



Corporate Equality Impact Assessment

Carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will help the County Council to meet its Public Sector Equality Duties (Equality Act 2010).

The duties which need to be considered when making decisions are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Failure to assess the equality impact may increase the risk of making an unfair decision which could potentially be discriminatory. It also prevents us from identifying opportunities to promote equality and therefore leaves the County Council open to potential legal challenge.

Using this EIA template will help to ensure that a decision is made in a fair way, based on evidence. It provides a clear and structured method to assess the potential impact on protected groups.

<p>Title of policy or proposal</p>	<p>Budget report for 2020-21 (assessment of overall impacts of the package of proposals that have been put forward as part of the budget report for 2020-21 but also including some potential savings identified for the following year.)</p>
<p>Briefly describe the aims of the policy change, decision or proposal, the likely outcomes and the rationale for it</p>	<p>The County Council has a statutory duty to set a budget and these proposals will include savings of £9.800 million with impacts on many of the Council's services, and a planned increase in Council Tax of 3.99%, of which 2% is specifically to provide an estimated £3.872 million in funding for adult social care.</p> <p>All individual budget savings proposals for 2020-21 have been screened for potential equality</p>



	<p>implications, and where this has identified potential equality impacts, specific impact assessments have been or will be carried out – except in cases where the final decision on whether to proceed with the saving will be taken after the budget round. In those cases, impact assessments will be carried out prior to final decisions being made and those assessments could, potentially, lead to decisions that some savings should not be made as currently proposed, but should be achieved in other ways.</p> <p>Some planned savings such as those through reduced use of independent fostering agencies in children’s social care and increased use of shared lives arrangements in adult services will involve both the development of enhanced in-house services and case by case assessments of how best to meet the needs of individuals. In these cases, individuals’ protected characteristics will be taken into account during assessments, and it is possible that the outcome may be a lower or higher level of savings than the assumption in the budget.</p>
<p>Consider the potential impact on any member of staff or member of the public with the following protected characteristics:</p> <p>Age, Disability, Gender identity/Gender reassignment, Race, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual orientation, Women who are pregnant or have recently had a baby.</p> <p>Also, for issues affecting staff, consider employees who are married or in a civil partnership.</p>	
<p>What information is already held or have you obtained through consultation or engagement activity?</p>	<p>Age: The age profiles of users of services vary significantly between services. In particular, children’s services are especially relevant to children and young people and to adults in the age range most likely to have dependent children, whilst adult social care services are particularly relevant to older people. A distinctive feature of Northumberland is that it has an above average proportion of older people in its population, and the projection is for a higher than</p>



	<p>average increase in this proportion over the coming decade – a change which will affect most Council services.</p> <p>Disability: All significant Council services within all Directorates are used by disabled people. Managers of individual services are expected to ensure that they understand specific issues which arise for disabled users, and to make reasonable adjustments to address any identified barriers to access.</p> <p>Most adult social care services are specifically designed to support disabled people, and disabled children are among those most likely to have special educational needs or to be “children in need” requiring social care. Services provided by each of the other Directorates also include some which focus on supporting disabled people, such as concessionary transport schemes.</p> <p>Any disabled staff affected by the proposals will be supported through the process and any reasonable adjustments required will be made. Discussions will take place to identify any new adjustments or support required depending on the outcome of the process.</p> <p>Gender identity/Gender reassignment: Numbers of transgender people are believed to be low as a proportion of the users of any Council service. While there are a wide range of barriers to access that can arise for people in this protected group, as a result either of prejudice or of rules and systems based on the assumption of fixed gender, it seems unlikely that any Council services will incur spending on meeting the needs of this protected group which is sufficiently significant in relation to overall budgets to affect the overall budget settlement, and none of the services affected by savings proposals has been identified as likely to have a significant differential impact on this group.</p>
--	--



	<p>Race: Because of the demographic composition of the County, none of the Council's services spends a substantial proportion of its budget in ways which have a clear differential impact on specific racial groups. The diverse and dispersed nature of the County's minority populations mean that statistics on service usage are not easy to interpret, but there is no current reason to believe that take-up of major services is disproportionately low in any racial group, though there can at times be issues about the availability of culturally appropriate services, because of the lack of substantial groups of potential users for these. There are also some specific issues about support for gypsies and travellers, refugees and asylum seekers – where relevant, these have been/will be considered in the EIAs for specific budget proposals.</p> <p>Religion or belief: In some Council services, particularly in education, but also to some extent in care services, religious organisations provide significant services. In some cases, these organisations give preference to adherents of a specific religion. The overall impact of current arrangements is likely to be that people of some particular faiths are in some circumstances slightly advantaged compared to those of other faiths or who are not religious.</p> <p>Sex: Patterns of usage of specific services vary, but in general Council services are used by women more than by men. For instance social care services for older people are disproportionately used by women, because of their greater longevity and higher rates of disability; and many children's services may still be more significant in their impact on women because of the continuation of traditional assumptions about the gender balance of child-care responsibilities.</p> <p>EIAs on specific savings proposals have</p>
--	---



