

Annex 4: Equality impacts of 2021/22 to 2023/24 Savings Proposals

1. Introduction and legal background

This report outlines how the impacts of the Council's budget proposals are being considered from an equality perspective. The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual because of certain personal characteristics ('protected characteristics'). The law also requires that equality issues are considered by public bodies as part of decision making, especially where services are reduced or redesigned.

Failure to undertake proportionate Equality Analysis/Equality Impact Assessment could present risks of legal challenge to the Council for failing to pay due regard to its public sector equality duty.

2. Actions so far

Each budget proposal has been set out in a Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Proposal template, with the high-level intentions outlined. The proposals describe what service redesign is being proposed and identify if there will be impacts upon residents and/or service users.

As part of the Council's equality analysis process, Directors (and their officers with delegated responsibilities) have been tasked to consider their proposals from an equality perspective. This initial 'screening' process aimed to highlight if any of the proposals have the potential to have significant impacts upon service users, and if so, what actions, if any, could be taken to mitigate any unexpected or unintentional impacts.

All savings proposals, new or recurrent recovery plans, were presented by lead portfolio members, supported by their directors to a panel comprising the Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader, CEO and S151 Officer. Impacts of the proposals, including those of equality, were discussed and considered as part of these meetings. Proposals were either approved, amended or rejected at through this meeting framework.

It should be noted that some decisions on financial management related to Covid-19 Recovery have already been taken in the summer of 2020, as part of # financial recovery planning processes.

3. Policy Development and Scrutiny Panels - equality scrutiny process

The budget proposals relevant to their respective remits were presented to the Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on 1st February 2021.

The PDS panel members have received a brief to enable them to scrutinise the proposals from an equality perspective (*see Appendix 1*).

4. Savings proposals for 2021-22

Across the Council, every attempt has been made to achieve efficiencies through service redesign, with minimum reduction in frontline services or disproportionate increases in charges.

Regarding impacts on staff, the council's Human Resources policies and procedures ensure there is full consultation and consideration of staffing matters and that employment-related equality issues are fully considered.

5 Detailed equality analysis

The finer detail of how the final proposals will be implemented will follow in due course, and it is recommended that comprehensive and detailed equality analysis is carried out on some of the proposals as they are taken forward. This will help to ensure that opportunities to enhance equality are utilised, and any possible negative impacts or barriers for particular groups are taken account of, and if possible, mitigated.

As above, regarding impacts on staff, the Council's Human Resources policies and procedures ensure there is full consultation and consideration of staffing matters and that employment-related equality issues are fully considered. Therefore, the focus here is largely on impacts upon service delivery and service users. Each item is accompanied by an appropriate recommendation based on information available at time of drafting.

The screening process has highlighted a number of proposals where there is a possibility of negative impact upon certain groups of people with protected characteristics and/or opportunities to enhance equality. Each item is accompanied by an appropriate recommendation based on information available at time of drafting.

5.1 Portfolio: Resources & Deputy Leader

Of the 16 budget proposals within this portfolio, 13 items were considered as part of the Finance Recovery Proposals 2020 Equalities Impact Assessment in June 2020 and are therefore not included in this report.

The remaining items for consideration are:

Travel budgets:

Increased use of technology, fewer face to face meetings along with new ways of working raises an opportunity to realise additional savings in staff travel.

Recommendation: Proportionate equality analysis should be carried where social isolation and potential impact on professional development should be noted.

Organisation Restructure:

To review senior management structure, ensuring it is fit for purpose and effectively delivers the Corporate Plan. We expect this to lead to some savings and may affect up to 8 full time equivalent posts.

Recommendation:

To follow the usual Human Resources policies and process which have equality considerations built into departmental and corporate restructuring.

Digital processes and new ways of working:

Taking the digital learning and accelerated changes to user needs, habits and demand resulting from the Covid Pandemic, we will maximise both digital, operating and building efficiencies to focus on targeting service offering to those who most need our mediated support. More flexibility to resource service delivery appropriately for the community where it is needed.

Recommendation:

To ensure full analysis is carried out on differing aspects of the digital programme on a case by case basis as efficiencies are driven out. To complete a cumulative equality analysis including (but not exclusively) capital and other programmes affecting pedestrians and transport within and around Bath city centre.

5.2 Portfolio: Adults Services

Of the 11 budget proposals within this portfolio, 6 items were considered as part of the Finance Recovery Proposals 2020 Equalities Impact Assessment in June 2020 and are therefore not included in this report.

The remaining items for consideration are:

Specialist & Complex - procurement review:

Strategically commission and procure a range of care and support services sufficient to meet identified needs and address gaps in B&NES and provide better value for money for people with complex and specialist needs

Recommendation:

A full equality analysis is required prior to final decision. Equality needs to be included throughout robust monitoring of any effects of this proposal on service users.

Community - Contract Management Framework

Review of contract management for services, improved contract management arrangements to be put in place by 2022 to achieve this.

Recommendation:

To ensure equality issues are included in the commissioning and procurement process as required by statute.

Reablement Review

Review and redesign service model. This will ensure delivery of flexible and proactive reablement, improving independence and quality of life alongside reductions in individual care and support needs. This will ensure individuals are supported to stay at home for longer and helped to avoid long term adult social care support.

Change to service delivery model and contractual arrangements; the effectiveness of the new reablement (model) service

Recommendation:

A full equality analysis is required prior to final decision. Equality needs to be included throughout robust monitoring of any effects, both positive and negative of this proposal on service users.

Learning Disability Commissioning

Remodel adult advocacy services

Recommendation:

A high-level screening of equality issues would be advised. Ensure equality issues are included in the commissioning and procurement process as required by statute. Best practice would include the voice of the user in this review.

Community - Review of Care Package Delivery

Commissioners and providers and social workers to review packages and placement costs ensuring eligible adult social care needs are met.

Recommendation:

A full equality analysis is required prior to final decision. Equality needs to be at the forefront of this proposal and should be included throughout robust monitoring of any effects, both positive and negative of this proposal on service users and carers.

5.3 Portfolio: Children's Services

Of the 8 budget proposals within this portfolio, 7 items were considered as part of the Finance Recovery Proposals 2020 Equalities Impact Assessment in June 2020 and are therefore not included in this report.

The remaining item for consideration is:

Early Years SEND

The deletion of a vacant post will not change current provision.

Recommendation:

No further action unless current level of provision and/or outcomes deteriorate. This should be identified by regular monitoring and service user feedback.

5.4 Portfolio: Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services

Of the 5 budget proposals within this portfolio, 3 items were considered as part of the Finance Recovery Proposals 2020 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) in June or the 2020/21 Budget Report EIA in February 2020 and are therefore not included in this report.

The remaining items for consideration are:

Household Waste Recycling Centres

Introduce charging for specific materials (rubble, plasterboard and tyres) at the recycling centres (common practice in other areas).

Recommendation:

No further action required.

Reduction in Environmental enforcement

Stop proactively issuing FPN's for littering, reduce enforcement team size by 1. The saving stated is after the lost FPN income has been mitigated.

Recommendation:

No further action required.

5.5 Portfolio: Leader

A single item included in this budget for consideration is:

Visit Bath

Create new model to deliver tourism management to the District at lower annual cost.

Recommendation:

To ensure equality issues are included in the commissioning and procurement process as required by statute.

5.6 Portfolio: Housing, Planning & Economic Development

Of the 7 budget proposals within this portfolio, 3 items were considered as part of the Finance Recovery Proposals 2020 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) in June or the 2020/21 Budget Report EIA in February 2020 and are therefore not included in this report.

The remaining items for consideration are:

Arts budget

Release the residual Arts budget as we have no annual commitments against this budget.

Recommendation:

No further action.

Planning Restructure

Mini restructure and vacancy management with minimal service impact, providing demand does not increase and this will be closely monitored.

Recommendation:

No further action

Housing Support Commissions

Do not renew an existing energy advice contract and instead provide in-house within existing resources. Fund a separate and existing housing support contract using the DFG element of the Better Care Fund.

There is little immediate and direct impact upon service delivery. However, it should be noted that this will further reduce the available headroom within the DFG budget which could directly impact residents if demand for DFGs increases.

