

**Equality Analysis (EA) Record Form**

Formerly Equality Impact Assessment

**January 2024**Department: **Corporate**

Team or Service Area Leading Assessment:

**Coordinated by Head of Equality and Diversity**

Title of Policy/ Service or Function:

**Council Budget 2024-2025**

Committee:

**Executive**

Lead Officer:

Steve Thompson / Andy Divall

**STEP 1 - IDENTIFYING THE PURPOSE OR AIMS**

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

**Revenue Budget for 2024/25**

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

The proposals are intended to support the management of a reduction in funding which have led to a gap of approximately £16.3 million in 2024/25 and further pressures anticipated in future years, as set out in the Medium Term Financial Sustainability Strategy , and in the main Executive report.

The purpose of this equality analysis is to:

- 1) Describe the work and decision making processes which assess potential impacts on key equality groups (protected characteristics) of the Budget proposals and if necessary, highlight potential areas of adverse impact that could constitute discrimination.
- 2) This year we also have included an analysis related to wider socio- economic inequality , taking account of the impacts on poverty and income inequality
- 3) Set out actions to ensure procedures are in place to continue to monitor and review the Equality impact of reduced revenue funding and consequent effects on services and staffing.

**Background and legal context**

Over the 14-year period since 2011/12, the Council has had to make annual large Revenue Budget savings. The compound effect means that nearly £1.4bn of resource has been removed from the Blackpool economy, one of the highest cuts per head of population across local authorities in England. The demography and needs of Blackpool's communities are described in detail later in this analysis. The Council serves, as is widely noted by many independent sources, the most deprived area in the country. Local government services are generally universal in scope, however we know the poor and vulnerable often rely on them most. Given the wider context of the UK economic outlook combined

with the current cost of living crisis, the outlook for vulnerable people and groups in our community, is more uncertain than it has ever been.

The central concern of the Council's work to explore equality impacts of its budget proposals, is to give appropriate attention, throughout the process, of equality considerations as laid out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Through this, we seek to find ways, wherever possible to mitigate the adverse effects – whilst delivering the legal requirement to produce a balanced budget.

The Council's statutory duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, is known as the "Public Sector Duty". It requires a conscientious and systematic examination of impacts on equality issues on all relevant decisions. Specifically :

- 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 contained in a). The Equality Objectives <sup>1</sup>b) The Council Plan. The Council has recently reviewed its Equality Objectives in line with a statutory four yearly process. These objectives inform a key aspect of the context for the work in assessing budget related equality impacts – on staff, service users and the wider public.

#### The Councils approach to Equality Analysis of the 2024-25 Budget proposals

As with previous budgetary cycles the Council has implemented a multi-level approach to the equality analysis exploring the impact of the Budget decisions arising from the Government's financial settlements.

This year, the government has published it's own assessment of the equality impacts of the provisional financial settlement. This analysis explores possible impacts – with the issues relating to age (over 65 years in particular) being identified as the protected characteristics most positively affected by the additional grants through the various Social care funding pots.

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<sup>1</sup> The Council's current Equality Objectives are :

**Services** – We will ensure all functions and services comply with our Equality Duty responsibilities , and we will monitor and inspect to ensure this

**Staff** – We will ensure that the workforce is 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

The Minister for Women and Equalities has also recently wrote to all local authority Leaders and Chief Executives to remind them of the need to adopt a conscientious and robust approach to ensuring compliance with the PSED<sup>2</sup>.

This has provided additional context to the Council's own work to scope and assess the implications of revenue budget decisions.

The context for this process has also been greatly influenced by the lasting effects of the Pandemic. The Council produced its own Equality Assessment of the effect of the pandemic on the community. This assessment and its conclusions has provided us with a solid foundation for the Council to explore the equality impacts of this and future years budget proposals.

In particular, we have been at every stage mindful of the following :

#### **Direct physical and mental health impacts**

1. Older people, disabled people and BAME communities are more likely to have been directly impacted through serious illness/ death if they contract COVID 19. Many more, in and around these groups whilst not directly affected, will have felt more impacts of the pandemic on their physical and emotional wellbeing – than other groups of people.
2. In addition, these groups, alongside others such as LGBT, people with mental health conditions and people living alone or in care institutions may well have been more vulnerable or disproportionately affected by the impact of policies like social distancing as a result of Covid19, and be affected by the emotional and wellbeing issues around this.

