

## Equality Impact Assessment Form

<b>Name of Strategy/Policy:</b>	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Take Up Strategy
<b>Officer Name(s):</b>	Anita Hall
<b>Job Title &amp; Location:</b>	Service Assurance Team Manager Town Centre Offices, Rawtenstall
<b>Department/Service Area:</b>	Customer Services & E Government
<b>Telephone &amp; E-mail Contact:</b>	01706 252 587 <a href="mailto:anitahall@rossendalebc.gov.uk">anitahall@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Date Assessment:</b>	

### 1. Impact Assessment – Policy and Target Outcomes

- a) Summarise the main aims/objectives of the strategy, policy, procedure or project (refer to “**Notes for Guidance**” for details).

**To actively promote the take up of Benefits within Rossendale, eliminate barriers to claiming, where possible, and ensure that all residents who are entitled to claim benefits are able to do so.**

- b) Is the policy under review (please tick)

New/proposed

Modified/adapted

Existing

- c) Who will be the main beneficiaries, targets or users of this strategy, policy, project or procedure?

- Customers/citizens of the district
- Targeted/specific groups of customers/citizens (indicate below in [d]).
- Elected Members/Councillors
- Internal colleagues/customers or other public authorities e.g. government agencies
- Community Groups/voluntary sector groups or campaign/interest groups

- Staff/employees (in their contractual position) and/or potential employees/trainees.
- Any other stakeholder e.g. trade unions, contractors, suppliers, district partners, public agencies (not directly under Council control), intermediaries representing interest groups e.g. tenants, developers, legal agencies or third parties.

Specify in box below:

Beneficiaries: Residents of Rossendale,  
Users of the strategy: Staff/employees

- d) Please detail below specific equality groups – for example disabled citizens, elderly or infirm/female or non-traditional users who are seen as intended beneficiaries from this policy/strategy/project/procedure (see “**Notes for Guidance**”).

Key equality groups as intended beneficiaries (where appropriate):

All residents of Rossendale. Not only will it reduce poverty for the customer who claims Benefit but all residents within Rossendale will benefit as customers will have more money to spend in Rossendale and so improve the economy.

It is the Authority’s intention to use targeted Benefit take up campaigns and monitor the effectiveness of said campaign. With the introduction of customer profiling it is anticipated that, in the future, we will be able to target these campaigns to customers from under represented areas of our community.

- e) To assist with the assessment you may need to consider collecting the following information you require, before completing the table in Section 2:

- NATIONAL DATA e.g. surveys, reports, statistics, etc which point up specific areas/issues.
- LOCAL DATA e.g. demographics, service mapping studies & relevant research.
- MANAGEMENT INFO e.g. data collected for operational/financial or other purposes.
- MONITORING DATA e.g. information already available or collected. For example: disability type, age band, gender, location. (ref existing BVPIs).
- CONSULTATION/CONTACT DATA e.g. user group feedback, representations, specific consultation events etc.
- CUSTOMER COMPLAINT/FEEDBACK e.g. results of investigations, inquiries, elected member cases, normal complaints/compliments etc.
- Views of LSP Officers, independent externals, contractors/suppliers, partners and academia (if relevant).

- OTHER eg frontline employee feedback, other research, experiences of other agencies/local authorities, councillors mailbags/surgeries.

f) Is further consultation, data collection or research still required?

Yes

No **X**

(If yes then complete Action Plan)

Key Actions (note responsible officer(s)):

## 2. Impact – Evidence

a) Using the table below please tick whether you have evidence that the policy/strategy has a negative, positive or neutral impact on any of the equality groups listed below

		<b>Positive Impact</b> – it could benefit	<b>Negative Impact</b> – it could disadvantage	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Neutral Impact (Neither)</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Women	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving economy of the borough.	
	Men	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving economy of the borough.	
<b>Race (Ethnicity or Nationality)</b>	Asian or Asian British people	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income,	

		<b>Positive Impact</b> – it could benefit	<b>Negative Impact</b> – it could disadvantage	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Neutral Impact (Neither)</b>
				reducing poverty and improving economy of the borough.	
	Black or black British people	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving economy of the borough.	
	Chinese or other ethnic people	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving economy of the borough.	
	Irish people	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty	

		<b>Positive Impact</b> – it could benefit	<b>Negative Impact</b> – it could disadvantage	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Neutral Impact (Neither)</b>
				and improving economy of the borough.	
	White people	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving economy of the borough.	
	Chinese people	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving economy of the borough.	
	Other minority communities not listed above e.g. traveller/European (please state below):	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving	

		<b>Positive Impact</b> – it could benefit	<b>Negative Impact</b> – it could disadvantage	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Neutral Impact (Neither)</b>
				economy of the borough.	
<b>Disability</b>	Physical/learning/mental health	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving economy of the borough.	
<b>Sexuality</b>	Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving economy of the borough.	
<b>Gender Identity</b>	Transgender people	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving economy of the	

		<b>Positive Impact</b> – it could benefit	<b>Negative Impact</b> – it could disadvantage	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Neutral Impact (Neither)</b>
				borough.	
<b>Age</b>	Older people (60+)	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving economy of the borough.	
	Younger people (17-25), and children	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving economy of the borough.	
<b>Belief</b>	Faith groups *	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving economy of the borough.	



