

Equality and Fairness Analysis

Scoping and findings report – Counter Fraud Policy

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| Officer responsible for equality and fairness analysis | Bill McCafferty Revenues and Benefits Manager | |
| Officer responsible for policy development | Bill McCafferty Revenues and Benefits Manager | |
| Policy area | Revenues and Benefits | |
| Service area responsible for implementing the policy | Benefits | |
| Originator (if not the Council) | | |
| Is the policy proposed (new) or existing? | New | |
| Is it an EBC policy or a partnership initiative? | EBC | |
| Key people involved in the policy development and its implementation | Ian Fitzpatrick, Senior Head of Community Bill McCafferty, Revenues & Benefits Manager Nick Ducatel, Revenues Manager | |
| Decision making bodies the policy will be referred to | Cabinet – October 2013 | |
| Snr/Head of Service | Ian Fitzpatrick | |
| Date of Equality and Fairness | | |

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| Steering group | |
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Policy = the full range of our policies, practices, activities, projects, procurement and decisions, whether it is formally written down or whether it is informal custom and practice. This includes all existing policies and any new policies under development.

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| Title of policy | Council Tax collection and recovery policy |
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| What is the purpose of the policy and why is it needed? |
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The policy is intended to set the framework within which, along with the statutory provisions, the Council will seek to collect the taxes and to recover any unpaid Council Tax and Business Rates.

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| In what context will it operate and who is it intended to benefit? |
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Council Tax and Business rates are the two local taxes that the Council is under a statutory duty to collect. Council Tax is a source of income which helps to meet the costs of running council, county council, police and fire services.

Business rates are paid to the government who then re-distribute them amongst councils.

In 2013/14 the total Council Tax due to be collected is c£52m from xxx tax payers. Of the Council Tax collected, the Council retain 14%, with approximately 72% going to the County Council, 5% to the Fire Service and 9% to the Police.

In 2013/14 there is c£34m of Business Rates to collect from xxx businesses.

The policy is intended to ensure that the Council collect taxes in a fair and equitable manner, in accordance with the legislation and with regard to those tax payers who pay their taxes on time.

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| What are the expected outcomes of the policy? |
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The aims of the policy are:

1. To bill customers accurately and in a timely manner
2. To help customers get the discounts and exemptions they are entitled to

3. To comply with relevant legislation
4. To take into account guidance and best practice
5. To collect taxes due in a fair and efficient manner
6. To provide payment methods that are convenient to the taxpayer
7. To discharge the Council's duty in relation to the recovery of Council Tax and Business Rates
8. To take recovery action taking into account individual's circumstances as far as practicable
9. Protect individual rights under Data Protection and Human Rights Legislation
10. To treat individuals consistently and fairly regardless of age, sex, gender, disability, race and sexual orientation,
11. To make use of distress or committal only as a last resort

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| <p>Which protected groups will it affect the most?</p> <p>Considering who the policy is intending to benefit and what the expected outcomes are, assess each characteristic and indicate whether the policy has 'M' more or 'L' less relevance and circle those that apply.</p> | Age | <u>M</u> | L |
| | Disability | M | L |
| | Gender reassignment | M | L |
| | Marriage and civil partnership | M | L |
| | Maternity and pregnancy | M | L |
| | Race | M | L |
| | Religion or beliefs | M | L |
| | Sex | M | L |
| | Sexual orientation | M | L |

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| Which parts of the PSED¹ is it relevant to? Use the same assessment as for protected groups. | 1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation | M | L |
| | 2. Advance equality of opportunity | M | L |
| | 3. Foster good relations | M | L |

Equality Information

List all the sources of information you have gathered and will use to evaluate the effectiveness, or potential effectiveness, of the policy. Include evidence gathered from engagement.