#### **Economic impacts**

3. The economic impact on people (employment and income levels) is going to take time to play out, but in the longer term is most likely to more adversely affect younger people, women, some BAME groups and people with mental health related disability

#### **Social and cohesion impacts**

4. It is clear that young people and children who live in particularly vulnerable households, due to domestic violence, drugs and alcohol abuse or parental mental health issues – will have suffered more emotional health and wellbeing issues during Covid19 lockdown, and hence many more will be at further risk and affected than before.
5. It is also the case that children and young people who live in households near or under the poverty lines, will, in aggregate, have suffered more than their peers – and the adverse impact on their education and general wellbeing is likely to be more sustained and damaging.
6. Past experience of significant economic contraction suggests we can expect to see, over time, a rise in community tensions and a deterioration in social cohesion. A piece of research has further highlighted this risk , and it's methodology has placed Blackpool as the local authority

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<sup>2</sup> Rt Hon Kemi Badenoch MP- Minister for Women and Equalities Letter dated 18<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

area “ *where stresses on social cohesion are most likely to have been amplified by the economic consequences of the pandemic* ”<sup>ii</sup>

### **Process and procedures underpinning the budget Equality Analysis**

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 summarised as :

- 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 led by Senior Managers/ Directors responsible for the services with briefing sessions with all Directorate heads to explore possible scope and impact of specific proposals on key Equality issues.
- The work is to identify the scope of possible impacts, in order to inform Chief Officer’s deliberation and Elected Members selection of proposals to take forward to consultation.
- All budget related proposals with significant equality implications are identified to decision makers, an appropriate level of impact work is commissioned through data analysis and consultation with service users, and other stakeholders affected.
- Assessing staffing impacts. At this stage, we don’t anticipate a significant direct impact on staffing as a result of this year’s proposals. The Council works incredibly hard throughout the year to mitigate the potential for compulsory redundancies as a result of the annual budgetary process. In order to achieve this the following action is taken:
  1. continuation of voluntary unpaid leave arrangements
  2. strict controls via a weekly Resourcing Panel for recruitment requests
  3. consideration of applications for early retirement, flexible retirement and voluntary redundancy
  4. holding vacant posts throughout the year which are subsequently removed resulting in a saving
  5. enabling employees to voluntarily reduce their hours of work if they wish to do so
  6. offering unpaid career breaks and unpaid sabbaticals
  7. cessation or limitation of the use of agency staff and casuals
  8. redeploying employees into other roles where their role is proposed to cease/change

As things stand this year, we are expecting no more than single figures in compulsory redundancies and we will strive to avoid this completely.

- In circumstances ( fortunately not this year) when staffing impacts are projected to be greater than a few people, we prepare 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. This is then compared to the demographic profile of the pools of staff that would be 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 processes and secondly, to track our process in working towards a workforce that better represents the community we serve. This assessment forms the basis of discussion and consultation with staff representatives through the Trade Union JCC structures.

- At appropriate stages, all the above is communicated and discussed with senior decision makers at Chief Officer and Elected Member levels. This in turn informs the final decisions, which are included within the finalised 2024-25 Revenue Budget report.
- Ongoing Departmental Equality review and compliance monitoring

To reinforce specific equality analysis of budget related decisions, the Council operates a rigorous Equality performance and compliance process, which applies to all departments and all our Companies. This process aims to build on the annual work on budget equality analysis by focusing on the systems and procedures in place across the councils departments and companies that ensure compliance with the Public equality duty, as well as wider good practice in equality and diversity.

3. Please outline any proposals being considered.

Funding and budgetary proposals as set out in the Executive report entitled General Fund Revenue Budget 2024/25 and in the report's other appendices.

4. What outcomes do we want to achieve?

To manage the impact of a further large reduction in funding which have led to a funding gap of approximately £16.3 million in 2024/25 and further pressures anticipated in future years as set out in the Medium Term Financial Sustainability Strategy.

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

**Protected Characteristics Census 2021 Information**

Census 2021 indicates the population of Blackpool is around 141,000.

## Appendix 4d

The total population of Blackpool has decreased by 0.7% since the last census in 2011, whilst the overall population of England increased by 6.6% and the North West region increased by 5.2%. Therefore Blackpool is going against both the regional and national trends.

Over the last 10 years, Blackpool's population has changed composition.

There are slightly more residents in the population who are female. There is a higher proportion of residents aged over 66

There are higher numbers of single residents who have never been married.

There is a small increase in proportion of residents who are of Mixed, Black or Asian ethnicities.

There is a decrease in the proportion of residents who identify as Christian, to identify as no religion.

### Sex

Sex	2021 England %	2021 North West %	2021 number of Blackpool residents	2021 % of Blackpool residents	10 year change (number of people)	Population percentage point change	2011 number of Blackpool residents	2011 % of Blackpool residents
F	51.0%	50.9%	71413	50.9%	↓ 877	+0.5%	72290	50.4%
M	49.1%	49.1%	69627	49.1%	↓ 148	-0.5%	69775	49.6%

Blackpool's population is composed of 49.1% males and 50.9% females. This is very similar to both the national and regional composition. Over the last 10 years the proportion of residents in Blackpool has pivoted by half a percentage point towards females.

