

Stage 1: Equality Impact Assessment

<p>1. What are the main aims purpose and outcomes of the Policy and how do these fit with the wider aims of the organization?</p>
<p>The council has adopted a policy on the setting of fees and charges to ensure that a consistent approach is used that takes account of all factors and creates a result that supports the priorities set out in the strategic plan.</p> <p>The outcome of this review is to set the appropriate level of fees and charges for 2012/13 for services where the Council raises income by charging the user of a service and where the setting of the fee to be charged is discretionary.</p>
<p>2. How do these aims affect our duty to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited by the act. • Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. • Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
<p>The major aim of the corporate fees and charges policy and this review is to ensure that an appropriate approach to funding of services is considered. The Council charges a fee for services where appropriate to ensure the charge to tax payers is consistent with affordability for all and the charge to service users is optimised. This action can only be taken where the Council possesses the power to make the charge.</p> <p>The policy identifies the assessment to be made in considering an initial charge or an increase. The factors identified as being necessary considerations include the direct effect on service users and the indirect effect upon tax payers of making the charge. This includes an assessment of the effect upon demand and dependent upon the nature of the service.</p> <p>In ensuring the corporate policy is followed, factors adversely affecting the Council's duties detailed above are minimised. The direct charging for services will advance equality of opportunity by ensuring the charges are fit for purpose and cost equates to use and enables choice.</p>
<p>3. What aspects of the policy including how it is delivered or accessed could contribute to inequality?</p>
<p>None, the policy has been developed to ensure the appropriate consideration of equality and other factors when setting fees and charges.</p>
<p>4. Will the policy have an impact (positive or negative) upon the lives of people, including particular communities and groups who have protected characteristics? What evidence do you have for this?</p>
<p>The policy will have a positive impact as the factors assessed as part of the policy includes ability to pay and need along with demand for the service. Adherence to the policy will help to ensure that charges are fit for purpose.</p>

If the answer to the second question has identified potential impacts and you have answered yes to any of the remaining questions then you should carry out a full EQIA set out as stage 2 below.