

Appendix D – Equality Impact Assessments

1 Overview

- 1.1 This appendix describes the most significant equality pressures confronting each main service area, informed by an equality analysis. It highlights the effect of policy and governance changes; an overview of positive and neutral impacts; and a service impact overview. These outcomes are based upon spending decisions taken during the last two years and changes resulting from the 2017/18 budget.
- 1.2 It is important to note that the budget is a financial plan of the Council's current operational intent and, where known, the equality impact of change is disclosed. However there are a number of individual decisions that will arise over the period of the 2017/18 budget. These will be subject to specific equality impact assessments in line with the Council's equality impact assessment (EIA) guidance. Political decisions will only be taken once effective and meaningful engagement has taken place on a need by need basis. It cannot be assumed that decisions will be taken to implement all these changes.
- 1.3 In making this decision the Council must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under s149 of the Equalities Act 2010, i.e. have due regard to the need to: A. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act. B. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. C. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 1.4 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. In addition, marital status is a relevant protected characteristic for 1.3(A)
- 1.5 The PSED is a relevant factor in making this decision but does not impose a duty to achieve the outcomes in s149, is only one factor that needs to be considered, and may be balanced against other relevant factors.

Policy and Governance Changes

- 1.6 The proposed social care precept may adversely impact some residents of Essex; however residents on the lowest incomes will remain eligible for support with their bills via their local council tax support schemes (operated and maintained by the district and borough councils). The increase proposed relates to a specific social care precept that will be ring-fenced for adult social care. This should positively impact on vulnerable adults within Essex by helping to protect and improve social care services.

1.7 The localisation of council tax benefit (introducing new payees to council tax as a result of national policy changes) was implemented in 2013/14 alongside a scheme for hardship and investment in collection initiatives including Citizens Advice support. As set out previously, the 12 billing authorities have sustained collection rates against this backdrop, ensuring no negative impact on other council tax payers. Given that success, the Council's budget proposes continuation of the investment into collection and hardship for 2017/18.

1.8 Essex County Council has joined forces with the borough, district and city councils and police and fire authorities to tackle council tax fraud across the county. The programme:

- ensures those entitled to discounts or exemptions on their council tax are receiving the right support
- has introduced extensive regular reviews to ensure the levels of benefits people receive are correct
- encourages people to notify councils if their circumstances change and the consequences of not doing so to enable councils to take swift and appropriate action against people fraudulently claiming council tax benefit.

The Council has anticipated specific increases in demand for services as a result of welfare changes but the full impact of these changes will become more apparent in the months beyond implementation. This is likely to predominantly impact on working age adults with disabilities and where families have someone with a disability. At this point it is unclear whether the impact is likely to be positive, negative or neutral.

1.9 Local authorities have taken over responsibility from NHS England for commissioning (i.e. planning and paying for) public health services for children aged 0-5. This includes health visiting and Family Nurse Partnership including targeted services for teenage mothers. Again, the Council will pay due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty ensuring that it considers the equality implications of the change. Based on the experience of the transfer of Public Health to local authorities we anticipate these changes to be positive. However, further details will emerge in 2017/18 on the exact nature of the impact.

1.10 During 2017/18 the Council will continue to support activity to combat financial exclusion and to promote financial literacy through its education services. Financial exclusion is caused in the main by inability of individuals to access mainstream financial products and services. This exclusion, historically has affected people on lower incomes who are also impacted by other forms of social exclusion.

1.11 The budget will be discharged during a period of intense pressure on the health and care system in Essex. Five Clinical Commissioning Groups

(CCGs) covering Mid and South Essex are part of the NHS Success Regime, a new regime for those health and care economies facing particularly deep challenges.

Service Impacts Overview

Cross cutting

- 1.12 The Council is undertaking an organisation redesign to reflect the challenges that it faces; this could affect all employees (excluding teaching staff). The redesign may impact how services are delivered with a greater emphasis partnership working and the use of other channels of delivery (e.g. digital) over the longer term; however this is not expected to impact on the level of services offered to customers.
- 1.13 The Council is undertaking a significant project to review the provision of all support services throughout the organisation to ensure these are delivered as cost effectively as possible and reflect the changing size and structure of the Council's frontline services as part of the Council's new organisational design. A full business case will be produced which will include an Equalities Impact Assessment of the detailed proposals; however at this stage it is not considered that they will have an adverse impact on persons who share any relevant protected characteristic.

Adult Social Care

- 1.14 Our vision for Adult Social Care is to help people help themselves to live independently, enabling them to take decisions over their lives. Our first duty is to provide advice and support to people and families so that vulnerable people can be safe and in control.
- 1.15 Demand is rising because of demography, ill-health and expectations, whilst our revenue is not keeping up through grants and income. We therefore need to change the way we work so that our budgets are sustainable over three years. This means that people will do more for themselves and we will support them to do it. Our legal framework, the Care Act 2014, allows us to balance meeting the needs of an individual with our wider obligations to all citizens, and to 'meet needs', not just to 'provide services'. Needs are set out in the Care & Support Guidance (DH 2016).
- 1.16 In line with the reductions in the Council's budget, the Adults Social Care portfolio needs to achieve efficiency savings of £55m for the 2017/18 financial year. Given the reductions in central government funding, there is a need to ensure that Council develops policies to ensure delivery of core services within our financial envelope. There is also a need to ensure that Council subsidies are reduced where people have the financial means to pay for services. It is our policy to charge for adult social care support in line with the statutory guidance set out in the Care and Support guidance (see above).

- 1.17 Detailed equality impact assessments will take place where required, ensuring that we actively engage and consult with those service users and their carers that are likely to be affected by any proposed changes. This will help us understand any equality impacts, including the impacts on protected characteristics, and where possible identify mitigating factors.
- 1.18 There are an estimated 255,433 people across Essex aged over 65 and 17,500 people receiving a commissioned care service. There are estimated to be 41,900 adults with a moderate or serious physical disability living in Essex with personal care needs.
- 1.19 The 2011 Census tells us that an estimated 146,211 adults in Essex provide informal care to relatives, friends or neighbours. This represents 10% of the population. In 2015/16: the Council completed 4,900 assessments and reviews, and supported 6,400 adult carers and 749 young carers through various third sector contracts and agreements. As a local authority, that gives us a rough total number supported of 12,049 (there is likely to be significant overlap, with carers drawing from multiple avenues of support). This is significantly lower than the number enumerated by means of self-identification in the census (146,211). Also, evidence shows that self-identified carers from particular BME communities are less likely to seek support.
- 1.20 Of the savings for 2017/18, the majority of savings activities relate to the following initiatives:
- a) The introduction and embedding of the new ‘three-conversation’ approach across Adult Social Care, which we have termed “Good Lives”, saving £2m. This asset-strength based approach looks to actively connect adults to the most appropriate family and community resources and networks for their circumstances, only intervene when crises occur, and introduce a full social care package only where necessary.
 - b) Continuing with the Increasing Independence approach to transform the model of support for adults with disabilities, enabling people to move out of residential care and developing a progressive approach to social work practice that is fully aligned with the Adults vision. The programme, which will save £12m, is aiming to support 110 adults with disabilities in residential care by enabling them to move into their own homes. The approach was also support other people who live at home to become more independent.
 - c) We are committed to reviewing spend on Housing Related Support Services. We aim to save £5m through decommissioning a number of current contracts and reviewing the level of floating support services provided. The decommissioning contracts will impact on approximately 10,800 people in Essex, the majority of who are Older People and/or have a disability. The impacts will be offset by better use of and access to community resources. The proposed reduction

in funding to Floating Support will impact on potentially over 6,000 working age adults across Essex with a wide variety of support needs. Impacts will be lessened by re-focusing the remaining service on the most vulnerable and those at imminent risk of homelessness. Individual and more detailed EIA(s) will be undertaken to understand the impact of each decommissioned contract and in turn any potential mitigating factors.