### Age

Age	2021 England %	2021 North West %	2021 number of Blackpool residents	2021 % of Blackpool residents	10 year change (number of people)	Population percentage point change	2011 number of Blackpool residents	2011 % of Blackpool residents
0-15	18.56%	18.76%	24699	17.51%	↓ 667	-0.35%	25366	17.86%
16-65	64.05%	63.60%	88873	63.02%	↓ 2216	-1.1%	91089	64.12%
66 and over	17.37%	17.63%	27461	19.47%	↑ 1851	1.44%	25610	18.03%

Blackpool has a slightly older demographic in comparison to the regional and national average with 19.47% of people over the age of 65 compared to 17.63% for the North West and 17.37% for England. The percentage of people who are of working age in Blackpool marginally below that of the regional and national averages with 63.02% of people aged between 16 and 65 compared to 63.6% in the North West and 64.05% for England. The number of people aged under 16 in Blackpool is also slightly lower than average at 17.51% compared to 18.76% in the North West and 18.56% for England.

### Ethnic Groups

Ethnic Group	2021 England %	2021 North West %	2021 number of Blackpool residents	2021 % of Blackpool residents	10 year change (number of people)	Population percentage point change	2011 number of Blackpool residents	2011 % of Blackpool residents
White	81.0%	85.6%	133547	94.7%	↓ 3792	-2.0%	137339	96.7%
Asian	9.6%	8.4%	3678	2.6%	↑ 1051	0.8%	2627	1.8%
Black	4.2%	2.3%	715	0.5%	↑ 369	0.3%	346	0.2%
Mixed	3.0%	2.2%	2213	1.6%	↑ 460	0.4%	1753	1.2%
Other	2.2%	1.5%	891	0.6%	–	–	–	–

Blackpool has a predominantly white population with 94.7% of people describing themselves as White. 1.6% of residents describe themselves as Mixed. Blackpool residents who describe themselves as Asian or Black make up 3.1% of Blackpool's total population, whilst another 0.6% of the population describe themselves as other groups such as Arab.

## Appendix 4d

For households with more than 1 person; 2% of households are composed of residents whose ethnic groups differ between generations but not within partnerships, 4% of households are composed of residents whose ethnic groups differ within partnerships.

### National identity

National identity	2021 England %	2021 North West %	2021 number of Blackpool residents	2021 % of Blackpool residents
British	56.83%	58.94	80247	56.90%
English and British	14.26%	16.0%	25886	18.35%
English	15.25%	15.0%	22934	16.26%
Scottish	0.41%	0.46%	1915	1.36%
Polish	1.01%	0.85%	1878	1.33%

Other national identities with populations over 100 residents in Blackpool include:

<b>UK identities</b>	
Other identity and UK identity	937
Scottish and British	712
Welsh	455
Any other combination of UK only identities	241
Welsh and British	165
<b>European identities</b>	
EU members post 2001	503
Irish	471
European	374
Italian	277
EU members pre 2001	149
Spanish (including Canary Islander)	102
Portuguese	100
<b>Asian Identities</b>	
Indian	372
Filipino	340
Pakistani	149



## Appendix 4d

Chinese	107
Other South-East Asian	107

English is the main language spoken by 95.58% of Blackpool residents. This is higher proportion than average for England of 90.8%.

1.4% of Blackpool residents' main language is Polish which is slightly above the England average of 1.1%

0.65% of Blackpool residents' main language is Romanian and this is slightly lower than the England average of 0.85%.

Other languages spoken as the main language by more than 100 residents include:

Tagalog or Filipino	0.23%
Malayalam	0.21%
Chinese other than Mandarin or Cantonese	0.12%
Arabic	0.12%
Urdu	0.12%
Hungarian	0.11%
Kurdish	0.11%
Bengali including Sylheti or Chatgaya	0.11%
Italian	0.10%
Tamil	0.10%
Latvian	0.09%
Thai	0.07%

## Religion

Religious Group	2021 England %	2021 North West %	2021 number of Blackpool residents	2021 % of Blackpool residents	10 year change (number of people)	Population percentage point change	2011 number of Blackpool residents	2011 % of Blackpool residents
Christian	46.3%	52.5%	71710	50.8%	↓ 23716	-16.4%	95426	67.2%
No religion	36.7%	32.6%	57808	41.0%	↑ 22993	16.5%	34815	24.5%
Muslim	6.7%	7.6%	2007	1.4%	↑ 946	0.7%	1061	0.7%
Other religion	0.6%	0.4%	707	0.5%	↑ 136	0.1%	571	0.4%
Hindu	1.8%	0.7%	507	0.4%	↑ 170	0.2%	337	0.2%
Buddhist	0.5%	0.3%	499	0.4%	↑ 49	0.1%	450	0.3%
Jewish	0.5%	0.4%	227	0.2%	↓ 25	0%	252	0.2%
Sikh	0.9%	0.2%	108	0.1%	↑ 47	0.1%	61	0.0%
Not answered	6.0%	5.3%	7464	5.3%	↓ 1628	-1.1%	9092	6.4%

## Appendix 4d

The majority of the Blackpool population are Christian, with 50.8% of people describing themselves as Christian compared with 52.5% in the North West and 46.3% in England. 41% of people in Blackpool describe themselves as having no religion. This is higher than to the national figure of 36.7%.

