

**Blackpool Council
Equality Analysis (EA) Record Form**
Formerly Equality Impact Assessment

February 2016

Department: **Corporate**

Team or Service Area Leading Assessment: **Resources and Deputy Chief Executive’s departments**

Title of Policy/ Service or Function: **Council Budget 2016 - 2017**

Date of proposals: Committee **Executive**

Lead Officer: Steve Thompson / Carmel Mckeogh / Andy Divall

STEP 1 - IDENTIFYING THE PURPOSE OR AIMS

1. What type of policy, service or function is this?

Existing x New/ proposed x Changing/ updated x

2. What is the aim and purpose of the policy, service or function?

The proposals are intended to support the management of a large reduction in funding from the Government and other financial pressures which have led to a funding gap of £25.1 million in 2016/17 and further pressures anticipated in future years.

The purpose of this equality analysis is to:

- 1) Describe the work and decision making processes to assess potential impacts on key equality groups (protected characteristics) of the Budget proposals and highlight potential areas of adverse impact that could constitute discrimination.
- 2) Set out actions to ensure procedures are in place to continue to monitor and review the Equality impact of reduced funding and consequent service and staff reductions.

Background and legal context

The Council has a statutory responsibility under Equality Law, known as “Public Sector Duty” “to examine and analyse the impacts on equality issues on all related decisions. This is set within the context of our overarching requirement under Equality law, as a designated public authority to have “due regard” to the need to –

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct
- Advance equality of opportunity

- Foster good relations between different (defined) groups

Council commitment to Equality and Diversity

The Council's priorities and commitments are published in two key publications a). The Equality Objectives ¹b) The Council Plan 2015-20

Both these documents describe the importance of this agenda to the Council and set out four overarching Objectives. The Council monitors and evaluates its work to advance all these objectives. Copies of a recent performance review report (dated December 2014) are available on request.

The Councils approach to Equality Analysis of the 2016-17 Budget proposals

The Council adopts a multi level approach to the equality analysis covering impact of the current Budget decisions arising from the Government's financial settlements.

This is in recognition of the complex effect on service users, staff, citizens and visitors of these decisions. This process involves a number of elements , key stages are :

September – October 15

- Initial service level proposals and scoping of equality issues. Focus is on the expected and known impact of service reduction proposals on key equality groups/ protected characteristics; this work is conducted by Senior Managers responsible for the services. The work is aimed at this first stage on identifying the scope of possible impacts, in order to inform Elected Members selection of proposals to take forward to consultation.
- Briefings for key decision makers, at both Elected Member (Executive) and Senior Officer Levels, on the Public Sector Equality duty and the implications for decision making.
- Briefing and Training for Senior Departmental Equality representatives and HR Advisors to ensure they can support their managers and departments in approaching the Equality Analysis of budget related proposals.
- Detailed advice, guidance and Pro forma paperwork for all key decision makers involved in the budgetary decision process.
- Concurrently, initial briefings on the likely scope of the overall Budget position have been conducted with the Community wide Equality Engagement groups including the town wide Equalities Forum and Disability partnership.

¹ The Council's Equality Objectives are :

Services – We will deliver services that are fair –measured by more people telling the Council they experience fair treatment by Council services

Staff – We will ensure that the workforce is more representative of the community the Council serves and equality and diversity is embedded in our staff culture

Decision making – We will involve people from diverse backgrounds in decision making at every level

Cohesion – We celebrate the growing diversity in Blackpool and increase respect and understanding for all

November 15 – January 16

- Equality Analysis is integrated within the priority led budgeting process. All budget related proposals with significant equality implications are identified, are flagged up to decision makers and an appropriate level of impact work is commissioned through data analysis and consultation with service users and others affected.
- Assessing staffing impacts. At this stage we are able to assess the effects of budget reductions on staff diversity issues. We do this by preparing a benchmark analysis of the current levels of workforce diversity for each of the key equality characteristics – Race, Gender, Disability, Age, Religion and Belief, and Sexual Orientation, as at August 2015. This is then compared to the demographic profile of the pools of staff that have been placed at risk of redundancy through the specific service proposals, and any significant variances highlighted and investigated. This work is important for two reasons, firstly, to ensure there is no discrimination through the selection process and secondly, to track our process in working towards a workforce that better represents the community we serve.
- At appropriate stages, all the above is communicated and discussed with senior decision makers at Officer and Elected Member levels. Which in turn informs the final decisions which are included within the Budget report.

3. Please outline any proposals being considered.

Funding and budgetary proposals as set out in the Executive report entitled General Fund Revenue Budget 2016/17 and in the report's appendices.

4. What outcomes do we want to achieve?

To manage the impact of a large reduction in funding from the Government and other financial pressures which have led to a funding gap of £25.1 million in 2016/17 and further pressures anticipated in future years.

