

SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA FOR

Council

Friday 6 February 2015

10.00 am

The Shire Hall, St Peter's Square, Hereford HR1 2HX

Pages

Supplement 3 – Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy - Complete Appendix 6 - Cumulative Equality Impact Assessment

This supplement contains a reissued appendix 6 to the report on the budget and medium term financial strategy. It comprises the document previously published with the agenda papers as appendix 6, together with an appendix, as referred to within that published document at the second line of text on page 146 of the agenda papers, which has not previously been published.

Please also note that the Equality Impact Assessments referred to at paragraph 49 of the report on the budget and medium term financial strategy under the heading Background Papers are being made available via the following link:

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/budgetconsultation2015>

Cumulative Equality Impact Assessment of Budget 2015/16

Carol Trachonitis, December 2014

1. Background

Herefordshire Council had a saving target of £15m in the financial year 2014/15. In order to achieve this, budget proposals were prepared. Those that affected services had an equality impact assessment completed, and these were considered before decisions were taken on the budget.

Over the next three years a further £18m of savings are required (2015/16 = £10.2m, 2016/17 = £7.6m).

This document summarises the Equality Impact Assessment for the budget proposals for the financial year 2015/16. It highlights:

- The key differential impacts of potential budget decisions for legally protected groups
- Where a single decision or series of decisions might have a greater negative impact on a specific group
- Ways in which negative effects across the council may be minimised or avoided, and where positive impacts can be maximised or created

Budget decisions can have different impacts on different groups of people, either changes to individual services or in the way those changes have an impact cumulatively.

The council has a legal duty (under the Equality Act 2010) to evidence that we have paid due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between person who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

The budget EIAs demonstrate how we are considering impacts, and action we will take where needed.

2. The Budget Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Process

In Herefordshire we use an EIA process to identify the main potential impacts on groups covered by legislation (the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010¹).

EIAs have been completed by service leads on the budget proposals where the potential change impacts on service provision. These have been reviewed for the proposals 15/16 and, where new proposals have been put forward, new impact assessments have been completed. Also, where

¹ "Protected characteristics" are; age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation (also marriage and civil partnership, but only in relation to eliminating discrimination)

we have implemented changes we have reviewed the impact of those changes. A summary is attached (appendix 1).

The aim of the EIA is to support good decision making; it encourages public bodies to understand how different people will be affected by their activities so that policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people's needs.

The aims of an EIA become especially important at times of straitened budgets, enabling us to:

- Think about what the council is trying to achieve
- Consider what impact the decision will have on different groups
- Target resources to those who may be most vulnerable
- Fund services which respond to people's diverse needs and save money by getting it right first time

Nationally there have been a number of successful legal challenges to funding decisions because public authorities have failed to show such consideration during the process. In such cases the public authority will almost always be required to start the decision-making process again, with improved consultation and evidence gathering to identify the impact on particular groups.

We have agreed that we must focus our priorities and resources towards:

- Keeping children and young people safe and giving them a great start in life
- Enabling residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives
- Investing in projects to improve roads, create jobs and build more homes

Unfortunately, it is not just severe funding reductions we are facing, but also an increasing population with additional needs, particularly in priority areas such as children and young people and adult social care.

In the simplest terms, we can no longer continue to pay for all the services we have traditionally provided. Therefore we must prioritise the services we provide and how we provide them. This means we may need to radically reduce or completely stop providing certain services, especially if they are not within our priority areas. However, even within our priority areas, we have still needed to make reductions to balance our budget.

3. The National Context

The budget proposals are being developed within the context of on-going reduced public funding to local government.

Key national issues that may have an equality impact include:

- General Election
- Children's and Families Act 2014
- Comprehensive Spending Review (which means that we are operating in a context of reduced funding for local authorities)
- Welfare Reform
- Education Reform

4. The Local Context

The Council is committed to supporting people to live full and independent lives within their local communities. While assessing the cumulative impact of our proposals on equality groups, we have identified two additional factors that could compound the impact. These factors are:

4.1. Rural isolation (due to the rural nature of the county)

According to the 2011 Census, Herefordshire is the 4th largest county (in geographic area) in England, with 54% of its population living in areas classified as rural. These rural areas make up 97% of the land area. The proposals will impact upon our rural communities. We recognise the need to offer support to enable people to exercise more choice and control over the services they receive.

4.2. Risk of financial exclusion (due to low income)

We understand that people are experiencing financial difficulties in the current economic climate.

5. Equality Impact Assessment Findings

The EIA process and consultation have been based on identifying whether or not service delivery impacts are likely to be different for a person because of their protected characteristic (with a focus on where impacts may be worse).

There has been an overall assessment of the Equality Impact Assessments that have been produced and the findings are:

- We acknowledge the importance of services such as transport and the rural bus service in providing access to services for rural communities and, in particular, older and disabled people and those on low income.
- We acknowledge the need to ensure that our services are as accessible as possible, and are looking at alternative models of delivery to support these budget proposals, including the use of technology to reduce our costs.
- We also recognise that these changes will have implications for carers, the majority of whom will be women, and that we need to fulfil our responsibilities to carers.
- Service users who are facing changes to residential or day centre support may face considerable uncertainty, worry and disruption. These impacts could be disproportionately felt by older and disabled service users, and specifically service users with a learning disability.
- We also recognise that the changes and remodelling we do around “early years” and children’s centres will have an impact on this same group.
- We also recognise that imminent changes such as housing benefit cap will impact on some people, particularly large families that are waiting for social housing. It is recognised that some of our proposals might further impact on these individuals.
- There are some fee increases for non-statutory services that we provide, for example car parking, and we understand that these fee increases all add up.
- We have also recently decided to change the support through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme provides essential help towards the Council Tax liability for all claimants on a low income. By continuing to assess entitlement on a means-tested basis, similar to the national approach to means-tested benefits, the scheme is equitable, albeit that the level of support overall may be reduced to working age claimants.
- Many of the services that are not a statutory requirement for the council to deliver will be delivered at full cost recovery (ie. charged for), or outsourced to an alternative provider.

Again this may not impact on specific protected characteristics, but will impact on those who have a low income.

Cumulative Equality Impact Assessment of Budget 2015-16

Budget Service Proposal 15/16	Proposed Budget Savings 15/16	High Level Assessment of Impact	Details of Equality Impact Assessment	Comments/Owner of EIA	Individual EIA Y/N
Adult Wellbeing Reduce carers respite	200	To reduce the maximum entitlement to carers' respite services, ensuring that this doesn't result in placement breakdown and therefore result in additional cost.	Light touch desktop analysis of data will be undertaken to ensure impact is understood.	TBC	Y
Workforce reshaping	300	Realignment and re-shaping of the workforce to deliver a more efficient and effective workforce at a reduced cost. Savings in 2015/16 will be delivered from bringing social care MH staff back in house from 2g. 2016/17 savings will be delivered from efficiencies within the wider AWB workforce	There will be a clearer focus on service users who are eligible for ASC services and support. It will reinvorgorate the recovery model within Mental Health which brings an empowering agenda for service users and provides support within community setting. This project will also align to the new processes around adult protection.	Ewen Archibald	Y
Workforce reshaping (Senior Management)	200	Realignment and re-shaping of the workforce to deliver a more efficient and effective workforce at a reduced cost.	This will be an internal management restructure to provide a more integrated management structure and reduce costs. No impact on service users except in a positive way to protect front line services.	Helen Coombes	N
Re-commissioning and reductions in cost of older people residential and Nursing care.	200	Good quality Residential and Nursing care for Older People that demonstrates value for money and effective use of council funding.	EIA completed 2013 with ongoing review of impact during decision making and implementation process. The existing EIA will be refreshed as the project moves through the implementation process. Potential of unintended consequence as providers not signing up to new rate and therefore service users may not be able to receive care from same providers.	Laura Tyler	Y
Revising personalisation offer	300	Improving how we communicate with eligible adult social care users about the amount available within their personal budget, based on the resources available to the council and the number within the population requiring support. Offering a range of mechanisms for people to exercise their choice and control including increasing the numbers taking a direct payment.	All service user groups impacted *Increase in the time it takes to establish final care provision *Existing clients may lose support from current provider *Market for Personal Budgets under development and therefore more established in some geographical areas than others *Increase in support required for people lacking mental capacity *More choice and control over care provision for clients *Outcomes focus for care provision *Coincides with the development of new community service development.	Colin Sowerby	Y
Contract changes	1,021	Completing all contract changes consulted on during 14/15 and driving improved value for money and negotiating improved rates / efficiencies from existing providers / contracts. Impact on service users will be minimal and will be considered on a contract by contract basis before changes are implemented. Impact on the local social care provider market will be regularly reviewed to ensure that the market is strengthened and where possible provider capacity and resilience is improved.	Contract management plan developed which will identify how contracts can be managed more effectively to drive better value for money. Minimal impact on service users. As each contract is reviewed and efficiencies identified, an EIA will be done as part of the contract management process.	Andrew French	Y (as required)

Budget Service Proposal 15/16	Proposed Budget Savings 15/16	High Level Assessment of Impact	Details of Equality Impact Assessment	Comments/Owner of EIA	Individual EIA Y/N
Reductions in accommodation based support	823	The effectiveness of current contracts will be reviewed in line with the priorities to focus on those people who are eligible for adult social care and who are homeless where we have a statutory responsibility. This will release savings and we will look to informal social networks and local communities to support the transition to minimise any negative impact on service users.	Clients signposted to other relevant housing related support services, other organisations or referred back to their own housing association. Service currently being wound down, service users being reduced to 220 as part of the extension of the contract conditions. Bi-monthly monitoring meetings on-going. Increase to other services to mitigate. EIA for specific contracts will be developed as part of the decision making process.	Laura Lloyd	Y
Increased Income	150	Continuing to implement the Fairer Charging Policy which was consulted on in 13/14 will ensure all service users who are assessed as required to pay, do so, so that it is equitable for everyone.	These savings will come from removing joint assessments for couples, changes to certain income disregards such as pension credit (under new care act regs) and implementing admin charges for self-funders who want us to purchase care in their own home, or want a deferred payment	Susie Binns	
Maximisation of CHC Funding	500	To offset the demographic/demand growth that AWB have been experiencing and to ensure sufficient available budget is in place to support social care elements of nursing packages.	No impact to service user - no reassessment of package for care	N/A	N
Population wellbeing interventions	1,000	Efficiencies to be delivered through closer working, collaborative commissioning, and demand management interventions between AWB and Public Health	n/a	N/A	N
Use of technology to reduce cost of care	200	Enables more people to live independently at home and uses council resources effectively so that those with eligible need are supported, reducing the cost of care through increased use of technology.	Detailed EIA requires completion. High level analysis identifies that this is expected to have an overall positive impact by enabling people to stay independent for longer in their own homes and by supporting carers in their caring role. There is however a potential negative impact around the removal of personal/human contact for some people.	Nathan Downing	Y
Remove funding for non eligible services	150	Improved information and advice regarding community based support and voluntary sector provision to be provided to service users with low level care needs who are no longer eligible for Council services, in line with the council's priorities and statutory responsibilities, this will ensure that those who have the most need can be supported effectively.	Through reassessments, people may no longer receive ASC support. But developing the support network within the community will support individuals and provide a mitigating factor.	Colin Sowerby	Y
Recommissioning and reductions in the cost of Homecare	116	Good quality and affordable homecare for service users, that offers choice and control through a range of personal budget payment mechanisms, including Direct Payments and Individual Service Funds.	Detailed EIA completed 2013. Proposal should have a positive impact on groups with protected characteristics delivering greater value for money, maintaining as wide a range of services as possible despite significant cuts in funding, and re-directing resource where possible as part of a whole system approach to prevention including intermediate care and reablement.	Angharad Boundford	Y
High cost care reductions	300	Increased local capacity for people with a learning disability and mental health service users will enable more people to live near their communities and friends and families at a lower cost. Ensuring that the cost of care is based on need and reflects local market variations will support the council in making sure it can support people with the available resources.	Move to a more outcomes based approach.	Colin Sowerby	Y
Children's Wellbeing					

