

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM INCLUDING SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

(Revised March 2021)

Please refer to the current Equality Impact Assessment guidance when completing this document. If you would like further guidance please contact the Diversity and Inclusion Team on 01443 444529.

An equality impact assessment **must** be undertaken at the outset of any proposal to ensure robust evidence is considered in decision making. This documentation will support the Council in making informed, effective and fair decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010.

This document will also contribute towards our duties to create a More Equal Wales within the

- Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act 2015.

The [‘A More Equal Wales – Mapping Duties’](#) guide highlights the alignment of our duties in respect of the above-mentioned legislation.

SECTION 1 – PROPOSAL DETAILS

Lead Officer: Lisa Kidner

Service Director: Andrea Richards

Service Area: Catering Services, Education & Inclusion Services

Date: 11.11.23

1.a) What are you assessing for impact?

| Strategy/Plan | Service Re-Model/Discontinuation of Service | Policy/Procedure | Practice | Information/Position Statement |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

1.b) What is the name of the proposal?

Continuation of free breakfast club provision in primary and special schools, with the introduction of a charge for the additional childcare element.

1.c) Please provide an overview of the proposal providing any supporting links to reports or documents.

The Council is facing significant financial challenges into the medium term and is considering a range of options to contribute to addressing the shortfall in funding.

The purpose of the report is to seek permission to consult on the introduction of a charge for the additional childcare element, which is available prior to the commencement of free breakfast club provision in primary and special schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf, noting eligible Free School Meal (eFSM) pupils would be exempt from any charge.

To note the proposal would generate additional income which would be ring fenced and reinvested back into school budgets.

1.d) Please outline where delivery of this proposal is affected by legislation or other drivers such as code of practice.

Section 88 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, places a duty on a local authority to provide free breakfasts on each school day for learners at a primary school it maintains. Local authorities have the flexibility to decide the form of the breakfast content subject to compliance with the Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards and Requirements) (Wales) 2013 (Healthy Eating Regulations), which regulate food and drink provided in maintained schools.

1.e) Please outline who this proposal affects:

- Service users
- Employees
- Wider community

SECTION 2 – SCREENING TEST – IS A FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIRED?

Screening is used to determine whether the initiative has positive, negative or neutral impacts upon protected groups. Where negative impacts are identified for protected groups then a full Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Please provide as much detail as possible of how the proposal will impact on the following groups, this may not necessarily be negative, but may impact on a group with a particular characteristic in a specific way.

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and foster good relations between different groups. Please take an intersectional approach in recognising an individual may have more than one protected characteristic.

| <u>Protected Characteristics</u> | Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts | Provide detail of the impact | What evidence has been used to support this view? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age (<i>Specific age groups i.e. young people or older people</i>) | Negative | <p>The proposal could have a potential negative impact on primary age children, who attend breakfast club and their parents/carers.</p> <p>The Council is continuing to provide a free breakfast club but if additional childcare is required before the free breakfast club starts, there will be a proposed charge. However, this charge may impact on the parents/carers of younger people for part of the session, as the pupils are 11 years of age or under.</p> <p>To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits. Advice and guidance can also be found on the RCT CBC website.</p> | <p>All Primary age children are eligible to attend free breakfasts clubs, therefore, the age profile of children attending is 3-11 years.</p> <p>Approximately one third (33.25%) of households in RCT have at least one dependent child of primary school age. Total households: 78,324 (Census, 2021).</p> <p>6.63% of households in RCT (15,611) are comprised of no adults or one adult with at least one child of primary school age (Census, 2021).</p> |

| <u>Protected Characteristics</u> | Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts | Provide detail of the impact | What evidence has been used to support this view? |
|--|--|--|---|
| | | | |
| <p>Disability <i>(people with visible and non-visible disabilities or long-term health conditions)</i></p> | <p>Negative</p> | <p>The proposal may have a negative impact on the parents/carers, with a disability / long-term health condition, of primary age children due to possible financial hardship. However, if learners are eligible to free school meals they will be able to access the additional childcare for free prior to the start of the breakfast club provision which free to all learners.</p> <p>To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits. Advice and guidance can also be found on the RCT CBC website.</p> | |

| <u>Protected Characteristics</u> | Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts | Provide detail of the impact | What evidence has been used to support this view? |
|---|---|--|--|
| | | | |
| Gender Reassignment <i>(anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex they were assigned at birth including non-binary identities)</i> | Neutral | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. |
| Marriage or Civil Partnership <i>(people who are married or in a civil partnership)</i> | Neutral | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. |
| Pregnancy and Maternity <i>(women who are pregnant/on maternity leave)</i> | Neutral | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. |
| Race <i>(ethnic and racial groups i.e. minority ethnic groups, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers)</i> | Neutral | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. |
| Religion or Belief <i>(people with different religions and philosophical beliefs)</i> | Neutral | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. |

| <u>Protected Characteristics</u> | Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts | Provide detail of the impact | What evidence has been used to support this view? |
|--|---|--|--|
| <i>including people with no beliefs)</i> | | | |
| Sex <i>(women and men, girls and boys)</i> | Neutral | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. |
| Sexual Orientation <i>(bisexual, gay, lesbian, straight)</i> | Neutral | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. |