	<p>considered/will consider more closely the gender balance of their users.</p> <p>Sexual orientation: We have limited information about differences in overall usage of services by sexual orientation. It is probable that lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people, and in particular gay men, are less likely to be parents making use of children's services than other groups, and it has been suggested that LGB people may also be likely to have more limited sources of family support than other groups if they need care, and might therefore have disproportionate need for publicly-funded care services. Sexual orientation can also affect health and therefore care needs – for instance LGB people are statistically more likely to have mental health or substance misuse problems, and gay men remain more at risk of HIV infection than heterosexual men, though numbers of people requiring support for that reason remain low in Northumberland. Otherwise, differences in the experiences of people of different sexual orientations are likely in general to be concerned with the culture of services, and in some cases of other users of services, rather than being directly connected with levels of spending.</p> <p>Women who are pregnant or recently had a baby:</p> <p>Some specific Council services are particularly relevant to pregnant women and women with young babies. No general issues have been identified, though there are specific issues which might need to be considered in the case of some savings proposals.</p> <p>The Council publishes an analysis of its equality information on an annual basis. The most recent report is available on the Equality in Northumberland page of the Council's website.</p>
<p>After considering the information, which</p>	<p>Age Disability</p>



<p>protected groups may potentially be affected? (Delete those not likely to be affected)</p>	<p>Gender identity/Gender reassignment Race Religion or belief Sex Sexual orientation Women who are pregnant or recently had a baby People who are married or in a civil partnership</p> <p>There is no reason to believe that overall budget allocations will have any differential impact on the treatment of employees who are married or in civil partnerships. However, further equality impact assessments linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will be carried out where necessary, and will consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts. It will remain in principle possible for the allocation of savings to be reviewed after the setting of the Council budget if these assessments show that there is evidence of a relevant differential impact on this group.</p>
<p>Using the information you have, give details of any potential positive and negative impacts on protected groups likely to be affected by the policy change, decision or proposal</p>	<p>Age: People of different age groups could be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by the budget proposals. Because of the overall pattern of Council expenditure, there are likely to be particularly significant impacts on children and young people and on the oldest age groups.</p> <p>However, when developing detailed plans for implementing savings in 2020-21 that might affect different age groups, specific assessments have been, or will be, undertaken as the proposals are developed and solutions will be sought which minimise any adverse impacts that are identified during impact assessments.</p> <p>Savings have been proposed within the budget for Early Support, however there is currently not expected to be a significant adverse impact as this proposal is largely based on aligning the budget for Children's Centres with existing spending patterns.</p>



	<p>This issue will be kept under review as savings plans are finalised.</p> <p>Given the nature of the Council's statutory responsibilities, and taking into account the scale of savings required and other Council priorities, Members may take the view that age-specific impacts cannot reasonably be avoided. In developing detailed plans for implementing savings, solutions will be sought which minimise adverse impacts.</p> <p>The impact of the budget proposals on the ability of people of different age groups to participate in public life will need to be considered carefully in developing some specific proposals for 2020-21. If more detailed equality impact assessments indicate there could be a disproportionate negative impact those proposals will be reviewed.</p> <p>Disability:</p> <p>Disabled people are more likely than others to depend on local authority services to support their quality of life and their ability to live independently, so any major reduction in public spending has the potential to have a particular impact on disabled people. In some cases, it may be possible to achieve better outcomes for disabled people at the same time as reducing costs. For instance the review of expenditure on commissioned services and reviews of individual risk management plans, which will continue in adult social care, aim to support people to live more independently and seek to review over-protective care arrangements which prevent that. The scale of savings in adult social care, combined with the fact that these savings will have to be achieved as the cumulative consequence of decisions about individual cases taking full account of protected characteristics, means there is a risk that the full savings might not be achieved.</p> <p>As individual proposals are implemented, specific</p>
--	--



