



Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment Form

Step 1

Name of Proposal

Increase in the charges made for primary and secondary school meals.

Step 2

Is this only a **screening** Equality Impact Assessment No

(B) If you have answered No to the above, please indicate the following:

Is this a full Equality Impact Assessment Yes

Is this a Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment Yes

If you have answered Yes to either or both of the above, continue with Step 3.

If your proposal is a **strategy** please ensure you complete Step 13 which is the Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment.

Step 3

(i) Lead Directorate/Service:

Education and Lifelong Learning

(ii) Are there any **relevant** statutory requirements affecting this proposal? If so, please describe.

Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

(iii) What is the aim of the proposal? Please give full details.

Angus Council has not increased the cost of a school meal since 2015. The inflationary pressures on services are now at such a level that an increase in charges is considered necessary.

(iv) Is it a new proposal? Yes Please indicate OR

Is it a review of e.g. an existing budget saving, report, strategy, policy, service review, procedure or function? No Please indicate

Step 4: Which people does your proposal involve or have consequences for?

Please indicate all which apply:

Employees	No
Job Applicants	No
Service users	Yes
Members of the public	No

Step 5: List the evidence/data/research that has been used in this assessment (links to data sources, information etc which you may find useful are in the Guidance). This could include:

Internal data (e.g. customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).

Budget information relating to Tayside Contracts payments.
Data relating to meal uptake.

Internal consultation (e.g. with staff, trade unions and any other services affected).

Directorate leadership team.
Tayside Contracts Monitoring Group

External data (e.g. Census, equality reports, equality evidence finder, performance reports, research, available statistics)

Tayside Contracts analysis regarding the cost of production for school meals.
Economic data relating to expected inflationary trends.
Local Government Settlement re school meals.
Analysis of school meal charges in other local authorities.
Joseph Rowntree Report – Poverty in Scotland 2023.
Education Scotland - Equity Toolkit

External consultation (e.g. partner organisations, national organisations, community groups, other councils).

Tayside Contracts Facilities Partnership Group
Informal discussion with Dundee City and Perth & Kinross.

Other (general information as appropriate).

Step 6: Evidence Gaps.

Are there any gaps in the equality information you currently hold? No

If yes, please state what they are, and what measures you will take to obtain the evidence you need

Step 7: Are there potential differential impacts on protected characteristic groups?

Please complete for each group, including details of the potential impact on those affected.

Please remember to take into account any particular impact resulting from **Covid-19**.

Please state if there is a potentially positive, negative, neutral or unknown impact for each group. Please state the reason(s) why.

Age

Impact – negative

Children up to P5, and some children in P6-S6 who are eligible based on financial criteria will continue to receive their entitlement to FSM if they choose to take it. For children and young people in this group there will be no negative impact and their rights as set out in the UNCRC will not be affected.

For children and young people in P6-S6 who are not eligible for FSM, the cost of accessing a school meal will increase. This may have a negative impact on family budgets and could impact on school meal uptake. There is therefore a potentially negative impact on Article 24 (Health and Health Services) and Article 26 (Social Security) as set out in the UNCRC. .

Disability

Impact – Neutral

Gender reassignment

Impact - neutral

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact - neutral

Pregnancy/Maternity

Impact - neutral

Race - (includes Gypsy Travellers)

Impact – neutral

Religion or Belief

Impact - neutral

Sex

Impact - neutral

Sexual orientation

Impact - neutral

Step 8: Consultation with any of the groups potentially affected

If you have consulted with any group potentially affected, please give details of how this was done and what the results were.

N/A

If you have not consulted with any group potentially affected, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating action of any negative impact (Step 9)?

Review of data provides the most robust mechanism of determining impacts and mitigations.

Step 9: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce potentially negative impacts?

N/A

Step 10: If a potentially negative impact has been identified, please state below the justification.

N/A

Step 11: In what way does this proposal contribute to any or all of the public sector equality duty to: eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between people of different protected characteristics?

N/A

Step 12: Is there any action which could be taken to advance equalities in relation to this proposal?

N/A

Step 13: FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY

This step is only applicable to **strategies** which are key, high level decisions. If your proposal is **not** a strategy, please leave this Step blank, and go to Step 14.

Links to data sources, information etc which you may find useful are in the Guidance.

Step 13(A) What evidence do you have about any socio-economic disadvantage/inequalities of outcome in relation to this strategic issue?

Although this proposal, if agreed by elected members, will involve an increase in charges, there will be minimal socio-economic disadvantage for any group. Free school meal provision will continue to be available for all those who are eligible. It is recognised that an increase in charges may impact other groups, but it is anticipated that there will be no disproportionate impact on those with low wealth etc.

Step 13(B) Please state if there are any gaps in socio-economic evidence for this strategy and how you will take measures to gather the evidence you need.

There is a gap in the data available to Angus Council regarding working poverty and the so-called “squeezed middle” of families. It is recognised that there will be families who are not eligible for Free School Meals under financial criteria but also experience extreme pressures on household budgets. Further exploration of the Child Poverty Index data is required to gather further evidence.

Step 13(C) Are there any potential impacts this strategy may have specifically on the undernoted groupings? Please remember to take into account any particular impact resulting from Covid-19.

Please state if there is a potentially positive, negative, neutral or unknown impact for each grouping.

Low and/or No Wealth (e.g. those with enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future).

Impact – neutral – no identified impact.

It is assumed that families in this grouping would be entitled to free school meals on financial criteria. As such they would be unaffected by the proposal to increase charges.

Material Deprivation (i.e. those unable to access basic goods and services e.g. repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies).

Impact – neutral – no identified impact.

It is assumed that families in this grouping would be entitled to free school meals on financial criteria. As such they would be unaffected by the proposal to increase charges.

Area Deprivation (i.e. where people live (e.g. rural areas), or where they work (e.g. accessibility of transport)).

Impact – no identified impact.

Socio-economic Background i.e. social class including parents’ education, people’s employment and income.

Impact – no identified impact.

It is assumed that many families experiencing deprivation due to socio-economic background would be entitled to free school meals on financial criteria. As such they would be unaffected by the proposal to increase charges.

Other – please indicate

Step 13(D) Please state below if there are measures which could be taken to reduce socio-economic disadvantage/inequalities of outcome.

Step 14: What arrangements will be put in place to monitor and review the Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment?

N/A

Step 15: Where will this Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment be published?

On the Council website with the budget papers.

Step 16: Sign off and Authorisation. Please state name, post, and date for each:

Prepared by: Beth Reader, Service Leader – ELL, 08 February 2024.

Reviewed by: Doreen Phillips, Snr Practitioner (Equalities)

Approved by: Kelly McIntosh, Director of Education & Lifelong Learning, 08 February 2024