The remaining population is relatively small with 1.4% of people describing themselves as Muslim, This is considerably lower than the figures for both the North West and England with 7.6% and 6.7% respectively. Blackpool also has lower proportions of its population who describe themselves as Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Sikh compared with the rest of the country.

### Marital Status

Marital Status	2021 England %	2021 North West %	2021 number of Blackpool residents	2021 % of Blackpool residents	10 year change (number of people)	2011 number of Blackpool residents	2011 % of Blackpool residents
Never married and never registered a civil partnership	37.93%	39.4%	47575	40.9%	↑6377	41198	35.3%
Married: Opposite sex	44.2%	42.3%	40912	35.2%	↓4610	45522	39.0%
Divorced	9.0%	9.1%	14511	12.5%	↓807	15318	13.1%
Widowed	6.0%	6.5%	8786	7.6%	↓1626	10412	8.9%
Separated, but still married	2.2%	2.3%	3387	2.9%	↓319	3706	3.2%
In a registered civil partnership: Same sex	0.1%	0.1%	281	0.2%	↑131	543	0.5%
Married: Same sex	0.3%	0.3%	674	0.6%			
Formerly in a civil partnership now legally dissolved	0.0%	0.0%	60	0.1%			
In a registered civil partnership: Opposite sex	0.1%	0.1%	77	0.1%			
Separated, but still in a registered civil partnership	0.0%	0.0%	50	0.0%			

## Appendix 4d

Surviving partner from civil partnership	0.0%	0.0%	29	0.0%			
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Blackpool has a higher proportion of residents who are described single 40.9% compared to the England average of 37.9% and smaller proportion of residents, 35.2% who are married to someone of the opposite sex, compared to the average for England at 44.2%. Blackpool has a slightly higher proportion of same sex couples who are married or in civil partnerships than the England and regional averages.

### Sexual orientation

Sexual Orientation	2021 England %	2021 North West %	2021 % of Blackpool residents	2021 number of Blackpool residents
Sexual orientation: Straight or Heterosexual	89.37%	90.12%	88.45%	102898
Sexual orientation: Gay or Lesbian	1.54%	1.69%	3.26%	3794
Sexual orientation: Bisexual	1.29%	1.22%	1.35%	1572
Sexual orientation: Pansexual	0.23%	0.20%	0.20%	237
Sexual orientation: Asexual	0.06%	0.05%	0.06%	67
Sexual orientation: Queer	0.03%	0.02%	0.01%	8
Sexual orientation: All other sexual orientations	0.02%	0.02%	0.01%	14
Sexual orientation: Not answered	7.46%	6.68%	6.66%	7749

Blackpool has a higher proportion of residents (nearly double) who describe themselves as gay or lesbian than the regional and national averages. Blackpool has a similar proportion of gay and lesbian residents as Manchester and Salford.

0.8% of the Blackpool population aged 16 and over are in same sex relationships either as married or civil partners.

### Gender identity

Gender Identity	2021 England %	2021 North West %	2021 % of Blackpool residents	2021 number of Blackpool residents
Gender identity the same as sex registered at birth	93.47%	94.19%	94.30%	109709
Gender identity different from sex registered at birth : no specific identity given	0.25%	0.23%	0.27%	316
Trans woman	0.10%	0.09%	0.11%	124
Trans man	0.10%	0.09%	0.12%	134
Non-binary	0.06%	0.06%	0.05%	59
All other gender identities	0.04%	0.03%	0.04%	44
Not answered	5.98%	5.31%	5.12%	5955

Blackpool has a higher than national and regional average percentage of residents who have a different gender identity to the sex assigned at birth. Blackpool also has a higher proportion of Trans residents compared to the North West and England averages and it also has a higher than average proportion of residents whose gender identity is the same as assigned at birth. The higher proportions in each category is underpinned by the higher percentage of residents who chose not to skip this question.

### Health and Disability

9509 (5.74% of residents aged over 16 are economically inactive due to long term health or disability).