	<p>assessments will be undertaken as the proposals are developed as consideration will need to be given to mitigation against any increased risk for disabled residents. However, given the overall savings required, Members may judge the impact of the budget proposals to be acceptable after other alternatives have been considered.</p> <p>To mitigate against adverse impacts on disabled people using adult social care services, the Council is proposing to apply an additional 2% increase in Council Tax for 2020-21 which would generate an estimated £3.872 million in additional funding for adult care.</p> <p>Impacts of other proposals have been considered in individual EIAs, or will be considered before final decisions are made. Again, Members may judge that the overall impact of these proposals is acceptable after other alternatives have been considered given the very challenging overall financial position.</p> <p>No major and widespread impact on participation in public life is anticipated, though some changes might have some impact on some people. EIAs on individual savings proposals have considered (or will consider) this issue.</p> <p>No major and widespread impact on public attitudes towards disabled people is anticipated, though some changes might have some impact on some people. EIAs on individual savings proposals have considered (or will consider) this issue.</p> <p>No significant risks that might make it more likely that disabled people will be at risk of harassment or victimisation of this kind have so far been identified, though the issue will be considered in more detailed EIAs of those proposals on which further work is planned after the budget has been set. The development of safeguarding arrangements focused on identifying harassment or victimisation of disabled</p>
--	---



	<p>people will continue to be an important priority for the Council.</p> <p>Potential adjustments have been/will be considered in EIAs on individual savings proposals.</p> <p>If the proposals result in redundancies there is some evidence that disabled staff may face additional barriers in securing alternative employment. Northumberland County Council is part of the Government's Disability Confident scheme and to help to overcome any adverse impact offers a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for disabled job applicants. This ensures that all disabled members of staff who meet the essential requirements for a post will be shortlisted for interview; they will not be required to meet the desirable requirements. Reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled staff that need to be relocated.</p> <p>This information will be publicised to all affected employees. Guidance for managers supporting disabled employees, available on the Council website, and through Enable Staff Disability Network, will be promoted to staff as a source of advice and support.</p> <p>Specific opportunities to create positive impacts in the course of making changes required to achieve savings have been/will be considered in assessing the equality impact of each specific proposal.</p> <p>Gender identity/Gender reassignment:</p> <p>No issues have currently been identified as a result of which people with different gender identities or who have transitioned or are transitioning would be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by this budget, though the question will be considered during further development of individual savings proposals. The Council is continuing to work to promote awareness and provide support to people with different gender identities or who have changed</p>
--	---



	<p>from the gender they were assigned at birth.</p> <p>No significant differential impact on the ability of people who have transitioned or are transitioning to participate in public life has been identified in preparing the budget. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will need to consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts.</p> <p>No significant differential impact that would affect public attitudes towards people who have transitioned or are transitioning has been identified in preparing the budget. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will need to consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts.</p> <p>No significant differential impact that would make it more likely that people who have transitioned or are transitioning will be at risk of harassment or victimisation has been identified in preparing the budget. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will need to consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts.</p> <p>It does not currently appear likely there is a risk that people who have transitioned or are transitioning could be disproportionately disadvantaged by this budget but this issue has been/will be considered further in EIAs for specific savings proposals.</p> <p>Opportunities to create positive impacts for people who have transitioned or are transitioning will need to be considered in planning the implementation of specific budget proposals.</p> <p>Race:</p> <p>No significant differential impact on specific national or ethnic minorities protected by the Equality Act 2010 has been identified in preparing the budget. Only one</p>
--	---



	<p>differential impact on specific national or ethnic minorities protected by the Equality Act 2010 has been identified in preparing the budget. The decision to increase pitch fees, which will have a specific impact on Gypsy Roma Travellers, is in line with an increase in rent for council housing tenants, so the differential impact has been judged not to be significant.</p> <p>Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will need to consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts.</p> <p>No significant differential impact on the ability of specific national or ethnic minorities to participate in public life has been identified in preparing the budget. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will need to consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts.</p> <p>No significant differential impact that would affect public attitudes towards people of different national or ethnic minorities has been identified in preparing the budget. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will need to consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts.</p> <p>No significant differential impact that would make it more likely that people from different national or ethnic minorities will be at risk of harassment or victimisation has been identified in preparing the budget. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will need to consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts.</p> <p>It does not currently appear likely there is a risk that people of different national or ethnic minorities could be disproportionately disadvantaged by this budget</p>
--	--



