), Pakistani (44%) and Black (42%) ethnic groups is higher than for other ethnic groups.</p> <p>We reach out to these groups through our community and voluntary sector partners.</p>
Religion or belief	no	no	
Sex	yes	no	<p>Nationally 38% of working age lone parents live in poverty – pre-dominantly headed by women.</p>

			We target promotion and support through our Early Help Service
Sexual orientation	no	no	
Intersectionality	yes	no	<p>There are many intersectionality's relating to poverty for example: 35% of disabled working age adults live in poverty compared to 18% of those who are do not have a disability.</p> <p>The range of ways the funds are promoted and accessed helps to reach those most impacted by poverty due to intersection of characteristics.</p>
Non-legally protected characteristic			
Carers	yes	no	<p>Nationally, informal carers are more likely to live in poverty than those with caring responsibilities, 29% compared to 20%.</p> <p>We are working with a partner organisation who works with carers, to identify people who need help them to make claims for support. This will reduce underclaiming with carers.</p>
Socio-economic disadvantage	no	no	<p>Nationally 38% of working age lone parents and 20% of working age parents in couples are in poverty.</p> <p>Nationally at 42% the rate of poverty is highest among social renters.</p> <p>Those who need financial or other types of support will be able to make a claim through our online or telephone claiming process, or through a delivery partner.</p>

5. Achievement of the Authority's public sector equality duty

Will the proposal contribute to any of the following?

If yes, how?

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment	N/A	
Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	yes	To make financial support accessible to all residents if the need it, and by making some automatic payments this will reduce the need to make claims.
Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	N/A	

6. Negative impacts		
Potential negative impact	Can it be reduced or removed?	If yes how? If no, why not and what alternative options were considered and not pursued?
Disability, Age, – some older or disabled people may not be able to make claims on line.	yes- reduced	Claims can be submitted by either the customer or a partner organisation, and some payment will be automatically issued without the need for a claim.

7. Action plan				
Actions to gather evidence or information to improve NTC's understanding of the potential impacts on people with protected characteristics and how best to respond to them	Responsible officer name	Responsible officer service area	Target completion date	Action completed
Monitoring of claims (e.g. by age and disability as part of DWP monitoring) for support made and the type of support needed, as well as the	Karen Edwards	ASC	31.03.2025	

take up of automatic payments issued.					
Actions already in place to remove or reduce potential negative impacts	Responsible officer name	Responsible officer service area		Impact	
Promotion with relevant services and partners (e.g. Age Uk and North Tyneside Carers Centre, schools, CVS organisations) to raise awareness of this support.	Tracy Hunter/ Kerry Nesbitt/ Karen Edwards	Finance/ Corporate Strategy/ASC		reduce	
Actions that will be taken to remove or reduce potential negative impacts	Responsible officer name	Responsible officer service area	Impact	Target completion date	Action completed
Signposting customers to best individual support for them.	Mick Nicholson	Customer Service	reduce	31/03/2025	in progress
Raising awareness of the support available through our services and partners networks.	Karen Edwards	ASC	reduce	31/03.2025	In progress
Escalation of instances where a customer is unable to complete a transaction due to lack of access to digital channels e.g. applications can be made via telephone, in person as well as online. Plus some eligible groups receive automated payments.	Mick Nicholson	Customer Service	reduce	31/03/2025	in progress
Actions that will be taken to make the most of any potential positive impact	Responsible officer name	Responsible officer service area		Target completion date	Action completed

There is on-going communication activity including media releases, social media and via the Our North Tyneside magazine.	Harry Wearing	Corporate Strategy	Ongoing	
Actions that will be taken to monitor the equality impact of this proposal once it is implemented	Responsible officer name	Responsible officer service area	Target completion date	Action completed
Track the type of claims being made and the type of customer, to ensure that protected groups are not missing out.	Karen Edwards	Adult Social Care	25/03/25	Choose an item.
Date review of EqIA to be completed	Responsible officer name	Responsible officer service area		
01/04/2025	Mick Nicholson	Customer Services		

8. Outcome of EqIA	
Outcome	Please explain and evidence why you have reached this conclusion:
The proposal is robust, no major change is required	Due to: the range of age groups and household types that benefit from the funds; the variety of application approaches and payment types including automatic payment; plus signposting to poverty prevention opportunities.

9. Corporate Equality Group member approval	
Do you agree or disagree with this assessment?	Agree
If disagree, please explain why?	
Name of Corporate Equality Group member	Anne Foreman
Date	20/12/2024

Section 10 guidance

To be completed by Director/Head of Service.

10. Director/ Head of Service approval	
Do you agree or disagree with this assessment?	Choose an item.
If disagree, please explain why?	
Name of Director/Head of Service	
Date	Click or tap to enter a date.