In addition, due to Council commitments made to the following groups of people we would like you to consider impacts upon them:

| | Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts | Provide detail of the impact | What evidence has been used to support this view? |
|--|---|--|--|
| Armed Forces Community <i>(anyone who is serving, has served, family members and the bereaved)</i> | Neutral | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. | It is considered that the proposal will have no direct impact on people who share this characteristic. |

| | | | |
|--|-----------------|--|---|
| <p>Carers <i>(anyone of any age who provides unpaid care)</i></p> | <p>Negative</p> | <p>The proposal could possibly impact on carers, if the parents/carers of primary age children who are not efsm cannot afford this service, which could put additional pressures on them.</p> <p>However, learners that are eligible to efsm will be able to access the additional childcare element free of charge prior to the start of the free breakfast club provision.</p> <p>To mitigate this impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits. Advice and guidance can also be found on the RCTCBC website.</p> <p>Carers will also be entitled to their own assessment, which will help to mitigate against indirect hardship caused by any future decisions.</p> | <p>Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.</p> |
|--|-----------------|--|---|

If the initial screening test has identified negative impacts then a full equality impact assessment (section 4) **must** be undertaken. However, if after undertaking the above screening test you determine a full equality impact assessment is not relevant please provide an adequate explanation below:

N/A

Are you happy you have sufficient evidence to justify your decision?

Yes

No

Name: Andrea Richards

Position: Service Director for 21st Century Schools and Transformation

Date: 11.11.23

Please forward a copy of this completed screening form to the Diversity and Inclusion Team.

PLEASE NOTE – there is a separate impact assessment for Welsh Language. This must also be completed for proposals.

Section 3 Socio-economic Duty needs only to be completed if proposals are of a strategic nature or when reviewing previous strategic decisions. Definition of a 'strategic nature' is available on page 6 of the Preparing for the Commencement of the Socio-economic Duty Welsh Government Guidance.

SECTION 3 – SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY (STRATEGIC DECISIONS ONLY)

The Socio-economic Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently and put tackling inequality genuinely at the heart of key decision making. Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, leading to greater material deprivation, restricting the ability to access basic goods and services.

Please consider these additional vulnerable groups and the impact your proposal may or may not have on them:

- Single parents and vulnerable families
- Pensioners
- Looked after children
- Homeless people
- Students
- Single adult households

- People living in the most deprived areas in Wales
- People with low literacy and numeracy
- People who have experienced the asylum system
- People misusing substances
- People of all ages leaving a care setting
- People involved in the criminal justice system

| <u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u> | Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts | Provide detail of the impact | What evidence has been used to support this view? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Low Income/Income Poverty <i>(cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing, transport etc.)</i> | Neutral | <p>The impact of this proposal is likely to have a neutral impact on parents/carers of primary age children experiencing income poverty, as learners eligible to efsm will be able to access the additional childcare element free of charge prior to the commencement of the free breakfast club. This proposed change in essence will offer the same provision to efsm learners as they are currently accessing.</p> <p>To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits. Advice and guidance can also be found on the RCT CBC website.</p> | <p>In RCT, of 78,324 households with at least one child of primary school age, 45.49% are considered deprived in at least one dimension (Census, 2021).</p> <p>57.81% (9025) of households with no or one adult and at least one child of primary school age in RCT are considered deprived in at least one dimension (Census, 2021).</p> <p>Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.</p> |
| Low and / or No Wealth <i>(enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with</i> | Negative | The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on parents/carers of primary age children that are not efsm but have low or no wealth due | Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage. |

| <u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u> | Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts | Provide detail of the impact | What evidence has been used to support this view? |
|---|---|--|--|
| <i>any unexpected spends and no provisions for the future)</i> | | to the proposed enhanced childcare charge. To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits. Advice and guidance can also be found on the RCT CBC website. | |
| <u>Material Deprivation</u> <i>(unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, hobbies etc.)</i> | Negative | The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on parents/carers of primary age children who are not efsm as they may be unable to afford the proposed charge for childcare. To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits. Advice and guidance can also be found on the RCT CBC website. | Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage. |

| <u>Socio-economic disadvantage</u> | Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts | Provide detail of the impact | What evidence has been used to support this view? |
|---|---|---|--|
| <u>Area Deprivation</u> <i>(where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of public transport))</i> | Negative | The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on parents/carers of primary age children that are not efsm and may be unable to afford the proposed charge for childcare. To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits. Advice and guidance can also be found on the RCT CBC website. | Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage. |
| <u>Socio-economic background</u> <i>(social class i.e. parents education, employment and income)</i> | Negative | The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on parents/carers of primary age children that are not efsm and may be unable to afford the proposed charge for childcare. To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits. Advice and | Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage. |