Age and gender

Population by gender and broad age groups in 2011

This dataset shows the resident population by gender and broad age groups from the 2011 Census.

| Age | | All people | Percent aged 0-14 | Percent aged 15-29 | Percent aged 30-44 | Percent aged 45-64 | Percent aged 65+ |
|------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Gender | Geography | | | | | | |
| All people | England and Wales | 56,075,912 | 17.6 | 19.9 | 20.5 | 25.4 | 16.4 |
| | South East | 8,634,750 | 17.8 | 18.6 | 20.4 | 26.1 | 17.2 |
| | East Sussex | 526,671 | 16.1 | 15.9 | 17.2 | 28.0 | 22.7 |
| | Eastbourne | 99,412 | 15.7 | 18.5 | 18.3 | 25.1 | 22.4 |
| Males | England and Wales | 27,573,376 | 18.4 | 20.5 | 20.8 | 25.6 | 14.9 |
| | South East | 4,239,298 | 18.6 | 19.2 | 20.5 | 26.3 | 15.5 |
| | East Sussex | 253,764 | 17.2 | 16.8 | 17.3 | 28.1 | 20.5 |
| | Eastbourne | 47,559 | 16.9 | 19.6 | 18.7 | 25.1 | 19.7 |
| Females | England and Wales | 28,502,536 | 16.9 | 19.4 | 20.3 | 25.3 | 18.0 |
| | South East | 4,395,452 | 17.0 | 18.0 | 20.3 | 25.9 | 18.8 |
| | East Sussex | 272,907 | 15.1 | 15.0 | 17.2 | 27.9 | 24.8 |

¹ Public Sector Equality Duty – for further information refer to the guide on same

Source: 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics

Ethnicity, nationality and language

Population by ethnic group in 2011

This dataset shows the population by ethnic groups from the 2011 Census.

| Ethnicity | All people | Percent All White | Percent All Mixed | Percent All Asian or Asian British | Percent All Black or Black British | Percent other ethnic group |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Geography | | | | | | |
| England and Wales | 56,075,912 | 86.0 | 2.2 | 7.5 | 3.3 | 1.0 |
| South East | 8,634,750 | 90.7 | 1.9 | 5.2 | 1.6 | 0.6 |
| East Sussex | 526,671 | 96.0 | 1.4 | 1.7 | 0.6 | 0.3 |
| Eastbourne | 99,412 | 94.1 | 1.8 | 2.8 | 0.8 | 0.5 |

Religion

Population by religion in 2011

This dataset shows the percentage of the population by religion from 2011 Census.

| Religions | All people | Percent Christian | Percent Buddhist | Percent Hindu | Percent Jewish | Percent Muslim | Percent Sikh | Percent other religions | Percent no religion | Percent religion not stated |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Geography | | | | | | | | | | |
| England and Wales | 56,075,912 | 59.3 | 0.4 | 1.5 | 0.5 | 4.8 | 0.8 | 0.4 | 25.1 | 7.2 |
| South East | 8,634,750 | 59.8 | 0.5 | 1.1 | 0.2 | 2.3 | 0.6 | 0.5 | 27.7 | 7.4 |
| East Sussex | 526,671 | 59.9 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 0.7 | 29.6 | 8.1 |
| Eastbourne | 99,412 | 59.6 | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 1.5 | 0.1 | 0.6 | 29.2 | 8.0 |

Source: 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics

Main household language in 2011

This dataset shows various combinations of adults and children within a household that have English as a main language.

| Household language | All households | All people aged 16 and over in household have English as a main language | At least one but not all people aged 16 and over in household have English as a main language | No people aged 16 and over in household but at least one person aged 3 to 15 has English as a main language | No people in household have English as a main language |
|--------------------|----------------|--|---|---|--|
| Geography | | | | | |
| England and Wales | 23,366,044 | 21,313,812 | 868,431 | 181,729 | 1,002,072 |
| South East | 3,555,463 | 3,312,400 | 114,631 | 19,423 | 109,009 |
| East Sussex | 231,905 | 222,351 | 4,692 | 672 | 4,190 |
| Eastbourne | 45,012 | 41,736 | 1,333 | 237 | 1,706 |

Source: 2011 Census. Office for National Statistics

Marital and civil partnership status

Population by marital and civil partnership status in 2011

This dataset shows the number of people aged 16 and over and the percentage by marital status from 2011 Census.

| Marital status | All people aged 16 and over | Percent single | Percent married | Percent in a registered same-sex civil partnership | Percent separated | Percent divorced | Percent widowed |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Geography | | | | | | | |
| England and Wales | 45,496,780 | 34.6 | 46.6 | 0.2 | 2.6 | 9.0 | 7.0 |
| South East | 6,992,666 | 31.9 | 49.3 | 0.2 | 2.5 | 9.1 | 6.9 |
| East Sussex | 435,515 | 29.1 | 48.4 | 0.3 | 2.7 | 10.7 | 8.7 |
| Eastbourne | 82,691 | 33.3 | 42.8 | 0.4 | 3.0 | 11.5 | 9.1 |