5. Who is the policy, service or function intended to help/ benefit?

Many of the Council's services are specifically aimed at addressing social and economic inequalities and have a wide impact on inclusion and community cohesion in Blackpool.

6. Please summarise the main data/ research

General Population Data

Blackpool has a resident population of some 142,900.

Blackpool has a high percentage of residents who are described as separated or divorced compared to

the Northwest region and England & Wales.

Blackpool has historically had a small, very diverse, black and minority ethnic (BME) population. This is now changing, and has grown at a significant rate in the last decade. And the town has seen a large number of people settle from the Eastern European A8 countries in the last 5 years.

Birth rates for Blackpool residents are lower than regional and national figures; death rates are higher. Blackpool had more deaths than it had live births in 2005, whereas the Northwest Region and England & Wales had more live births than deaths.

The most recent population estimates suggested that a slight decline in population over recent years may have halted. Official projections for the future indicate a population increase to 159,900 by the year 2029. Official projections for the future also indicate a rise in 65 plus year olds both in numbers and as a proportion of the total population

Health and Disability

A high proportion of residents describe their health as “not good” and state that they have a “limiting long term illness”. 42.9% of households in Blackpool include one or more person with a limiting long-term illness, statistics in the North West are 38.4% and in England 33.6%.

10% of people aged between 16-74 are permanently sick or disabled and economically inactive. Percentages are 8% for the NW and 5% for England. In Blackpool approximately a third more men than women are in this category.

Over a hundred people of working age in Blackpool are registered Blind with nearly 200 registered as having sight impairment. Nearly 200 people of working age are registered Deaf or hearing impaired. Nearly 500 people with dual sensory loss have been identified.

Life expectancy in Blackpool is a major cause for concern; the data suggests that while life expectancy increased slightly over the last ten-year period, progress in extending the Blackpool life expectancy figures does not compare favourably with the national trend and other areas. The main causes of all deaths in Blackpool are broadly similar to those for England although deaths due to the digestive system and respiratory system are a little higher in Blackpool than in England as a whole.

Deaths from heart disease and stroke, smoking and cancer are higher in Blackpool than the regional and national average Estimates suggest there are a higher percentage of smokers and ex-smokers in Blackpool than in England as a whole. Certainly there are fewer people who have never smoked.

Alcohol misuse is a significant problem in the North West. It is estimated that 22% of adults in Blackpool binge drink, less than the regional but more than the national average. Admissions to hospital in Blackpool for alcohol related conditions are more than the regional and national average

The number of drug users aged 15-44 in contact with treatment services in Blackpool is the highest of all the local authorities in England.

The number of people registered with severe long-term mental health problems and who are actively accessing treatment is higher than the regional and national average

The Standardised mortality ratio for all deaths under 75 years in Blackpool are higher than the average for England. Male mortality rates in Blackpool exceed female rates for key diseases for the

under 75's. Blackpool key disease mortality rates for both males and females under 75 exceed those for England.

Race and Ethnicity

Blackpool has a small, diverse BME community with 98.4% classifying themselves as white. The percentages are lower in the North West (94.4%) and in England (90.9%).

96.59% of people living in Blackpool were born in the United Kingdom as opposed to 95% regionally and 91% nationally. Of those born outside of the UK, the highest percentages were born in Western Europe (0.85%) and Asia (0.79%).

Gender and Transgender

Blackpool's population is composed of 48% men and 52% women (similar to national gender balance).

Information from the University of Salford suggests that there are about 5,000 – 6,000 transgender people in the UK who are living permanently in their new gender role.

Religion or belief / faith communities

Only 1.2% of the population describe their religion as other than Christian, none/not stated, of which the highest percentage (0.44%) describe themselves as Muslim. The percentage of population for the North West are 4.3% (of which 3% is Muslim) and in England the percentage is 6% (again 3.1% being Muslim and 1.1% Hindu).

Sexual orientation

The percentage of people indicating they live in a same sex relationship is higher in Blackpool at 0.5% than in the North West or England (0.2%). There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that Blackpool has one of the largest gay and lesbian populations outside of the country's largest cities.

Age

Although over half of the population (55.1%) are less than 45 years of age, Blackpool has a high proportion of older residents, (aged 60 years and over), when compared to the Northwest region, and England & Wales. 23.7% are under 20 years of age, 51.2% are aged between 20 and 59; and almost one quarter (25.0%) are aged 60 years and over.

Learning Disabilities

Blackpool has a significantly higher prevalence of learning disabilities amongst adults aged 18-64 (5.7% compared to 4.5% nationally). People with learning disabilities and autism are one of the most excluded groups in the community and more likely to be living in poverty than the general population, partially because they are less likely to be in paid employment. Less than 6% of people with a learning disability are currently in employment across Blackpool. People with learning disabilities are at increased risk of many health conditions compared to the general population. Common problems include respiratory diseases, sensory impairment, gastrointestinal cancer, anxiety and depression and dementia.

