

Bristol City Council Equality Impact Relevance Check

This tool will identify the equalities relevance of a proposal, and establish whether a full Equality Impact Assessment will be required. Please read the guidance prior to completing this relevance check.



What is the proposal?	
Name of proposal	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction evidence requirements
Please outline the proposal.	<p>The proposal is to change the verification process of Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Reduction (CTR) claims, by ceasing to operate a Risk Based Verification (RBV) scheme and instead align evidence requirements to those that already exist for changes to circumstance to existing HB/CTR claims (i.e. 90% of existing work).</p> <p>This means that that instead of claimants being risk scored as low, medium and high and therefore having to provide no, some or a higher levels of evidence respectively, they will all have to provide the same level, but no longer original evidence, for the vast majority of cases.</p> <p>In reality most information and evidence can now be sourced from other national and government systems, although there are some exceptions, e.g. private tenancy rents, so the aim is that most claimants will have to provide less evidence (although a few may have to provide more) and also stop the necessity for people to have to come to Temple St CSP to provide original evidence.</p>
What savings will this proposal achieve?	None
Name of Lead Officer	Matthew Kendall/Denise Murray

Could your proposal impact citizens with protected characteristics?

(This includes service users and the wider community)

Please outline where there may be significant opportunities or positive impacts, and for whom.

The proposal will simplify the information and evidence requirements for households who are on a low income and claiming HB/CTR. Disabled people, Black and minority ethnic people, and females are overrepresented within the group who receive HB/CTR when compared to Bristol's overall population.

The service does not hold reliable data on gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, faith and belief (although there is a high correlation between high HB/CTR demand and areas with high percentages of residents from some faith groups) or sexual orientation.

Please outline where there may be significant negative impacts, and for whom.

We have not identified any significant negative impacts. We will ensure there are alternative arrangements in place for providing evidence, which meet the accessibility requirements of disabled applicants and/or those who cannot access digital services.

Could your proposal impact staff with protected characteristics?

(i.e. reduction in posts, changes to working hours or locations, changes in pay)

Please outline where there may be significant opportunities or positive impacts, and for whom.

It is not expected that the proposal will have significant positive impacts on staff.

Please outline where there may be negative impacts, and for whom.

We have not identified significant negative impacts on staff, whilst noting there will have to be some minor re-training.

Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required?

Does the proposal have the potential to impact on people with protected characteristics in the following ways:

- access to or participation in a service,
- levels of representation in our workforce, or
- reducing quality of life (i.e. health, education, standard of living) ?

Please indicate yes or no. If the answer is yes then a full impact assessment must be carried out. If the answer is no, please provide a justification.

No – we have not identified any significant impact from this proposal for people on the basis of their protected characteristics.

Service Director sign-off and date:

Denise Murray

9/7/2020

Equalities Officer sign-off and date:

*Reviewed by Equality and Inclusion Team
3/7/2020*