	<p>but this issue has been/will be considered further in EIAs for specific savings proposals.</p> <p>Opportunities to create positive impacts for people of different national or ethnic minorities will need to be considered in planning the implementation of specific budget proposals. The continuing development of personal budgets across a range of adult and children's services offers a specific opportunity to empower people to arrange culturally appropriate forms of support.</p> <p>Religion or belief:</p> <p>No issues have currently been identified as a result of which people with different religions or beliefs might be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by this budget, though the question will be considered during further development of individual savings proposals.</p> <p>No significant differential impact on the ability of people with specific religious or other beliefs to participate in public life has been identified in preparing the budget. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will need to consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts.</p> <p>No significant differential impact that would affect public attitudes towards people with religious or other beliefs has been identified in preparing the budget. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will need to consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts.</p> <p>No significant differential impact that would make it more likely that people with religious or other beliefs will be at risk of harassment or victimisation has been identified in preparing the budget. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific</p>
--	---



	<p>budget proposals will need to consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts.</p> <p>It does not currently appear likely there is a risk that people with religious or other beliefs could be disproportionately disadvantaged by this budget but this issue has been/will be considered further in EIAs for specific savings proposals.</p> <p>Opportunities to create positive impacts for people with religious or other beliefs will need to be considered in planning the implementation of specific budget proposals.</p> <p>Sex:</p> <p>Because of the pattern of usage of Council services, it is likely that any substantial reduction in Council budgets will disproportionately disadvantage women.</p> <p>Women also make up substantially more than half of the Council's directly employed workforce, and the position is likely to be similar overall across organisations providing services commissioned by the Council, because many of these are services which still have predominantly female workforces, such as care services, so any reductions in employment, direct or indirect, as a result of budget savings are likely disproportionately to affect women.</p> <p>Detailed issues have been/will be considered in EIAs on specific savings proposals, and will be examined further in the course of implementation, where relevant.</p> <p>No significant issues that would affect the ability of males or females to participate in public life have so far been identified. However the need for further impact assessment, to support decisions during the further development and implementation of the proposals, will be considered and this issue will be further examined where relevant.</p> <p>No significant issues that might differentially affect</p>
--	---



	<p>public attitudes towards males or females have so far been identified. However the need for further impact assessment, to support decisions during the further development and implementation of the proposals, will be considered and this issue will be further examined where relevant.</p> <p>No significant risks that might make it more likely that males or females will be at risk of harassment or victimisation of this kind have so far been identified, though the issue will be considered in more detailed EIAs of those proposals on which further work is planned after the budget has been set.</p> <p>The Council has only a limited ability to mitigate the overall impact of budget reductions on women, which is largely a consequence of the wider economic situation, and of decisions taken nationally about how to respond to this. However in considering specific proposals for 2020-21, Members will need to take into account the potential detrimental consequences of budget savings for equality between the sexes. More specific opportunities for reducing disadvantage to women (or possibly, in some cases, to men) have been or will be considered in EIAs for specific savings proposals.</p> <p>Specific opportunities to create positive impacts in the course of making changes required to achieve savings have been or will be considered in assessing the equality impact of each specific proposal.</p> <p>Sexual orientation:</p> <p>The budget proposals planned for 2020-21 currently appear unlikely to have a differential impact. Where necessary, further assessment of the impact on people with different sexual orientations will be linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals.</p> <p>No significant differential impact on the ability of people of different sexual orientations to participate in</p>
--	---



	<p>public life has been identified in preparing the budget. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will need to consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts.</p> <p>No significant differential impact on public attitudes towards people of different sexual orientations has been identified in preparing the budget. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will need to consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts.</p> <p>No significant risks that might make it more likely that people with different sexual orientations will be at risk of harassment or victimisation has been identified in preparing the budget. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will need to consider whether there is a possibility of differential impacts.</p> <p>No specific opportunities to create positive impacts for people with different sexual orientations linked to budget savings have so far been identified; this issue will need to be considered where relevant in developing detailed proposals.</p> <p>If EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals identify differential impacts, they will need to consider whether there are reasonable steps that could be taken to reduce these.</p> <p>Women who are pregnant or recently had a baby:</p> <p>The risk that pregnant women or those with children under 26 weeks could be disproportionately disadvantaged will need to be considered where relevant in carrying out detailed EIAs required to support the implementation of specific budget proposals.</p> <p>No significant risk has been identified that the budget proposals will affect public attitudes towards pregnant</p>
--	---



