

Appendix 8

## Equality Impact Assessment

**Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed**

**2021/22 Budget and Three-Year Medium Term Financial Strategy**

**Directorate:** RESOURCES

**Service:** Council-wide

**Name and job title of person doing the assessment**

**Name:** Clare Muir

**Job Title:** Policy and Voluntary Sector Manager

**Date of assessment:** 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**What is the aim of your policy or new service?**

The aim of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy is to deliver a balanced and affordable budget that ensures the Council's finances are sustainable in both the short (one year) and medium term (three years). That in the longer term the Council's finances are not reliant on the unsustainable use of one-off reserves or funding and that general and earmarked reserves are maintained and bolstered to meet future funding challenges and risk.

The Strategy is informed by the Council's Vision: "to ensure that Reading realises its potential - and that everyone who lives and works in Reading can share in the benefits of its success", as well as its Corporate Plan priorities:

- Securing the economic success of Reading;
- Improving access to decent housing to meet local needs;
- Protecting and enhancing the life outcomes of vulnerable adults and children;
- Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe (which includes addressing the declared climate emergency);
- Promoting great education, leisure and cultural opportunities for people in reading; and
- Ensuring the Council is 'fit for the future'.

**Who will benefit from this proposal and how?**

Residents and service users will benefit from the Council setting a balanced and affordable budget that ensures the Council's finances are sustainable. And whilst the Budget Strategy relies on significant service transformation to drive increased efficiency savings and income generation it does mean that service cuts are not required.

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### Who are the main stakeholders and what do they want?

Residents, businesses, councillors and council staff in Reading.

Our citizens panel Covid-19 survey indicates at priorities for residents since the pandemic have changed slightly. Their highest priorities now are: health services, access to open countryside and clean streets. This compares to the results to a similar question asked to the panel 2018 where their highest priorities were: level of crime, clean streets, good schools.

The survey also showed some differences across equality characteristics.

More younger people said they would need help with debt advice, mental health support and childcare services.

More respondents from BAME communities felt they will need help with debt advice, mental health support, employment services, childcare services and befriending.

More respondents with disabilities feel they will need support with debt advice, food banks, mental health support, shopping and befriending.

All groups need some help with using online services.

### Assessment of Relevance and Impact

The draft budget proposes 69 new business cases for change as set out in Appendix 3. The Equality duty has been considered for each of these proposed savings. For the majority of these the Equality Duty is not relevant to the changes proposed or no negative impact is identified under the Equality Duty.

For 17 of the proposed changes an Equality Impact Assessment will be required as the proposals are developed. These are:

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Ref	Change Proposal	Reason for Equality Impact Assessment
DACHS-2021-05 rev	Supporting Young People into adulthood (pressure)	The proposed change would ideally have only positive impacts on service users and their families, although the shift away from a long-term care to short-term intensive work focused on maximising independence could represent a culture shift in some cases. Equality impact assessment may be required for individual proposals
DACHS-2021-19 rev	Supporting Young People into adulthood (savings target)	The proposed change would ideally have only positive impacts on service users and their families, although the shift away from a long-term care to short-term intensive work focused on maximising independence could represent a culture shift in some cases. Equality impact assessment may be required for individual proposals
DACHS-2021-22 rev	Workforce Review	Potential for impact on staff. EQIA will be informed by consultation in Jan 21 & March 21
DACHS-2122-NEW-01	Alternative to Residential and Nursing Care for 18 to 64 Year Olds	Equality impact assessment may be required for individual proposals
DACHS-2021-21 rev	Outcome based delivery support (Promoting Independent Living)	Service users and their families could also experience a shift from a "cared for" environment to a "supported to" environment; the rationale for and benefits of this approach will need to be discussed and agreed in the course of care planning sessions, progressing only if all parties agree that this is in the service user's best interest. Equality impact assessment may be required for individual proposals
DACHS-2122-NEW-02	Efficiency savings secured through Public Health re-procurements	DAAT service users may experience an altered level of service/ access to treatment. Potential impact on success treatment completions and drug related harm in Reading. Consolidating of adults and young person service may be less desirable for some service users.
DEGNS-2122-02	Workforce Review	Potential for impact on staff
DEGNS-2021-33	Fundamental Service Review - Planning and Regulatory Services	Potential for impact on staff. EQIA will be completed in January 2021.

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Ref	Change Proposal	Reason for Equality Impact Assessment
DEGNS-2122-05	Unachievable licencing income due to Covid-19	Potential for impact on protected characteristic due to the demographic profile of taxi economy in Reading. EQIA will be completed in January 2021.
DEGNS-2122-08-rev	Town Hall Covid-19 income pressure and recovery plan	Potential for impact on staff
DEGNS-2122-10	Street Lighting Energy	Potential impact for access and safety for protected characteristics
DEGNS-2021-78	Commercialisation Direct Services	Potential for impact on staff
DEGNS-2122-13-rev	Review of office and workspace requirements	Potential for impact on staff
DOR-2021-06	New customer services model (Phase 2)	Potential for impact on staff. EQIA will be completed in January 2022 when the full consultation takes place
DOR-2122-NEW-03	Redesign of Reception Centre to reflect greater self-service options	Potential for impact on staff
DOR-2122-NEW-06	Reduction in staffing levels for HR and OD	Potential for impact on staff
COR-2122-NEW-01	Corporate Contractual Changes	Potential for impact on staff.

10 of these proposals have a potential for equality impact on staff. 4 of these proposals have a potential for impact on younger users of Adult Care services. Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken and the outcomes reported back for consideration by the relevant committee as proposals are developed.