



## Equality Impact Assessment

### What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and why does the County Council do them?

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) is an obligation within the [Equality Act 2010](#) ("the Act"), which asks public authorities, like Hampshire County Council, to give 'due regard' to equality considerations, in particular to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation 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.

This includes assessing the impact of policies and practices on individuals and communities with a protected characteristic, as defined in the Act and some other specific groups. The County Council uses EIAs to ensure it has paid 'due regard' to equalities considerations when there are changes to a service or policy, a new project or certain decisions.

EIA author	Position & Department	Contact
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Title:	Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Household Support Fund Extension October 2022
Related EIAs:	EIA Number: 252, 163

EIA for Savings Programme:	No
Service affected	Support provided to vulnerable households through the Connect4Communities programme
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	The Household Support Fund is a continuation of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) provision of funding to Local Authorities to provide financial support for food, water and energy bills this winter. It is aimed at Children, families, individuals and pensioners who are vulnerable or find themselves in financial hardship being impacted by the inflationary challenges and the cost of living. Hampshire County Council (HCC) will work with a wide variety of partners and other organisations and support the development and delivery of a range of initiatives to support those most vulnerable.
New/changed service/policy/project	The DWP will provide a further £7.1m funding to HCC to support vulnerable households with costs of food, energy, water bills and housing costs between October 2022 - March 2023. The grant conditions do not ringfence proportions of the funding for specific cohorts, however there is a requirement for at least a part of local schemes to operate on an application basis. Working with schools, colleges and early years providers the proposed programme will deliver financial support to a wide range of vulnerable families between October 2022 and March 2023. Through grant funding, the programme will also support the development and delivery of a range of community led projects to meet local needs across Hampshire. A variety of initiatives have been identified working with our local community partners.

Engagement
A variety of stakeholders have been consulted so that existing local provision and need can be identified, risks in respect of duplication of funding can be addressed and emerging ideas validated or challenged. This has included engagement with Adult Health and Care, Community Pantries, Citizens Advice Service and District Councils.

## Age

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>Children, families, individuals and pensioners who are vulnerable or find themselves in financial hardship: this programme, with support from signposting agencies, will help to identify and support those people to ensure they have access to food and heating this winter, as well as other basics such as cooking facilities, bedding or other essentials to keep warm this winter.</p> <p>Discretionary funding allocated to over 600 schools, colleges and early years settings is not means tested, so settings can support families they recognise as being in need. Schools will receive additional funding to address the increased cost of school meals for benefits-related free school meal eligible children.</p> <p>Food vouchers will be awarded to over 500 Hampshire Foster Carers supporting some of Hampshire's most vulnerable children.</p>
Mitigation	

## Disability

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>According to the Office of National Statistics in October 2022, over half (55%) of disabled adults reported finding it difficult to afford their energy bills, and around a third</p>

(36%) found it difficult to afford their rent or mortgage payments compared with 40% and 27% of non-disabled people, respectively.

Children, families, individuals and pensioners with disabilities who are vulnerable or find themselves in hardship can via this programme and with signposting from agencies, be identified and helped to ensure they have access to food and heating this winter, as well as other basics which may be identified such as cooking facilities, bedding or other essentials.

There are currently 670 children open to the Council's Disabled Children's Team and 2,000 Gateway Card holders, who may receive support via our social care teams or from working with provider organisations to deliver direct support.

Adults with disabilities who have met the threshold for support from Adult Health and Care social care teams may benefit from this grant. There are around 6,500 adults with disabilities open to social care that are not in residential accommodation and just over 500 who do not have any care provision in place.

Mitigation

## Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.
Mitigation	

## Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.
Mitigation	

## Race

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>According to the Office of National Statistics in October 2022, around two-thirds (69%) of Black or Black British adults and (59%) Asian or Asian British adults reported finding it difficult to afford their energy bills, compared with around 4 in 10 (44%) white adults.</p> <p>Community grants will provide opportunities for organisations working within ethnic minority communities to apply for funds to provide support. Additionally, through delivery partners and the communications planned, we can raise awareness of the connect4communities programme and signpost ethnic minority households to the support being offered.</p>
Mitigation	

## Religion or Belief

Impact on public	Neutral

Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.
Mitigation	

## Sex

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.
Mitigation	

## Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.

Mitigation

## Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.</p>
Mitigation	

## Poverty

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>The Office for National Statistics reported in October 2022 that the proportion of all adults finding it difficult to afford their energy bills, rent or mortgage payments has increased through the year: almost half of adults (45%) who paid energy bills (compared with 40% in March to June 2022) and 30% (compared with 26% March to June 2022) paying rent or mortgages reported these being difficult to afford.</p> <p>Children, families, individuals and pensioners who are vulnerable or find themselves in financial hardship: this programme, with support from signposting agencies, will help to identify and support those people to ensure they have access to food and heating this winter, as well as other basics such as cooking facilities, bedding or other essentials to keep warm this winter.</p> <p>Exceptional housing support where existing schemes do not meet the need, may be available via District Councils.</p>

Mitigation	

## Rurality

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.</p> <p>It is the intention to work with community organisations in all Hampshire districts to ensure there is a means to apply for support. Additionally, community grants can be applied for by organisations across the county.</p>
Mitigation	

Geographical Impact:All Hampshire

## Equality Statement

### Additional information:

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Household Support Fund extension is targeted towards members of the public. There is no specific delivery aimed at staff, or required changes to working practices for our staff, therefore the impact for staff has been assessed as neutral.

### Overview Statement:

Assessment to show that due regard has been given and that there is no requirement for a full EIA:



