

**City of York Council
Equalities Impact Assessment**

Who is submitting the proposal?

Directorate:	Corporate		
Service Area:	Finance Department		
Name of the proposal:	Financial Strategy 2024/2025 to 2028/29		
Lead officer:	Debbie Mitchell		
Date assessment completed:	29 December 2023		
Names of those who contributed to the assessment:			
Name	Job title	Organisation	Area of expertise
Debbie Mitchell	Chief Finance Officer	CYC	S151 Officer
Helen Malam	Principal Accountant, Corporate Finance	CYC	
Bryn Roberts	Director of Governance	CYC	Monitoring Officer
Pauline Stuchfield	Director of Customers and Communities	CYC	

Step 1 – Aims and intended outcomes

1.1	What is the purpose of the proposal? Please explain your proposal in Plain English avoiding acronyms and jargon.
	<i>This has been prepared to support the Council's Financial Strategy 2024-25 to 2028-29 which will be presented to the Council's Executive on 25th January 2024. This is an initial Equality Impact Assessment developed alongside the strategy to assist Councillors in their decision making, and covers the Equality Impact of the overall Council financial strategy rather than individual proposals. It is intended that further detailed assessments will be completed where necessary in respect of the individual budget savings identified in the financial strategy.</i>
1.2	Are there any external considerations? (Legislation/government directive/codes of practice etc.)
	<i>The Financial Strategy report highlights the national and local context and sets out the financial and legislative framework for the strategy. In particular reference has been made to the Local Government Settlement 2023. Following approval of the strategy, future Equality Impact Assessments will need to consider the specific areas which are directly related to that budget saving.</i>
1.3	Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests?
	<i>This is a council wide strategy and potentially impacts residents, partners, and the Council. Greater details as to the precise identity of stakeholders and their interests will be addressed in future savings specific equality impact assessments.</i>

1.4	What results/outcomes do we want to achieve and for whom? This section should explain what outcomes you want to achieve for service users, staff and/or the wider community. Demonstrate how the proposal links to the Council Plan (2023- 2027) and other corporate strategies and plans.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is noted that the EIA accompanying the budget report is not intended to address the impacts of every detailed aspect of the budget, and therefore individual elements of the budget will, following Council approval, attract their own EIA to support delivery of that proposal and ensure that any negative impact on protected characteristics is acknowledged and, where possible, mitigated. 2. This impact assessment, therefore, only considers risks associated with the financial strategy as a whole, considering whether that overall financial strategy will cause any negative impact for a particular group, sector or community exists, and how any such impact is eliminated or counterbalanced. 3. The financial strategy will impact on all residents and has carefully considered the local demand for services whilst also ensuring the budget set is prudent, protects vulnerable people and has capacity to invest.

Step 2 – Gathering the information and feedback

2.1	What sources of data, evidence and consultation feedback do we have to help us understand the impact of the proposal on equality rights and human rights? Please consider a range of sources, including: consultation exercises, surveys, feedback from staff, stakeholders, participants, research reports, the views of equality groups, as well your own experience of working in this area etc.	
	Source of data/supporting evidence	Reason for using

A budget consultation exercise commenced in November 2023 and closed on 22nd December 2023	There is a statutory requirement for the council to consult local businesses on its budget proposals
A number of focus groups were consulted in December	This allowed a more in-depth discussion with participants
Use of the 'York Profile Q2' data from Open data	This provides latest data on the residents of York and in particular the make up of protected characteristics within York. https://data.yorkopendata.org/dataset/york-profile

Step 3 – Gaps in data and knowledge

3.1	What are the main gaps in information and understanding of the impact of your proposal? Please indicate how any gaps will be dealt with.	
	Gaps in data or knowledge	Action to deal with this
4.	It is accepted that the EIA accompanying the budget report will not address the impacts of every detailed aspect of the budget and therefore individual elements of the budget will, following Council approval, attract their own EIA to support delivery of that proposal and ensure that negative aspects of the protected characteristics are acknowledged and where possible mitigated.	Ensure the EIA is kept under review; and development of individual EIA's to support individual budget savings once Council has approved the proposals

Step 4 – Analysing the impacts or effects.