| | | | |
|---|----------|--|--|
| | | guidance can also be found on the RCT CBC website. | |
| <p>Socio-economic disadvantage</p> <p><i>(What cumulative impact will the proposal have on people or groups because of their protected characteristic(s) or vulnerability or because they are already disadvantaged)</i></p> | Negative | <p>The impact of this proposal may have a negative impact on parents/carers of primary age children who are not efsm that may be unable to afford the proposed charge for childcare. To mitigate the impact the Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits. Advice and guidance can also be found on the RCT CBC website.</p> | <p>Although the in-work poverty rate for single parents in Wales (27%) is lower than the rest of the UK for the same period (30%), like the UK, single parents have the highest in-work poverty rate than all household types. Also, like the UK, single parents are more likely to be single mothers (Poverty in Wales, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, November 2020).</p> <p>Assessment of impact on service users during and following consultation stage.</p> |

SECTION 4 – FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

You should use the information gathered at the screening stage to assist you in identifying possible negative/adverse impacts and clearly identify which groups are affected.

- 4.a) In terms of disproportionate/negative/adverse impacts that the proposal may have on a protected group, outline the steps that will be taken to reduce or mitigate the impact for each group identified. **Attach a separate action plan where impacts are substantial.**

The proposal has a negative impact on eight disadvantaged groups highlighted in section 3, which includes age, disability, carers, Low and / or No Wealth, Material Deprivation, Area Deprivation, Socio-economic Background and Socio-Economic Disadvantage. A detailed action plan to reduce/mitigate these impacts will be collated during and following the consultation process. However, it is important to note that no charge will be made for the additional childcare provided for efsm learners prior to the start of the free breakfast clubs

To minimise the impact of an introduction of a charge on these groups, the Council will continue to provide the free breakfast session, free additional childcare for efsm learners and set the charge for the childcare element at a rate, which is substantially lower than comparable childcare rates charged by an external provider. The Council will continue to highlight the Cost of Living support and advice from the UK Government, which can be found on the GOV.UK website, i.e. Wales Fuel Support Scheme, income and disability benefits. Advice and guidance can also be found on the RCT CBC website.

- 4.b) If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible, please explain why they are not possible.

Not applicable.

- 4.c) Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning, in particular, the sources used for establishing the demographics of service users/staff.

Census 2021, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Schools PLASC data, iTrent

- 4.d) Give details of how you engaged with service users/staff on the proposals and the steps taken to avoid any disproportionate impact on a protected group. Explain how you have used feedback to influence your decision.

To be actioned following Cabinet's consideration of the proposal to consult, if approved.

4.e) Are you satisfied that the engagement process complies with the requirements of the Statutory Equality and Socio-economic Duties?

Yes

No

SECTION 5 – MONITORING AND REVIEW

5a) Please outline below how the implementation of the proposal will be monitored:

Following Cabinet's consideration to consult on the proposals, the impact assessment will be updated if approved and Cabinet will receive a further report on the outcome of the consultation in due course.

5b) When is the evaluation of the proposal due to be reviewed?

To be determined following Cabinet's final decision .

5c) Who is responsible for the monitoring and review of the proposal?

Director of Education & Inclusion Services

5d) How will the results of the monitoring be used to develop future proposals?

To be determined following Cabinet's final decision.

SECTION 6 – REVIEW

As part of the Impact Assessment process all proposals that fall within the definition of ‘Key Decisions’ must be submitted to the Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your proposal is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.

If this proposal is a Key Decision please forward your impact assessment to Councilbusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk for a Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. The EqlA guidance document provides more information on what a Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that you can demonstrate how you have considered equality and socio-economic outcomes. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below

| Officer Review Panel Comments | Date Considered | Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| | | |
| Consultation Comments | Date Considered | Brief description of any amendments made following consultation |
| | | |

SECTION 6 – SUMMARY OF IMPACTS FOR THE PROPOSAL

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment. This summary should be included in the equality and socio-economic impact section of the Cabinet report template. The impact assessment should be published alongside the report.

There are 8 negative and 9 neutral equality and diversity implications associated with this report. These risks will be mitigated by a range of actions as detailed in the impact assessment.

The impact assessment has been completed prior to any consultation being undertaken on the proposal. Should a consultation be initiated by Cabinet on the proposal, relevant feedback would be used to inform and update the impact assessment ahead of any financial decision being made in relation to this proposal.

SECTION 7 – AUTHORISATIONS

Lead Officer: Lisa Kidner, Business Manager Catering Services

Name: Andrea Richards

Position: Service Director of 21st Century Schools and Transformation

Date: 11.11.23

I recommend that the proposal:

- Is implemented with no amendments
- Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined
- Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on protected groups or socio-economic disadvantage

Head of Service/Director Approval: yes

Name: Gaynor Davies

Position: Director of Education & Inclusion Services

Date: 11.11.23

Please submit this impact assessment with any SLT/Cabinet Reports.