

Thurrock Council

Community Equality Impact Assessment

Service area and lead officer

Name of service	Revenues and Benefits
CEIA Lead Officer	Andy Brittain
CEIA Lead Officer job title	Head of Service
CEIA Lead Officer email address	abrittain@thurrock.gov.uk

Subject of this assessment

What specific policy, strategy, function or service is the subject of this assessment?
Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTS)
Borough-wide or location-specific?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Borough-wide <input type="checkbox"/> Location-specific – please state locations below.
Click or tap here to enter text.
Why is this policy, strategy, function or service development or review needed?
<p>Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) helps support council taxpayers who have a low income by providing a reduction in the actual amount in Council Tax payable.</p> <p>On 1st April 2013, LCTS replaced the national Council Tax Benefit Scheme (CTB). Unlike CTB, which was wholly funded by Central Government and administered by local authorities, for LCTS each Council was required to design and implement its own scheme against a backdrop of 10% reduction in central funding.</p> <p>The Council is required to consider its scheme annually and consult on any changes before they are introduced. The current LCTS scheme was implemented on the 1st April 2017 following consultation and has been agreed for each subsequent year up to the current financial year with no changes.</p>

1. Engagement, consultation and supporting information

- 1.1. What steps you have taken, or do you plan to take, to engage or consult (where applicable) the whole community or specific groups affected by this development or review? **This is a vital step.**

Steps you have taken, or plan to take, to engage or consult

The Council is required to consider its scheme annually and consult on any changes before they are introduced. The current LCTS scheme was implemented on the 1st April 2017 following public consultation and has been agreed for each subsequent year up to the current financial year with no changes.

As there are no proposed changes to the existing scheme the council is not required to undertake a further consultation.

- 1.2. What data or intelligence sources have you used to inform your assessment of the impact? How have these helped you understand who will be affected by the development or review?

Sources of data or intelligence, and how they have been used

LCTS scheme – Eligibility criteria has been considered to ensure protected characteristics are not adversely impacted by the design of the scheme and remains ‘accessible to all’ who have recourse to public funds.

Benchmarking – The scheme has been benchmarked against other Essex and geographically neighbouring authorities to ensure the level of support provided remains comparable.

Collection rates are closely monitored and used as a further indicator for the appropriate level of support

Complaint data is considered to inform any potential improvements that could be made to the scheme.

2. Community and workforce impact

2.1. What impacts will this development or review have on communities, workforce and the health and wellbeing of local residents?

Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Local communities in general	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The LCTS scheme provides means tested support in the form of council tax reductions for low income households	The scheme will remain subject to annual review.
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pension age applicants will retain support determined by Central Government. Working age applicants will retain same level of support as 2023/24 (subject to changes in their own circumstances)	The scheme will remain subject to annual review.
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no specific disproportionate impacts on the basis of disability.	The scheme will remain subject to annual review.
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no specific disproportionate impacts on the basis of gender reassignment.	The scheme will remain subject to annual review.
Marriage and civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no specific disproportionate impacts on the basis of marriage and civil partnership.	The scheme will remain subject to annual review.
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no specific disproportionate impacts on the basis of pregnancy and maternity.	The scheme will remain subject to annual review.
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no specific disproportionate impacts for this group on the basis of race.	The scheme will remain subject to annual review.

Communities and groups	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary of positive and negative impacts	How will positives be maximised, and negatives minimised or eliminated?
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no specific disproportionate impacts on the basis of religion or belief.	The scheme will remain subject to annual review.
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no specific disproportionate impacts on the basis of sex.	The scheme will remain subject to annual review.
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no specific disproportionate impacts on the basis of sexual orientation.	The scheme will remain subject to annual review.
Location-specific impact, if any	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no specific disproportionate impacts according to location.	The scheme will remain subject to annual review.
Workforce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no specific disproportionate impacts for the workforce.	The scheme will remain subject to annual review.
Health and wellbeing of residents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no specific impacts for the health and wellbeing of residents.	The scheme will remain subject to annual review.
Socio-economic outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) helps support council taxpayers who have a low income by providing a reduction in the actual amount in Council Tax payable.	The scheme provides a means tested approach to determine the level of support provided
Veterans and serving members of the armed forces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no specific impacts for veterans and serving members of the armed forces.	The scheme will remain subject to annual review.

3. Monitoring and review

3.1. How will you review community and equality impact once the policy, strategy, function or service has been implemented? These actions should be developed using the information gathered in sections 1 and 2 and included in your service area's business plans.

How	By when	By who
The scheme will continue to be reviewed and considered on an annual basis	The council has to approve its scheme annually by 11 th March ahead of the forthcoming financial year to which it relates.	Head of Revenues and Benefits
CEIA to be monitored, reviewed and updated with consideration of benchmarking, complaints and collection data	April 2025-March 2026	Head of Revenues and Benefits
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4. Next steps

4.1. The information gathered must be used to inform reports presented to Cabinet or overview and scrutiny committees. This will give members a necessary understanding of the impact their decisions will have on different groups and the whole community.

Summarise the implications and customer impact below. This summary should be added to the committee reports template in the Diversity and Equality Implications section for review and sign-off at the consultation stage of the report preparation cycle.

Summary of implications and customer impact
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There are no specific disproportionate negative impacts for any of the protected groups with the scheme to be applied universally. A commitment is made to the ongoing review, monitoring and updating of this CEIA that will inform implementation of the scheme. The recommendation is to retain the current scheme for the forthcoming financial year.

5. Sign off

5.1. This Community Equality Impact Assessment must be authorised by the relevant project sponsor, strategic lead, or assistant director. This should not be the CEIA Lead Officer. Officers authorising this assessment are responsible for:

- the accuracy of the information
- making sure actions are undertaken

Name	Role	Date
Jonathan Wilson	Assistant Director - Finance	21/12/23
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