



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Document Details			
Name of proposal/policy	West Northamptonshire Council Budget Proposals 2021-2022	Budget number (if applicable)	N / A
Programme / Service area responsible	Finance	Programme Board meeting date	
Name of completing officer	Belinda Green	Date EqIA created	15.12.20
Approved by Programme Manager		Date of approval	

The Equality Act 2010 places a ‘**General Duty**’ on all public bodies to have ‘**Due regard**’ to:

- **Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation**
- **Advancing equality of opportunity**
- **Fostering good relations**

We do this by undertaking equality impact assessments (EqIAs) to help us understand the implications of policies and decisions on people with protected characteristics – EqIAs are our way of evidencing this.

PART A – REMOVE ALL GUIDANCE IN ITALICS ONCE COMPLETED

1. Description of current provision/policy and main beneficiaries/stakeholders

The current two-tier system of local government in Northamptonshire is changing from 1st April 2021. On 1st April 2021 there will be a new council for West Northamptonshire, replacing the County Council, Northampton Borough Council, Daventry District Council and South Northamptonshire Council. It is recognised that the creation of a new Council will present opportunities for efficiency savings. However, there are also risks associated with the demand for services during the first year of a new organisation.

In the process to set the first annual budget West Northants Council is required to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations when making decisions on budget proposals.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires councils to demonstrate their consideration of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making. This involves an understanding of the potential impact of policy and decisions on different people and evidence on how decisions were reached.

To help us do this we have undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) based on the proposed draft budget. While there is no legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment, this process enables a rigorous analysis of decision making and identifies any negative and positive impact on people with protected characteristics:

• Age • Disability • Gender reassignment • Marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirements to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination. • Pregnancy and maternity • Race – ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality • Religion or Belief – including lack of belief • Sex • Sexual orientation.

Residents, local partners and other stakeholders will have the opportunity to review the proposed budget and to provide comments and feedback during a four-week consultation period.

2. Description of proposal under consideration/development

The new West Northamptonshire Council will face significant financial challenges during its first year against a backdrop of rising demand in services, the impact from the recent COVID-19 pandemic, transition and transformation costs and the increasing service demand such as adult social care. The aim is to develop a sustainable plan for future years.

The creation of a single tier council provides the opportunity to transform services for our residents. The council will also engage with stakeholders and partners to support residents and businesses through the covid -19 pandemic and will continue to support our more vulnerable residents and communities through our work with the voluntary sector.

The main features of the budget proposals are as follows:

- Existing service levels will be protected
- No plans for reduction in services
- Council Tax increase of 1.99% and social care precept increase of 3% so a total increase of 4.99%
- Savings and efficiencies will be identified as a result of merging 4 councils into 1 and service aggregation
- There are costs related to the LGR transition and transformation of services
- It is recognised that there will be additional demand across most services as a result of Covid-19 and this is reflected in the budget proposals
- There are a number of technical budget proposals that do not require equality impact assessments

Some of the proposals which are efficiencies, of a technical nature or income generation do not effect service delivery and therefore do not require a full impact assessment.

This Equality Impact Assessment does not deal with the impacts of individual budget proposals, it assesses the overall impact and is, at this stage, a high level assessment. Equality Impact assessments will be carried out on individual budget proposals which have a direct impact on residents with protected characteristics.

<p>3. Data used in this Equality Impact Assessment (general population data where appropriate but each EqIA should contain information on people who use the service under consideration – if this is not applicable to your proposal then you probably do not need to do an EqIA)</p>	
<p>Data Source (include link where published) – quantitative or qualitative</p>	<p>What does this data tell us?</p>
<p>People affected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All people living in the new West Northamptonshire area. It is estimated that the population of West Northants is 432,000 (based on estimated taken in 2019) Direct service users including adult social care <p>Stakeholders/partners</p>	<p>All residents of West Northamptonshire and service users will be impacted by the budget proposals.</p> <p>It should be noted that there are no service reductions for the residents and although there are recognised risks associated with demand for services in 2021-2022 these have been mitigated by including some contingency funding in the plans</p>

<p>4. Please give details about planned consultation or engagement with communities and other stakeholders that are likely to be affected by the policy/decision/service change. Contact the Consultation, Equalities & Accessibility Team (ceat@northamptonshire.gov.uk) for advice or complete the online form with details of your consultation/engagement activity.</p> <p>If you are not carrying out any consultation or engagement activity, please provide reasons why you think this is not necessary.</p>
<p>Residents, local partners and other stakeholders will have the opportunity to review the proposed budget and provide feedback during a consultation period. The consultation will commence on 6^h January 2021 and will be open for four weeks. The budget consultation process will use a wide range of methods and will be widely promoted. It will include an online form and the opportunity to provide feedback in other formats for those who do not have access to online services. The draft budget will also be presented to the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment.</p> <p>The response to the budget consultation will be analysed and will form part of the final budget report to be received by Shadow Executive on 12th February 2021.</p> <p>Please note that in addition to the budget consultation there has already been a consultation process on the proposed Council Tax Reduction Scheme</p> <p>West Northants Council is committed to minimising and preventing negative impacts of protected equality groups. The Council will seek to gather relevant data and undertake analysis to identify actions required in the future. The Council will engage with service users/stakeholders to seek their views and will identify any unanticipated impact at an early stage.</p>

4. Please give details about planned consultation or engagement with communities and other stakeholders that are likely to be affected by the policy/decision/service change. Contact the Consultation, Equalities & Accessibility Team (ceat@northamptonshire.gov.uk) for advice or complete the online form with details of your consultation/engagement activity.

If you are not carrying out any consultation or engagement activity, please provide reasons why you think this is not necessary.

Some of the proposals which are efficiencies, of a technical nature or income generation do not effect service delivery and therefore do not require a full impact assessment.

This Equality Impact Assessment does not deal with the impacts of individual budget proposals, it assesses the overall impact and is, at this stage, a high level assessment. Equality Impact assessments will be carried out on individual budget proposals which have a direct impact on residents with protected characteristics.

5. If consultation or engagement has been carried out in the past, please provide details. If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced the work to date?

N/A

Protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010

6. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are unsure, set out what you will do to get enough information to make an assessment.		
Sex	Impact and explanation	<p>Neutral Explanation: Across the Budget proposals the initial impact assessment has not highlighted any negative or positive impacts on individuals in relation to sex.</p>

<p>6. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are unsure, set out what you will do to get enough information to make an assessment.</p>		
	Mitigations/actions	Neutral impact, not relevant to assessing eligibility.
<p>Gender Reassignment</p>	Impact	<p>Neutral Explanation: Across the Budget proposals the initial impact assessment has not highlighted any negative or positive impacts on individuals in relation to gender reassignment.</p>
	Mitigations/actions	Neutral impact, not relevant to assessing eligibility.
<p>Age</p>	Impact	<p>Positive & Negative Explanation: We expect to see a continued growth of older adults aged 65+. Nearly a fifth of older people are living alone with health and/or disability issues. A new operating model for adult social care is well underway and the new approach is designed to place people at the centre of decision making and focuses on strengths of an individual</p>

<p>6. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are unsure, set out what you will do to get enough information to make an assessment.</p>		
		<p>A Children’s Trust was established from 1st November 2020 as a company wholly owned by NCC to deliver early help and social care for children and families on behalf of the council. From 1st April 2021 the ownership will transfer to the two new unitaries.</p> <p>There are a number of proposals that may impact on people within this protected characteristic as outlined below</p>
	<p>Mitigations/actions</p>	<p><u>Older adults</u></p> <p>There is a proposal to end a number of sheltered housing contracts (following their termination dates expiring). Any risks arising from this proposal will be mitigated by a redesign of provision and an overarching approach to service delivery. The consultation process will highlight any public concerns about this proposal.</p> <p>Proposal for an Admission Avoidance Service to be provided by health service, East Mids Ambulance Service and adult social care will have a positive impact in providing support to older people following falls in the home and will reduce hospital admissions.</p>

<p>6. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are unsure, set out what you will do to get enough information to make an assessment.</p>		
		<p><u>Children</u></p> <p>A Children’s Trust has now been established. Budget Proposals include a reduction in the use of residential care. Any risk associated with this will be fully mitigated by plans to improve capacity in foster care which will have a positive impact on children who will be placed in a family setting rather than residential home settings.</p> <p>There is also a proposal to reduce the reliance on agency staff working within Children’s Trust. Any possible risk is mitigated by a proposal to increase the level of permanent staffing within the Trust so creating a more stable workforce.</p> <p>There are also budget proposals to support plans to improve children’s outcomes by improved edge of care support and interventions.</p>

<p>6. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are unsure, set out what you will do to get enough information to make an assessment.</p>		
<p>Disability</p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Positive Explanation:</p> <p>Moray Lodge development will provide specialist and step down supported living for people with an acquired brain injury and mental health support needs.</p>
	<p>Mitigations/actions</p>	<p>This is a positive impact and no mitigation required</p>

