

HDC Initial Equality Impact Assessment Form (EIA1)

Service Area/Section	Revenues and Benefits Service	Persons undertaking the assessment (please also state name of contact officer)		Leigh Butler	
Name of policy or function to be assessed	Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) Policy	Date of assessment	17th January 2011	New or existing policy	New Policy
1. Briefly describe the aims, objective or purpose of the policy, or service function.	To assist our customers who need extra help with housing costs in addition to what they are already receiving in housing and/or council tax benefit.				
2. Are there any associated objectives of the policy/function?	<p>Through the operation of the DHP, the benefits service aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alleviate poverty ▪ Safeguard residents in their homes and keep families together ▪ Encourage and sustain residents in employment 				
3. Who is intended to benefit from this policy and in what way?	Any potential HB/CTB customers whose financial situation causes hardship. The award is intended as a short-term measure to ease difficult circumstances.				
4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy/function and for whom?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To help customers through personal crises and difficult events. ▪ To assist benefit staff to administer the scheme fairly 				
5. How do these outcomes meet or hinder other policies, values, or objectives of HDC?					
6. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the intended outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The funding for DHP comes directly from Central Government and is limited per year, so if the allocated amount is spent, no more awards can be made. (This circumstance has not yet occurred with Harborough DC). ▪ Lack of knowledge/awareness of the scheme to HB/CTB customers 				

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No DHP award will cross over into a new financial year. Customers are expected to reapply. 	
7. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to this policy?	HB/CTB customers DWP CAB and Welfare Right Groups		8. Who implements the policy/function and is responsible for the policy? Leigh Butler, Revenues and Benefits Manager
9. Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact on racial groups?		Y	The application form is only available in English; this has a potential to impact on certain non-English speaking groups. Leaflets are available different languages through the Council's website.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? 			Leaflets are available different languages through the Council's website and can be printed off for customers as and when required.
10. Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to gender?		N	The application form does not question an individual's gender.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? 			The application form
11. Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to disability?		Y	Medical circumstances are taken into account when awarding DHP. Refusal for DHP could be that the housing costs are too high, so they are advised to find an alternative home.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? 			Discussion with customer in conjunction with Benefits Visiting Officer whilst at their home.
12. Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?		N	The benefits visiting officer is not aware of the individuals sexual orientation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? 			The application form
13. Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to age?		N	The benefits visiting officer is not aware of the individuals age.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	The application form		

14. Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to religious belief?		N	The benefits visiting officer is not aware of the individuals religious belief.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? 	The application form		
15. Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to people having dependants/caring responsibilities?		Y	The policy may have a differential impact as the assessment takes into account dependants/caring responsibilities. The benefits visiting officer could decide that it is unreasonable to expect the customer to re-locate with their children and have to change schools. Cases are looked at individually, taking into account the needs of the customer and their family.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? 	The application form		
16. Could any differential impact identified in 9-15 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy?		N	The overall aim of the policy is to alleviate poverty.
17. Can any adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one or more groups or any other reason?		N	The function satisfies all current legislative requirements.
18. Should the policy proceed to a full impact assessment?		N	
19. If no, are there any recommended changes required to the policy to improve it around the equality agenda?	This is a new policy		
Additional notes/guidance (Policy Officer)			

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Signed (completing officer) Date 17/01/2011

Signed (completing officer) Date __/__/__

Signed (Head of Service) Date __/__/__