

**East Renfrewshire Council
Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit**

SCREENING DATA

Policy name Debt Recovery Policy

Step 1 of 3

Preceding Statement

The word '**policy**' will be used throughout as shorthand for policy, service or proposal.

Question 1.

→ What is the policy? (Name/description of the policy)

Answer: Debt Recovery Policy outlines the Council policy for collection of 5 specific income streams – C/Tax NDR Charges for Services East Renfrewshire Culture & Leisure Trust Housing Benefit Overpayments

Question 2.

→ What is the aim, objectives or purpose of the policy? Why is it needed?

Answer: The aim of the policy is to develop a Council wide approach towards debt collection and to maximise collections and to treat service users consistently, ensuring an individual's rights are protected.

It is needed to ensure a transparent and consistent approach. All customers individual circumstances are taken into account and suitable debt management options are explored.

Question 3.

Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community, and therefore potentially have an effect in terms of equality?

Answer

(delete as appropriate)

→ Yes all of the above

Question 4.

Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?

Answer

(delete as appropriate)

→ Yes – Major policy from a Revenues perspective as it underpins revenues collection.

Question 5.

Will it have a significant effect on how other organisations operate (for example, a national strategy, an inspection framework or criteria for funding)?

Answer

(delete as appropriate)

→ No

Step 2 of 3

Question 6.

Does it relate to functions that previous involvement activities have identified as being important to particular protected groups?

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Answer

(delete as appropriate)

→ No

Question 7.

Does it relate to an area where your department or the Council has set equality outcomes?

Answer

(delete as appropriate)

→ No

Question 8.

Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities? (For example, disabled people's access to public transport; the gender pay gap; racist or homophobic bullying in schools, etc.)

Add an action

Answer

(delete as appropriate)

→ No – however a number of vulnerable client groups may be affected by the policy

Question 9.

Which protected groups are or could be particularly affected by the policy? Please give reasons

Guidance Notes

Could the policy outcomes differ between protected groups identified by: disability, race, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership? This analysis can be extended beyond the basic protected groups to other grounds such as socio-economic status or caring responsibilities where these are relevant given local needs and circumstances.

→ *(Place 'x' where appropriate)*

<input type="checkbox"/>	Age
<input type="checkbox"/>	Disability
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gender
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gender reassignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pregnancy and maternity
<input type="checkbox"/>	Race
<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion or belief
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marriage and civil partnership (with regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination in employment)

Further Details

Please provide reasons in space below:

→ The policy aims to ensure that all of the above protected groups receive a consistent level of service and are treated the same.

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Question 10.

Which parts of the public sector duty is the policy relevant to?

Add an action

Guidance Notes

The aims of the public sector duty are to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and another conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- Foster good relations between people from different groups

→ **Answer: Not applicable**

Step 3 of 3

Question 11.

Does it relate to a policy where there is significant potential for reducing inequalities or improving outcomes? (For example, improving access to health services for transsexual people, or increasing take-up of apprenticeships by female students.)

Answer

(delete as appropriate)

→ No

Question 12.

What data do you have to facilitate the screening of this policy?

Add an action

Guidance Notes

- You may find the following types of information useful:
 - Comparisons with similar policies in other departments or authorities to help you identify relevant equality issues
 - Analysis of enquiries or complaints from the public to help you understand the needs or experiences of different groups
 - Recommendations from inspections or audits to help you identify any concerns about equality matters from regulators
 - Information about the local community, including census findings to help you establish the numbers of protected groups in your area
 - Recent research from a range of national, regional and local sources to help you identify relevant equality issues
 - Results of engagement activities or surveys to help you understand the needs or experiences of different groups
 - Information from protected groups and other agencies, such as equality organisations and voluntary or community organisations providing services to the public to help you understand the needs or experiences of different groups

Answer: There has been engagement with elderly and vulnerable groups as part of a drive to ensure benefits are claimed and income is maximised in order to avoid debt recovery processes.

→

Question 13.

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What consultation information do you have regarding this policy? Who has been consulted and what were the outcomes?

→ **Answer:** Internal consultation particularly with Legal services, Accountancy & HSCP. Policy wording was agreed and approved by Cabinet.

Question 14.

Are there any information gaps (data and/or consultation)?

Answer

(delete as appropriate)

→ Yes – we don't specific data that demonstrates groups affected by the policy.

Further Details

If yes, please give details:

→

SCOPING THE ASSESSMENT

Policy name **Debt Recovery Policy**

Step 1 of 3

Question 1.

What are the aims of the policy?

Answer: The aim of the policy is to develop a Council wide approach towards debt collection and to maximise collections and to treat service users consistently, ensuring an individual's rights are protected.

→

Question 2.

Which aspects of the policy are particularly relevant to the duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.

→ **Answer All aspects of the policy**

Question 3.