Blackpool has poor life expectancy, with life expectancy at birth for males the poorest in England at 74.5 years compared to 79.6 years for the rest of England. Life expectancy for females is equally poor, at 79.5 years, compared to 83.2 years for the rest of England.<sup>[xi]</sup> Blackpool has the lowest life expectancies for both men and women of all upper tier local authorities. The gap in life expectancy between those who live in the most deprived quintile in Blackpool and those who live in the least deprived is estimated to be 10 years. The biggest contributors for both men and women are circulatory diseases [heart disease or strokes for example] (21.8% in males, 24.1% in females), cancer (15.7% in males, 15.6% in females), respiratory diseases [flu, pneumonia and chronic obstructive respiratory disease and digestive diseases including chronic liver disease and cirrhosis (14.5% in males, 15.9% in females). These four areas contribute over half of the overall life expectancy gap in Blackpool.<sup>[xii]</sup>

In Blackpool, from July 2021 to June 2022, 24.7% of working age people are classed as economically inactive, this higher figure than average for England which has 21.2% of working age people classified as economically inactive in the same period.

From July 2021 to June 2022, 40.7% of economically inactive people in Blackpool were classed as being 'long-term sick' which is higher than the average for England 24.4%<sup>[xiii]</sup>

Substance and Alcohol misuse is high, with alcohol-related mortality the highest for males in England and 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in females in England<sup>[xiv]</sup>. Admissions to hospital in Blackpool for alcohol-related conditions (narrow definition) are much more prevalent than the regional and national average. With 1,020 per 100,000 compared to 740 in the North West and 660 in England.<sup>[xv]</sup> Further estimates suggest that the prevalence of opiate (e.g. heroin, morphine or codeine) and/or crack cocaine use in Blackpool was 23.45 per 1,000 population amongst 15-64 year olds<sup>[xvi]</sup>. Blackpool has the highest drug prevalence rate across the North West region, and has the second highest rate nationally, second only to Middlesbrough.

Blackpool's 2020/21 prevalence of GP diagnosed depression is the highest in the country at 19.8% (up from 18.5% in 2019/20), significantly higher than the national average of 12.3%. There were 3,100 new diagnoses of depression recorded on GP practice disease registers in Blackpool in 2020/21, 2.2% of the GP registered population. This is a reduction from 2018/19 when the rate was 2.7%. Across England the rate of new diagnoses was 1.4% in 2020/21 (down from 1.7% in 2018/19).<sup>[xvii]</sup>

Within the Blackpool NHS CCG area, Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information (PANSI) estimates that by 2030 amongst 18-64 years old, 1,867 adults are estimated as having a borderline personality disorder, 2,617 as having an anti-social personality disorder and 545 people being diagnosed with a psychotic disorder. 5607 people in Blackpool's 18-64 population are estimated as having two or more psychiatric disorders.<sup>[xviii]</sup> NHS Blackpool CCG GP practices have some of the highest rates of prescribing anti-depressants in England.<sup>[xix]</sup> Blackpool has the seventh highest rate of suicide in England with 18.7 per 100,000 cases per year.<sup>[xx]</sup>

Conception rates in Blackpool females under 18 year old, are the third highest in England (32.9 conceptions per 1,000 females aged 15-17).<sup>[xxi]</sup> In addition, Blackpool has a lower proportion of teenage pregnancies leading to abortion (33.8%) compared to England (52%).<sup>[xxii]</sup> This implies a greater relative proportion of teenagers go on to become parents. Teenage conceptions have associated risks for both parent and child’s health and social wellbeing.

The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) estimate that across 2016/17 there are 1,560 people registered blind or partially sighted in Blackpool.<sup>[xxiii]</sup> According to the Department of Education, most children with hearing and visual impairments are educated within the mainstream school system and do not generally attend special schools.<sup>[xxiv]</sup>

As of December 2022, there were a total of 663 children or young people with a statement of SEN (Special Educational Needs) or EHC (Education, Health and Care) plans. This is approximately 4.9% of pupils in Blackpool and is slightly higher with the proportions the North West (4.2%).<sup>[xxv]</sup> The largest grouping of children and young people in Blackpool with an EHC plan are aged 11-15 (38.7%) with those aged 5-10 representing 31.6% of the total number of children and young people with EHC plans. Analysis of School Census data by Blackpool Council shows that SEN is more prevalent among boys than girls. As of January 2019, 65.5% of all SEN pupils are boys compared to 34.5% girls.<sup>[xxvi]</sup>

When looking at the number of children who require SEN support (children identified as having Special Educational Need but do not necessary have a SEN statement or EHC plan). Blackpool supports around 3,957 children. This is around 20.4% of all pupils in Blackpool, higher than England (14.9%) and the North West (15.2%). 83.8% of pupils with SEN receive SEN support, greater than England (79.4%) and the North West (79.1%).<sup>[xxvii]</sup>

**Learning Disabilities**

The Blackpool adult population has a higher prevalence of learning disabilities compared to the national figure with 4.44 adults per 1,000 people with a learning disability getting long-term support from local authorities compared to 3.38 per 1,000 people in England and 3.84 per 1,000 people in the North West.<sup>[xxviii]</sup> As of May 2019, 846 people in Blackpool (0.6%) claimed a Disability Living Allowance for learning disabilities, which is slightly higher than the national average and the North West (0.5% respectively).<sup>[xxix]</sup> There are relatively few children with severe learning difficulties in the mainstream education system; in Blackpool, 24% of all special school pupils have severe learning disabilities. In addition a large proportion (26.3%) of special school SEN pupils are considered autistic.<sup>[xxx]</sup>