7. What are the impacts or effects for Key Protected Characteristics?

General impacts covering protected characteristics

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In drawing together the detailed proposals the authority has been mindful of the need to assess the Equality impact and wherever possible, mitigate the adverse effects on service provision to key equality groups.

Although the scale and continuing patterns of cuts have made it impossible to protect all services to the most vulnerable children and adults in our community, we have made these decisions having regard to the impact this will have on people who share protected characteristics, and have tried to mitigate and reduce impact, wherever we can.

The collective effects of combined service cuts alongside other government initiatives such as welfare reform are difficult to judge at this stage and will only really become apparent over time. The opportunity for these issues to be explored further through consultation and engagement with key community groups and service providers will be important in the year ahead.

The effect of the Budget in respect of the Council's workforce diversity will continue to be measured and assessed for the impact on the overall balance of employees, compared with the Blackpool population. This will help us to assess progress towards our target of becoming an employer that better reflects the composition of the community we serve.

Specific impacts

As in previous year, all Services are expected to make savings. Across the board savings will be made in management, the removal of vacant posts, increased income targets and reduction in supplies and services spend etc.

A number of direct services are significantly affected within the Council's various departments. These equality issues and impacts have been – and will continue to be – explored in detailed Equality Analysis, which has in turn informed the decision making process. This particularly includes proposed changes / reductions in the following areas :

Phase 1 (initial) proposals published in November 2015

Adult Services - a general budget reduction, reduction of the volunteer's service, ceasing and negotiating contracts with external providers, and increasing fees and charges

Places - bringing archived collections back to Blackpool from Lancashire County Council; increasing external funding to the visitor economy budget; and increasing parking revenue through a review of the current provision

Children's Services - increased flexibility in the transport arrangements for children with special educational needs, a reduction of the children's social care contact team, undertaking a review of Council-run children's homes, and a review of the residential respite care provided to children with disabilities at Hornby Road

Community and Environmental Services - contractual savings in the streetlight and public convenience contracts, cessation of the green waste collection service, increased income from the commercial waste service, a review of the school breakfast scheme, plus operational efficiencies in Public Protection, Highways and Road Safety and Parks which will result in staffing reductions

Mitigations

In all these individual service areas consultation has taken place and every effort will continue to be made to mitigate and reduce the impact of cuts wherever possible. All the above proposals have been explored with rigorous equality analysis.

Despite the difficulties inherent in balancing a budget whilst securing a £25.1 million reduction, we believe it's important to where ever possible, protect a number of our direct services that provide vital support for people.

Phase 2 (additional £5.1 million proposals) February 2016

In late December 2015, the local government settlement confirmed the allocations of central, Revenue Support Grant for 2016/17 to Blackpool and all other local authorities.

In our circumstances this settlement has resulted in an additional requirement to reduce the 2016/17 budget by a further £5.1 million, adding to the initial £20 million we estimated with proposals that were brought forward in November 2015.

Proposals to address the additional £5.1 million gap are set out in the main report; all of these have been initially screened for known Equality impacts, and will now be subject to appropriate levels full of equality analysis and staff / community / service user consultation before final decisions on these are brought forward to the Executive/Council in due course. Details of the actions are contained in item 1 of the Action plan below.

Relationships between or within communities (cohesion)

The continued reduction in Council funding for deprived communities across much of Blackpool will have an inevitable effect on services and support for these neighbourhoods, and therefore add to the pressures and tensions within these areas. The Council will keep a close dialogue with key community groups and leaders, as well as engagement through our Fairness Commission and Equality forums - to monitor this, and react if / when required.

The Council will also continue to fulfil obligations and responsibilities in recording and monitoring Hate Crime and related incidents.

Monitoring the levels and patterns of Hate Crime will be a very important means of tracing the effects on community tensions of the reductions in the wider public sector spend in Blackpool in the period ahead.

8. What do you know about how the proposals could impact on levels of socio –economic inequality, in particular Poverty?

The proposals have the potential to have an impact on groups and individuals who may be vulnerable directly as a result of their protected characteristics or whose vulnerability is increased by their protected characteristics.

9. What can be done to improve the policy, service, function or any proposals in order to reduce or remove any adverse impact or effects identified?

Significant budget reductions on this scale, by their very nature, have an unavoidable adverse impact on service delivery and people. However, the decisions on individual service areas, as far as possible, have been made with regard to the impact on particular vulnerable groups and people sharing protected characteristics.