4.1	Please consider what the evidence tells you about the likely impact (positive or negative) on people sharing a protected characteristic, i.e. how significant could the impacts be if we did not make any
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adjustments? Remember the duty is also positive – so please identify where the proposal offers opportunities to promote equality and/or foster good relations.			
Equality Groups and Human Rights.	Key Findings/Impacts	Positive (+) Negative (-) Neutral (0)	High (H) Medium (M) Low (L)
Age	<p>Older People:</p> <p>Continued investment in Adult Social Care, Telecare, Extra Care Sheltered Housing and Disability Support are expected to have a positive impact on older people.</p> <p>Any increase in fees and charges could adversely impact on older people, their families and their standard of living.</p> <p>Financial assessments are completed for Adult Social Care customers to ensure that people only contribute what they can afford.</p> <p>As these projects progress assessments will continue to take place. There will be further detailed impact assessments by the respective service areas, and it is expected that these will give further clarity based on evidence available as to likely impacts.</p>	Positive and negative	high
Disability	Continued investment in Adult Social Care, Telecare, Extra Care Sheltered Housing and Disability Support are expected to have a positive impact on disabled people.	Positive and negative	high

	Any increase in fees and charges could adversely impact on disabled people, their families and their standard of living. Financial assessments are completed for Adult Social Care customers to ensure that people only contribute an amount they can afford.		
Gender	Customer data shows that a higher proportion of females use social care services, and that a higher proportion of carers are also female. Some of these carers will be council staff. Therefore, proposed investment is expected to have a positive impact. However, this also means that females will be more adversely affected by any savings in these areas. The impacts identified under 'older people' will apply.	Positive and negative	high
Gender Reassignment	It is not expected that there will be any impact	neutral	
Marriage and civil partnership	An increase in fees and charges could impact on whether a decision is made to marry/have a civil partnership ceremony for couples with a lower income. The lowest price weddings will remain at fee levels.	Negative	low
Pregnancy and maternity	It is not expected that there will be any impact	neutral	
Race	It is not expected that there will be any impact	neutral	
Religion and belief	It is not expected that there will be any impact	neutral	
Sexual orientation	It is not expected that there will be any impact	neutral	

Other Socio-economic groups including :	Could other socio-economic groups be affected e.g. carers, ex-offenders, low incomes?		
Carer	<p>Continued investment in Adult Social Care, Telecare, Extra Care Sheltered Housing and Disability Support should have a positive impact on disabled people.</p> <p>Any increase in fees and charges could adversely impact on disabled people, their families and their standard of living. Financial assessments are completed for Adult Social Care customers to ensure that people only contribute an amount they can afford.</p>	Positive and negative	high
Low income groups	Although there are increases in council fees and charges, the Financial Strategy includes a provision for a York living wage to council staff and other financial inclusion projects (eg digital inclusion). There is also continued investment in the free school meals scheme.	Positive and negative	medium
Veterans, Armed Forces Community	It is not expected that there will be any impact	neutral	
Other			
Impact on human rights:			
List any human rights impacted.	It is not expected that there will be any impact	neutral	

Use the following guidance to inform your responses:

Indicate:

- Where you think that the proposal could have a POSITIVE impact on any of the equality groups like promoting equality and equal opportunities or improving relations within equality groups
- Where you think that the proposal could have a NEGATIVE impact on any of the equality groups, i.e. it could disadvantage them
- Where you think that this proposal has a NEUTRAL effect on any of the equality groups listed below i.e. it has no effect currently on equality groups.

It is important to remember that a proposal may be highly relevant to one aspect of equality and not relevant to another.

