

# Equality Impact Assessment

**Service Area:** Customer Focus

**Head of Service:** Sarah Higgins

**Lead Officer:** Julie Dark

**Date of Assessment:** 28/09/2023

**Person responsible for completing the assessment:** Sarah Higgins

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**Name of policy/function/project/service area to be assessed:** Council Tax

**Brief description of proposal to be assessed:** Introduction of Council Tax Exemption for Care Leavers

**Proposed implementation date of project/proposal:** 1st October 2023

## Brief description of the anticipated outcomes of the proposal:

Provision	Current Arrangement	Proposed Arrangement	Comment
Council Tax Exemption for Care Leavers up to age 25	NDC can apply Exceptional hardship funds to those care leavers who qualify for benefits/Council Tax Reduction	The exemption would apply to all care leavers up to the age of 25	Similar schemes are being rolled out across all Devon districts

## Impact:

Summarise any positive impacts or benefits, any negative impacts (i.e. potential for discrimination, disadvantage or disproportionate treatment) and any neutral impacts and the evidence you have taken into account to reach this conclusion. Be aware that there may be positive, negative and neutral impacts within each characteristic. (NOTE: please refer to the Equality Strategy for the characteristics) Where an impact is unknown, state so, and identify what steps will be taken to address any gaps in data:

Care leavers face the challenge of having to cope with the demands of living on their own at a young age: having to manage finances, maintain a home and manage their lives independently, without the support from families. Whilst not mitigating the impact of all of the disadvantages that care leavers have experienced, a council tax exemption can assist care leavers to overcome them. By providing a discretionary council tax exemption, the Council will be providing financial support to care leavers whilst they develop independent lives and life skills. Being a care leaver is not considered to be a protected characteristic, however care leavers living within North Devon may have one or more protected characteristic. It is proposed that this exemption will be applied to all care leavers up to the age of 25 and looked after by Devon County Council, therefore it is felt to have a neutral impact on most areas of interest.

### **Consideration of Alternatives:**

**Describe what alternatives have been considered and/or what actions will be taken to remove or minimise any potential negative effect identified above (attach evidence or provide link to appropriate data, reports, etc):**

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### **Consultation:**

**Brief description of any consultation with stakeholders and summarise how it has influenced the proposal. Please attach evidence or provide link to appropriate data or reports:**

The schemes across districts in Devon are being adopted with close consultation with Devon County Council.

### **Funding Considerations:**

From April 2024 the scheme will be funded by the overall Council Tax collection fund.

**Date approved by Head of Service:** 01/09/2023

### **Reporting and Publication:**

**Equality Impact Assessments will be published on North Devon Council's website.**

**The completion of an Equality Impact Assessment is an ongoing process. Impacts will be continually reviewed during projects and the decision making process and the Assessment will be updated accordingly and published.**

**A further assessment will also be undertaken between 6 to 12 months following the implementation of the policy, project, decision or service change has been implemented.**

**Please also confirm the date on which you will be re-considering the project/report and submitting a further EIA if applicable.**

N/A

**Monitoring Arrangements:**

**Briefly describe the monitoring arrangements/systems that will be put in place to monitor the effects of this proposal.**

All information and data regarding this scheme will be held as per our data retention policy

**Date approved by Head of Service:** 09/10/2023

**Corporate and Community Services Use Only:** Date of publication to NDC Website: 10/10/2023