

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Benefits Advice Team Decommission

Reference: EIA000355

Date: 06/02/2024



 **RESET**

 **RESHAPE**

 **RESTART**

EIA Form – About your EIA

Reference number	EIA000355
Date Submitted	06/02/2024
Subject of the EIA	Benefits Advice Team Decommission
Brief description of the policy, service or function covered by the EIA	<p>The Benefit Advice Team (BAT) comprises of a team of three who work across Birmingham to provide a home visiting function for benefit take up. The team concentrates on disability related benefit take up and works with vulnerable clients to assist with benefit issues and concerns. The BAT team assist with the initial applications, mandatory reconsiderations and also support clients who need to attend tribunals. The team is funded by the Benefit Service but delivers outcomes for three Service areas via Service Level Agreement Contracts that cover three specific areas: Carers, Community Mental Health Trust and Homelessness services although there are a number of organisations and agencies that also refer to the team. The team has also assisted with additional enquires which covers a range of benefit issues, regarding eligibility, criteria and the claim process and offers home visit support to complete applications. They also advise and support many organisations with enquiries about benefits which ensure that they provide an integrated approach and a successful outcome for the clients. The team works with a range of organisations such as the Alzheimer's Society, The Stroke Association and Community Mental teams. The take up of these benefits has supported individuals to be able to stay in their homes with care and support, and not be moved into care. Supported in independent living reduces hospitalisation, gives additional income, more affordability, more personal choice and avoids homelessness. Overarching timeline for The proposed disbandment of the Benefits Advice Team functionality will have an influence on most of the protected characteristics, however we cannot tell if it is disproportionate for protected characteristics as very little, or no data is available. The BAT is impartial to all users of the service and offer assistance and support to anyone requesting their help regardless of their protected characteristics.</p>
Equality Assessment is in support of...	["Amended function"]
How frequently will you review impact and mitigation measures identified in this EIA?	Not required
Due date of the first review	2024-02-06



Directorate, Division & Service Area

Which directorate(s) are responsible for this EIA?	["Adults Social Care"]
Division	Revenues and Benefits
Service area	Benefits
Budget Saving	Yes

Officers

Responsible officer	Winston Mckenzie
Accountable officer	David Kinnair

Data Sources

Data sources	["Birmingham City Observatory data and insight"]
Data source details	Census 2021 Birmingham City Observatory BUDGET DELIVERY PLAN Carers Benefit Take Up 2022-23 Budget Delivery Plan 2023 BAT

Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic – Age

Does this proposal impact people due to their age as per the Equality Act 2010?	Yes
What age groups are impacted by your proposal?	["0-9 years", "10-19 years", "20-29 years", "30-39 years", "40-49 years", "50-59 years", "60-69 years", "70-79 years", "80-89 years", "90 years or over"]



<p>Please describe the impact to the age characteristic</p>	<p>The Benefits Advise Team if abolished will impact all age groups identified in the Equality Act 2010. However, we do not have sufficient qualitative or independent data to identify how this will affect this group in particular.</p> <p>There is some evidence in the data available that shows a high level of applicants applying for BAT assistance are of pension age (in receipt of pension credit, Attendance Allowance or SRP) as well as working age applicants (UC/PIP/ESA).</p> <p>There is insufficient qualitative or independent data to identify in more detail how this will affect this group in particular</p>
<p>How will you mitigate against any negative impact to the age characteristic?</p>	<p>There is no comprehensive data available from the application/visiting process or unless a full impact assessment is carried out for this characteristic, therefore we cannot identify specific mitigation for specific individuals/requirements.</p> <p>However, there is a general level of mitigation if the role and services provided by the Benefits advice team is delivered by other organisations such as CAB, DWP, Debt advice services, financial institutions, landlords, family members or carers, or self-assistance via online platforms.</p> <p>Signposting can also be used to mitigate the impact / decommissioning of the Benefit Advice Team</p>