	<p>women or those with children under 26 weeks however further detailed EIAs on individual savings will where relevant consider this issue.</p> <p>No significant risk has been identified that the budget proposals will make it more or less likely that pregnant women or those with children under 26 weeks will be at risk of harassment or victimisation but further detailed EIAs on individual savings will where relevant consider this issue.</p> <p>Opportunities to create positive impacts for pregnant women or those with children under 26 weeks will need to be considered where relevant in carrying out detailed EIAs required to support the implementation of specific budget proposals.</p>
<p>Give details of any Human Rights implications and actions that may be needed to safeguard Human Rights.</p>	<p>Human rights issues have been considered in EIAs of specific budget proposals, and no unacceptable implications have been identified. Where necessary, further EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals will consider potential human rights issues. It would in principle be possible to review the overall balance of the budget savings if these specific EIAs revealed human rights issues which could not be addressed within them; however this does not appear likely to be necessary.</p>
<p>Give details of any actions that can be taken to promote equality or to lessen any potential adverse impact on protected groups.</p>	<p>If EIAs linked to the implementation of specific budget proposals identify differential impacts on any protected groups, they will need to consider whether there are reasonable steps that could be taken to reduce these.</p>
<p>What plans are there to monitor and review the actual impact of the policy change, decision or proposal on equality</p>	<p>Monitoring arrangements have been/will be considered in EIAs for specific budget proposals and service changes. The Council carries out an annual strategic equality information analysis, which provides a regular overview of significant equalities issues across services, including any issues which emerge</p>



of opportunity?	as a result of budget changes.
When will follow up review be done?	Follow up reviews will be done for individual EIAs for specific proposals as these are developed and implemented. Further reviews of specific proposals will be done if these are identified during the annual equality information analysis.
Based on a consideration of all the potential impacts, mark one of the following as an overall summary of the outcome of this assessment:	
	The equality analysis has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.
	The equality analysis has identified risks or opportunities to promote better equality; the change, decision or proposal will be adjusted to avoid risks and ensure that opportunities are taken.
x	The equality analysis has identified risks to equality which will not be eliminated, and/or opportunities to promote better equality which will not be taken. Acceptance of these is reasonable and proportionate, given the objectives of the change, decision or proposal, and its overall financial and policy context.
	The equality analysis shows that the change, decision or proposal would lead to actual or potential unlawful discrimination, or would conflict with the Council's positive duties to an extent which is disproportionate to its objectives. It should not be adopted in its current form.
Explain how the judgement above was reached and summarise steps which will be taken to reduce any	It does not appear possible to achieve substantial budget savings without some detrimental effect on people in protected groups because one of the functions of many public services is to provide additional support to disadvantaged groups. However



<p>negative or to enhance any positive impacts on equality</p>	<p>there are opportunities to make budget savings in ways which minimise these impacts, and which contribute to making changes in services which have some positive aspects for protected groups. The opportunity to increase council tax by an additional 2% has been taken to help reduce the impact on services used by older and disabled people.</p> <p>The Council's approach will continue to be to address equality and human rights issues at a number of levels:</p> <p>This impact assessment will support the Council's decisions about the budget for each Directorate, the overall level of the budget, and the specific savings proposals included in the final budget.</p> <p>Individual EIAs have taken place on each savings proposal included in the Council's budget, other than proposals which will be developed more fully following further consultation and review, and proposals which were assessed at a screening stage as having no significant potential impact on equality or human rights - for instance because they are concerned purely with improving technical efficiency.</p> <p>Where the intention is to develop proposals more fully after the budget has been set, or where there are significant further decisions to be taken in the course of implementation of any of the budget proposals, the need for further EIAs will be considered. If any of these identifies a potential need to revise either budget decisions within a Directorate budget or the overall balance of savings between Directorates, this will be considered through the Council's usual decision-making processes.</p> <p>Where the Council has specific statutory duties to individuals in protected groups –for instance its duties to disabled people under social services legislation – it will continue to fulfil these duties, even if the overall impact requires the Executive Team to recommend</p>
---	---



	alternative compensating savings for consideration. Changes to the budgets which have been set for specific services or Directorates (though the first options considered will usually be budget adjustments within a Directorate)
Name(s) and job title(s) of person (people involved in) carrying out this assessment	Daljit Lally - Chief Executive Stephen Corlett - Senior Manager (Policy) Keith Thompson - Rights Team Manager
Authorising director or head of service	Daljit Lally – Chief Executive
Date authorised	28/01/2020
The completed equality impact assessment must be attached to the report that will be considered by the decision maker or decision makers to enable them to give due regard to the impact of the policy, decision or proposal on protected groups	