

Cherwell District Council

Equality Impact Assessment

Transformation Budget and Business Planning 2024/25: Overarching Equality Impact Assessment

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 transformation 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 2024/25 transformation 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 and its 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 transformation 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. This overarching impact assessment has been carried out taking into account any individual Equalities Impact Assessments plus the combined impact of proposals for the budget.</p> <p>After assessing the proposed savings and their com we have determined that none of the proposals will have an impact on residents within the protected characteristics, however, the following proposal could potentially impact a group within the additional characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charging for replacement bins and caddies
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Authorised by	Shona Ware – Assistant Director Customer Focus
Date of Assessment	October, 2023

Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p>Context / Background 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 supporting our 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>In addition, key themes including climate action and addressing inequality will be critical in supporting the delivery of the Council’s overarching priorities and vision.</p> <p>This budget and business planning round has been impacted by ongoing uncertainty in major funding streams such as Business Rates. In addition, significant budget pressures have arisen due to the cost of living crisis and the associated high levels of inflation. In combination, this is resulting in a challenging budgeting and business planning process which is hoping to address some of these pressure through a transformation programme that has been part of this Budget and Business Planning process to make sure we are making the most of our current resources.</p> <p>Every savings proposal considered (efficiency or for public consultation) was required to undertake an initial Equalities Impact Assessment, completed by the service manager, to indicate whether they had identified any potential impacts of their savings proposals on protected characteristics. Please note that completing an individual Equalities Impact Assessment is mandatory for all new projects, policies, strategies, and proposals presented by council services.</p> <p>Changes to fees and charges are addressed in the associated Fees and Chares 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, benchmarking, and market opportunities.</p>
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	<p>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>Proposals Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action</p>	<p>The overall budget savings proposals for 2024-25 have been developed with the objective of effectively targeting services, so that we continue to meet the needs of the most vulnerable and fulfil our statutory duties. The savings proposals reviewed are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To better reflect the service we provide, and propose changes in the housing market, with increase of license fees for Houses in Multiple Occupation by 10% • Reviewing CCTV coverage across the district to remove duplication or no longer necessary coverage where appropriate to reduce monitoring and maintenance costs • Providing playground inspections internally • Generate additional income from inspecting taxis by widening the MOT offer • Introduce a charge for replacing bins and food caddies that are lost or damaged (except for any damage caused by the crews when emptying them) - £40 for a wheeled bin, £10 for a large food caddy ,and £5 for a small food caddy –

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To introduce a range of charges for collecting different bulky waste items to better reflect the actual cost of providing this service rather than one fixed cost. To introduce a premium service for urgent collections • Ensuring those currently receiving weekly waste collections to have the appropriate containers, and move to fortnightly collections, in line with the rest of the district. This would reduce our operational costs, improve overall efficiency, and encourage households to reduce the amount of waste they produce • Changing the working pattern of our street cleansing services to maintain high standards but reduce operational costs • Only retain and maintain Cherwell District Council owned public conveniences that are fully accessible. This would mean keeping the Changing Places facilities in Bicester, Banbury and Kidlington and closing the public conveniences at Banbury Bus Station and Pioneer Square that do not meet these standards
<p>Evidence / Intelligence 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</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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) of health and wellbeing needs, the associated Equalities Briefing and Cherwell District Profile and the results of the 2021 Census, to consider the making of our communities, and the possible impact of the proposals as they are drawn up. • A public consultation process, the results of which are published alongside the Transformation 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.

Section 3: Impact Assessment

Assessing the evidence and impact on those within the protected and additional characteristics

Age: According to the 2021 Census there are 161,016 residents in Cherwell, of which 2.3% (3,751) are aged 85+. Cherwell's population is ageing with the 85+ population predicted to increase by 88% by 2037. No specific issues relating to resident's age have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Disability: Around 15% of Cherwell's population have a disability, according to the Census 2021. No specific issues relating to disabilities have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Gender Reassignment: During the 2021 Census, a total of 657 residents stated that their gender identity is different from the sex registered 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 1,784 live births in Cherwell in 2022, a higher fertility rate in comparison with the county average. No specific issues relating to pregnancy nor maternity have been identified as likely to arise because of these proposals.

Marriage and Civil Partnership: According to the 2021 Census 48.6% of residents in Cherwell were married or in a civil partnership and 682 registered same-sex civil partnerships. 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 2021 Census, 88.7% of Cherwell's residents identified as white, 6% as Asian/Asian British or Asian Welsh, 2.9% as mixed or multiple ethnic groups, 1.8% were Black/Black African/ Black Caribbean or Black British and 1.3% were other ethnic groups. The majority of ethnic minority populations in Cherwell are based in Banbury. In regard to nationality 86.7% of residents only have UK national identity, 11% has a non-UK identity and 2.3% has UK identity and a non-UK identity (simultaneously). 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: Regarding religion and belief, in the 2021 Census 50% of Cherwell residents identified as Christians, 38% as having no religion, 6.1% did not answer, 3.2% as Muslim, 0.8% as Hindu, 0.6% as Buddhist, 0.4% as Sikh, 0.5% other religion and 0.1% Jewish. No specific issues relating to religion or belief have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Sex: In the 2021 Census, Cherwell reported to have a population composed by 81,112 females (50.4%) and 79,904 (49.6%) males. No specific issues relating to sex have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Sexual Orientation: According to the Census 2021, of all over 16 years old Cherwell residents, 90.3% identified as heterosexual, 1.3% as gay or lesbian, 1.1% bisexual, 0.2% pansexual, 0.1 asexual and 6.8% did not respond. No specific issues relating to sexual orientation have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Rural Communities: Oxfordshire is the most rural county in the South East at 2.6 people per hectare and 40% of our population live in smaller towns and villages. No specific issues relating to rural communities have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Armed Forces: According to the Census 2021 there are 4,214 residents in Cherwell that have previously served in regular UK armed forces. No specific issues relating to the armed forces have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

Carers: In 2021 there were a total of 11,597 unpaid carers in Cherwell. No specific issues relating to carers have been identified as likely to arise as a result of these proposals.

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

Areas of Social Deprivation: Although Oxfordshire is generally considered to be relatively affluent, there are pockets of deprivation and a number of these are located in Cherwell wards. Parts of Banbury Cross and Neithrop, Banbury Ruscote, Bicester South and Ambrosden, Bicester West, Kidlington East, and Launton and Otmoor are within the 20% most deprived areas of Cherwell.

The proposal of charging for replacement bins and caddies could have an impact on those with a lower income, as per our internal procedures an Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the proposal to establish mitigating actions. The recent increase to minimum wage and Universal Credit will contribute to mitigate the potential impact of this proposal.

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