Recommendation:

A full equality analysis is required prior to final decision. Equality needs to be included via robust monitoring of any effects already felt from previous cost savings in recent years. The voices of Disabled people requiring Disabled Facilities Grants to make their homes accessible need to be heard in this equality analysis. This proposal may impact on the efficacy of proposal titled: 'Reablement Review' in Adult Services portfolio.

5.7 Portfolio: Community Services

Of the 8 budget proposals within this portfolio, 5 items were considered as part of the Finance Recovery Proposals 2020 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) in June or the 2020/21 Budget Report EIA in February 2020 and are therefore not included in this report.

The remaining items for consideration are:

Parks & Bereavement Services

A combination of upskilling and staff reduction, and a reduction on spend for fuel, operational equipment & maintenance through the whole service.

Recommendation:

Proportionate equality analysis should be carried out to ensure staff (particularly those on lower paid grades) are not financially disadvantaged. Any adverse impact on professional development should be noted. Human Resources policies and process will be followed which have equality considerations built into departmental restructuring thus providing assurance.

Leisure

Capitalise part of Leisure Project Manager post

Recommendation:

No further action.

Human Resources policies and process to be followed which have equality considerations built into departmental restructuring.

Odd down sports ground

Investment to enhance income generating activities

Recommendation:

Proportionate equality analysis should be carried out in order to inform any consultation processes.

5.8 Portfolio: Transport Services

Of the 13 budget proposals within this portfolio, 2 items were considered as part of the Finance Recovery Proposals 2020 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) in June or the 2020/21 Budget Report EIA in February 2020 and are therefore not included in this report.

The remaining items for consideration are:

Maintenance of highways assets

Highways are currently reviewing the asset and have undertaken limited maintenance. Returning to the original arrangement would result in the existing ongoing complaints continuing.

Recommendation:

No further action

CCTV Service Redesign

Opportunity to further align out of hours response to in-hours customer service arrangements

Recommendation:

Proportionate equality analysis should be carried out in order to inform any consultation processes particularly in regard to community safety issues affecting vulnerable users.

Traffic Management

Stop the use of portable Vehicle activated speed signs

Recommendation:

No further action

Reduction of Pay and Display (P&D) machines

Customer complaints could rise. Loss of trade to competitors. Almost 2/3 of machines are mains powered and will require one off capital to terminate supply and make safe.

Recommendation:

Proportionate equality analysis should be carried out in order to inform any consultation processes particularly in regard to issues affecting users without access to electronic banking and/or mobile devices.

Removal of P&D based credit card payments for parking

Remove credit or debit card payments in car parks (all transactions through MiPermit).

Recommendation:

Proportionate equality analysis should be carried out in order to inform any consultation processes particularly in regard to issues affecting users without access to mobile devices.

Reduce maintenance contracts on P&D machines

Reduced maintenance of remaining P&D machines.

Recommendation:

No further action

Review coach parking contract at Weston Island

Xmas market impact - increased use of on street locations for coach lay over including unpopular locations such as Lower Bristol Road, Wellsway and Royal Avenue.

Recommendation:

Proportionate equality analysis should be carried out in order to identify any negative impact on Blue badge users and those using dropped kerbs.

Review security contracts on car parks

Increased risk of anti-social behaviour in car parks.

Recommendation:

Proportionate equality analysis should be carried out in order to inform any consultation processes particularly in regard to community safety issues affecting vulnerable user who may become victims of crime.

Cancel security contracts on Park & Ride sites

Cancel security contracts on Park & Ride sites, install a height barrier at Lansdown Park & Ride.

Recommendation:

Proportionate equality analysis should be carried out in order to inform any consultation processes particularly in regard to community safety issues affecting vulnerable user who may become victims of crime.

Review security contract on Terrace Walk

Cancel provision of security staff at Terrace Walk

Recommendation:

No further action.

Remove Compliance Officer post

Role can be split and undertaken by other staff at a reduced level.

Recommendation:

No further action.

Human Resources policies and process to be followed which have equality considerations built into departmental restructuring.

