

# Initial Screening- Corporate Debt Policy

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## Equality Impact Assessment – screening.

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**Name of Strategy/Policy:**

Corporate Debt Policy

**Date of Assessment:** 19/04/2010

**Is this a new or updated Policy?** New

**How is the Strategy/Policy finalised/adopted:**

Cabinet/Board  Delegated

**Lead Officer conducting the assessment:** Robin Bates

**Job Title:** Head of Revenues and Benefits

**Service area:** Revenues and Benefits

**Contact details:** 01604837119

**Others involved in the assessment:** Finance and Support and Housing.

**Identify what the activity is trying to achieve – why is the Policy/activity<sup>1</sup> required**

Creation of a policy to ensure that all monies due to the Council are collected efficiently, in accordance with legal requirements and using best practice.

**Purpose of the Policy/activity.**

Northampton Borough Council is continually working to address equality gaps wherever these may be found. The Council has come a long way and is very proud of the progress made but it recognises that it will need to continue to work hard to maintain its achievements and progress through the Equality Framework. The Council also acknowledges that in these difficult times, difficult decisions will have to be made. The Council has the ambition that by

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<sup>1</sup> Policy/activity in this context includes policies, services, strategies, functions, projects, plans, restructures, major events, etc

2013 it will be excellent in terms of public service. This includes priorities in the financial management of the Council.

**Identify the main beneficiaries or people affected by the issue**

The policy will affect all areas of the community that have overdue debts to the Council, including those liable due to arrears of:

Council Tax  
Business Rates  
Business improvement district levy  
Council Tenants  
Former Council Tenants  
Temporary and bed and breakfast accommodation  
Service Charges for leaseholders  
Re-chargeable repairs – current tenants  
Re-chargeable repairs – former tenants  
Housing benefit overpayments  
Sundry debts (i.e. Council services)

**What information exists already?**

Best practice available in relation to collection of debt and will be reviewed as part of creating the draft policy. Best practice associated with the collection of Housing Benefit overpayments (Key Lines of Enquiry from the Audit Commission) Best practice in the collection of rent arrears from the Audit Commission.

**Has any consultation been undertaken on this or related issue?**

Yes and will be outlined as part of a full equalities impact assessment, although the policy incorporates statutory obligations, considerations of fair debt practices (not increasing the total indebtedness) requirement of court orders, established best practice based on research completed elsewhere on communities akin to Northampton.

**Are any reports or other relevant documents available from our organisation or from partners or other sources?**

NBC Equalities level 3 self-assessment  
NBC Equalities level 3 peer review report  
Equalities Journey framework  
Examples of other Corporate Debt policies  
Vulnerable tenants policies etc.

**Which parts of the activity have the potential for adverse impact or to discriminate unlawfully?**

The policy, procedure or working practice may have a differential impact on people's race, religion/belief, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or caring responsibilities; which could be positive (it could benefit) or negative (it could disadvantage). The policy, procedure or working practice may also have a neutral impact (no consequences).

	<b>Positive Impact (✓)</b>	<b>Negative Impact (✓)</b>	<b>Neutral Impact (✓)</b>	<b>Reason for Impact</b>	<b>Details of People Impacted (e.g. BME community, wheelchair users, females etc)</b>	<b>Evidence (this may include statistics or data already collected)</b>	<b>Can any positive/negative impact be justified? Is it lawful? (e.g. positive action)</b>
<b>Race</b>	✓				Language Line	Vulnerability trigger	Preventative Action
<b>Religion/Belief</b>			✓				
<b>Disability</b>	✓				A clear route for vulnerable people to obtain help and advice	Vulnerability trigger	Preventative action
<b>Gender</b>			✓				
<b>Age</b>	✓				A clear route for vulnerable people to obtain	Vulnerability trigger	Preventative action

					help and advice		
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			✓				
<b>Caring Responsibilities</b>			✓				

**Could a particular sector of the community be disadvantaged by the strategy/policy.**

Yes  No  (give details of any evidence you may have)

**If yes**, proceed to undertake a full [Equality Impact Assessment](#) (EIA)

**If no**, then have this confirmed by the Corporate Equalities Steering Group representative for your area and signed off by your Service Head / Corporate Director/ Board. In the event of any queries, check with a member of the Policy team.

**Action points** (please make this SMART-state what/who/how/when) **to be completed even when not proceeding to a full assesment**

Compile information necessary to complete full impact assessment.

**Confirmed by:** Robin Bates

**Signed by:**



**Please attach a copy of this screening to the document it relates**

✓

**Copy to be sent to Policy Team Leader at [policy@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:policy@northampton.gov.uk)**

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