



(4)	<p><b>What outcomes are expected from this policy / function?</b></p> <p>Provision of correct council tax bills produced in a timely manner, Offering taxpayers alternative methods of payment, The collection of revenue for the Council, A high rate of collection.</p>
(5)	<p><b>What factors / forces could contribute to / detract from the outcomes?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislation,</li> <li>• Systems,</li> <li>• Staff Training,</li> <li>• Access to the Service (customers can experience difficulties in contacting the office at busy times, also limited opening times for phone lines),</li> <li>• Lack of information from customers regarding their circumstances,</li> <li>• Backlogs and peaks of work.</li> </ul>
(6)	<p><b>Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy / function?</b></p> <p>Barnsley MBC, Tax payers, Fire, Police, Parishes</p>
(7)	<p><b>Who implements the policy and who is responsible for the policy / function?</b></p> <p>Dave Whittingham, Taxation Manager</p>
(8)	<p><b>Is there any monitoring data available? (e.g. results from consultations, surveys, focus groups)</b></p> <p>There was no previous research or reports specific to the Service. But the 2001 census profile gives information on the make-up of Barnsley.</p>
(9)	<p>Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact on <b>ethnic groups</b>? <b>Yes</b> Please explain:</p> <p>The differential impact is on the non-english speaking groups, all bills and documentation are in English and we do not provide guidance on where/how to obtain these in alternative formats.</p> <p><i>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</i> Information provided by the Senior Council Tax Officer. Viewed a council tax bill.</p>

<p>(10)</p>	<p>Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to <b>gender</b>? <b>No</b> Please explain:</p> <p>There would be no differential impact due to an individual's gender. Gender is irrelevant, council tax is a property-based tax and is charged on each dwelling.</p> <p><i>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</i> Discussions with the Senior Council Tax Officer.</p>
<p>(11)</p>	<p>Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to <b>disability</b>? <b>Yes</b> Please explain:</p> <p>The function aims to have a positive impact on people with certain disabilities in accordance with their needs and where discretion is allowed within legislation. Council Tax bills may be reduced where a property has certain features that meet the particular needs of a disabled person.</p> <p>Also, the service can send out visiting officers to assist people in completing forms if this is required.</p> <p><i>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</i> As above.</p>
<p>(12)</p>	<p>Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to <b>sexual orientation</b>? <b>No</b> Please explain:</p> <p>The service would be unaware of an individual's sexual orientation.</p> <p><i>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</i> Discussions with the Senior Council Tax Officer.</p>
<p>(13)</p>	<p>Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to <b>age</b>? <b>No</b> Please explain:</p> <p>Council tax is payable for each dwelling by the resident and in some circumstances the non-resident owners. A resident is someone aged 18 or over. There would be no differential impact due to the age of a resident, there are several discounts residents can apply for, but they must be able to fulfil the criteria set down in legislation.</p> <p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? Discussions with the Senior Council Tax Officer. Council tax procedures.</p>

<p>(14)</p>	<p>Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to <b>religion</b> or <b>belief</b>? <b>No</b> Please explain:</p> <p>There is no need to ask for this information. Although within council tax legislation members of a religious community who have no income or capital may be disregarded for Council Tax purposes.</p> <p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? Council tax procedures.</p>
<p>(15)</p>	<p>Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact on people due to them having <b>dependants/caring responsibilities</b>? <b>Yes</b> Please explain:</p> <p>The function takes into account people with these responsibilities, dependent on their circumstances, but again this is in accordance with the discounts, reliefs and rebates that are offered within legislation.</p> <p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? Council tax procedures.</p>
<p>(16)</p>	<p>Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact due to their <b>offending past</b>? <b>Yes</b> Please explain:</p> <p>The service would generally be unaware of an individual's offending past. But under council tax legislation people in detention are disregarded for council tax purposes during the period they are detained in prison. Although the disregard does not apply to prisoners serving a sentence for non-payment of council tax or fines.</p> <p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? Discussions with the Senior Council Tax Officer. Council tax procedures</p>
<p>(17)</p>	<p>Are there any concerns that the policy/function could have a differential impact on <b>Trans</b> people? <b>No</b> Please explain:</p> <p>Council tax officers would be unaware of whether an individual is transgendered or transsexual. This would have no bearing on the charge.</p> <p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? Discussions with the Senior Council Tax Officer.</p>

(18)	<p>Could the differential impact identified in 8–16 amount to there being the <b>potential</b> for adverse impact in this policy or function? <b>No</b> Please explain:</p> <p>We found the service to have some differential impacts on the equality target groups, but only in accordance with legislation and this does not amount to there being an adverse impact in the function.</p> <p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this? Discussions with the Senior Council Tax Officer.</p>
(19)	<p>Are the differential impacts caused by unlawful discrimination?</p> <p>The function satisfies all current legislative requirements.</p>
(20)	<p><b>Findings</b></p> <p>Council Tax policy and procedures are very much governed by legislation. People don't apply to this service for council tax, it is mandatory and we have a duty to collect the taxes due by each chargepayer. Many households do not have to pay the standard amount of Council Tax because certain discounts and exemptions may vary the amount of Council Tax charged. For households or individuals to receive these discounts or exemptions they must fulfill various criteria that are set within legislation.</p>
(21)	<p><b>Action Points</b></p> <p>To undertake a review of all correspondence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard letters are produced in font size 12 'Times New Roman' style. This is a small typeface and may not be appropriate for all, particularly our customers with visual impairments.</li> <li>• Update the content where necessary of the discount and exemption application forms and the procedure manual, the wording in some paragraphs is a little inappropriate and could unintentionally offend some individuals.</li> </ul> <p>Also, to include diversity procedures within the council tax procedure manual. This could include guidance for staff on when an interpreter is needed and what to do when a customer asks for leaflets or documents in a language other than English.</p>
<p>Completed by: N Stephenson <span style="float: right;">Date: 25/5/07</span></p>	