Please tick the boxes which apply

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→ **Answer** (*Place 'x' where appropriate*)

<input type="checkbox"/>	There is evidence to indicate that the policy may result in less favourable treatment for particular groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	There is evidence to indicate that the policy may give rise to indirect discrimination
<input type="checkbox"/>	There is evidence to indicate that the policy may give rise to unlawful harassment or victimisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	There is evidence to indicate that the policy may lead to discrimination arising from disability
<input type="checkbox"/>	There is evidence to indicate that the policy may build in reasonable adjustments where these may be needed

→ **Further Details**
If there is evidence, please give details here

N/a

Question 4.

Which aspects of the policy are particularly relevant to the duty to have due regard to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

→ **Answer:** N/a

Question 5.

Please tick the boxes which apply
Add an action

→ **Answer** (*Place 'x' where appropriate*)

<input type="checkbox"/>	There is evidence to indicate the policy will remove or minimise disadvantage
<input type="checkbox"/>	There is evidence the policy will meet the needs of different groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	There is evidence the policy will encourage increased participation of particular groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	There is evidence the policy will take account of disabled people's needs

Further Details **No evidence to demonstrate however, we think our customers are treated fairly and we minimise disadvantage and we take account of disabled people's needs.**

→ Please give further details:

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Question 6.

Which aspects of the policy are particularly relevant to the duty to have due regard to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

→ **Answer: None**

Question 7.

(Place 'x' where appropriate)

→ **Answer**

There is evidence the policy will help you to tackle prejudice

There is evidence the policy will promote understanding between different groups

Further Details NA

→ **Please give further details:**

Question 8.

What evidence is already available about the needs of relevant groups, and where are the gaps in evidence?

→ **Answer: NA**

Question 9.

What data will be required in the future to ensure effective monitoring of the implementation of this policy?

→ **Answer: PI's demonstrate the effective monitoring of this policy. Reduction in write off would also demonstrate effective monitoring.**

OUTCOME OF THE ASSESSMENT

Question 10.

Having considered the potential or actual impacts of the policy, what should be done?

Question

Option 1 : No major change

Add an action Policy has recently been reviewed and approved by cabinet

Answer

(delete as appropriate)

→ Yes

Question 11.

Option 2 : Adjust the policy

Answer No adjustment required to the policy.

(delete as appropriate)

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→ No

Further Details

If you answered "yes" to option 2, please outline your plans to: - remove or change the aspect(s) of the policy that create(s) any negative or unwanted impact identified; - remove barriers, to better advance equality or to foster good relations and; - to introduce additional measures to reduce or mitigate any potential negative impact.

Answer

→

Question 12.

Option 3 : continue the policy despite the potential for adverse impact

Add an action

Answer N/A

(delete as appropriate)

→ Yes / No

Further Details

If you answered "yes" to option 3, please give the reasons why and how you believe that decision is compatible with your obligations under the duty.

Answer

Question 13.

Option 4 : Stop and remove the policy

Add an action

Answer

(delete as appropriate)

→ No

Further Details

If you answered "yes" to option 4 please give your reasons

→

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Policy name Debt Recovery Policy

Step 1 of 3

Question 1. Aim of the policy?

Answer The aim of the policy is to develop a Council wide approach towards debt collection and to maximise collections and to treat service users consistently, ensuring an individual's rights are protected.



Question 2. Priority?

(Place 'x' where appropriate)



Answer

x	High
	Medium
	Low

Question 3. Tick areas of equality relevance



Answer

(Place 'x' where appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Age
<input type="checkbox"/>	Disability
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gender
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gender reassignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pregnancy and maternity
<input type="checkbox"/>	Race
<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion or belief
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marriage and civil partnership (with regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination in employment)

Question 4. Risk of adverse impact



Answer N/A

Question 5. Data used (including assessment of reliability and validity)

Add an action



Answer N/A

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Question 6. Assessment of adverse impact

→ **Answer** N/A

Question 7. Consultation carried out (methods, target groups consulted, etc)

→ **Answer** Yes - Internal consultation and approval

Question 8. Proposed method to reduce or eliminate Adverse Impact (including reasons chosen)

→ **Answer** N/A

Question 9. Conclusions and recommendations for amendments to the policy. Please state who/which group or committee considered the options and took the decision on what action would be taken. If a number of options were considered, summarise these and the reason for selecting one option over any others. If no further action is required as a result of the EQIA, please explain.

→ **Answer** N/A

Question 10. Timescale for implementation

→ **Answer** N/A

Question 11. Methods of publication

→ **Answer** Website, Revenues team internal communications

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→ **Question 12. Monitoring arrangements**

Answer Will be reviewed if there are any substantial legislative changes.

→ Comments

→ Next Review Date – N/A

→ Chief Officer's Signature: Steven Skelly Revenues & Business Support
Manager