

Screening/Scoping Pro Forma

Section	Revenues	Officer responsible for the screening/scoping	Donna Stacey
Name of Policy to be assessed	Business Rates	Date of Assessment	26/09/2008
		Is this a proposed new or existing policy/procedure/practice?	Existing
1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/procedure/practice?	Bill, account & recover Business Rates from businesses that helps the Borough, County, Parishes & Police to provide amenities and services		
2. Are there any associated or specific objectives of the policy/procedure/practice? Please explain.	Maximise revenue available to the Council Through levying of business rates to non-domestic properties. Maintain & improve systems to maximise debit to be collected as well as cash income – act as an agent for Central Government. Maximise collection balanced with customer needs.		
3. Who is intended to benefit from this policy and in what way?	All residents and businesses within the borough, to ensure optimum services through maximum collection.		
4. What outcomes are wanted from this policy/procedures/practice?	Maximum collection of business rates in most cost effective & efficient manner, while taking into account individual needs.		
5. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	Variety of different businesses with different needs. Outside factors & markets, both nationally & internationally, such as petrol increases and 'credit crunch' & recession all an effect on businesses and their ability to pay.		
6. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy?	Residents, Businesses, Councillors, Parish, Police, Bailiffs, Central Government, Valuation Office, Magistrates Court & County Council	7. Who implements the policy, and who is responsible for the policy?	This is as statutory service required by Central Government, to be 'actioned' by the Borough in accordance with legislation
8. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact on racial groups?	N	Please explain: Everyone who owns a business has to pay regardless of race. Race is not a criterion relevant to the setting or collection of the tax. Ensure that documentation can be made available in alternative languages on request.	
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	As this is a form of taxation, regulation by legislation, there are no discounts etc on grounds of race & payment obligations are the same.		
9. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a	N	Question not asked as irrelevant.	

differential impact due to gender?			
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Payable by male or female owners alike and no discounts etc, on grounds of gender.		
10. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to disability?		N	Question not asked as irrelevant. Ensure that documentation is available in alternative formats for those who are blind or partially sighted.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Payable by able bodied and disabled owners alike		
11. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?		N	Question not asked as irrelevant.
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Payable regardless as does not affect charge or collection		
12. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to their age?		N	Question not asked as irrelevant
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Payable by all owners whatever their age		
13. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to their religious belief?		N	Question not asked as irrelevant
What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	However, the business rates team consists of male & female officers who can be used where relevant to prevent offending a customer on grounds of religion.		
14. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them having dependants/caring responsibilities?		N	Question not asked as irrelevant

<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>Personal circumstances are not relevant to businesses and the collection of the rates</p>	
<p>15. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them have an offending past?</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Question not asked as irrelevant</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>This is not relevant to the setting or collection of the business rates.</p>	
<p>16. Are there concerns that the policy <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to them being Transgender or transsexual?</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Question not asked as irrelevant.</p>
<p>What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?</p>	<p>This does not affect the setting or collection of the charge.</p>	
<p>17. Could the differential impact identified in 8-16 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact in this policy/procedure/practice?</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Please explain</p>
<p>18. Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason?</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Please explain for each heading (questions 8-16) on a separate piece of paper. Businesses are non-personal entities & therefore the setting and collection of the rates is separate from the personal circumstances of those owning the businesses and liable for the rates. However, common sense and discretion does prevail in circumstances e.g. where the owner may be in a wheelchair and has difficulty getting into the offices, the property inspector could arrange to visit the business instead.</p>
<p>Business improvement</p> <p>19. Is there any concern that there</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Please explain</p>

are unmet needs in relation to any of the above groups?			
20. Does differential impact or unmet need cut across the equality strands (e.g. elder BME groups)?		N	Please explain
21. If yes, should the full EIA be conducted jointly with another service area/contractor/partner/agency?		N	Please explain
22. Is there a missed opportunity to improve your business in relation to any of the policies, procedures or practices to promote racial, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief equality?			As business rates suggests, this is a non-personal entity & therefore the equalities issues are no relevant to the actual businesses being charges. However, it may be worth considering how access to the Council could be improved with regards to equality. This could include promoting the language line and hearing loop facilities. Promote availability of visiting officers where applicable. Promote the existing electronic and on-line registration, amendment & payment facilities. Consider availability of leaflets etc in different languages or formats on request only, as not economically feasible to produce ad hoc.
23. Should the policy proceed to full equality impact assessment?	¥	N	
24. If No, are there any changes required to the policy to improve it around the equality agenda?	Y	N	Yes
			No
			Promote language line & hearing loop facilities. Promote availability of visiting officers for those who have difficulties visiting the office for Business rates purposes. Promote existing electronic and on-line registration, amendment and payment facilities. Consider availability of leaflets etc in different languages or formats on request

		only, as not economically feasible to produce ad hoc.	
--	--	---	--

Signed
(completing officer)

Date September 2008

Signed
(Head of Section) **Date**

Countersigned
(HR representative)

Date September 2008