

Diversity impact assessment

TITLE
CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGETS 2022/23 OVERARCHING DIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DIA)
DATE
February 2022
LEAD OFFICER.
Katey Durkin Head of Finance Strategy
1 Summary description of the proposed change
What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed? How does it compare with the current situation?
<p>Overarching Diversity Impact Assessment</p> <p>This Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) does not seek to duplicate the service specific DIAs. Instead, its purpose is to bring together their findings, summarising the cumulative impact that the budget proposals may have on people with protected characteristics within the Medway community and workforce (as defined in the Equality Act 2010). Each service is expected to carry out a DIA to support the proposals set out in the Budget 2022/23 report to Council.</p> <p>Budget 2022/23</p> <p>The Capital and Revenue Budgets 2022/23 report sets out the Council's spending plans for 2022/23 and how it intends to resource the delivery of services. In accordance with the Constitution, this will be submitted to Council for consideration and approval on 24 February 2022.</p>
2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment
Eg: Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user. Eg: Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile
Evidence used to support this overarching DIA includes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital and Revenue Budget Report 2022/23
<p><u>Proposals 2021/22</u></p> <p>Budget changes have been proposed across a wide range of services as follows:</p> <p>Regeneration, Culture, Environment (RCE)</p> <p>Services severely impacted by Covid-19 restrictions have largely recovered. and now represent only a modest (£304,000) pressure in the 2023/23 budget. The proposed budget represents a net increase across the Directorate of £326,000, primarily addressing pressures arising from demographic growth impacting on waste arisings, contractual uplifts across the waste and highways services and the impact of the revised mechanism for charging staff costs to capital programme.</p> <p>Where savings have been made, they are largely due to centralisation of budgets, recovery of income, property rationalisation and improved energy</p>

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efficiency. The budget also reflects savings on travel, printing and other supplies/services owing to new ways of working. Many of these changes are unlikely to affect service provision. However, each service is expected to carry out a DIA to support the proposals so any adverse impact can be mitigated.

Business Support Department (BSD)

The proposed budget for 2022/23 for Business Support represents an increase of £809,000 compared to the 2021/22 base. This includes the centralisation of legal costs from across the organisation, charging the costs of the Business Change Team capital resources and the cessation of grants to Parishes as these are no longer mandatory or funded by the Government.

Where savings have been made, they are largely due to reduced external expenditure, removal of 2021/22 one-off pay award, restructuring and using flexible capital receipts. The budget also reflects savings on travel, printing and other supplies/services owing to new ways of working. Many of these changes are unlikely to affect service provision. However, each service is expected to carry out a DIA to support the proposals so any adverse impact can be mitigated.

Children and Adults (C&A) including Public Health

The budget reflects:

- a further increase for Children's Social Care of £6.107million. The overall increase is offset by the transfer of £1.835million to BSD for the centralisation of legal costs and £1.274million reduction in the contribution the Children's Social Care budget makes towards DSG funded expenditure
- significant increases in Adult Social Care expenditure of £5.807million, based on the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on placement numbers and provider fees increasing, driving up placement costs. The pandemic has also driven up both the number of people and level of need among those with mental ill-health.
- that Medway continues to experience significant pressure on services for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), with the budget for Education representing an increase of £2.900million compared to 2021/22.

Where savings have been made, they are largely due to improvement programmes, health contribution, reductions in forecast placement costs and centralisation of budgets. The budget also reflects savings on travel, printing and other supplies/services owing to new ways of working. Many of these changes are unlikely to affect service provision. However, each service is expected to carry out a DIA to support the proposals so any adverse impact can be mitigated.

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3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age	Yes	Yes	Yes
Disability	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gender reassignment	No	No	No
Marriage/civil partnership	No	No	No
Pregnancy/maternity	Yes	Yes	Yes
Race	No	No	No
Religion/belief	No	No	No
Sex	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sexual orientation	No	No	No
Other (eg low income groups)	Yes	Yes	No

4 Summary of the likely impacts

Who will be affected?

How will they be affected?

Summary of impacts

Services have identified savings proposals for 2022/23. The consequent likely impacts on people with protected characteristics – both positive and adverse, have been summarised below.

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Positive impact:

The journey to a smart Medway continues to transform the council's processes to make it quicker and easier for customers to access our services online. This will allow our customers to access services at a time that suits them, meet their expectations and delivers value for money. Any resident who wants to take advantage of new online processes can be supported in libraries by staff, or a volunteer computer buddy.

The proposed increase to Adult Social Care and Children's Services are anticipated to enable improved service provision.

Adverse impact

Any adverse impact due to proposed budget changes will be managed by services through the completion of a service specific DIA which will enable services to make more informed choices regarding solutions which may mitigate potential adverse impacts.

Fees and Charges

The budget proposals have been formulated on an assumption that fees and charges would generally increase by 3.0%, however where market conditions allow or where the Council has a statutory obligation to recover costs, greater increases have been applied. Any additional charges or changes to service provision will be considered through service specific diversity impact assessments.

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5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?

Are there alternative providers?

Can demand for services be managed differently?

Consultation

Following the decision on the budget for 2022/23, in some circumstances services will need to carry out consultation with service users. This will inform how specific services or programmes should be redesigned to meet user needs, balanced against the Council's financial resources.

Equality duty

The Council is committed to having due regard to s149 Equality Act 2010 as an integral part of its decision making. Carrying out DIAs helps to anticipate the likely effects of budget proposals on different communities and groups, and thereby assists the Council to comply with its equality duties when discharging its public function of budget setting. Diversity Impact Assessments (DIA's) will be undertaken (or the existing DIA will be updated) before any final decisions that could impact on people with protected characteristics, are made through the Council's processes. This will enable services to make more informed choices regarding solutions which may mitigate potential adverse impacts.

Performance Review

The Council will continue to review the performance of services as part of the existing quarterly monitoring process to take account of the impact on people with protected characteristics when making decisions in future about services.

Action Plans

Where potential adverse impacts are identified, an action plan which sets out how the service will mitigate the impact will be included in the service specific DIAs. All DIAs and associated action plans are approved by Assistant Directors.

Council Equalities and Workforce Policies

Existing council equalities and workforce policies are used to minimise or avoid negative impacts on staff, especially those with protected characteristics.

Alternative Delivery Models

In seeking to deliver services more efficiently and embrace more commercial ways of working, the Council has established alternative delivery vehicles, including Medway Norse and Medway Development Company.

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6 Action plan

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Carry out appropriate consultation once the overall 2022/23 budget decision has been approved, incorporate the findings into new/updated DIA and resubmit to Council decision-making processes	relevant service manager	end of Q2 Sept 2022 (6 months)
Directorate Management teams (DMTs) to review cumulative risk of DIAs once completed and ensure action plans are completed	DMTs	end of Q2 Sept 2022 (6 months)

7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

The budget decision will be made by Full Council on 24 February 2022.

Recommendations:

- Where decisions are yet to be made on how to implement cost savings, for specific services, DIAs will be undertaken (or updated) before such decisions are made. Consultation will be undertaken (where appropriate) to inform service specific DIAs.
- DMTs to continue to monitor equalities impact of changes to services and assess cumulative impact of service changes across Directorates, including the delivery of DIA actions.

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored.

Assistant Director

Phil Watts

Date of authorisation

February 2022