

Attach a copy of this SIA to your project, policy or activity on Covalent

Service Impact Assessment

BASILDON COUNCIL

A Service Impact Assessment (SIA) is an assessment tool that helps to ensure that the Council promotes equality and does not discriminate against our staff, service users or residents. It is a way of making sure that teams and services think carefully about the impact of functions, policies, projects, decisions, strategies, service provision, activities etc. on different groups based on their protected characteristics. These protected characteristics (also known as protected groups) are listed under the Equality Act 2010 as race, sex, religion/belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy & maternity, marriage & civil partnerships and age. SIAs also help the authority to demonstrate 'due regard' when making decisions. This is a requirement of the equalities legislation and is currently the area the council is most likely to receive a challenge on equalities grounds. In Basildon we also use SIAs to address other issues such as Human Rights, Community Cohesion, socio-economic, health inequalities, issues relating to part time workers, carers etc as part of best practice.

There are 5 sections to complete in total, (See Flow Chart Appendix 1, Page 11)

Section 1 is purely information required on those who are likely to be affected.

Section 2 requires you to enter baseline data,

Section 3 requires you to assess against the protected groups, community cohesion, Human Rights

Section 4 & 5 requires you act on your outcomes and finalise your decision based on consultation outcomes following findings of negative impact.

The SIA is a live document which can be updated at anytime during the development and implementation stages of your project, policy, strategy, service provision etc. The best time to undertake an SIA is when you have a draft policy, project proposal or outline of service provision. You should use the SIA to inform the final end product. If a project changes direction, it is also critical to review the SIA to make sure the new direction does not adversely impact on the protected groups.

What is meant by impact?

There are three possible impacts that can happen:

1. A **negative or adverse impact** is when the impact of a policy/project could disadvantage one of the groups mentioned above. This could be differential, where the negative impact on one group is likely to be bigger than on another. For example, if an event is held in a building with no access for people with mobility difficulties, this could have a negative or adverse impact on attendees who have mobility difficulties, such as wheelchair users, people with pushchairs, people with Zimmer frames etc.
2. An impact that will benefit an equality target group is a **positive impact**. This could improve equal opportunities or community cohesion. There may also be a differential impact, where the positive impact on one particular group is likely to be greater than on another. For example, a health programme targeting Somali residents would have a positive differential impact on Somali people compared to other ethnic groups, but it would not have a negative impact on other groups.
3. A **neutral impact** where there is no likely change and therefore no potential impact on any of the protected groups

What do you require to undertake an SIA?

Baseline data: This is any data that relates to the people who are likely to be impacted by your service, functions, policy, project etc. It could include their profile based on the protected characteristic, feedback from consultations/surveys and any information including anecdotal that is available

Joint Arrangements and Partnership Working

When working on joint policies, it is the service lead that should be ultimately responsible for the SIA. Even in partnership arrangements, we must be able to demonstrate that Basildon Borough Council as an organisation is fulfilling our duties even where we are not the lead organisation. When contractors are delivering services on our behalf, we have to ensure that they are delivering accessible, discrimination free services. 'Due regard' is non-delegable and the onus remains with us as a council.

SECTION 1

Service Impact Assessment for	Revenues and Benefits Penalties Policy
Department:	Revenues and Benefits
Service area:	Customer Services
Name of lead assessing officer:	Cheryl Falder
Job title:	Revenues and Benefits Analyst
Telephone number	01268 207982

What are you assessing?

Policy/Strategy..... X

New or Proposed.....

Project.....

Changing/Updating

Service.....

Review of existing

Function.....

Decision.....

Other please specify _____

Has this been through an SIA Challenge Yes X No
 (Contact Inclusion & Diversity for information on challenge)

SECTION 1 – INFORMATION ON ITEM UNDER ASSESSMENT

Section 1a) Please give a brief description of the item being assessed

- Brief description: A policy dealing with the issue of financial penalties in relation to Council Tax, Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) and Housing Benefit (HB).
- Aims and Objectives: To act as a deterrent against providing false information or delaying in notifying a change in circumstances and provide financial gain for the authority in the form of penalties. To be prepared in the case of a legal challenge against the council in relation to the imposition of penalties. Protecting the reputation of the council by having a clear statement as to when penalties will be issued.
- Who will it impact on? (Include reference to impact on staff if relevant) Residents of Basildon. Including those claiming Local Council Tax Support.

Section 1b) Has any other local authority or similar service provider implemented the item under assessment?

Yes No

If yes we strongly advise that you contact that authority/service provider and obtain a copy of their impact assessment and monitoring data outlining equalities related successes or concerns.

Section 1c) Will this item be carried out wholly or partly by contractors/subcontractors

Yes No

If yes have you included Equality & Human Rights considerations into the contract?

Equality Yes No

Human Rights Yes No N/A

Section 1d) Have those identified in question Q1a been consulted or involved in the development of the item under assessment?

Yes No

All affected persons will be notified of the change to implementing penalties when we run our year end processes as this information will be included on all notification letters and Council Tax bills.

