

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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| Stage 1: Title and aims of the activity (“activity” is an umbrella term covering policies, procedures, guidance and decisions). | |
| Service | Corporate Services |
| Section | Finance - Revenues |
| Title of the activity etc. | Revenues Budget |
| Aims of the activity | <p>This EIA concerns the Revenues budget within Finance. The budget funds the delivery of the Council’s legal obligation and strategy in relation to the billing and collection of Council Tax, Business Rates and Sundry Debtors. The budget also funds the Income Management team, including system support for both the Council’s cash receipting system and Revenues and Benefits system mainly through a staff resource.</p> <p>The strategy ensures that the council continues to meet its statutory obligations in the collection of local taxes.</p> <p>The Revenues budget will fund the Revenues Team to ensure that all customers are charged correctly for any liability due to the council, all bills are produced on time, financially vulnerable customers are treated with sensitivity, customers will receive a responsive telephone and face-to-face enquiry service and that the Revenues Team is able to continue to adapt to change particularly in regard to debt recovery and changes in taxation legislation.</p> <p>We will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that all our processes are as streamlined as possible in order to deliver fast and accurate bills for all amounts due, offering various payment methods and flexible repayment plans • Working with other services, external partners and stakeholders to ensure a joined up approach to customer service • Working with senior management to promote the strategic direction of the council • Ensuring compliance with legal frameworks and guidance • Engaging with customers on issues that affect them • Through a rigorous performance monitoring and management regime |
| Author(s) & Title(s) | <div style="background-color: #cccccc; width: 150px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div> Revenues Manager |

| Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment. | |
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| Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints). | The Revenues Team Plan includes a range of performance measures which enable managers to monitor both quantitative and qualitative performance. Customer satisfaction levels are monitored on a regular basis, including the level of satisfaction with the delivery of the benefit service through information received from the Feedback team. |
| Internal consultation with staff and other services affected. | Consultation with members of the Revenues team, members of the Benefits Policy Board, Finance Management Team, other council services and consultation with senior management team which identified the requirement for continued investment in Revenues to support the mandatory billing and collection of local taxes and other charges/debts due to the council. |
| External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils). | <p>This budget supports the work of the service as it continues to collect local taxes and all other income due to the council.</p> <p>The Budget Simulator (online tool where members of the public can set the budget) will provide feedback on where they believe the local priorities are.</p> <p>Community engagement events with Area Managers have taken place and these are further opportunities to explore views in regard to the general views of budgets.</p> |
| External data (census, available statistics). | Customer satisfaction levels are monitored on a regular basis, including the level of satisfaction with the delivery of the Revenues service. Data via quarterly and annual returns is provided to the Scottish Government and feedback received. |
| Other (general information as appropriate). | The Revenues Team Plan was developed to take account of work priorities, improvement initiatives and any legislative changes. |

| Stage 3: Evidence Gaps. | |
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| Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold? | No |

| Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps. | | |
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| What measures will be taken to fill the information gaps before the activity is implemented? These should be included in the action plan at the back of this form. | Measures: | Timescale: |
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| Stage 5: Are there potential impacts on protected groups? Please complete for each protected group by inserting "yes" in the applicable box/boxes below. | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|---------|---------|
| | Positive | Negative | Neutral | Unknown |
| Age – Younger | | | Yes | |
| Age – Older | | | Yes | |
| Disability | | | Yes | |
| Race – (includes Gypsy Travellers) | | | Yes | |
| Religion or Belief | | | Yes | |
| Gender – male/female | | | Yes | |
| Pregnancy and maternity | | | Yes | |
| Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual) | | | Yes | |
| Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender) | | | Yes | |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership | | | Yes | |

| Stage 6: What are the positive and negative impacts? | | |
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| Impacts. | Positive (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected) | Negative (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected) |
| Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on those with protected characteristics you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe those affected. | | |
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| Stage 7: Have any of the affected groups been consulted? | |
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| If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps? | |

| Stage 8: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts? | | |
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| These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form. | Mitigating Steps | Timescale |
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| Stage 9: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups? | |
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| These should be included in the action plan. | Engagement events are held in the evenings in order to maximise the widest possible attendance from a cross section of the population. |

Stage 10: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?

The budget will support the Revenues Team in the development of systems, processes and corporate debt policy ensuring that all debts due to the council are dealt with in a consistent, effective and efficient manner and that all customers are treated fairly with consideration being given to individual circumstances providing a holistic approach to service delivery.

Stage 11: What equality monitoring arrangements will be put in place?

These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).

The overall budget will not change, but equality considerations will be considered as part of the development of the Revenues Team Plan

Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?

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| Please complete the appropriate box/boxes | 1 | No negative impacts have been identified –please explain. |
| | The Revenues budget is an over-arching budget which supports how the council and its services bill and collect all sums due to the council. As the remit of the team is constrained by a legislative framework at UK and Scottish Government level, it is more appropriate to consider any negative or positive impacts as and when the revenues team develops projects that form part of a council driven improvement agenda. | |
| | 2 | Negative Impacts have been identified, these can be mitigated - please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen. |
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| | 3 | The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen |

* Stage 13: Set out the justification that the activity can and should go ahead despite the negative impact.

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Stage 14: Sign off and authorisation.

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| Sign off and authorisation. | 1) Service and Team | Corporate Services, Finance, Revenues. | |
| | 2) Title of Policy/Activity | Revenues Budget | |
| | 3) Authors: I/We have completed the equality impact assessment for this policy/activity. | Name: <input type="text"/> | Name: |
| | | Position: Revenues Manager | Position: |
| | | Date: 25/11/13 | Date: |
| | | Signature: | Signature: |
| | | Name: | Name: |
| | | Position: | Position: |
| | Date: | Date: | |
| | Signature: | Signature: | |
| 4) Consultation with Service Manager | Name: Head of Finance, <input type="text"/> | | |
| | Date: | | |
| 5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service | Name: <input type="text"/> | Name: | |
| | Position: Director of Corporate Services | Position: | |
| | Date: | Date: | |
| 6) If the EIA relates to a matter that has to go before a Committee, Committee report author sends the Committee Report and this form, and any supporting assessment documents, to the Officers responsible for monitoring and the Committee Officer of the relevant Committee. e.g. Social Work and Housing Committee. | | Date: | |
| 7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: eia@abdshire | | Date: | |
| (Equalities team to complete) Has the completed form been published on the website? YES/NO | | Date: | |

