



SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Equality Impact (Initial Analysis)

Council Tax Support Scheme 2022/23

Service Area: Revenues and Benefits	Lead officer: Claire Moses	Date of Meeting 11/11/21
	Assessors: Bridget Chesterfield	
	Neutral Assessor: Carol Drury	

1. Name and description of policy/service/function/strategy

In January 2021, the meeting of Council approved South Kesteven District Councils Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme for 2021/22.

The Council must review and reapprove its CTS scheme each year as part of its budget setting process and make any necessary changes from 1 April

There are currently 8,104 residents claiming Council Tax Support in the South Kesteven District. Of these, 3,259 are pensioners and 2,672 are vulnerable (working age, who are protected under the legislation and receive Council Tax support as prescribed by the Government (broadly similar to the level of Council Tax Benefit). It is the 2,173 remaining working age claimants where a local scheme can be determined which can change the level of support provided. The level of support currently provided is capped at 80% entitlement for all applicants of working age. This means anyone of working age eligible for help paying their Council Tax will be entitled to claim for help with **up to but no more than** 80% of their bill. Pensioners and vulnerable persons eligible for help paying their Council Tax are protected by legislation.

This equality analysis relates specifically to the support available to those 2173 working age claimants.

For Council Tax Support purposes, a vulnerable group is where: -

- You or your partner receive a War Pension / War Widows Pension
- Someone in the household is entitled to a Disability Premium (inclusive of enhanced and severe disability premiums)
- A child in the household qualifies for a disabled child premium
- You, your partner, or a child in your household receives Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment.
- You or your partner qualifies for disabled earnings disregard
- You or your partner qualifies for a Carer Premium / or have underlying entitlement to Carers Allowance
- You or your partner receive Employment and Support Allowance that includes the Support Component
- You or your partner receive the Disability Element in your Working Tax Credit
- You or your partner are in receipt of the higher rate of the Limited Capability for Work Element in your Universal Credit

Is this a new or existing policy?

Existing

2. Complete the table below, considering whether the proposed policy/service/function/strategy could have any potential positive, or negative impacts on groups from any of the protected characteristics (or diversity strands) listed, using demographic data, user surveys, local consultations evaluation forms, comments and complaints etc.

Equality Group	Does this policy/service/function/strategy have a positive or negative impact on any of the equality groups? Please state which for each group	Please describe why the impact is positive or negative. If you consider this policy etc is not relevant to a specific characteristic please explain why
Age	Positive impact – working age Neutral impact – pension age	<p>Currently, there are no proposed changes to the scheme and as a result, there would be no negative impact to this group.</p> <p>For working age, there could be a risk to those of working age (and not deemed as vulnerable as defined by the Secretary of State or by South Kesteven District Councils scheme).</p> <p>Pensioners are a protected group for the purposes of the Council Tax Support scheme, so will not be financially affected. Therefore the reduction in support will be borne by the remainder of those in receipt of Council Tax Support.</p>
Disability	Neutral	<p>People with a mental health condition or a learning disability may be particularly vulnerable to changes in council tax support. National evidence shows that these two groups are less likely to be employed and may not see help for financial difficulties.</p>

		<p>The scheme recognises these difficulties and protects them from any changes.</p> <p>There is no impact as the group is deemed as 'vulnerable' and are protected from any changes to the scheme.</p>
Race	Neutral	Residents from the EU who have not been granted settled status are excluded from provision by statute but race itself does not have any effect on the application of the scheme
Gender Reassignment	Neutral	This protected characteristic would not determine or have influence on any decision made under this scheme as its eligibility is specific to an income and capital means test If a person who identifies under this protected characteristic meets the criteria of the scheme they would be eligible for support
Religion or Belief	Neutral	This protected characteristic would not determine or have influence on any decision made under this scheme as its eligibility is specific to an income and capital means test If a person who identifies under this protected characteristic meets the criteria of the scheme they would be eligible for support
Sex	Neutral	This protected characteristic would not determine or have influence on any decision made under this scheme as its eligibility is specific to an income and capital means test If a person who identifies under this protected

		characteristic meets the criteria of the scheme they would be eligible for support
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	This protected characteristic would not determine or have influence on any decision made under this scheme as its eligibility is specific to an income and capital means test If a person who identifies under this protected characteristic meets the criteria of the scheme they would be eligible for support
Pregnancy and Maternity	Neutral	This protected characteristic would not determine or have influence on any decision made under this scheme as its eligibility is specific to an income and capital means test If a person who identifies under this protected characteristic meets the criteria of the scheme they would be eligible for support
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	This protected characteristic would not determine or have influence on any decision made under this scheme as its eligibility is specific to an income and capital means test If a person who identifies under this protected characteristic meets the criteria of the scheme they would be eligible for support
Carers	Neutral	This protected characteristic would not determine or have influence on any decision made under this scheme as its eligibility is specific to an income and capital means test If a person who identifies under this protected characteristic meets the

		criteria of the scheme they would be eligible for support
<p>Other Groups (e.g. those from deprived (IMD*) communities; those from rural communities, those with an offending past)</p> <p>*(IMD = Indices of multiple deprivation)</p>	Neutral	All persons who qualify under the terms of the scheme are eligible for support regardless of background
General comments		

3. What equality data/information did you use to inform the outcomes of the proposed policy/service/function/strategy? (Note any relevant consultation who took part and key findings)

Information used from the Revenues and Benefits software system. This provides all information relating to current Council Tax Support awards and enables officers to model potential changes to awards.

All recipients of Council Tax Support have been advised of the proposed scheme for 2022/23 and have been invited to provide a response to the proposals via an online survey (paper forms are available upon request)

If there are any gaps in the consultation/monitoring data, how will this be addressed?

There will be no gaps as all affected will have been consulted with

4. **Outcomes of analysis and recommendations (please note you will be required to provide evidence to support the recommendations made): Please check one of the options.**

a)	No major change needed: equality analysis has not identified any potential for discrimination or for negative impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>If you have checked option a) you can now send this form to the Lead Officer and your Neutral Assessor for sign off</i>		
b)	Adjust the proposal to remove barriers identified by equality analysis or to better promote equality.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>If you have checked option b) you will need to answer questions b.1 and b.2</i>		
c)	Adverse impact but continue	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>If you have checked option c) you will need to answer questions c.1</i>		
d)	Stop and remove the policy/function/service/strategy as equality analysis has shown actual or potential unlawful	<input type="checkbox"/>

- b.1 In brief, what changes are you planning to make to your proposed policy/service/function/strategy to minimise or eliminate the negative equality impacts?**

Currently the consultation of the scheme is based on 'no change'

- b.2 Please provide details of whom you will consult on the proposed changes and if you do not plan to consult, please provide the rationale behind that decision.**

All residents in receipt of Council Tax Support
 All South Kesteven District Council Members
 All South Kesteven District Parish Clerks
 Citizens Advice South Lincs
 Local media informed

If you have checked option b) you will need to complete a Stage 2 equality analysis

- c.1 Please provide an explanation in the box below that clearly sets out your justification for continuing with the proposed policy/function/service/strategy.

If you have checked option c) you will need to complete a Stage 2 equality analysis. You should consider in stage 2 whether there are sufficient plans to reduce the negative impact and/or plans to monitor the actual impact.

Signed (Lead Officer):
(Name and title)

Claire Moses
Head of Revenues and Benefits

Date completed:

11/11/21

Signed (Neutral Assessor):
(Name and title)

Carol Drury
Senior Community Development Officer

Date signed off:

11/11/21