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. Analysis by ONS of the Annual Population Survey revealed that in 2021, the pay gap in median pay between disabled and non-disabled workers was 13.8%.<sup>[xxxi]</sup>

<p><b>6. <i>General impacts covering protected characteristics</i></b></p>
<p>In drawing together the detailed proposals the authority has been mindful of the need to assess the Equality impacts and wherever possible and mitigate any adverse effects on service provision.</p> <p>Although the scale and continuing annual cycle 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. A very large proportion of the Council’s revenue</p>

budget is now spent on statutory adults and children's services, which means there is very little room to make savings that don't in some way affect services.

The collective long-term effects on people and groups of combined service cuts alongside other government initiatives such as tax and 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 period 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 composition 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.

## **7. Specific impacts**

As the budget report explains, the approach is based on securing the Council's sustainability through implementing our Medium-Term Financial Sustainability Strategy (MTFSS.) The plan makes clear that service reductions and cuts were the last resort and only considered after other options have been exhausted. Some of the specific proposals taken forward at this stage could affect (direct and indirectly) equality issues and protected groups. And in particular, this year within a suite of complex measures we are now exploring in our Adult social care directorate. In all these measures, we will be consulting with affected staff and service users, exploring mitigations within detailed impact analysis before final decisions are made.

It is also recognised that continued year on year reduction in direct services, and their back office support systems, can and does have a real impact on the response times and quality of front line public services. These impacts, although spread across all service users and residents, will affect vulnerable people and groups more, given that many Council services are disproportionately used by them. The Council has been very conscious of this during the process of developing these proposals and as a consequence, reductions in staffing have been considered only as a last resort, when all other options to reduce budgets have been explored.

## **8. 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 could add to the pressures and tensions within these areas. The research paper highlighted above, **Building back resilient Communities** –has also reinforced the need for vigilance on this.

The Council will keep a close dialogue with key community groups and leaders, 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 a post pandemic Blackpool in the year ahead.

### ***Economic and Social Disadvantage<sup>iii</sup>***

The Council has decided to systematically analyse the impact on socio-economic inequality of its policies and strategies.

### **Socio-Economic Profile of Blackpool**

A number of factors have a cumulative impact on a person's social and economic position. This includes, access to high quality education, skills and jobs, access to good quality homes and access to resources such as financial services, hospitals. It also includes factors such crime rates, occupation of parents and carers, community cohesion and household income. Blackpool has a resident population of 141,574. [ONS](#).

### **Cumulative Deprivation:**

There were 64,790 households in Blackpool. [Census 2021](#). The census breaks down households into 4 dimensions of deprivation including: having lower than level 2 qualifications, or unemployment, or disability, no central heating at home. Using these measures; 302 households in Blackpool are impacted by all of these factors and a further 4169 are impacted by 3 out of the 4.

- 31.6% of Blackpool households are classified as not deprived (England: 48.4%)
- 32.2% of Blackpool households are classified deprived in 1 dimensions (England: 48.4%)
- 25.6% of Blackpool households are classified deprived in 2 dimensions (England: 33.5%)
- 9.3% of Blackpool households are classified deprived in 3 dimensions (England: 3.7%)
- 1.4% of Blackpool households are classified deprived in 4 dimensions (England: 0.2%)

**Housing Tenure:** There is a high percentage of private rented dwellings in Blackpool and a slightly lower owner-occupier rate than seen nationally. [Census 2021](#)

- 57.8% - owner occupied (England: 62.3%)
- 31.9% - privately rented (England: 20.6%)
- 10.3% - social rented (England: 17.1%)

### **Household Compositions:**

- 38.0% of households in Blackpool single person households. (England: 30.1%)
- 15.1% of single person households are aged over 66.
- 13.7% are lone parents to dependent children. (England: 11.1%)

**Average Earnings:** The median hourly pay for workers in Blackpool in 2023 is £13.64. (England £17.50)

**Universal Credit:** As of October 2023, 22,824 people in Blackpool claim universal credit. [DWP](#)

**Economic Inactivity:** As of April 2021, 8,300 households were categorised as 'workless' where no adults of working age were in employment.