- d) We will develop a fundamental operational policy and infrastructure for the delivery of Adult Social Care going forward, saving £7m. This will be designed to enable us to achieve best value and sustainability in the medium term in the context of the overall resources available to the Council. In doing so, we will review practice to ensure that social workers take a more consistent approach within the law and policy, whilst seeking to provide assurance that expenditure is as low as possible. Any changes that occur as a result will likely apply to all client groups.
- e) We will make changes to the procurement of supported living packages of care to generate savings of £2m and improve delivery of the service model for tenants through clearer quality indicators and service specification. The majority of tenants in supported living schemes have a learning disability, but other client groups may be affected.
- f) We will implement changes to some policies relating to charging for Adult Social Care services in order to ensure that those people who have the financial means to pay for services do so. These changes will affect approximately 4,700 Service Users receiving care in their own homes (non-residential), across the County. This work is expected to generate additional income of £5m. A separate EIA has already been published which sets out the impact of those groups likely to be affected and potential mitigations.
- g) We will work with our wholly owned traded company 'ECL' to transform a number of services they deliver on our behalf. Some of this work will be complementary to and build on other initiatives elsewhere in the Council. We anticipate savings of £1m in undertaking this work.
- h) We plan to offer prepaid cards as the preferred direct payment mechanism to all new direct payments service users, while keeping the other payment methods e.g. Essex Pass and bank accounts. This follows positive feedback from service users on a pilot process undertaken earlier this year. This will provide Essex County Council with much needed transparency and visibility on service users' expenditure of the direct payment monies. We anticipate savings of £1m from this initiative.

- i) Our Transport Integration Programme will make savings of £500,000 in 2017/18. These savings will be delivered through contract efficiencies and a reduction of the costs associated with Day Opportunities. Removal of funding will be delivered in such a way so that day services can continue to run and meet customers' eligible needs. Care will be taken to ensure that there are no negative impacts on their ability to access services. It is anticipated that there will be positive impacts with support in accessing different transport arrangements, particularly increasing people's independence and avoiding isolation.
- j) We are planning to maximise the use of technology and digital solutions to support people to maintain their independence. This programme will save £500,000.
- k) Supporting frail elderly people (especially those over the age of 65) to live independently at home. Our objective is to reduce demand for social care by maximising the independence of Older People in the community and following admission to hospital. This will be achieved by investing more into reablement services and making reablement the default pathway before ongoing and longer term care is assessed for. It is expected that by 2020/21 as many as 13,000 cases annually would be suitable for reablement.

Children and Families

- 1.21 Our vision for Children's Social Care is to ensure that children and young people are protected from significant harm and their development and well-being are promoted. We do this by delivering a range of early help, family support and social work interventions together with our partner agencies, with families in need in Essex. We have a specific responsibility to ensure that children in our care and care leavers receive high quality support from us as corporate parents. We will be in the forefront of best practice in early help and social work for children and young people and we will always learn from and respond to the most forward thinking innovations and changes in the profession, learning from feedback and the voice of the child.
- 1.22 £250,000 of income is forecast from the sale of professional services. Services have been provided to central government and other local authorities in the past. The service are currently developing options around improvement; commissioning for outcomes and Good Lives
- 1.23 The service is aiming to release £750,000 of savings from the remodelling of service provision. This will require placement reviews for individual young people and ensure no negative impact on their care and support. This work will commence April 2017 and completed by March 2018
- 1.24 £3m saving has been achieved from the Pre-birth-19 contract, an amalgamation of several different contracts, including Family Partnerships, Healthy Schools and Children's Centres, into a single, 10 year procurement.

- 1.25 £500,000 Collaborative Supplier Engagement, Contract reviews and negotiation of external purchasing for fostering and residential care placements.

None of the proposed changes will adversely discriminate against any disadvantage or vulnerable groups of children and young people.

Corporate and Communities

- 1.26 The staffing budgets in this portfolio are likely to be affected by the Support Services savings to be found in 2017/18; however as per paragraph 1.12 the detail of this project is still to be worked through and an EIA will be completed as part of the business case.
- 1.27 The Community Hubs Programme supports Face to Face Services in establishing vibrant hubs in our communities that include our library and registration services with other partners, creating places where people can learn, read, share, be inspired and take an active role in community life, as well as accessing the services that they need. No negative equality impacts are expected as a result of this review; however a separate EIA will be completed as part of the business case.
- 1.28 The Trading Standards service is being reviewed for 2017/18, with savings to be achieved through income generation from additional services and from operational efficiencies. No negative equality impacts are expected as a result of this review; however a separate EIA will be completed as part of the business case.