The impact on staff sharing protected characteristics will also be equality monitored to ensure, wherever particular groups do not suffer disproportional adverse impact due to this.

In due course, further Equality engagement will be important as the effect of combined service cuts are difficult to measure at this stage and will only really become apparent over time. The budget reductions over the last few years are completely unprecedented in scale and the opportunity for these issues to be explored further through consultation and engagement with key community groups and service providers will be important in the year ahead.

The effect of the reduction in budget in respect of the workforce diversity will be measured and assessed and the long term impact on the staffing profile in respect of the overall balance of the workforce will be tracked

10. Consultation - Please give details below.

Consultation meetings on the broad budget position facing the Council have been undertaken with the community engagement groups during 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17 budget cycles. The Council's Director of Resources or his representative has personally attended and briefed a number of these groups.

Wider communication has also taken place via the Council's extensive corporate communication methods – which include web site, social media, media briefings & press statements and interviews.

For Phase 1 proposals - at a detailed service level, where equality impact work has identified a need - consultations over the individual proposals have also taken place, with service users, potential users, staff and other key stakeholders.

Consultation with the Trades Unions with regards to staffing issues has been embedded into normal working practices and has also met all formal consultation requirements.

For Phase 2 proposals – all of the above process will now proceed, as outlined in section 7, and in the Action Plan below.

ACTION PLAN

Please outline your proposed action plan below.

Issues/ adverse impact identified	Proposed action/ objectives to deal with adverse impact	Targets/Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments
1.Full equality analysis of all relevant proposals contained within phase 2 (additional £5.1 million proposals)	Depending on the nature / extend of impact, recommendations could be to introduce mitigations of various kind – or not to proceed with the proposal.	To ensure all phase 2 proposals are robustly and proportionately Equality assessed.	Will be dependent on nature of proposal – all will be assess before ultimate decisions are made by Executive/ Council	All Chief Officers/Director of Resources Deputy Chief Executive Pay Equality and Policy Manager Director of Resources	
2. Need for continued dialogue and engagement with vulnerable groups and providers on the long term impact of budgetary reductions	To maintain current support for structures of community engagement in equality and diversity	To engage key groups over the long term impact of service reductions on specific Equality issues in Blackpool	On going throughout 2016.	Director of Resources Deputy Chief Executive Pay Equality and Policy Manager Director of Resources	
3. Need for a full examination of the effect of service reduction on workforce diversity and continued dialogue and engagement with staff over budgetary reductions in future years	To conduct equality monitoring on staff at risk of redundancy and take appropriate action if adverse impacts are identified To track staff equality monitoring data to ensure an accurate picture of current workforce diversity.	To mitigate any disproportional effect on staff who share protected characteristics, and monitor the target of becoming a more diverse employer.	Within current and any future redundancy processes	Deputy Chief Executive Pay Equality and Policy Manager	
4. Need for detailed examination of the effect of service reductions on specific service users and continued dialogue/ engagement with them over	To conduct equality analysis as part of service redesign/commissioning review proposals and take appropriate action if possible to mitigate adverse impacts are identified	To mitigate any disproportionate effect on service users who share protected characteristics if possible, and monitor the outcome of changes.	Within current and any future budget reduction exercises	Relevant Chief Officers	

Issues/ adverse impact identified	Proposed action/ objectives to deal with adverse impact	Targets/Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments
budgetary reductions in future years	To track staff equality monitoring data to ensure an accurate picture of the impact is available.				

ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND REVIEW

Please outline your arrangements for future monitoring and review below.

Agreed action	Monitoring arrangements	Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments
1.Full equality analysis of all relevant proposals contained within phase 2 (additional £5.1 million proposals)	To be coordinated by the Senior Officer Budget Timeline group and delivered by relevant senior staff in each Directorate	Will be dependent on nature of proposal – all will be assess before ultimate decisions are made by Executive/ Council	All Chief Officers/Director of Resources Deputy Chief Executive Pay Equality and Policy Manager Director of Resources	
2. To maintain current support for structures of service user and provider engagement.	To be built into the Directorate Business planning and Performance review processes	2016 and ongoing	Deputy Chief Executive Pay Equality and Policy Manager	
3. To conduct equality monitoring on staff at risk of redundancy and take appropriate action if adverse impacts are identified To track staff equality monitoring data to ensure an accurate picture of current workforce diversity.	To be built into the Directorate Business planning and Performance review processes	2016 and ongoing	Deputy Chief Executive Pay Equality and Policy Manage	
4. Where appropriate to conduct equality monitoring on service changes and take appropriate action if adverse impacts are identified	To be built into the Directorate Business planning and Performance review processes	2016 and ongoing	Relevant Chief Officers Deputy Chief Executive Pay Equality and Policy Manager	

Name: Andy Divall

Position: Pay Equality and Policy Manager