Budget Service Proposal 15/16	Proposed Budget Savings 15/16	High Level Assessment of Impact	Details of Equality Impact Assessment	Comments/Owner of EIA	Individual EIA Y/N
Care Placement Strategy - Reduction in residential placement costs	588	The implementation of a Prevent and Step down approach to Residential placements via Herefordshire Intensive Placements Support Service and In-House Foster Care Placements. 10 placements to be transfer out of residential over the next five years and for the split of in house fostering and external agencies to move from 76:24 to 90:10.		Joanna King	
Recruitment Strategy	259	This is a five point recruitment and retention approach to enable the reduction of agency staff, including continuation of the NQSW programme, Regional standard rates for agency, international recruitment, reviewing the recruitment offer, training development. The Ratio of permanent to agency moves from 54:46 to 90:10 over the next three years	Potentially may affect opportunities for some children and families with protected characteristics if savings are taken. But caseloads do not reduce, therefore increasing the caseload per worker and potentially reducing service quality and levels. Will be addressed through reconfiguration of service and maximising the effectiveness and targetting of early help services to reduce the demand for social care intervention.	Paul Meredith	
Adoptions Initiatives	181	Increase by 10 external adoption placements/reduce cost of provision through economies of scale of the West Mercia Adoption Partnership	No negative impact perceived as broad recruitment drive to attract a diverse cohort of adoptors to reflect the children coming into the service.	Hillary Hale	
Children in Need Service Redesign	101	Reduction from 6 to 4 teams, with 1 service manager and the introduction of Senior Practitioners to provide management oversight and offer development opportunities for staff.	N/A	Kay Prescott	
Economy, Communities and Corporate					
Waste & Sustainability Full year effect of introducing alternate weekly collection of waste and limited collection to the contents of a refuse wheelie bin, implemented in November 2014.	412	Non-recyclable waste is now collected every fortnight rather than weekly. Limiting the amount of non-recyclable waste collected means families now re-cycle more or dispose of excess household waste at a household waste disposal site.	No adverse impact reported since the implementation, this will be monitored on an on-going basis.		EIAs completed 13/14
Country Parks and Picnic Sites - Disposal of small sites and reduction in subsidy for larger sites at Queenswood and Bodenham Lake	150	The management of the sites will be passed to a community group who may need to introduce a membership scheme and/or car parking charges to enable them to fund the site running cost.	None identified as no proposal to change service provision.	No adverse impact expected	N