Digital Innovation, IT and Customer Services

- 1.29 The staffing budgets in this portfolio are likely to be affected by the Support Services savings to be found in 2017/18; however as per paragraph 1.12 the detail of this project is still to be worked through and an EIA will be completed as part of the business case.
- 1.30 The successful roll-out of new technology enabling mobile and flexible working has given staff the tools to improve their work/life balance. The Access to Work budget will be centralised in 2017/18 to ensure the best provision of support for staff with disabilities working at the Council.
- 1.31 Information Services (IS) projects also enable front line staff to work more effectively with our most vulnerable residents. The IS project for the delivery of the Social Care Case Management system will deliver over £500,000 of savings in 2017/18 as part of this journey.
- 1.32 The Digital Channels transformation programme has made it easier and more convenient for service users to access council services. Additional customer channels have been introduced creating consumer choice whilst simplifying customer journeys. The opportunity to transact online 24/7 at a time that suits customers is now available. Aspects of the Essex County

Council website have been redesigned making information easier to find and instant online translation functionality makes information accessible to all.

Economic Growth, Infrastructure and Partnerships

- 1.33 Efficiency savings of £1m have been identified for the 2017/18 financial year. Of the efficiency savings for 2017/18, the major areas of activity relate to:
- Reforming and recommissioning the Inward Investment service, this is expected to deliver savings of £150,000. There will be no direct impact on the manner in which the service is delivered.
 - The Employability and Skills Board will be funded from the core Skills budget, with additional savings of £125,000 in the Apprentice Hub. There will be no direct impact on the manner in which the service is delivered.
 - Economic Regeneration activities will be re-prioritised and focussed on areas that are not being adequately provided by the market, this will generate savings of £1m, with no direct impact on service users.

It is not considered that these proposals above will have a disproportionate impact on persons who share any relevant protected characteristic

Education and Lifelong Learning

- 1.34 The Education Services Grant (ESG) is allocated to local authorities and academies on a simple per-pupil basis according to the number of pupils for whom they are responsible. The Government confirmed in November 2016 that reduction to the ESG for the financial year 2017/18 will go ahead. The transitional arrangements for ESG for April to August 2017 are still to be finalised but the general funding rate will provisionally be £50 per pupil which is a reduction of £27 per pupil compared to the current £77 per pupil. This equates to a 35% reduction compared to 2016/17. Savings of £4m are expected to be delivered for 2017/18. A briefing paper will be presented to the Schools Forum in January 2017 to agree which services will no longer be possible to be funded by the Council.
- 1.35 The £2m savings identified within the Transforming Education Services (TES) are on track to deliver full benefits by 2017/18. A new model for the School Improvement is in the process of being designed. The provision currently costs £3.3m and will reduce by £1.5m to £1.8m in line with agreed TES savings. The current level of service provision will be maintained until the end of August 2017.
- 1.36 Home to School Transport is expected to deliver £1m of savings through the integration of home to school with local bus procurement via a dynamic purchasing system (DPS).

Environment and Waste

- 1.37 Efficiency savings of £3m have been identified for the 2017/18 financial year. In addition to these efficiencies the service has absorbed and continues to absorb significant pressures in relation to increase growth in tonnages (primarily residual waste) which reflect current disposal levels and the anticipated growth in the number of dwellings within Essex.
- 1.38 Of the efficiency savings for 2017/18, the major areas of activity relate to:
- The development and delivery of a waste prevention and minimisation programme including 'Love Food Hate Waste' waste reduction project consisting of a public engagement and education programme to encourage the adoption of waste avoidance behaviours. The programme aims to deliver waste reduction across Essex with associated savings of £386,000. There will be no direct impact on the manner in which waste services are delivered and therefore no equality impacts are expected.
 - Three Essex Waste Collection Authorities are expected to introduce alternate weekly collections in 2017/18, realising savings on residual waste disposal in the region of £560,000. As these changes are progressed, individual equality impact assessments will be undertaken.
 - There are a range of other savings concepts which form part of a £1m savings programme aimed at reducing the waste budget by 1%. These projects are at a very early stage in development. There are not expected to be any impacts to protected groups at this stage but an equality impact assessment will be completed as part of the governance and decision making for each individual project.

