

# Equality Impact Assessment

Please click on headings to find [general guidance](#) or section guidance with an example.

You will find supporting information in appendices at the end of the guidance.

When you start to assess your proposal, arrange to meet Tim Greaves, Equality Co-ordinator, for specific guidance. Send the completed form to him for a final check and so that he can publish it on our Vale of Glamorgan equality web pages.

Please also contact Tim Greaves if you need this equality impact assessment form in a different format.

## 1. [What are you assessing?](#)

Council Tax - Discretionary Relief for Care Leavers
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## 2. [Who is responsible?](#)

<b>Name</b>	Carys Lord	<b>Job Title</b>	Head of Finance
<b>Team</b>	Finance	<b>Directorate</b>	Managing Director and Resources

## 3. [When is the assessment being carried out?](#)

<b>Date of start of assessment</b>	February 2018
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## 4. [Describe the proposal?](#)

### What is the purpose of the proposal?

To grant Discretionary Council Tax Reduction in accordance with the provisions contained in section 13A Local Government Finance Act 1992 in respect of a class of individuals defined as Care Leavers.

### Why do you need to put it in place?

Corporate parenting is a statutory function of the Council. The underlying principle is that

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every local authority will seek the same outcomes for children and young people in care that every good parent would want for their own children. As corporate parents, the Council has the responsibility to keep them safe, make sure their experiences in care are positive and improve their on-going life chances. Research has evidenced that it is a challenging time for care leavers when they move into independent accommodation and begin to manage their own budget fully for the first time, particularly if they are falling behind on their council tax.

### **Do we need to commit significant resources to it (such as money or staff time)?**

The administration of the discretion will be met within the existing resources within Council Tax.

The cost of awarding Section 13A Discretionary Council Tax Reductions has to be funded from within the total income generated by Council Tax. As a consequence of this the Council will only consider using its powers to reduce council tax liability for any council tax payer or class of payer in exceptional circumstances. It is anticipated that the overall total cost of this award for care leavers will not exceed £10,000.

### **What are the intended outcomes of the proposal?**

The intention is to provide financial support to a small cohort of individuals for whom the Council has a responsibility in its role as a corporate parent.

### **Who does the proposal affect?**

The proposal will impact on care leavers between the age of 18 and 25 who live in the Vale of Glamorgan.

### **Will the proposal affect how other organisations work?**

Organisations who currently work with the Council to support this cohort of individuals will need to know that the discretion is available and will need to advise the young person as to how they can go about applying for the discretion

### **Will the proposal affect how you deliver services?**

At the current time the policy would have an effect on the Council Tax liability of less than 20 individuals who would meet the criteria for this discretion.

### **Will the proposal impact on other policies or practices?**

No

### **Can you change the proposal so that it further promotes equality of opportunity**

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## **and fosters good relations?**

This policy is targeted at a certain group of individuals. A wider policy in relation to Discretions with regard to Council tax payments is planned

## **How will you achieve the proposed changes?**

The changes are minimal due to the small of cohort of individuals who will benefit from this proposal. The changes will be implemented through the Council tax team and through joint working with colleagues in the Leaving Care service in the Social Services Directorate

## **Who will deliver the proposal?**

The Council Tax and Leaving Care Services

## **How will you know whether you have achieved the proposal's purpose?**

The number of applications for discretion will be monitored against the numbers of individuals eligible to apply under the criteria agreed

## **5. What evidence are you using?**

### **Engagement (with internal and external stakeholders)**

At this stage no external engagement has taken place due to the small cohort of individuals who are impacted upon as a result of this change. However it is planned to develop a wider policy in relation to Discretions with regard to Council tax payments and wider engagement will be undertaken in relation to this broader policy.

### **Consultation (with internal and external stakeholders)**

Consultation has taken place with social services in pulling together the proposed policy

### **National data and research**

A 2015 report by The Children's Society (The Wolf at the Door. How council tax debt collection is harming children) suggests that care leavers are a particularly vulnerable group for council tax debt. It found that when care leavers move into independent accommodation and they begin to manage their own budget fully for the first time, that

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this is a challenging time for care leavers, particularly if they are falling behind on their council tax. The Children's Society report made a number of recommendations, including making care leavers eligible for council tax discount. This would help to relieve some of the initial pressure and would sit alongside a number of other financial support arrangements available to care leavers

## Local data and research

### 6. [How robust is the evidence?](#)

#### Does it show what the impact will be (positive and negative)?

The available data indicates that the proposals to allow council tax discretions for this small group will have a positive impact on their ability to maintain their independence

#### What are the gaps?

This report addresses a gap in support for care leavers

#### What will you do about this?

#### What monitoring data will you collect?

Information regarding the number of individuals who have been granted this discretion will be collected by the Council Tax section

#### How often will you analyse and report on this?

The number of discretions awarded will be report on a quarterly basis

#### Where will you publish monitoring data and reports?

This will be published via the service planning process

### 7. [Impact](#)

#### Is there an impact?

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There will be an impact on a very small number of council tax payers

**If there is no impact, what is the justification for thinking this? Provide evidence.**

**If there is likely to be an impact, what is it?**

**Age**

The impact is on a small number of council tax payers, less than 20, who are care leavers between 18 and 25 years of age

**How do you know?**

**Explain this for each of the relevant protected characteristics as identified above.**

The impact will be positive as it will reduce some of the financial challenges that this small cohort of residents encounter

**What can be done to promote a positive impact?**

**Explain this for each of the relevant protected characteristics as identified above.**

The availability of this discretion will be highlighted amongst this small group of residents

**What can be done to lessen the risk of a negative impact?**

**Explain this for each of the relevant protected characteristics as identified above.**

There is no negative impact resulting from this proposal

**Is there a need for more favourable treatment to achieve equal outcomes? (Disability only)**

**Will the impact be positive, negative or neutral?**

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Explain this for each of the relevant protected characteristics as identified above.

## 8. Monitoring ongoing impact

### Date you will monitor progress

At the end of September 2018

### Measures that you will monitor

- Number of discretions that have been applied for
- Number of discretions that have been awarded

### Date you will review implemented proposal and its impact

March 2019

## 9. Further action as a result of this equality impact assessment

<b>Possible Outcomes</b>	
<b>No major change</b>	
<b>Adjust the policy</b>	Adjust the current policy with regard to applying discretions in relation to Council Tax
<b>Continue the policy</b>	
<b>Stop and remove the policy</b>	

## 10. Outcomes and Actions

Recommend actions to senior management team

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Outcome following formal consideration of proposal by senior management team

## 11. [Important Note](#)

Where you have identified impacts, you must detail this in your Cabinet report when seeking approval for your proposal.

## 12. [Publication](#)

Where will you publish your approved proposal and equality impact assessment?

Vale of Glamorgan Website

In addition to anywhere you intend to publish your approved proposal and equality impact assessment, you must send a copy to Tim Greaves, Equality Co-ordinator, to publish on the equality pages of the Vale of Glamorgan website.

## 13. [Authorisation](#)

Approved by (name)	
Job Title (senior manager)	
Date of approval	
Date of review	