

Customer Access Review – Full Assessment

Assessment details		
Assessment area		Private Sector Housing Discretionary Assistance Policy
Date of assessment		October 2020
Directorate and Service		Strategic Directorate (External Services), Housing Services
Manager		Peter Dosad
Officer conducting assessment		Jackie Pye
Step 1: Scoping the assessment		
1	What are the aims and objectives of the activity or proposal?	To ensure Dartford Borough residents are able to access discretionary assistance to enable them to live safely and securely in their own homes and to provide a clear and transparent policy for doing so.
2	Who will be affected?	All eligible Dartford Borough residents.
3	How does the activity or proposal contribute to: a) any key performance indicators? b) policies, values or objectives of Dartford Borough Council?	To positively impact on residents lives by helping them to live independently. The Policy relates to the Council’s Corporate Plan 2017-20 strategic aim to facilitate quality, choice and diversity in the housing market, to create strong and self-reliant communities and deliver high quality services to service users, and the strategic objective of meeting the housing needs in the borough.
4	Which aspects of the activity or proposal are dictated by legislation/regulation and where do we have discretion in how they are delivered?	<p>The Council has a power under the Regulatory Reform Order (Housing Assistance). The Order provides local authorities with a general permissive power to assist households with the improvement of living conditions. The issuing of grants and services is discretionary where resources allow. The grants are non-means tested and non-repayable.</p> <p>The Policy is tenure neutral so households across all tenures can apply. Ultimately it is the applicants’ choice which scheme within the policy they apply to.</p>

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Step 2: Information collection

Note: Equality and Diversity information for Dartford can be found at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-and-data/Facts-and-figures-about-Kent/equality-and-diversity-data>

5	<p>What do you know about the groups of people who will be affected? i.e. demographic information in relation to the protected characteristic groups (age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment)</p>	<p>The policy affects any resident who would qualify for assistance under the terms of the policy in relation to the type of grant being provided. However, it is likely to mainly affect elderly or disabled residents.</p> <p>There is no single measure of disability. Using the broadest definition (2011 Census) 14,735 residents in Dartford (15.1%), have a health problem or disability which limits their day-to-day activities. Of this, 6,621 residents or 44.9% of those with long term health problem or disability have their day to day activities limited a lot.</p> <p>The Council does not have a waiting list for Discretionary Grants and cases are processed as quickly as possible.</p>
6	<p>What consultation has taken place with affected groups? Please describe who was consulted and the key findings</p>	<p>As grants are administered on an ad hoc basis and referrals can be made by other agencies and directly by residents, therefore no formal consultation has taken place.</p>
7	<p>Are there any gaps in information? If so, what additional research and/or consultation is needed to ensure that affected groups needs and views are taken into account?</p>	<p>No additional research required.</p> <p>Any future Policy revisions will include consulting the public/service users for their views.</p> <p>Information on applying for a Discretionary Grant will be available the Council's website as well as locally; particularly via the local Home Improvement Agency (HIA), social services and GP surgeries. The HIA has a Punjabi speaking Officer. The Council can also access a translation service if necessary.</p>

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		Additional information/promotional work is planned including awareness training for staff in other Agencies/Organisations and improvements to the Council's website.			
Step 3: Assessing the equality impact					
8	<p>Consider whether the activity or proposal has or will have any positive or negative equality impacts on the protected characteristic groups in relation to the following aims of the General Equality Duty:</p> <p>a) tackling unlawful discrimination b) promoting equality of opportunity c) promoting good relations</p> <p><u>NOTES:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Initial Screening will have identified which aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty are relevant to the activity or proposal for consideration • For existing activities, consider how they are working in practice for each relevant protected group • For new proposals, consider whether there is anything that could give rise to positive and negative equality impacts for each relevant protected group • If there is no identified equality impact, please tick the 'No Impact' box and explain why in question 9 • If the equality impact is unclear, please tick the 'Unknown' box and explain why in question 9 				
		POSITIVE IMPACTS	NEGATIVE IMPACTS	NO IMPACT	UNKNOWN
a	Age	The provision of grants and services is available to all residents regardless of age and so enables people of all ages to live safely and securely in their own home.	None identified	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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b	Disability	All grants are for the benefit of all residents, including those with a disability. People with hearing and sight impairments are able to request information about the service in alternative formats (e.g. Braille and Audio Tape) as part of our corporate policy.	None identified	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	Gender (including reassignment)	Not applicable	None identified	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	Race	Non-English speaking groups are able to request translated information about the service and we can provide interpreters. The HIA also has a Punjabi speaking Officer	None identified	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e	Religion/Belief	The timing of any works will be arranged with the applicants co-operation so any religious/faith holidays to be taken into account		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f	Sexual Orientation	Not applicable	None identified	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g	Pregnancy/Maternity	Not applicable	None identified	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	If 'no impact' or 'unknown' was selected, please explain	All grants and services will be provided regardless of the addition of any other protected characteristic.			
10	If DBC works with partners to deliver the activity or proposal, please describe circumstances that could give rise to positive/negative equality impacts between different groups	None identified.			
11	Any other comments	None			

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Step 4: Action plan					
11. Based on the information in Steps 1 and 2, please list the actions that will be taken to address:					
a) any gaps in information and consultation					
b) how any negative impacts on equality will be mitigated or eradicated					
a) If additional information and/or consultation is required or the impact is still unclear, what actions will you put in place to gather the information you need?					
Information needs	Action	Intended outcome	Date for completion	How this will be monitored	Responsible officer
None					
b) If any negative impacts on equality were found, what actions will you put in place to mitigate or eradicate these impacts?					
Identified impacts (and who is affected)	Action	Intended outcome	Date for completion	How this will be monitored	Responsible officer
None					

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Step 5: Decision making and future monitoring		
13	Which decision making process does this Customer Access Review need to go through? i.e. who does this need to be approved by?	Relevant Director
14	How will you continue to monitor the impact of the activity or proposal on the equality groups?	New assessments will be undertaken as and when the policy is significantly updated or reviewed.
15	When will you review this Customer Access Review?	As required or in 2 years.
Step 6: Final steps		
16	Once this Customer Access Review has been approved, send this assessment to the Policy & Projects Officer	
17	If the subject of the Customer Access Review is going to committee, summarise your findings in the committee report	
18	Implement the actions identified from this Customer Access Review and ensure progress is monitored and recorded	