Protected Characteristic – Disability

<p>Does this proposal impact those people with a disability as per the Equality Act 2010?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
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<p>Please describe the impact to the disability characteristic</p>	<p>The Benefits Advise Team if abolished will impact all disability groups identified in the Equality Act 2010, that may apply for BAT assistance or support. However, we do not have sufficient qualitative or objective data to identify how this will affect this group. There is evidence in the data available that shows a level of applicants applying for BAT assistance are in receipt of Carers Allowances, PIP/DLA /ESA or Attendance Allowance. These benefits are associated alongside disability and incapacity. Therefore, an inference can realistically be drawn that people with a disability are likely to be impacted by the removal of this function.</p> <p>There is insufficient qualitative or independent data to identify in more detail how this will affect this group in particular</p>
<p>How will you mitigate against any negative impact to the disability characteristic?</p>	<p>There is no comprehensive data available from the application/visiting process or unless a full impact assessment is carried out for this characteristic, therefore we cannot identify specific mitigation for specific individuals/requirements.</p> <p>However, there is a general level of mitigation if the role and services provided by the Benefits advice team is delivered by other organisations such as CAB, DWP, Debt advice services, financial institutions, landlords, family members or carers, or self-assistance via online platforms.</p> <p>Signposting can also be used to mitigate the impact / decommissioning of the Benefit Advice Team</p>

Protected Characteristic – Sex

<p>Does this proposal impact citizens based on their sex as per the Equality Act 2010?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>What sexes will be impacted by this proposal?</p>	<p>["Male", "Female", "Non-binary"]</p>



<p>Please describe the impact to the sex characteristic</p>	<p>The Benefits Advise Team if abolished will impact Male, Female & non-binary groups correspondingly as identified in the Equality Act 2010. However, we do not have sufficient qualitative or independent data to identify how the cessation of the BAT will affect this group in detail.</p> <p>There is insufficient qualitative or independent data to identify in more detail how this will affect this group in particular</p>
<p>How will you mitigate against any negative impact to the sex characteristic?</p>	<p>There is no comprehensive data available from the application/visiting process or unless a full impact assessment is carried out for this characteristic, therefore we cannot identify specific mitigation for specific individuals/requirements.</p> <p>However, there is a general level of mitigation if the role and services provided by the Benefits advice team is delivered by other organisations such as CAB, DWP, Debt advice services, financial institutions, landlords, family members or carers, or self-assistance via online platforms.</p> <p>Signposting can also be used to mitigate the impact / decommissioning of the Benefit Advice Team</p>

Protected Characteristic - Gender Reassignment

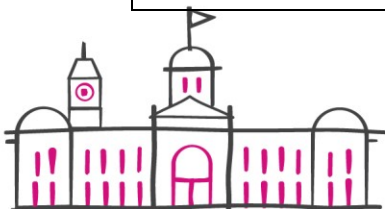
<p>Does this proposal impact people who are proposing to undergo, undergoing or have undergone a process to reassign one's sex as per the Equality Act 2010?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please describe the impact to the gender reassignment characteristic</p>	<p>The Benefits Advice Team if abolished will impact any person subject to gender reassignment as identified in the Equality Act 2010, as the scheme will no longer be in operation. However, we do not have sufficient qualitative or independent data to identify how this will affect this group in particular</p> <p>There is insufficient qualitative or independent data to identify in more detail how this will affect this group in particular</p>



<p>How will you mitigate against any negative impact to the gender reassignment characteristic?</p>	<p>There is no comprehensive data available from the application/visiting process or unless a full impact assessment is carried out for this characteristic, therefore we cannot identify specific mitigation for specific individuals/requirements.</p> <p>However, there is a general level of mitigation if the role and services provided by the Benefits advice team is delivered by other organisations such as CAB, DWP, Debt advice services, financial institutions, landlords, family members or carers, or self-assistance via online platforms.</p> <p>Signposting can also be used to mitigate the impact / decommissioning of the Benefit Advice Team</p>
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Protected Characteristic - Marriage and Civil Partnership