If Yes, can you give details of the consultation including methods and outcomes

If No, when are you going to involve or consult those identified in Q1? (add this as an action in your Improvement plan 1, stating timescales and consider whether you have enough information to complete the impact assessment)

SECTION 2 –BASELINE DATA

Section 2) In relation to those identified in Q1a do you have any data the protected equality groups or other groups that will be affected by the item under assessment?

Groups	Baseline data staff  Click on the above image for staff data	Baseline data community  Community Baseline data 2013.pdf
i) People from different racial ethnic groups (gypsies & travellers, refugees & asylum seekers)	N/A – does not affect staff	As attached – whole community affected
ii) people of different sex (male or female)	N/A	As attached
iii) People from different religions or beliefs	N/A	As attached

Section 2) In relation to those identified in Q1a do you have any data the protected equality groups or other groups that will be affected by the item under assessment?

Groups	Baseline data staff  Click on the above image for staff data	Baseline data community  Community Baseline data 2013.pdf
iv) Disabled People (for example, physically disabled: (including wheelchair user), sensory impairment, mental health conditions, learning difficulties	N/A	As attached
v) People of different ages	N/A	As attached
vi) People of various sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual)	N/A	As attached
vii) People who have undergone or are undergoing gender-reassignment	N/A	As attached
viii) Marriage & Civil Partnership	N/A	As attached
ix) Pregnancy or maternity	N/A	As attached
x) Carers	N/A	As attached
xi) Part time workers	N/A	N/A

Section 2) In relation to those identified in Q1a do you have any data the protected equality groups or other groups that will be affected by the item under assessment?

Groups	Baseline data staff	Baseline data community
xii) Other (Socio Economic issues, ex-offendersetc)	 <p>Click on the above image for staff data</p>	 <p>Community Baseline data 2013.pdf</p>

SECTION 3 – ASSESS LIKELY IMPACT ON EQUALITY GROUPS, HUMAN RIGHTS AND COMMUNITY COHESION

Section 3 a) Could the item under assessment in the way it is implemented/applied have a negative impact on any protected equality groups or other groups think about community and staff?



Issues to consider, please click on document

Group	<i>Describe any negative impact or inequality to the best of your knowledge</i>	<i>Identify any possible solutions to eliminate or reduce negative impact</i>	<i>Describe any positive impact</i>	<i>Describe and neutral impact</i>	<i>Don't know (consultation required – add to Initial Assessment Plan)</i>
Race and culture	Potential language barrier, person not understanding the notification letter, or Council Tax bill and not being aware of the need to inform of their change in circumstances.	Ensure that documents are available in different languages upon request. Publicise that if someone has a language barrier then to contact us. We have language line available for use at the Basildon Centre.			
Sex	N/A				
Disability	Potential that physical or mental problems have contributed to the reasons for committing the offence. For	Publicise that help it is available at the Basildon Centre or by telephoning the Council. Provide guidance within the policy that where it			

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	example dyslexia prevented person being able to fully understand the notification letter or Council Tax bill.	is clear these circumstances exist that a penalty will not be issued. Ensure information is available in various formats for example Braille, Large Print upon request			
Sexual Orientation	N/A				
Religion	N/A				
Age	N/A				
Gender Reassignment	N/A				
Marriage & Civil Partnership	N/A				
Pregnancy & Maternity	N/A				

Section 3 a) Could the item under assessment in the way it is implemented/applied have a negative impact on any protected equality groups or other groups think about community and staff?



Issues to consider, please click on document

Group	<i>Describe any negative impact or inequality to the best of your knowledge</i>	<i>Identify any possible solutions to eliminate or reduce negative impact</i>	<i>Describe any positive impact</i>	<i>Describe and neutral impact</i>	Don't know <i>(consultation required – add to Initial Assessment Plan)</i>
Carers	N/A				
Socio-economic	People falling into this category are the most likely to be in receipt of LCTS and therefore could potentially receive a penalty	Provide guidance within the policy that the person's circumstances will be considered before a penalty is issued.			
Health	A person suffering from a terminal illness may have been unable to deal with their own affairs for example due to a stay in hospital or a hospice.	Provide guidance within the policy that where it is clear these circumstances exist that a penalty will not be issued.			
Human Rights  Human Rights Standards.pdf	No impact on human rights.				

Section 3 a) Could the item under assessment in the way it is implemented/applied have a negative impact on any protected equality groups or other groups think about community and staff?



Issues to consider, please click on document

Group	<i>Describe any negative impact or inequality to the best of your knowledge</i>	<i>Identify any possible solutions to eliminate or reduce negative impact</i>	<i>Describe any positive impact</i>	<i>Describe and neutral impact</i>	<i>Don't know (consultation required – add to Initial Assessment Plan)</i>
Other (Offenders, parts-time workers etc, low literacy, geographical position)	A person in prison may not be able to deal with their own affairs. Someone may have low literacy and not have been able to understand the notification letter or Council Tax bill. For example some people from Traveller communities cannot read.	Provide guidance within the policy that the person's circumstances will be considered before a penalty is issued.			

