

Disability Equality Impact Assessment Questionnaire

Policy/Service/Change being assessed: 2012/2013 Budget Proposal : Proposed 3.5% Increase in Council Tax for all Residents of Darlington for 2012/2013.	Department: Resources / People
Person Responsible for Assessment: Elizabeth Davison – Assistant Director - Finance Person responsible for strategy where different from above: Anthony Sandys – Head of Revenue and Benefits Pauline Mitchell – Assistant Director – Adult Social Care and Housing	Date of assessment: January 2012

Brief description of service and to whom provided/available: It is proposed a 3.5% increase in Council Tax to take place in 2012/2013. This will be applied to all residents within the Darlington Borough. It is not proposed to change any eligibility criteria for discounts or exceptions that apply to specific groups.
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Introduction

This template should be used with the Disability Equality Scheme 2006-2009. Completing this template without following the rest of the disability equality impact assessment process outlined in the Scheme does not comprise a disability equality impact assessment.

If, after reading the guidance, you require further information on how to implement the assessment, please contact Peter Roberts, Social Enterprise Development Manager on 01325 388713

Q.1 Is your service/policy/change accessible to all disabled people? Bear in mind any economic, social, environmental, physical, intellectual, cultural, linguistic, technological or other barriers.

Issue	Yes	No	If yes, what evidence do you have to demonstrate this?	If no, what do you plan to do to remove barriers to access?
Physical or mobility impairment	√		Residents with a disability may be eligible to a discount in Council tax depending on individual circumstances. Details relating to Council Tax including discounts and exemptions are available on the Council's internet pages; Council tax employees are also able to offer advice and guidance via e-mail, telephone or in person. Other organisations also offer advice on Council tax including Citizens Advice, DAD. Literature is available in various languages and typed formats (Large, Braille) There is no proposal to change the eligibility criteria relating to discounts and exemptions as part of this proposal and there is therefore no disproportionate impact on disabled people.	
Sensory impairment	√			
Learning disability or mental impairment	√			
Other disabilities and health conditions covered by the Equality Act 2010 (eg. diabetes, HIV, multiple sclerosis, depression and cancer)	√			
Any other disability issue (e.g. frail/vulnerable people, people with mild impairments who do not perceive themselves as disabled, people with multiple impairment)	√			

Q.2 (a) For whatever reason, does your service treat any group of disabled people differently from its other service users?

Yes

✓

No

If you have answered 'yes', please specify those individuals or groups affected and whether the impact has the potential to be adverse.

Impact is a positive impact (discount will continue to be applied to eligible disabled people). The increase in Council Tax proposal will not have a disproportionate impact on disabled residents.

b) What needs to be done to prevent any potentially adverse impact?

Nothing, not applicable. The Council will continue to promote and communicate discounts and eligibility criteria to eligible residents including those with a disability via the internet, face to face contact, e-mail, information leaflets etc.

Q.3 (a) Do you promote disability equality within your service? (e.g. through departmental equalities group, innovative marketing or community engagement techniques)

Yes

√

No

If you have answered 'yes', please give examples of how equality is promoted.

In addition to the Council commitment to promote equality of opportunity in all services and policies, the following is specific to the promotion of Council Tax;

- Residents will receive a leaflet explaining Council Tax Services including exceptions and discounts each year when new Council tax bandings and charges are sent to all residents
- New residents will receive details when moving into a house within the Darlington Borough
- Leaflets are available in both large print and Braille
- Leaflets can also be produced in foreign languages on request
- Changes to Council tax will be communicated in the Town Crier
- Welfare Rights Service, Citizens Advice and other Advice organisations are aware of Council Tax benefits and associated discounts available
- The Council's Financial Assessments Team will also be able to offer advice when considering any Adult Social Care eligibility criteria

(b) Do you promote positive attitudes towards disabled people? (e.g. through customer care training, cultural issues awareness training, the use of images of disabled people in your publicity material)

Yes

√

No

If you have answered 'yes', please give examples.

The Council as a whole promotes a positive attitude to disabled people in both the recruitment, employment and providing services to disabled members of the community.

Employees are made aware of disability issues including access to services, buildings and information. The Council is committed to ensuring that information available to the public is in an easy read format and accessible in various methods and in multiple locations

Q.4 Are there any plans in place within your Service to promote disability equality more effectively?

Yes
No

√

If yes, please outline what you intend to do (including details, if known, of timescales and areas to be covered, etc.)