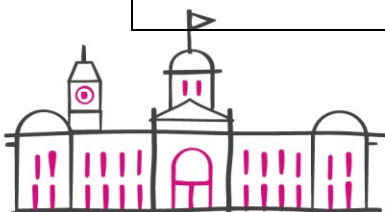
<p>Does this proposal impact people who are married or in a civil partnership as per the Equality Act 2010?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>What legal marital or registered civil partnership status will be impacted by this proposal?</p>	<p>["Surviving partner from civil partnership", "Widowed", "Formerly in a civil partnership now legally dissolved", "Divorced", "Separated, but still in a registered civil partnership", "Separated, but still married", "In a registered civil partnership: Same sex", "In a registered civil partnership: Opposite sex", "Never married and never registered a civil partnership", "Married: Same sex", "Married: Opposite sex", "Single"]</p>
<p>Please describe the impact to the marriage and civil partnership characteristic</p>	<p>The Benefits Advise Team if withdrawn will impact all the following categories "Single", "Never married and never registered a civil partnership", "Married: Same sex", "Married: Opposite sex", "In a registered civil partnership: Opposite sex", "In a registered civil partnership: Same sex", "Separated, but still married", "Separated, but still in a registered civil partnership", "Divorced", "Formerly in a civil partnership now legally dissolved", "Widowed", "Surviving partner from civil partnership" as identified in the Equality Act 2010, this is because the Benefits Advise Team will no longer be in operation to offer support or advice.</p> <p>There is insufficient qualitative or independent data to identify in more detail how this will affect this group in particular</p>



<p>How will you mitigate against any negative impact to the marriage and civil partnership characteristic?</p>	<p>There is no comprehensive data available from the application/visiting process or unless a full impact assessment is carried out for this characteristic, therefore we cannot identify specific mitigation for specific individuals/requirements.</p> <p>However, there is a general level of mitigation if the role and services provided by the Benefits advice team is delivered by other organisations such as CAB, DWP, Debt advice services, financial institutions, landlords, family members or carers, or self-assistance via online platforms.</p> <p>Signposting can also be used to mitigate the impact / decommissioning of the Benefit Advice Team</p>
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Protected Characteristic - Pregnancy and Maternity

<p>Does this proposal impact people covered by the Equality Act 2010 under the protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please describe the impact to the pregnancy and maternity characteristic</p>	<p>The Benefits Advise Team if withdrawn can potentially impact all person including those who are pregnant/ on maternity as identified in the Equality Act 2010, this is because the Benefits Advise Team will no longer be in operation to visit or offer advice</p> <p>There is insufficient qualitative or independent data to identify in more detail how this will affect this group in particular</p>
<p>How will you mitigate against any negative impact to the pregnancy and maternity characteristic?</p>	<p>There is no comprehensive data available from the application/visiting process or unless a full impact assessment is carried out for this characteristic, therefore we cannot identify specific mitigation for specific individuals/requirements.</p> <p>However, there is a general level of mitigation if the role and services provided by the Benefits advice team is delivered by other organisations such as CAB, DWP, Debt advice services, financial institutions, landlords, family members or carers, or self-assistance via online platforms.</p> <p>Signposting can also be used to mitigate the impact / decommissioning of the Benefit Advice Team</p>