SECTION 3b) – COMMUNITY COHESION

Section 3b) How will the item under assessment help to foster good relations? Explain.	N/A
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SECTION 4: OUTCOMES OF YOUR ASSESSMENT

<p>Outcome 1. You do not have enough data on all relevant groups to come to a conclusion. You must seek data or consult with the relevant groups</p>	<p>Next steps: (To be entered into SIA Action Plan with timescales)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect relevant baseline data • Consult with relevant groups to collect data • Continue undertaking the Impact Assessment
<p>Outcome 2: Potential (negative impact) to one or more protected characteristics has been found but you can easily adjust or amend item to remove the barrier.</p>	<p>Next steps: (To be entered into SIA Action Plan with timescales)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give details of how you are going to amend or adjust policy to address the negative impact • Monitor item under assessment to ensure that there is no future impact on protected groups and others • Set a review date to ensure • Communicate the findings of the SIA
<p>Outcome 3: Negative impact has been found. It is not easy to adjust or amend item. You may or may not have options/ideas as to how the negative impact can be amended. Enter the issues found and the planned consultation into the SIA Action Plan. You need to consult with the relevant group and enter any issues/ actions following the consultation into the SIA Action Plan.</p>	<p>Next steps: (Enter consultation information into SIA Action Plan with timescales)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give details of findings and options/ideas • Consult with relevant group on your options/ideas or to establish a solution • Complete Final Assessment Improvement Plan outlining the results of consultation and your final decision • Monitor item under assessment to ensure that there is no future impact on protected groups and others • Set a review date to ensure • Communicate the findings of the SIA

<p>Outcome 4: Unlawful discrimination has been found and the item should be removed, stopped or changed. Seek legal advice or speak to the Inclusion & Diversity team.</p> <p>STOP, change or remove item:</p>	<p>Next steps: (To be entered into SIA Action Plan with timescales)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give details unlawful discrimination and what you will do to remove it and include this in the Initial action plan • Monitor item under assessment to ensure that there is no future impact on protected groups and others • Set a review date to ensure • Communicate the findings of the SIA
<p>Outcome 5: This is an initial SIA which will be updated as the item under assessment progresses. There is no adverse impact identified at this stage</p>	<p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter the action to update the SIA as the item under assessment progresses into the action plan section along with any other identified actions at this stage. • Complete section 5 if you have changed the item under assessment as a result of consultation where negative impact had been identified or where there was no data

SECTION 5 – MAKING A FINAL DECISION

Section 5a). What consultation have you undertaken in relation to the negative impact/no data available (include Human rights, community cohesion where relevant).

Consultation undertaken on negative impact or where there has been no data: N/A

Findings:

List evidence of consultation and state where this can be found: (For example minutes of meetings, questionnaires, presentations etc)

Q5b) Based on the consultation what changes will be made to the item under assessment to address negative impact? If no changes can be made, you must justify why and provide any relevant evidence.

Changes made as a result of consultation:	
No changes can be made	Justification
Section 5c) Taking everything into account what is your final decision?	
There are sufficient steps in place to ensure that any negative impacts are mitigated.	

5 d) NEXT STEPS

<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any final amendments to be entered into Final Assessment improvement plan with timescales • Communicate your final decision • Monitor item under assessment to ensure that there is no future impact on protected groups and others • Set a review date to ensure

Service Impact Assessment Action Plan. List the nature of any adverse impact (issues) and recommendations (actions) that you plan to implement as a result of this assessment. This should include Community Cohesion findings if relevant.

Department: Revenues and Benefits

Title of Service Impact Assessment: Revenues and Benefits Penalties Service Impact Assessment

Lead assessing officer responsible: Cheryl Falder

Issues identified (Outcomes)	Actions Required	Timescale	Costs	Officer Responsible	Comments	Date Completed
Language barrier	Ensure that you inform the community that documents are available in other languages upon request	Already in place				

Service Impact Assessment Action Plan. List the nature of any adverse impact (issues) and recommendations (actions) that you plan to implement as a result of this assessment. This should include Community Cohesion findings if relevant.

Department: Revenues and Benefits

Title of Service Impact Assessment: Revenues and Benefits Penalties Service Impact Assessment

Lead assessing officer responsible: Cheryl Falder

Issues identified (Outcomes)	Actions Required	Timescale	Costs	Officer Responsible	Comments	Date Completed
Literacy and learning disability	Help is already available at the Basildon Centre	Already in place				
Physical Disability	Provide guidance within the policy that the person's circumstances will be considered before a penalty is issued, for example due to physical or mental health problems					
Visual impairment	Large print, Braille and other formats are available upon request	Already in place				
Health	Provide guidance within the policy that the person's circumstances will be considered before a penalty is issued, for example due to hospitalisation or being in a hospice.					
Offenders	Provide guidance within the policy that the person's circumstances will be considered before a penalty is issued, for example due to a prison sentence.					

Final Assessment Sign off

Approval of I & D department (please allow two weeks turnaround) :

I & D team signature:  Ndunge Kivuitu

Date 20/10/17

Name and Signature of Service Manager:

Date

Name and Signature of Director /Head of Service/ Group Manager:

Date

If an Action Plan is required at this stage, please ensure that the I & D Department approves the SIA and improvement plan prior to sign off by the

APPENDIX 1

