

Colchester Borough Council

Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy/ decision to be assessed:

Environmental Protection Scheme of Charges

A review of the Scheme of Charges (and associated processes and procedures) for the provision of services by the Environmental Protection Team including:

- Private Drinking Water Supplies
- Environmental Information Requests
- Provision of Technical Advice

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

To prepare a scheme of reasonable charges for services which ensures the recovery of costs incurred in service delivery and complies with relevant legislation.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

The chargeable activities relate to:

- The risk assessment, sampling and analysis of private water supplies and distribution systems
- The provision of environmental information other than that held on public registers
- The provision of technical advice upon request.

These activities entail:

- Initial contact through the Customer Service Centre, email or written requests for service
- Site visits and appropriate testing
- Risk assessment of water supplies
- Responding appropriately to the risks identified including the preparation of recommendations and other documentation
- Written confirmation of requirements and outcomes
- Provision of Environmental Information as requested and permitted by law.
- Preparation of technical advice.

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so what are they?

NO

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

- Residents of the Borough
- Developers
- Owner Occupiers
- Businesses

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

- Ensure the safety of drinking water supplies
- Ensure residents are aware of the quality, safety and potential harmful effects of their water supplies
- Ensure that detailed environmental search information can be supplied
- Increased capacity to deliver quality service in a timely manner
- Self-supporting finance to offset other costs
- Increased capacity to undertake statutory functions
- Compliance with the law

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below:

NO

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations¹ which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff?

These charges and associated processes and procedures apply equally to all groups, however the following mechanisms are in place to assess impact:

- Customer Satisfaction Surveys
- Complaints Process

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'² and those who do not³
- (c) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not⁴

Not all policies help us to meet the 'general duty', but most do.

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to meet the 'general duty': N/A

9. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

¹Click on [surveys or consultations](#) for more information. The Council's surveys and consultations include 'equality monitoring information' to help us identify any particular concerns or views expressed by any particular group or 'protected characteristic'. It can also help us to assess how representative of our customers the respondent group is. Local Data on the Protected Characteristics is available [on this page](#) of the Hub.

² The Equality Act's 'protected characteristics' include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

³ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

⁴ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

Remember to include reference to any relevant consultation, data or information.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Age	Older people (60+)		The charges and associated processes and procedures apply equally to all users.		None identified
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)		As above		None identified
Disability	Physical		As above		None identified
	Sensory		As above		None identified
	Learning		As above		None identified
	Mental health issues		As above		None identified
	Other – <i>specify</i>		As above		None identified
Ethnicity ⁵	White		As above		None identified
	Black		As above		None identified
	Chinese		As above		None identified
	Mixed Ethnic Origin		As above		None identified
	Gypsies/ Travellers		As above		None identified
	Other – <i>please state</i>		As above		None identified
Language	English not first language		The charges and associated processes and procedures apply equally to all users.		None identified
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks		As above		None identified
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)		As above		None identified
Sex	Men		As above		None identified

⁵ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian (Asian or Asian British), African, Caribbean, Other Black (Black or Black British), White and Black African, White and Asian, White and Black Caribbean (Mixed), British, Irish, Other White (White), Chinese, Other (Other Ethnic Group).

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
	Women		As above		None identified
Gender Reassignment ⁶	Transgender/ Transsexual		As above		None identified
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian		As above		None identified
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership		As above		None identified

10. If you have identified any negative impacts (above) how can they be minimised or removed?

- No but It is possible that residents served by private drinking water supplies may be on low incomes. In recognition of this and the significant impact water supply can have on health, there is a concession to persons in receipt of means tested benefits with the sampling fee being waived. This, in itself has a positive impact as there is no legal requirement for owners and users of private supplies serving single domestic households to test their supplies and to maintain them in a safe and wholesome condition – this should therefore encourage people to come forward and request sampling

11. Could the policy discriminate⁷ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly⁸? **No**

⁶ The protected characteristic of gender reassignment is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as “a person proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.” This is a personal process that may involve medical interventions such as counselling, psychotherapy, hormone therapy or surgery, but does not have to. NB: It is generally held that transgender people disguise their features or clothing to resemble their preferred sex, whereas transsexual people wish to change their body to completely resemble their preferred sex.

⁷ The Council has a general duty to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their 'protected characteristic' whether on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity; religion or belief; sex (gender), sexual orientation, or marriage and civil partnership. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would nevertheless disadvantage people on the grounds of their 'protected characteristic'.

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

12. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
No negative impacts have been identified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

13. Name and job title of person completing this form:

- Belinda Silkstone Environmental Protection Manager

14. Date of completion:

- January 2018

15. Date for update or review of this screening:

- January 2021

⁸ If you answer 'yes' to question 11 (above) you will need to complete this section *and* go on to complete Section 2 in order to conduct a full Equality Impact Assessment.