Protected Characteristic - Ethnicity and Race

Does this proposal impact people due to their race as per the Equality Act 2010?	Yes
What ethnic groups would be impacted by this proposal?	["Western and Southern Europe", "Central and Eastern Europe", "Roma", "Gypsy or Irish Traveller", "Irish", "Latin American", "Arab", "Other Black", "Black British", "Caribbean", "White British", "Other White", "Bangladeshi", "Chinese", "Indian", "Pakistani", "African", "Other Asian"]
Please describe the impact to the ethnicity and race characteristic	<p>The Benefits Advise Team if abolished can impact all ethnicities and races as identified in the Equality Act 2010, this is because the scheme will no longer be in operation for visiting or for advice.</p> <p>There is insufficient qualitative or independent data to identify in more detail how this will affect this group in particular</p>
How will you mitigate against any negative impact to the ethnicity and race characteristic?	<p>There is no comprehensive data available from the application/visiting process or unless a full impact assessment is carried out for this characteristic, therefore we cannot identify specific mitigation for specific individuals/requirements.</p> <p>However, there is a general level of mitigation if the role and services provided by the Benefits advice team is delivered by other organisations such as CAB, DWP, Debt advice services, financial institutions, landlords, family members or carers, or self-assistance via online platforms.</p> <p>Signposting can also be used to mitigate the impact / decommissioning of the Benefit Advice Team</p>

Protected Characteristic - Religion or Beliefs

Does this proposal impact people's religion or beliefs as per the Equality Act 2010?	Yes
What religions could be impacted by this proposal?	["No religion", "Christian", "Buddhist", "Hindu", "Jewish", "Muslim", "Sikh"]



<p>Please describe the impact to the religion or beliefs characteristic</p>	<p>The Benefits Advise Team if abolished can impact based on religion or beliefs as identified in the Equality Act 2010, this is because the team will no longer be in operation to offer visits, support or advice to anyone who identifies with this group .</p> <p>There is insufficient qualitative or independent data to identify in more detail how this will affect this group in particular</p>
<p>How will you mitigate against any negative impact to the religion or beliefs characteristic?</p>	<p>There is no comprehensive data available from the application/visiting process or unless a full impact assessment is carried out for this characteristic, therefore we cannot identify specific mitigation for specific individuals/requirements.</p> <p>However, there is a general level of mitigation if the role and services provided by the Benefits advice team is delivered by other organisations such as CAB, DWP, Debt advice services, financial institutions, landlords, family members or carers, or self-assistance via online platforms.</p> <p>Signposting can also be used to mitigate the impact / decommissioning of the Benefit Advice Team</p>

Protected Characteristic - Sexual Orientation

<p>Does this proposal impact people's sexual orientation as per the Equality Act 2010?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>What sexual orientations may be impacted by this proposal?</p>	<p>["Straight or heterosexual", "Gay or lesbian", "Bisexual", "Pansexual", "Asexual", "Queer", "All other sexual orientations"]</p>
<p>Please describe the impact to the sexual orientation characteristic</p>	<p>The Benefits Advise Team if made obsolete can impact based on sexual orientation as identified in the Equality Act 2010, this is because the scheme will no longer be in operation for visiting or giving advice to anyone who identifies as belonging to this characteristic.</p> <p>There is insufficient qualitative or independent data to identify in more detail how this will affect this group in particular</p>



<p>How will you mitigate against any negative impact to the sexual orientation characteristic?</p>	<p>There is no comprehensive data available from the application/visiting process or unless a full impact assessment is carried out for this characteristic, therefore we cannot identify specific mitigation for specific individuals/requirements.</p> <p>However, there is a general level of mitigation if the role and services provided by the Benefits advice team is delivered by other organisations such as CAB, DWP, Debt advice services, financial institutions, landlords, family members or carers, or self-assistance via online platforms.</p> <p>Signposting can also be used to mitigate the impact / decommissioning of the Benefit Advice Team</p>
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Monitoring

<p>How will you ensure any adverse impact and mitigation measures are monitored?</p>	<p>As the BAT team will be permanently decommissioned and no longer form part of the Benefits Service Structure – there is no value in undertaking any further evaluation or monitoring of its function once approval is given</p>
<p>Officer responsible for monitoring impact and mitigation</p>	<p>Winston Mckenzie</p>

