



Cherwell
DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

**Appendix 4 - Cherwell District Council
Equality Impact Assessment
Summary Savings proposals 2023/24**

November 2022

Section 1: Summary details

Directorate and Service Area	All Directorates and Service Areas
What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	This assessment sets out the overall impact that the budget and business planning proposals have on a range of equality and diversity characteristics, including the nine protected characteristics defined under the Equality Act 2010, and sets out any mitigations that have been put in place against possible negative impacts.
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	This impact assessment provides an overview of the 2023/24 budget and business planning proposals and so comments on changes to existing programmes as well as new proposals.
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community? (following completion of the assessment).	<p>This assessment covers the overall budget and business planning proposal for Cherwell District Council and seeks to highlight key evidence and intelligence that the Council has used to assess the impact of its budget proposals on the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. The Council has also assessed the impact on those living in rural areas, those living with social deprivation, armed forces communities and carers.</p> <p>An initial review of all proposals was completed by the Performance and Insight Team to review the impact of savings and determine where mitigations would be required. Individual Equality Impact Assessments will be finalised following approval of budget proposals for any required policy change that could have a negative impact.</p> <p>The assessment has not identified any bias, unfair advantage or disadvantage to any groups or individuals. Where potential negative impacts have been identified, mitigations have been put in place to reduce impact.</p>
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Date of Assessment	November 2022

Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p>Context / Background</p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>The Council's budget and business planning proposals are designed to enable us to deliver the key priorities in our Business Plan to enable communities to thrive and businesses to grow. Our strategic priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing that meets your needs - Leading on environmental sustainability - An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres - Healthy, resilient and engaged communities <p>This budget and business planning round has been impacted by reduction and ongoing uncertainty in major funding streams including the New Homes Bonus Grant and Business Rates. In addition, significant budget pressures have arisen due to reduction in income due to Covid-19, alongside the additional costs incurred due to the current economic environment and increased inflation. In combination, this is resulting in a challenging budgeting and business planning process as set out in the main Budget and Business Planning reports.</p>
<p>Proposals</p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>This impact assessment covers all savings proposals across Wellbeing and Housing, Customer Focus, Human Resources and Organisational development, Properties, Planning and development, Growth and Economy, Environmental and Regulatory services. Details of proposals are set out in the main Budget and Business Planning proposals.</p> <p>Changes to fees and charges are addressed in the associated Fees and Charges schedule. Any increase to fees and charges may impact on those with more need to use a service, including due to an individual having one or more of the protected characteristics. Changes to fees and charges are proposed after consideration of inflation, service need, bench-marking and market opportunities. Where material service impact has been assessed from changes in charges these will be addressed through the equality impact assessment process that supports decision making on the budget and business planning report or the later specific decision-making process associated with review and any subsequent proposed change.</p>
<p>Evidence / Intelligence</p>	<p>In considering the impact of budget proposals before they are formally agreed, the Council undertakes a detailed process of democratic and community engagement. This includes:</p>

List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.

- Using the Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) of health and wellbeing needs, and the associated Equalities Briefing and Cherwell District Profile to consider the impact of proposals as they are drawn up and in the development of this overarching assessment. The latest countywide JSNA can be found [here](#); and detailed data for our main population settlements (Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington) is available [here](#).
- A public consultation process, the results of which will be published alongside the Budget and Business Planning proposals.
- A democratic process including agreement of proposals by Executive, analysis and comment on those proposals by Budget and Business Planning Committee, and adoption of the budget by Full Council. Each of these stages provides an opportunity to invite comment and engagement from the public and representatives of particular organisations or population groups.

Alternatives considered / rejected

Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Age: In mid-2020 there were 151,800 residents in the Cherwell district, 3,829 of which were aged 85+. Cherwell's population is ageing with the 85+ population predicted to increase by 88% by 2037. There were 43,153 people aged under 25 in Cherwell in 2019 (28.5% of the total population), this is slightly lower than the figure for the rest of the county where around 30.5% of the population is aged under 25.

No specific issues relating to age have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Disability: As of October 2020, there were 2,875 attendance allowance claimants in Cherwell; also, 3,862 Personal Independence Payment and 2,696 Disability living allowance claimants across the district.

No specific issues relating to disability have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Gender Identity: There is limited information available on gender identity and data at a local level is not available. During the 2019-20 financial year, there were 445 applications for gender recognition certificates in the UK, but this will be under representative of those whose gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth.

No specific issues relating to gender reassignment have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Pregnancy and Maternity: There were 1,791 live births in Cherwell in 2020 and is a comparatively higher fertility rate to the county average.

No specific issues relating to pregnancy and maternity have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Marriage and Civil Partnership: Only county-level data could be sourced for this protected characteristic. At the time of the 2011 Census there were 128,400 married households in Oxfordshire and 682 registered same-sex civil partnerships. Same sex marriage became legal in 2014. In 2017 in Oxfordshire there were 3,224 marriages of opposite sex couples and 79 same-sex marriages.

No specific issues relating to marriage and civil partnership have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Race including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality: In the 2011 Census, 86.3% of Cherwell's residents were White British, 5.8% White-non-British, 4.3% were Asian/Asian British 0.46% Chinese and 0.80% Other Asian), 1.4% were Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, 1.8% Mixed and 0.4% were other ethnic groups. The majority of ethnic minority populations in Cherwell are based in Banbury.

No specific issues relating to race including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Religion or belief: The question on religion and belief in the 2011 Census survey was voluntary and 67.7% of residents in Cherwell responded to this question. 94.2% of those that responded said that they were Christian, the largest non-Christian group stated that they were Muslim (2.3%) and 25% of respondents said that they had no religion or belief. No specific issues relating to religion or belief have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Sex: In Cherwell in 2019 there were 75,832 females (50.3%) and 74,671 (49.6%) males. No specific issues relating to sex have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Sexual Orientation: There is limited data on sexual orientation defined as people identifying as heterosexual/straight, gay/lesbian, bisexual or another sexual attraction at a district level. It was estimated that there was a total of 12,300 people aged 16+ in Oxfordshire identifying as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual in 2018. No specific issues relating to sexual orientation have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Rural Communities: According to the Output Area Classification (2011) 21% of Cherwell residents live in rural areas. This impact assessment has identified no specific impact of our budget and business planning proposals on rural communities.

Armed Forces: In April 2020 there were 9,360 regular armed forces personnel stationed in Oxfordshire and as of March 2020 there were 6,623 recipients of pensions/compensation under the Armed Forces Pension Scheme, War Pension Scheme and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme in the county. This impact assessment has identified no specific impact of our budget and business planning proposals on the Armed Forces.

Carers: According to the 2011 Census, there was a total of 13,354 people providing unpaid care in Cherwell. No specific issues relating to carers have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Care leavers: Care Leavers face many challenges as they move into adulthood, such as those relating to careers, education, accommodation and personal change. This impact assessment has identified no specific impact of our budget and business planning proposals on Care Leavers.

Areas of Social Deprivation: Parts of Banbury Cross and Neithrop, Banbury Ruscote, Bicester South and Ambrosden, Bicester West, Kidlington East, and Launton and Otmoor are within the most deprived areas of Cherwell. The proposal of increasing rent for Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership properties could have a negative impact on residents within areas of deprivation, there are mitigating actions in place to minimise this impact, such as increase on housing benefits and cost-of-living crisis support for Universal credit and other benefits' claimants.

Section 4 : Summary

The overall budget proposals have been developed with the objective of effectively targeting services so that we continue to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, including those living with deprivation, and fulfil our statutory duties. All proposals that will have an impact, positive or negative, on any protected characteristic or on rural communities, armed forces, carers or areas of social deprivation; as per the council's Equalities and Inclusion framework all proposals will have an individual EIA completed alongside policy development, to ensure full compliance to our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. The proposal to increase rent for Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership properties could have a negative impact on part of the residents within areas of deprivation; there are mitigating actions in place to minimise this impact, such as increases on benefits, cost-of-living crisis support and extra payments for benefits' claimants. Also, as always, we will be working closely across different services and voluntary sector to monitor the welfare of our most vulnerable residents to make sure sufficient support is in place.