Finance, Commercial, Traded Services, Housing and Planning

- 1.39 The staffing budgets in this portfolio are likely to be affected by the Support Services savings to be found in 2017/18; however as per paragraph 1.12 the detail of this project is still to be worked through and an EIA will be completed as part of the business case.
- 1.40 Savings within this portfolio mainly relate to projects to find efficiencies across the Council, for example, reducing the amount of paper consumed, reducing the amount of travel undertaken and improving debt management. These are about changing the way the Council works in order to use our limited resources wisely. The detail of how these proposals will be implemented is still to be determined in some cases; however at this stage it is not considered that they will have an adverse impact on persons who share any relevant protected characteristic.
- 1.41 A review of the Archive Service is currently being undertaken, which will identify opportunities to maximise income and reduce costs in 2017/18. No

negative equality impacts are expected as a result of this review; however a separate EIA will be completed as part of the business case.

Health

- 1.42 In line with the reductions in the Council's budget the Health portfolio needs to achieve £1m of savings in 2017/18. Our approach to these savings is in line with our Adult Social Care vision to help people help themselves to live independently, enabling them to take decisions over their lives. Our first duty is to provide advice and support to people and families so that vulnerable people can be safe and in control.
- 1.43 In our mental health services we are taking 3 approaches to enable us to achieve these savings within the framework of our vision. These are:
- a) Earlier intervention, through development of the new Care and Assessment Team to pick up demand before a need for Secondary Care support develops.
 - b) Building greater independence and resilience through redesign of the mental health accommodation pathway, including varied support options for stepping down from residential care.
 - c) Back-office efficiencies through our annual negotiation with the Secondary Mental Health trusts.

The changes do not focus specifically on any of the protected characteristics and we do not anticipate adverse impacts in relation to equalities.

Highways and Transportation

- 1.44 Efficiency savings of £7m have been identified for the 2017/18 financial year. The efficiencies within the portfolio should be noted in the context of also absorbing pressures in relation to increased demand through demographics and economic growth.
- 1.45 The ongoing redesign of the Passenger Transport network is being developed so as to have a positive impact overall, however, individual changes to services may potentially have localised or very specific adverse impacts. Additionally the commercialisation of supported services whilst it results in the continuation of those services and the ability to support an overall wider network than could otherwise be supported, does result in individual changes such as fare increases and occasionally route and timetable changes. Specific EIA's will be undertaken to analyse any localised or specific adverse impact that may result in the ongoing redesign of Passenger Transport.

- 1.46 Further efficiencies are categorised into the 3 main areas outlined below, which will result in a generally maintained service provision and cost reduction.
- Partnership and Contract efficiencies within the Ringway Jacobs partnership (highways maintenance); whilst benefits are being achieved through seeking continuous improvements, different ways to deliver services more efficiently, and economies in scale, an element of saving will result in reduced service outputs. The effect could see an overall reduction in the level of reactive maintenance on the highway network. This could negatively impact service users generally.
 - Combined approach to work with other partners including Police and the Parking Partnerships. Financial benefits will be achieved through one-off opportunities, different methodologies, reducing subsidies and increasing income opportunities.
 - Increased income for fees and charges, including in the main Bus Lane Enforcement, Records Management and Green Claims. Failure to enforce could lead to safety and congestion issues. Increased enforcement activity will result initially in higher penalties issued to non-compliant users of the Essex Highway Network. It should be noted that performance and behaviour will improve over time and there should be a significant reduction in penalties issued. It is anticipated that Bus Lane enforcement and Records Management income will decrease over time.

It is not considered that these proposals above will have a disproportionate impact on persons who share any relevant protected characteristic

Leader

- 1.47 The staffing budgets in this portfolio are likely to be affected by the Support Services savings to be found in 2017/18; however as per paragraph 1.12 the detail of this project is still to be worked through and an EIA will be completed as part of the business case.
- 1.48 The current phase of the Property Transformation programme will conclude in 2017/18, delivering £725,000 of additional savings from a rationalised property estate and efficiency developments to deliver mobile and flexible working for employees. As well as benefiting employees this should provide environmental benefits via a reduced need to travel and a smaller property estate to maintain.