

# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

## DISCRETIONARY RELIEF FROM COUNCIL TAX FOR YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING CARE

### 1) ASSESSMENT AUTHOR(S)

Dewi Morgan, Senior Manager Revenues and Risk

### 2) PARTNERS

Who are your partners when starting or changing the policy / plan / practice? They will need to be included when undertaking this assessment.

Not relevant

### 3) DATE ASSESSMENT BEGUN

1 April 2018

### 4) DATE ASSESSMENT COMPLETED

16 July 2018

### 5) AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY / PLAN / PRACTICE

Note why the policy / plan / practice is necessary. Note what the Authority hopes to achieve.

The aim of the policy is to use the Council's discretionary powers under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to offer discretionary relief to young people leaving the Council's care and exempt them from paying Council Tax until they are 25 years old, to assist them to become independent.

### 6) PARTICIPATION AND CONSULTATION

Have you consulted regarding the change in policy / plan / practice? What was the result? Remember it is a statutory requirement to consult with the people who will be affected.

The matter was discussed by the Corporate Parenting Panel in April 2018. The Panel was supportive of the intention.

## **7) EVIDENCE AVAILABLE**

The evidence can be based on local, regional or national evidence, e.g. the service's data or regional equality statistics or a national report.

National studies have shown that young people leaving care need every support to assist them to live independently, and avoid falling into debt. A number of local authorities have already introduced this policy, and Welsh Government are supportive of the principle.

## **8) GAPS IN EVIDENCE**

Note any gaps in evidence and explain how you intend to fill them.

We are confident that there are no gaps in our evidence.

## 9) RELEVANCE AND EFFECT

The relevance of the policy / plan / practice to the general equality duty and to each one of the equality groups (protected characteristics) must be shown. The real or likely effect must be clearly notes. It is possible that not every characteristic will be relevant or be affected.

### 9a)

<b>Equality Act General Duty</b>	<b>Relevance</b>	<b>The real or likely effect</b>
<b>Removing illegal discrimination, harassment and victimisation</b>	No effect	This policy will apply to those leaving care, until they are 25 years old. This policy will affect a very small cohort of the population. It could be up to 80 people, but in practice it will be less than this because the majority already receive a discount, exemption, and/or Council Tax Reduction, and therefore Council tax liability has already been met.
<b>Promoting equal opportunities</b>	No effect	The policy intention will be to provide the same opportunities for young people leaving care to establish themselves independently, because they do not have the family support available to the majority of society. Studies (e.g. by The Children's Society) show that this policy would give the same opportunities to young people leaving care as for the rest of the population, and would not give them an unfair advantage.
<b>Foster good relations</b>	No effect	Although there is a small possibility that some individuals would feel that it is unfair that these young people are receiving this relief, there is no evidence that this is the experience in the areas that have already adopted the policy.

## 9 b)

Characteristics	Relevance	The real or likely effect
<b>Race</b>	No effect	
<b>Disability</b>	No effect	
<b>Sex</b>	No effect	
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	No effect	
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	No effect	
<b>Religion or belief</b>	No effect	
<b>The Welsh language</b>	No effect	
<b>Age</b>	Positive	This policy has been specifically targeted towards a cohort of the population that is under 25 years old, but we do not believe that this will have a negative effect on anyone on the basis of age.
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	No effect	
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	No effect	

## 10) ADDRESSING THE EFFECTS

a)	<b>Note any possible effects from an equality perspective</b>  On the basis of a detailed consideration of the categories of support, we foresee a positive effect on the young people leaving care. We do not anticipate a negative impact from an equality perspective.
b)	<b>What steps can be taken to lessen or improve these effects?</b>  No further steps necessary.
c)	<b>Is it necessary to reconsider the proposal?</b>  No

## 11) ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND REVIEWING

What steps will you take to review the policy / plan / practice once it has been adopted? Although the above assessment recognised the possible effect, it must be remembered that the full effect will not be seen until the policy is implemented

We are of the opinion that the policy considers the circumstances that may arise, but will review the Policy again as applications are being dealt with, and will amend as required.

## 12) DECISION

The Cabinet to decide on 31 July 2018.