

Equality Impact Assessment: Financial Assistance Policy for the Better Care Fund

The Equality Act 2010 includes a general duty which requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

Authorities which fail to carry out equality impact assessments risk making poor and unfair decisions which may discriminate against particular groups and worsen inequality.

Committee name & date:	Report Title	Decisions being recommended:	People with protected characteristics potentially impacted by the decisions to be made:
Executive 1 September 2020 Council 20 October 2020	Financial Assistance Policy for the Better Care Fund	Adoption of policy	<p>The Financial Assistance Policy for the Better Care Fund is primarily concerned with the provision of mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants. Therefore, the protected characteristics falling within the disability group are most likely to be impacted.</p> <p>That said, the policy also provides for financial assistance to low-income households, households in fuel poverty, and to those whose dwelling poses a risk to their health and safety. For this reason, there is potential to impact all groups.</p>

Factors to consider in the assessment: For each of the groups below, an assessment has been made on whether the proposed decision will have a **positive, negative or neutral impact**. This is must be noted in the table below alongside brief details of why this conclusion has been reached and notes of any mitigation proposed. Where the impact is negative, a **high, medium or low assessment** is given. The assessment rates the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact –some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers; asylum seekers).	Neutral		There is no evidence that this will impact on any specific person based on this characteristic. Any incidental impact on those within this group is very likely to be positive.
Disability: as defined by the Equality Act – a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse impact on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.	Positive		It is envisaged the Financial Assistance Policy will have a positive impact on this protected characteristic through provision of adaptations and home improvements for disabled persons. There are additional provisions in this policy to address the issue of delayed discharges. This is not only tackled by the Disabled Facilities Grant, but also the Healthy Homes Grant; addressing issues with the dwelling to ensure a property is suitable to return to.
Sex/Gender	Neutral		There is no evidence that this will impact on any specific person based on this characteristic. Any incidental impact on those within this group is very likely to be positive.
Gender reassignment	Neutral		There is no evidence that this will impact on any specific person based on this characteristic. Any incidental impact on those within this group is very likely to be positive.

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
Religion and belief (includes no belief, some philosophical beliefs such as Buddhism and sects within religions).	Neutral		There is no evidence that this will impact on any specific person based on this characteristic. Any incidental impact on those within this group is very likely to be positive.
Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual).	Neutral		There is no evidence that this will impact on any specific person based on this characteristic. Any incidental impact on those within this group is very likely to be positive.
Age (children and young people aged 0-24; adults aged 25-50; younger older people aged 51-75/80; older people 81+; frail older people; people living with age related conditions. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs).	Positive		It is envisaged the Financial Assistance Policy will have a positive impact on this protected characteristic through provision of adaptations and home improvements for elderly residents. The policy also has specific provisions for adaptations for children, in that the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant is not means tested for children assessed as requiring adaptations.
Pregnancy and maternity including new and breast feeding mothers	Positive		The policy aims to provide financial assistance to vulnerable groups and to those who may need adaptations to properly undertake or access care. This includes adaptations for new mothers of children with disabilities.
Marriage and civil partnership status	Neutral		There is no evidence that this will impact on any specific person based on this characteristic. Any incidental impact on those within this group is very likely to be positive.

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
<p><u>Actions identified that will mitigate any negative impacts and/or promote inclusion</u></p> <p>The Council will consider Equalities and protected characteristics at all stages of any financial assistance being offered.</p> <p>Any adverse impact will be judged and mitigated as far as possible in the early stages of an application. This will ensure that the policy is applied in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998.</p> <p>All Authorised Officers processing applications for financial assistance will ensure that all persons dealt with receive fair and equitable treatment irrespective of their background or protected characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010.</p>			

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