<p>6. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are unsure, set out what you will do to get enough information to make an assessment.</p>		
<p>Race & Ethnicity</p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Neutral Explanation: Across the Budget proposals the initial impact assessment has not highlighted any negative or positive impacts on individuals in relation to race and ethnicity The consultation process will highlight any public concerns about the proposals in relation to this group.</p>
	<p>Mitigations/actions</p>	<p>Neutral impact, not relevant to assessing eligibility.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Neutral Explanation: Across the Budget proposals the initial impact assessments have not highlighted any negative or positive impacts on individuals in relation to sexual orientation The consultation process will highlight any public concerns about the proposals in relation to this group.</p>

<p>6. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are unsure, set out what you will do to get enough information to make an assessment.</p>		
	Mitigations/actions	Neutral impact, not relevant to assessing eligibility.
<p>Religion or Belief (or No Belief)</p>	Impact	<p>Neutral Explanation: Across the Budget proposals the initial impact assessments have not highlighted any negative or positive impacts on individuals in relation to religion or belief The consultation process will highlight any public concerns about the proposals in relation to this group.</p>
	Mitigations/actions	Neutral impact, not relevant to assessing eligibility.

<p>6. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are unsure, set out what you will do to get enough information to make an assessment.</p>		
<p>Pregnancy & Maternity</p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Neutral Explanation: Across the Budget proposals the initial impact assessment has not highlighted any negative or positive impacts on individuals in relation to pregnancy and maternity. The consultation process will highlight any public concerns about the proposals in relation to this group.</p>
	<p>Mitigations/actions</p>	<p>Neutral impact, not relevant to assessing eligibility.</p>

<p>7. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are unsure, set out what you will do to get enough information to make an assessment.</p>		
<p>Human Rights – relevant articles and local authority context:</p> <p><i>Article 2 – Right to life</i></p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Neutral Explanation: Across the Budget proposals the initial impact assessments have not highlighted any negative or positive impacts on Human Rights. The consultation process will highlight any public concerns about the proposals in relation to this.</p>

<p>7. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are unsure, set out what you will do to get enough information to make an assessment.</p>		
<p><i>Article 3 – Freedom from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment</i></p> <p><i>Article 4 – Prohibition of slavery and forced labour</i></p> <p><i>Article 5 – Right to liberty and security</i></p> <p><i>Article 6 – Right to a fair trial</i></p> <p><i>Article 8 – Right to private and family life</i></p> <p><i>Article 9 – Freedom of thought, belief and religion</i></p> <p><i>Article 10 – Freedom of expression</i></p> <p><i>Article 11 – Freedom of assembly and association</i></p> <p><i>Article 14 – Protection from discrimination</i></p>		

<p>7. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are unsure, set out what you will do to get enough information to make an assessment.</p>		
<p><i>Article 1 of the First Protocol: Protection of property</i></p> <p><i>Article 2 of the First Protocol: Right to education</i></p>		
	Mitigations/actions	Neutral impact.
<p>Rural isolation</p>	Impact	<p>Neutral Explanation: Across the Budget proposals the initial impact assessments have not highlighted any negative or positive impacts on individuals in relation to rural isolation. The consultation process will highlight any public concerns about the proposals in relation to this.</p>
	Mitigations/actions	Neutral impact.
<p>Socio-economic exclusion</p>	Impact	<p>Positive Explanation: Social exclusion is the process in which individuals are denied full access to services/opportunities that are normally available to</p>

<p>7. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are unsure, set out what you will do to get enough information to make an assessment.</p>		
		<p>members of a different group, and which are fundamental to social integration within that group (for example housing, healthcare, service provision, education etc). The budget proposals impact positively on both children and adults and will help to remove barriers and/or disadvantages. There are also no proposals to reduce services</p>
	<p>Mitigations/actions</p>	<p>No further actions required at this stage</p>
<p>Health and wellbeing considerations</p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Positive Explanation: The proposals in the Adult Social Care area and Children’s Trust directly impact in a positive the health and wellbeing of individuals by increasing the availability of support, making the best use of the full range of services that are currently available to support people to live independently in a community setting and increased capacity in foster care.</p>
	<p>Mitigations/actions</p>	<p>No further actions required at this stage</p>

PART B – if you are undertaking any further work before the decision on this policy or service change is made, please complete Part B and then make a final assessment based on this additional information

