



Equality Impact Assessment

Preliminary assessment form v5 / 2013

www.portsmouth.gov.uk

The preliminary impact assessment is a quick and easy screening process. It should:

- identify those policies, projects, services, functions or strategies which require a full EIA by looking at:
 - negative, positive or no impact on any of the equality groups
 - opportunity to promote equality for the equality groups
 - data / feedback
- prioritise if and when a full EIA should be completed
- justify reasons for why a full EIA is not going to be completed

Directorate:

Director of Children's social care

**Function e.g. HR,
IS, carers:**

Financial Assessment & Benefits

Title of policy, service, function, project or strategy (new or old) :

Means Testing Assessment Policy for Adoption, Special Guardianship, Child Arrangement & Residence Orders

Type of policy, service, function, project or strategy:

☐

Existing

☐

New / proposed

☒

Changed

Q1 - What is the aim of your policy, service, function, project or strategy?

The current financial support and assessment processes applied by the Financial Assessments and Benefits (FAB) team, on behalf of Children's Social Care, have not been reviewed or updated for a number of years. The current assessment processes are complicated and have developed and evolved with the different care orders. The current means testing assessments processes applied by the FAB team are also not consistent with those that they apply to Adult Services; as the Children's assessments exclude capital thresholds.

The proposed means testing assessment policy has been updated and revised to ensure consistency, fairness, transparency as well as compliance with the relevant regulations and guidance. For the purpose of this policy the Council has applied principles from the standardised means test model - as issued by the Department for Education Skills and The Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) Regulations 2014; which is consistent with the process applied in Adult Services.

Q2 - Who is this policy, service, function, project or strategy going to benefit or have a detrimental effect on and how?

The proposed means testing assessment policy will apply to all carers subject to an Adoption Special Guardianship, Child Arrangement or Residence Order who are eligible to receive financial support from the Council.

The proposed policy seeks to ensure that financial support is awarded to those most in need and will benefit the families caring for children under one of the above types of care order.

Q3 - Thinking about each group below, does, or could the policy, service, function, project or strategy have a negative impact on members of the equality groups below?

Group	Negative	Positive / no impact	Unclear
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transgender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other excluded groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------------

If the answer is "negative" or "unclear" consider doing a full EIA

Q4 - Does, or could the policy, service, function, project or strategy help to promote equality for members of the equality groups?

Group	Yes	No	Unclear
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transgender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy or maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other excluded groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If the answer is "no" or "unclear" consider doing a full EIA

Q5 - Do you have any feedback data from the equality groups that influences, affects or shapes this policy, service, function, project or strategy?

Group	Yes	No	Unclear
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transgender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other excluded groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If the answer is "no" or "unclear" consider doing a full EIA

Q6 - Using the assessments in questions 3, 4 and 5 should a full assessment be carried out on this policy, service, function or strategy?

☐ yes ☒ No

Q7 - How have you come to this decision?

The proposed means testing assessment policy has been updated and revised to ensure consistency fairness, transparency as well as compliance with the relevant regulations and guidance. For the purpose of this policy the Council has applied principles from the standardised means test model - as issued by the Department for Education Skills and The Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) Regulations 2014; which is consistent with the process applied in Adult Services.

Portsmouth City Council already applies a means tested approach to financial support, this revised approach is to bring it in line with Adult Assessments and ensure transparent and equitable approach to all families requiring financial support looking after Portsmouth's vulnerable children.

Further mitigating factors are as follows:

Every family affected by this proposed change has already been assessed by Children's Services and will be re-assessed at appropriate periods. Every family will be visited from our Financial Assessment and Benefits (FAB) staff to explain in detail how these changes will affect them individually. At those visits the FAB staff:

- Act on behalf of the City Council as a whole to identify any problems or opportunities and either signpost clients to appropriate services or call on the necessary services as needed.
- Identify and claim any benefits or other income that the client may be entitled to, including making the claims on their behalf for benefits administered by the City Council and other agencies such as the Department of Work & Pensions.
- Calculate how much financial support they are entitled to, using accurate up to date figures and ensuring a clear comparison between assessment processes is detailed and evidenced to show the financial impact for them.

Additionally, transitional protection arrangements will be put in place, for a period of time after the implementation of this new policy, to mitigate the impact for those carers whose new assessment would lead to a reduction in their weekly level of financial support. This will allow them time to adjust to the new levels of weekly financial support.

If you have to complete a full EIA please contact the Equalities and diversity team if you require help
Tel: 023 9283 4789 or email: equalities@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Q8 - Who was involved in the EIA?

Richard Webb, Finance Manager Education, Children & Regulatory Services
Kelly Redman, Team Lead - Financial Assessments, Income and Recovery

This EIA has been approved by: Sarah Newman

Contact number: x1161

Date: 07/02/2017

Please email a copy of your completed EIA to the Equality and diversity team. We will contact you with any comments or queries about your preliminary EIA.

Telephone: 023 9283 4789

Email: equalities@portsmouthcc.gov.uk