		<b>Positive Impact</b> – it could benefit	<b>Negative Impact</b> – it could disadvantage	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Neutral Impact (Neither)</b>
<b>Other Groups (e.g. carers, rural isolation)</b>		√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving economy of the borough.	
<b>Equal opportunities and/or improving relations</b>	Note impact on group relations <u>between</u> and any effects on social cohesion.	√		Eliminate barriers to claiming Benefits, if claim successful more disposable income, reducing poverty and improving economy of the borough.	

**Notes:**

\* Faith groups cover a wide range of groupings, the most common of which are Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Sikhs, Hindus. Consider faith categories individually and collectively when considering positive and negative impacts.

- b) If the table above is not fully completed, what further information does the Assessor need?

None

- c) Based on a summary of the evidence obtained, are there specific equality groups more affected than others by this policy/project etc area? If so indicate briefly below.

### 3. Impact – Nature/Type

a) Could you further improve the strategy, project, policy or procedure's positive impact?

YES

NO

If "Yes", briefly summarise below how the positive impact could be improved upon.

Key Actions:

b) If you indicated that there is neutral impact, could this be changed to become positive?

YES

NO

If yes, briefly summarise below how this impact could be minimised or removed:

Key Actions:

c) You need to think about how you can mitigate any adverse or negative impact or use the policy to promote a positive impact. If the proposed policy or project has a:

**High Impact** – you have identified that the policy or project will have a high, negative impact i.e. that it may be or is unlawfully discriminating against some groups, you will have to take immediate action to mitigate this.

Or:

**Lower Impact** – if you have identified that the policy would have a negative or adverse impact (that may not be lawful) you will also need to consider what changes you could make to remove this impact.

If you have identified adverse impact you must determine whether you will recommend that the Council should:

- Change the policy, stating what the changes should be
- Revise the policy, stating the revisions
- Consult further if you feel that you do not have enough information

Actions arising from the impact assessment should form part of the Service Planning Process.

Key Actions:

#### 4. Impact Assessment - Summary

##### a) Key Findings

Please list the major outcomes/results/findings of this assessment in relation to equality which require action by the Council:

After liaison with other Local Authorities, it has become clear that many Authorities face the same barriers to customers claiming benefits and many have developed strategies which aim to break down these barriers and so make claiming benefit easier for all customers.

A take up group exists, locally, which meet quarterly and consists of members from RBC, welfare rights, CAB, LCC and various other welfare and support groups. The Strategy was taken to this group for consultation and any comments noted. There is felt to be no further action required by the Council at this time, other than to monitor/analyse the effectiveness of take up campaigns.

b) "Public Duty" Issues

Refer to "**Notes for Guidance**". Given the three strands of legal duty, please identify which particular issues are essential for the Council to address:

**5. Impact Assessment – Further Action**

a) As a result of collecting evidence (including consultation) have any changes been made, or are planned, to this policy, strategy, procedure or project?

Yes

No

(If yes then complete Action Plan)

Key Actions (note responsible officer(s) or political body as required):

b) Has a monitoring/evaluation/review process been set up to check the successful implementation of the policy/strategy including improved outcomes?

Yes

No

If yes, briefly summarise below:

Improve Management and Review system.

The Service Assurance Team will ensure that the Strategy is cascaded to Capita and that they produce a yearly benefit take up action plan of which progress/effectiveness can be monitored against.

- c) Please briefly describe how the above monitoring/evaluation will ensure the policy/strategy will be reviewed/monitored for impact (indicate timescale):

Capita will produce a yearly benefit take up action plan of which will include timescales. Progress/effectiveness of various campaigns will be monitored by way of the monthly liaison meetings between the Council's Service Assurance Team and Capita.

**Please complete the Action Plan overleaf**

- d) If no further action is to be taken as a result of this assessment:

1. Are you convinced that no discriminatory action is evident in the implementation of this policy, procedure, etc?

Yes **X**

2. Have you weighed up and considered any negative impact and the options to change, alter or adapt?

Yes **X**

No

3. Do you intend/recommend a further review? If yes, indicate timescale.

Yes

No

**IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN**

Please list below any recommendations for action that you plan to take as a result of this impact assessment (refer to Sections 3 & 4).

Issue	Action required	Lead officer	Timescale	Resource implications	Comments

## Equality Impact Assessment

### Checklist & Signature Sheet

<b>Name of Strategy/Policy:</b>	
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Please check the following steps have been completed before signing below:

- Sections 1 to 4 completed
- Action Plan completed
- Notified all relevant Officers/Service Areas/Partners

Signed: ...Anita Hall.....

Job Title: ...Service Assurance Manager.....

Date commenced Assessment: ...December 2007.....

Date received in HR:.....

Received in HR by:.....

**Please sign the EQIA as indicated above, retain a copy and send a copy of the full EQIA, including the Action Plan, to:**

**Liz Murphy**  
**Head of Human Resources**  
**Kingfisher Business Centre, Futures Park**  
**Bacup**  
**OL13 OBB**  
[lizmurphy@rossendalebc.gov.uk](mailto:lizmurphy@rossendalebc.gov.uk)

#### MANAGEMENT ACTION REQUIRED (to be completed by the Head of HR)

- Referred back to Assessor for amendment  
.....(date)
- Refer to Committee ..... (specify committee & date)
- Considered by Corporate Equalities Implementation Group.....  
(date)
- Published/made publicly available on ..... (date)

Signed:..... (Head of HR) Date:.....

Date of Review:.....