<p>High impact (The proposal or process is very equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is significant potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or public facing The proposal has consequences for or affects significant numbers of people The proposal has the potential to make a significant contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights.</p>
<p>Medium impact (The proposal or process is somewhat equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is some evidence to suggest potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or cross-Unit, but mainly internal The proposal has consequences for or affects some people The proposal has the potential to make a contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights</p>

<p>Low impact (The proposal or process might be equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is little evidence to suggest that the proposal could result in adverse impact The proposal operates in a limited way The proposal has consequences for or affects few people The proposal may have the potential to contribute to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights</p>
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Step 5 - Mitigating adverse impacts and maximising positive impacts

<p>5.1</p>	<p>Based on your findings, explain ways you plan to mitigate any unlawful prohibited conduct or unwanted adverse impact. Where positive impacts have been identified, what is been done to optimise opportunities to advance equality or foster good relations?</p>
<p>The negative impacts can be mitigated by investment targeted to the identified groups and communities. The key approaches to achieving savings whilst avoiding impacts on communities of identity include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that, wherever reasonable, savings are made from ‘back office’ functions and universal services; • Protecting statutory services and other key services for vulnerable residents; • Increasing community involvement in service redesign and delivery; • Making services self-financing wherever practicable, including external trading; • Maximising the return from externalised service provision; • Redesign of existing services and external contracts; • Placing a focus on prevention, and ceasing service provision only where this is least impact; • Streamlining services to provide focussed support and reduce areas of duplication; 	

- Supporting carers;
- Integrated working with health; and
- Focussing growth where it is expected to have a positive effect on older or disabled people and their carers

Funding for carers will continue as the council aims to provide a more comprehensive set of support, reflecting the significant role of carers in allowing people to remain in their own homes and live independently as far as possible.

The continued investment in adult social care will see work continuing to reduce people's dependency on social care support through the provision of information and advice and earlier intervention to support, maintain or regain independence for those who are able. This will improve outcomes for customers, including those with one or more protected characteristic (particularly Age and Disability). For those who require ongoing support, the offer will be made more flexible and tailored to their needs.

Step 6 – Recommendations and conclusions of the assessment

6.1	<p>Having considered the potential or actual impacts you should be in a position to make an informed judgement on what should be done. In all cases, document your reasoning that justifies your decision. There are four main options you can take:</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No major change to the proposal – the EIA demonstrates the proposal is robust. There is no potential for unlawful discrimination or adverse impact and you have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitor and review. - Adjust the proposal – the EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. This involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance quality or to foster good relations.

- **Continue with the proposal** (despite the potential for adverse impact) – you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and how you believe the decision is compatible with our obligations under the duty
- **Stop and remove the proposal** – if there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you should consider stopping the proposal altogether. If a proposal leads to unlawful discrimination it should be removed or changed.

Important: If there are any adverse impacts you cannot mitigate, please provide a compelling reason in the justification column.

Option selected	Conclusions/justification
Continue with the proposal	This is an initial assessment prepared to support the Council’s Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2028/29 and will be further informed via the development and monitoring of Equalities Impact Assessments for the respective budget savings once Council has approved them

Step 7 – Summary of agreed actions resulting from the assessment

7.1 What action, by whom, will be undertaken as a result of the impact assessment.			
Impact/issue	Action to be taken	Person responsible	Timescale
Delivery of the identified budget savings	The Chief Operating Officer and Corporate Directors will develop detailed Equality Impact Assessments in relation to individual proposals. Consultation will	Chief Operating Officer and Corporate Directors	To be determined and will depend on complexity of the identified budget saving and service proposal in question.

	take place with relevant stakeholders as identified and or required and decisions will be made following receipt of legal, financial, HR advice.		
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Step 8 - Monitor, review and improve

8. 1	How will the impact of your proposal be monitored and improved upon going forward? Consider how will you identify the impact of activities on protected characteristics and other marginalised groups going forward? How will any learning and enhancements be capitalised on and embedded?
	The section 151 Officer will monitor the progress of the respective budget proposals and the Council's Corporate Management Team will have oversight of the progress of the Financial Strategy