**Qualifications:** 24.6% of adults in Blackpool hold no formal qualifications. (England: 18.1%)

**Approximated Social Grade:**

- 10.9% of Blackpool adults are classified as AB Higher and intermediate managerial/administrative/professional occupations. (England: 23.5%)
- 31.0% of Blackpool adults are classified as C1 Supervisory, clerical and junior managerial/administrative/professional occupations (England: 32.7%)
- 22.4% of Blackpool adults are classified as C2 Skilled manual occupations (England: 21.3%)
- 35.6% of Blackpool adults are classified as DE Semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations; unemployed and lowest grade occupations (England: 22.5%) [Census 2021](#)

**Technological Exclusion:** In 2023, 84.71% of properties had signal strong enough for mobile phone calls indoors from any provider which means around 15% of properties are unable to switch providers. 90 properties were unable to receive at least 10Mb of broadband speed. [OFCOM](#) In 2020, the ONS found 12.4% of over 16s in Blackpool were classified as internet non—users because they had not used the internet in 3 months or more. [ONS](#)

**Child Poverty:** The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) is an estimation of children aged 0-15 living in income poverty based on IMD data. Using calculations based on this index, in 2019 almost 7,800 (30.7%) children in Blackpool were estimated to be living in income deprived families, compared to 17.1% nationally. This was the highest level in the North West, and second highest nationally. [BlackpoolJSNA](#)

In 2022, 5,743 children lived in ‘absolute low income families’, where families do not have sufficient income to meet all basic food and housing needs. [DWP](#)

**Young people not in education employment or training.**

In 2023, 11.1% of young people aged 16 or 17 were not enrolled in training or in employment. (England 5.2%) [DfE](#)

As we describe above, given the widespread and deep levels of deprivation in Blackpool, and the combined effects of multiple years of cuts to the Council’s revenue budget. Further cuts, can at best only serve to reduce the scope of the Council to take effective direct action here.

The levelling up and regeneration programme has successfully managed to deliver a suite of key projects aimed at transforming Blackpool’s visitor economy. In time, these initiatives will increase, and spread prosperity and opportunity. However, although economic outcomes will increase, for many people vulnerable because of disability or other deprivation factors, this will take time and targeted effort to improve outcomes. All of these matters are considered and balanced by decision makers throughout this process, however in the final analysis the Council is obliged to set a balanced budget and must also give account to prescribed service levels for statutory services.

10.. 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 due 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, groups do not suffer disproportional adverse impact due to this and make sure that our policies do not indirectly discriminate on people who share protected characteristics.

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 decade are 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.

## 11. Consultation / engagement

Consultation briefings on the broad budget position facing the Council have been undertaken with the community equality groups during the last 13 budget cycles. The Council's Director of Resources or his representative has often personally attended and briefed a number of these groups. Once the specific Budget proposals are published in February 2023, specific consultations with key affected stakeholders-amongst them staff, service users and other key stakeholders – will take place. The outcomes of these consultations will then be considered by key decision makers, and will be regarded alongside equality impacts, and all other important factors in the final decisions.

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.

The approach we adopt to engagement is an ongoing dialogue. We will utilise initiatives during the period ahead to give staff and the wider community's opportunity to feedback to us on the collective and specific impacts of the budget.

## ACTION PLAN

Issues/ adverse impact identified	Proposed action/ objectives to deal with adverse impact	Targets/Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments
1. Need for continued dialogue and engagement with vulnerable groups / communities and providers on the long term impact of this year's budgetary reductions	To maintain support for structures of community engagement in equality and diversity. Further , draw on the proposals for new methods of direct Councillor engagement with hard to reach groups	To engage key groups over the long term impact of service reductions on specific Equality issues in Blackpool	On-going throughout 2024 and beyond.	Director of Resources  Head of Equality and Diversity	New Elected Member equality champions, for key Equality issues.
2. 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	<p>If adverse impacts on staffing levels become apparent – to conduct equality monitoring on staff at risk of redundancy and take appropriate action if adverse impacts are identified</p> <p>To track staff equality monitoring data to ensure an accurate picture of current workforce diversity.</p> <p>Utilise staff engagement forums for key Equality characteristics to encourage dialogue over the impacts on Budget reductions.</p>	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	Head of HR/OD  Head of Equality and Diversity	Working primarily with the Trade Unions through the Joint Consultative Committee.

## Appendix 4d

Issues/ adverse impact identified	Proposed action/ objectives to deal with adverse impact	Targets/Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments
3. Need for detailed examination of the effect of service reductions on specific service users and continued dialogue / engagement with them over budgetary reductions in future years	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	
4. Deepen awareness and compliance with Public duties and decision making	Embed the new Equality Performance and compliance assessment process across all Council Dept.  Roll out new Equality Duty course to all Cabinet Members, senior and key staff.	To ensure the authority is fully compliant with all aspects of the public sector equality duties.	On-going throughout 2024 and beyond.	Head of Equality and Diversity &  Relevant Chief Officers	Priority for2024 to ensure all Council Members elected in May 2023, have appropriate Equality duty training.

### ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND REVIEW

Agreed action	Monitoring arrangements	Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments
1. To maintain current support for structures of service user and provider engagement.	To be built into the Directorate Business planning and Compliance review processes	2023 and ongoing	Chief Officers  Head of Equality and Diversity	
2. To conduct equality monitoring on staff at risk of redundancy and take appropriate action	To be built into the Directorate Business planning and Compliance review processes	2024 and ongoing	Head of HR	

## Appendix 4d

Agreed action	Monitoring arrangements	Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments
<p>if adverse impacts are identified</p> <p>To track staff equality monitoring data to ensure an accurate picture of current workforce diversity.</p>			<p>Head of Equality and Diversity</p>	
<p>3. Where appropriate to conduct equality monitoring on service changes and take appropriate action if adverse impacts are identified</p>	<p>To be built into the Directorate Business planning and Compliance review processes</p>	<p>2024 and ongoing</p>	<p>Relevant Chief Officers</p> <p>Head of Equality and Diversity</p>	

<sup>i</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-provisional-local-government-finance-settlement-2024-to-2025/consultation-provisional-local-government-finance-settlement-2024-to-2025>

<sup>ii</sup> Page 16 , Building back resilient Communities – Hope Charitable Trust 2021

<sup>[xi]</sup> ONS Life Expectancy, 2016-18

<sup>[xii]</sup> Public Health England based on ONS death registration data and mid-year population estimates, and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2015

<sup>[xiv]</sup> Alcohol-related mortality, Public Health England (based on ONS source data), 2018

<sup>[xv]</sup> Calculated by Public Health England: Health and Social Care Information Centre - Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) and Office for National Statistics (ONS) - Mid Year Population Estimates, 2020

<sup>[xvi]</sup> Opiate and crack cocaine use: prevalence estimates by local area, Public Health England, 2019

<sup>[xvii]</sup> [Mental Health \(blackpooljsna.org.uk\)](https://blackpooljsna.org.uk)

<sup>[xviii]</sup> Blackpool JSNA based on Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information (PANSI) data, 2022

<sup>[xix]</sup> ‘Antidepressants prescribed far more in deprived English coastal towns’, Gayle, Damien, <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/apr/14/antidepressants-prescribed-deprived-seaside-towns-of-north-and-east-blackpool-sunderland-and-east-lindsey-nhs>

<sup>[xx]</sup> Suicide registrations in England and Wales by local authority, 2019 to 2021, 2022

<sup>[xxi]</sup> Conception statistics, England and Wales, Office for National Statistics, 2019

<sup>[xxii]</sup> Under 18s conceptions leading to abortion (%), Conceptions in England and Wales: 2017, Office for National Statistics, 2019

<sup>[xxiii]</sup> Registered Blind and Partially Sighted People, NHS Digital, 2017

[xxiv] Statements of SEN and EHC plans: England, Department for Education, 2022

[xxv] Special educational needs in England: January 2019, Department for Education, 2019

[xxvi] SEND Census Data 2016-2019, Business Intelligence Team, August 2019

[xxvii] Special educational needs in England: January 2019, Department for Education, 2019

[xxviii] Adults (18 and older) with learning disability getting long term support from Local Authorities, NHS Digital Adult social care activity and finance report, Short and Long Term Care statistics 2017/18, 2019

[xxix] DLA by condition, Department of Work and Pensions, May 2019

[xxx] Special educational needs in England: January 2019, Department for Education, 2019

[xxxi] Disability pay gaps in the UK: 2021, ONS, 2022

### iii Understanding the wider impact on Socio-economic disadvantage

This covers the ways in which some people and communities experience negative outcomes and have less opportunities than others in our society due to particular social and economic factors. This could be having little to no income or savings, living in an area identified as being at high risk of deprivation, or being unable to access basic goods and services. This in turn can have severe impacts which lead to widening gaps of inequality of outcome for people, including in educational attainment, health and employment opportunities. Structural discrimination and inequality can also intensify the risk of these issues for individuals and communities who share particular protected characteristics as laid out in the Equality Act, 2010.

Socio-economic disadvantage has close links to poverty, but is manifested in a wider sense of social exclusion that just a lack of income

***“socio-economic disadvantage applies to anyone who is denied, through low income or lack of resources, the opportunity to participate fully in the life of the community and have quality access to education, healthcare and leisure activities, as well as the necessities of life including good housing and adequate food and clothing.”***

Whilst socio-economic disadvantage is a complex problem, much of what is already being done within our services and regeneration programmes aims for everyone to reach their full potential and live prosperous and fulfilling lives free from poverty and inequality. The questions below are intended to add to reflection on both the potential for positive and negative impacts of the plans here.

What does our data and intelligence tell us about the impact on people and groups suffering socio-economic disadvantage of what we intend to do?

Have/will people in communities directly affected by socio – economic disadvantage have an active say in the development of these proposals?

Can the policy/proposals actively contribute to reducing socio – economic inequality? What specific and measurable targets can be set to track and judge if we achieve this?