6. Cumulative impacts

Budget proposals have the potential to impact on people across the full range of protected characteristics. In addition, whilst considerations of socio-economic status are not a requirement of the Equality Act public sector duty, the “narrowing the gap” agenda is an important focus for the Council and its partners.

The Council’s over-riding purpose of *improving people’s lives*, along with its Corporate Strategy core policies of addressing the climate and ecological emergency, delivering for residents, focusing on prevention and giving people a bigger say, will continue to influence the way that each proposal is carried out and implemented. It will be important to ensure that all the equality impacts are considered alongside each other as further details are developed (and within any consultation), in order to identify the cumulative impacts. These impacts will be assessed and managed through the Council’s relevant programme and project management and other governance processes.

7. Recommendations for Budget implementation phase

For each proposal that is taken forward, the following recommendations should be considered (as appropriate), to ensure that equality issues continue to be considered during the implementation stages.

- a. **Full or proportionate Equality Impact Assessments/equality analysis** should be carried out on all proposals where initial reviews have revealed likely impacts upon particular groups of people due to their protected characteristics (see 4.1 above). This enables the Council to demonstrate it has taken due regard to equality issues and has thoroughly considered how to uphold the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Council's Equality Impact Assessment template can be found on the Council's [EIA web pages](#), and support is available from the Equality Team in carrying out the assessments. Completed EIAs should be published on this web page.
- b. **Inclusive consultation.** Where consultation is arranged as part of taking any of these proposals forward, it is vital that a diverse range of people are encouraged to take part. This will help highlight any additional equality impacts that may need to be addressed and mitigated where possible. A variety of methods should be used to access consultees. The Equality Team can advise on this and on how to access participants from groups representing different equality strands. The [Independent Equality Advisory Group](#) can also be used as a consultative body, and will provide further guidance on likely impacts, and ways of mitigating these.
- c. **Clear and transparent communication.** Wherever it is planned to introduce changes, it is important to ensure that the communication and publicity strategies are accessible to disabled people (for example, people with visual impairment or learning disability) and those for whom English is an additional language. The Council has commissioned Oncall Interpreting services to assist with [Interpreting and Translation](#) where necessary.
- d. **Incorporating equality issues within commissioning specifications.** Where proposals include commissioning or recommissioning external providers, detailed equality requirements should be built into contract specifications. This will ensure that best practice relating to equality in delivery of services is continued and improved upon when delivered by external partners.
- e. **Workforce training and development.** A number of the budget proposals are dependent upon the ability of officers to recognise opportunities to advance equality (for example, within commissioning, or by targeting services towards those who are most vulnerable). It is also important that officers are aware of, and sensitive to, the particular needs of different groups of people. Equality training is available as part of the Corporate Training programme, and bespoke training can be arranged by the Council's Equality Team.
- f. **Ongoing monitoring.** Where services are subject to redesign, equality monitoring should be carried out to help identify if the service is operating as

intended, if it is reaching and meeting the needs of our most vulnerable communities; and if there are any unforeseen impacts that need to be addressed. See the Council's sample [equality monitoring template](#) for the data categories that should be used.

Appendix 1.

Briefing note for panel members on equality in financial decision making Background

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual because of certain personal characteristics ('protected characteristics').

The law also requires that equality issues are considered by public bodies as part of decision making, especially where services are reduced or redesigned.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires us to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people.

The questions below are intended to assist PDS panels to scrutinise the proposals (within their remit) from an equalities perspective.

A). For each new draft proposal to be put before Cabinet in February 2021:

- Are panel members clear that this proposal has been considered from an equality perspective?
- Do we know what the impact will be on the most vulnerable people?
- Are there any potential unintended impacts or "knock-on" effects consequences - e.g. on partners, residents or other services?
- Have we consulted people and listened to what they have told us about this?
- During the implementation of the proposal – how will we continue to check for unintended effects on particular groups of people?
- Will there be room for discretion if during the implementation we discover that the change of service disproportionately disadvantages some people?
- Considering all the proposals together, what will the cumulative impact be, and will adverse impacts fall disproportionately on specific groups?

B). For any budget items agreed by Council in February 2020

- What have we learnt about equality impacts following the implementation of last years' proposals?