Source: 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics

Limiting long-term illness in 2011

This dataset shows the percentage of people that have a limiting long-term illness or disability from 2011 Census.

| Type | All people | Percent people with long-term health problem or disability | Percent day-to-day activities limited a little | Percent day-to-day activities limited a lot | Percent people without long-term health problem or disability |
|-------------------|------------|--|--|---|---|
| Geography | | | | | |
| England and Wales | 56,075,912 | 17.9 | 9.4 | 8.5 | 82.1 |
| South East | 8,634,750 | 15.7 | 8.8 | 6.9 | 84.3 |
| East Sussex | 526,671 | 20.3 | 11.2 | 9.2 | 79.7 |
| Eastbourne | 99,412 | 21.0 | 11.3 | 9.7 | 79.0 |

Source: 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics

Poverty

Households in poverty in 2013

This dataset shows the number and percentage of households living in poverty. A household in poverty is one whose income is below 60% of the GB median household income, which in 2013 was £16,814.

| Measure | Total number of households | Number of households below 60% of GB median | Percentage of households below 60% of GB median |
|---------------|----------------------------|---|---|
| Geography | | | |
| Great Britain | 26,323,250 | 7,720,637 | 29.3 |
| South East | 3,636,820 | 897,564 | 24.7 |
| East Sussex | 236,516 | 65,181 | 27.6 |
| Eastbourne | 45,981 | 13,345 | 29.0 |

Source: CACI

Are there gaps in this information and if so, what are these?

For instance, do you have information that is sufficient for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of the policy against all protected characteristics?

As we do not record equalities data on taxpayers it is impossible to evaluate the effectiveness.

What steps did you take, or are you intending to take, to fill these gaps?

Depending on the purpose of the policy it may prove useful to engage with service users, employees, equality/involvement groups/organisations and other interested parties etc.

We will monitor any complaints received to identify trends that may suggest inequality in the way people are dealt with.

What does all the information gathered tell you about the policy?

I.e. does the policy miss opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations?

Based on your evidence and engagement is there a need to balance conflicting views and how will you do this?

You will need to find an appropriate balance for these groups and the policy in question.

No.

Is there a need to counter resentment or address inaccurate perceptions, if so what will you do?

This is more likely to arise in regard to policies that justifiably benefit certain groups over others and so give the impression of 'favourable treatment'.

The policy does not benefit any group over any other group.

Findings of your analysis

Having gathered in all the evidence and considered the potential or actual effect of the policy on equality, you should now be in a position to make an informed judgement about what should be done with the policy. There are four main steps to take:

1. No major change – the policy is robust and evidence shows no potential for discrimination and all opportunities to advice equality and foster good relations between groups has been taken;
2. Adjust the policy - some steps need to be taken to remove barriers in the policy or to better advance equality;
3. Continue the policy – you will adopt the policy despite any adverse effects or missed opportunities because you are satisfied that it does not unlawfully discriminate – you will need to document what the justification is for continuing the policy, and how you reached this decision;
4. Stop and remove the policy – there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be reduced.

Irrespective of the step you recommend you are required to provide documentation in support of your decision and the reasons why you made it together with all supporting equality information used.

Please type 'recommended course of action' against the desired step below.

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| No major change | |
| Adjust the policy | |
| Continue the policy | |
| Stop and remove the policy | |

Proposed action plan in regard to policy implementation

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| Quality checking: What was the outcome of the Corporate Equality and Fairness Planning Group? | |
| How will you implement any recommendations the | |

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| group made? | |
| How will the policy be monitored once implemented, and who will do this? Consider how you will determine whether or not the policy is having its desired effects i.e. what type of information is needed and how often will it be gathered? | |
| Who will analyse the monitoring at its review stages? | Revenues and Benefits Manager. |
| What could trigger an early revision? | Changes in legislation. |
| How will you involve key service users/other parties in the review process? | Through liaison meetings with the voluntary sector. |
| How will you publish the results of any reviews? | |

For completion by the Equality and Fairness Steering Group:

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| Results of group discussion and recommended course of action: | |
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