

PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

1. Title

Title: Business Rates Discretionary Relief Renewals in 2025/26

Directorate: Finance and Customer Services

Service area: Financial Services

Lead person: Rob Mahon

Contact number: 01709 822034

Is this a:

☐

Strategy / Policy

☐

Service / Function

☒

Other

If other, please specify

Cabinet Report to consider the renewal applications for awards of Business Rates Discretionary Relief for the 2025/26 financial year.

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

The report presents the renewal applications for the awards of Business Rates Discretionary Relief for the 2025/26 financial year which have been considered in line with the policy agreed by Cabinet on 12 December 2016.

The policy criteria includes consideration of organisations who actively encourage membership from particular groups in the community which include, young people, women, persons with a disability and ethnic minorities.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>		✓
Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>		✓
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>	✓	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? <i>(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i>		✓
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>		✓
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i>		✓

If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason

The recommendation in the report is to award discretionary relief to the organisations which will positively impact the organisation ensuring continuity of access to facilities, support, training and education which helps tackle inequality.

If you have answered **no** to **all** the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals before decisions are made.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below using the prompts for guidance and complete an Equality Analysis (Part B).

- **How have you considered equality and diversity?**

The recommendation in the report is to award discretionary relief which will positively impact the organisation ensuring continuity of service and will ensure service users with protected characteristics can continue to access to this service.

- **Key findings**

- **Actions**

The Discretionary Rate Relief Policy is currently under review and an Equality Impact Analysis will be carried out as part of the review, with a part B completed at that point.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	31 March 2025
--	---------------

Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	31 March 2025
--	---------------

Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Robert Cutts Head of Service
---	---------------------------------

5. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:

Name	Job title	Date
Rob Mahon	Assistant Director	

6. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Appendix 2

Date screening completed	16/12/2024
Report title and date	Business Rates Discretionary Relief Renewals in 2025/26 – 10 February 2025
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	