****TO BE COMPLETED FOLLOWING CONSULTATION****

REMOVE ALL GUIDANCE IN ITALICS ONCE COMPLETED

1. Consultation, follow up data and information gathered from actions identified above	
<i>Describe any consultation or engagement that you have carried out since you completed Part A and number of responses/event attendees/contacts</i>	What does this information tell us? <i>What did people tell you? Did they support the proposal? Did they make any alternative suggestions? Did support differ depending on who was responding?</i>
<i>Describe any further work you have undertaken since completing Part A – have you had further discussions with providers? Has the budget changed? Are alternative proposals being considered? Have you been able to fill in any gaps in information that you had identified?</i>	<i>What does this tell you?</i>

Protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010 – see Part A for explanations and guidance

<p>2. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are still unsure, please explain what you plan to do in future to address this.</p>		
<p>Sex <i>Refer back to Part A for detail</i></p>	Impact	<p>Positive / neutral / negative / unsure (delete as appropriate) Explanation:</p>
	Mitigations/actions	
<p>Gender Reassignment <i>Refer back to Part A for detail</i></p>	Impact	<p>Positive / neutral / negative / unsure (delete as appropriate) Explanation:</p>
	Mitigations/actions	
<p>Age <i>Refer back to Part A for detail</i></p>	Impact	<p>Positive / neutral / negative / unsure (delete as appropriate) Explanation:</p>
	Mitigations/actions	
<p>Disability <i>Refer back to Part A for detail</i></p>	Impact	<p>Positive / neutral / negative / unsure (delete as appropriate) Explanation:</p>
	Mitigations/actions	
<p>Race & Ethnicity <i>Refer back to Part A for detail</i></p>	Impact	<p>Positive / neutral / negative / unsure (delete as appropriate) Explanation:</p>

<p>2. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are still unsure, please explain what you plan to do in future to address this.</p>		
	Mitigations/actions	
<p>Sexual Orientation <i>Refer back to Part A for detail</i></p>	Impact	<p>Positive / neutral / negative / unsure (delete as appropriate) Explanation:</p>
	Mitigations/actions	
<p>Religion or Belief (or No Belief) <i>Refer back to Part A for detail</i></p>	Impact	<p>Positive / neutral / negative / unsure (delete as appropriate) Explanation:</p>
	Mitigations/actions	
<p>Pregnancy & Maternity <i>Refer back to Part A for detail</i></p>	Impact	<p>Positive / neutral / negative / unsure (delete as appropriate) Explanation:</p>

Cross-cutting considerations – see Part A for explanations and guidance

<p>3. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are still unsure, please explain what you plan to do in future to address this.</p>		
<p>Human Rights (Please see articles in the toolkit for more information) <i>Refer back to Part A for detail</i></p>	Impact	<p>Positive / neutral / negative / unsure (delete as appropriate) Explanation:</p>
	Mitigations/actions	
<p>Rural isolation <i>Refer back to Part A for detail</i></p>	Impact	<p>Positive / neutral / negative / unsure (delete as appropriate) Explanation:</p>
	Mitigations/actions	
<p>Socio-economic exclusion <i>Refer back to Part A for detail</i></p>	Impact	<p>Positive / neutral / negative / unsure (delete as appropriate) Explanation:</p>
	Mitigations/actions	
<p>Health and wellbeing considerations <i>Refer back to Part A for detail</i></p>	Impact	<p>Positive / neutral / negative / unsure (delete as appropriate) Explanation:</p>
	<p>Mitigations/actions</p> <p>Note: Depending on the scale of the impact identified, there may be a recommendation</p>	

<p>3. Based on the above information, what is the likely impact on the following groups? Please explain why you have made this assessment. If you are still unsure, please explain what you plan to do in future to address this.</p>		
	<p>for a full Health Impact Assessment to be completed</p>	

<p>4. Final impact analysis (taking the findings from Part B into account) – including review date if required</p>
<p><i>Based on all the information contained in this assessment, and based on what you are proposing to do/recommend, what do you assess the impact to be – in particular, highlight where there may be negative impacts, and what can be done to mitigate them. These need to be made clear so that decision-makers are fully informed before making their decision. This equality impact assessment will be the authorities* evidence of meeting its duties under the Equality Act and would be referred to in the event of a legal challenge.</i></p>

* reference to Authorities includes Daventry District Council, Northampton Borough Council, South Northants Council and West Northamptonshire Council