Budget Service Proposal 15/16	Proposed Budget Savings 15/16	High Level Assessment of Impact	Details of Equality Impact Assessment	Comments/Owner of EIA	Individual EIA Y/N
Public and School/College Transport - Full-year effect of reductions in bus subsidies implemented in September 2014 and associated efficiency savings in contract management. Implementation of revised school/college transport policy from September 2015	595	No additional impact in 2015/16 for transport. Policy for school/college transport effective from Autumn term. Year 7 pupils only will be effected by the nearest school policy.	No additional impact in 2015/16 for transport. Impact assessments completed for school/college transport policy and included within the original report. There are various bursaries available to cover costs.	Impact assessment carried out in 2011 - further consultation completed in 2014, EIA produced. SB/AL	Y SB/AL
Council Tax reduction Scheme - the discount awarded to some council tax payers in receipt of welfare benefits was reduced from 91.5% to 84% in 2014/15. There will be no changes in 2015/16, however collection performance has been higher than anticipated meaning increased income. Further reductions in discount from 2016/17 will be required to balance the budget. Note: Pensioners are exempt from the changes.	150	No additional impact in 2015/16. Further reductions in discount will be consulted upon as part of the 2016/17 budget process and the impact assessed	The lowest earners in Herefordshire now pay 16% of their total Council Tax bill.	EIA Completed - Anne Phillips / Anne Bradbury	Y completed
Discretionary Rate Relief - Removal of discretionary National Non-Domestic Rates/Business Rate relief for some voluntary organisations	150	Following the Cabinet report agreed in June 2014, a new Discretionary Rate Relief charter and policy has been agreed from April 2015. Relief will be given to those organisations who run, develop facilities, services or activities which directly benefit Herefordshire residents and meet the priorities of the council in support of council services and their budgets.	Discretionary relief (in addition to mandatory relief) is only available for those charities that are locally based providing facilities that benefit the wider community of Herefordshire and are of a social/welfare nature.	EIA Completed - Anne Phillips and Anne Bradbury	Y completed
Asset Review Disposal or increased income to reduce debt charges	100	Capital receipt from sale of assets utilised to offset current or future debt costs. Sale of assets surplus to requirements	None	None expected - however as assets are identified for disposal possible assessments required	To be looked at on a case by case basis
Withdrawal of subsidy/cultural services partners	466	No Impact	None	No adverse impact identified as no proposed change to service	N

Budget Service Proposal 15/16	Proposed Budget Savings 15/16	High Level Assessment of Impact	Details of Equality Impact Assessment	Comments/Owner of EIA	Individual EIA Y/N
Management Savings within regulatory services and facilities management. Reductions in workforce strategy costs.	90	No impact - efficiency saving	None	No impact	N
Car Parking Income	600	Full year effect of introducing new car parking charges from June 14 and additional spaces within the Old Market Development. If this savings target is not achieved car parking charges may be reviewed / extended.	No impact upon disabled groups as free parking provided.	No impact as maintaining blue badge parking scheme enabling free parking for those who meet the criteria	N
Removal of funding to Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service including the Citizens Advice Bureau	40	Council funding contributes to total funding supporting these organisations, new tendering opportunities available for these organisations to bid for which will support mitigation, matching their objectives.	possible adverse impact on low income and vulnerable groups.	Impact assessments carried out in 13/14. HVOSS and HALC implemented and no recorded negative impact. CAB impact assessment completed in 2013 and a further EIA completed in December 14 as included in review of Information advice and guidance paper.	Y
Customer & Library Services: Co-location of services at sites, move services to provide on-line, increase income generation and community involvement in operation of sites.	423	Bromyard – reducing the space allocation and appointment basis for customer services. Kington – becoming a health and wellbeing centre including the customer service element agreed at Cabinet in December 2014. Ledbury – co-location of Libraries and Customer Services at the Masters House. Belmont – increased community involvement and local contribution. Hereford – public realm phone contact to Balfour Beatty/ increased council tax transactions on-line.	Impact Assessments complete for cabinet report of 23 January 2014, updated in September 2014. Limited adverse effect, although consideration given to people accessing digital services, specifically older people and disabled people therefore face to face / phone contact remains an option. -	Revised impact assessment completed January 2014 and no adverse impact reported since implementation of new opening hours	Y
Reductions in staff and workforce strategy			No adverse impact expected		N
Car park strategy - review and implement (including on-street car parking)		None expected	No impact upon disabled groups as free parking provided.	None	N
Corporate Accommodation - further rationalisation		No impact - efficiency saving	Impact Assessments required on an individual basis when assets are identified.	Y	
Back Office Services (including Finance, Revenues and Benefits and Hoople)	420	No impact - efficiency saving	None	None expected	N
Totals	10,185				

