

Appendix H: Summary of Brief Equality Impact Assessments undertaken on budget savings proposals for 2012/13

Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) helps to ensure that decisions taken by Stevenage Borough Council are made in a fair, transparent and accountable way, considering the needs and the rights of different people in the community. Based on the 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010, the EqIA considers the impact on the following groups when reviewing, developing or making decisions about new or existing policies, services or functions:

- Disability
- Race
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Age
- Religion and belief
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership

In addition, socio-economic factors are also considered in EqIAs, as directed by the Executive of Stevenage Borough Council. Note however that, as this factor is non-statutory, decision makers should use their discretion when considering the analysis of socio-economic impact.

EqIAs are a demonstration of our compliance with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). The Public Sector Equality Duty states that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The following steps are taking place to ensure that equality and diversity is considered for budget savings proposals for 2012/13:

- 29 Sept - Heads of Service begin Brief EqIAs of savings proposals or groups of minor savings proposals (complete)
- 10 Nov - Brief EqIAs summarised for appendix to Executive Report (complete).
- 12 Nov - Community Conference: budget savings consultation.
- 22 Nov - Executive consider summary of Brief EqIAs.
- 22 Nov - Town wide consultation on budget savings begins including:
 - Café Choice 12 Dec
 - Online consultation
- Jan 2012 - Full EqIAs completed where necessary using consultation results. Full EqIAs provided for consideration at Council in February 2012.
- Feb 2012 onwards - An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken and reviewed periodically to assess the impact on staff as restructures and redundancies take place.

No.	Savings Proposal	Summary of Impacts	Actions to be taken	Resp. Officer
1	<p>Children's Services: £1,500 budget reduction for play centres</p> <p>The three playcentres offer universal open access free play opportunities targeted at children aged 5 to 14 years. Parents and their children under 5 years of age can also have access to these facilities.</p>	<p>Potential to cause adverse impact or discrimination and potential to make a positive contribution to promoting equality</p> <p>Neutral: The proposed saving will be made through efficiencies in purchasing goods and in increased income through traded services. Therefore there is no affect on direct services envisaged.</p>	<p>Could reasonable adjustments be made to the proposal to address the Equality Impacts? Could other actions be taken to mitigate impact?</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>Children's Services Manager</p>
2	<p>Environmental Health – Provision of disabled adaptations in Stevenage Homes properties. To charge £12,300 per annum to the Housing Revenue Account to cover the cost of time spent by Environmental Health Officers on the provision of adaptations in Stevenage Homes properties.</p>	<p>Neutral. This is an accounting adjustment there will be no change to service delivery.</p>	<p>The involvement of the Environmental Health Officer will help to ensure that larger scale adaptations in Stevenage Homes properties are delivered in a way that is consistent with the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants in the private sector.</p>	<p>Environment al Health Manager (Residential)</p>
3	<p>Environmental Health - Give up budget £3,400 (ES570 581100) – this is SBC's contribution towards the cost of employing a Environmental Health Co-ordinator to support the Herts & Beds Environmental Health Heads of Service Group. The role of the coordinator has been to manage the nine</p>	<p>Neutral: No adverse or disproportionate impact on any particular groups is anticipated. It is intended that the Environmental Health Heads and topic groups will continue to operate albeit with some reduction in efficiency. This is not considered to be likely to impact on front line service delivery.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Environment al Health Manager (Residential)</p>

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	environmental health topic groups and to provide support to the Heads of Service Group, responding to consultations and carrying out projects associated with making best use of resources and avoiding unnecessary duplication.	Potential to cause adverse impact or discrimination and potential to make a positive contribution to promoting equality	Could reasonable adjustments be made to the proposal to address the Equality Impacts? Could other actions be taken to mitigate impact?	
4	Environmental Health – Food hygiene. Give up budget (£340 - ES570 195300) for provision of food hygiene training courses for food proprietors in and around Stevenage.	Neutral: There is no adverse or disproportionate impact arising from the proposed budget reduction – food hygiene courses are available from other providers and have not been offered in Stevenage since 2009.	Direct food proprietors to other agencies offering courses.	Environmental Health Manager (Residential)
5	Environmental Health – Animal Control. 10% reduction in equipment & materials budget (ES210 410100)	Neutral: There is no impact arising from this proposed saving – the decision to reduce the level of service has already been implemented. The proposed reduction in budget is a reflection of the subsequent reduction in demand and, hence, reduction in the amount of pesticides etc required to deliver the current level of service.	N/A	Environmental Health Manager (Residential)
6	Environmental Services: Redundancy: Arboriculture & Conservation Officer The service provides opportunities for the whole community – schools, community	Low negative impact on service users: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of volunteering opportunities provides people of all groups and with an opportunity to learn new skills, make new friends, and learn more about their local biodiversity in a safe and enjoyable environment. 	Volunteering opportunities significantly reduced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in programme offered • Consider possible partnership arrangements with external partners 	Head of Environmental Services

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		<p>Potential to cause adverse impact or discrimination and potential to make a positive contribution to promoting equality</p>	<p>Could reasonable adjustments be made to the proposal to address the Equality Impacts? Could other actions be taken to mitigate impact?</p>	
	<p>groups, volunteers, local residents, partner organisations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opportunity to learn new skills can increase volunteers chances of future employment • The woodlands and wild spaces in Stevenage provide opportunities for free informal activities and enjoyment of the natural environment. <p>High negative impact on colleagues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demands associated with a requirement to take on additional work. 	<p>Impact on staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise job descriptions of alternative officers. • Identify non-statutory areas of work that could be 'parked' • Regular one to one meetings with manager to prioritise work 	
7	<p>Information Systems: Reduction of 1 Systems Analyst post.</p> <p>This is a corporate team working internally for Stevenage Borough Council and SHL.</p>	<p>Neutral: The savings proposals will impact mainly upon the Team's ability to implement and develop new ICT systems. The demand for new systems has reduced in line with the Council's worsening capital projections. Savings are being offered up as business priorities requiring the support of the team have reduced.</p>	N/A	Head of Customer Services and Business Improvement
8	<p>Elections: Saving on casual elections post based on 10/11 cost</p>	<p>Neutral: Limited impact on service due to improved deployment of existing resources</p>	N/A	Borough Solicitor
9	<p>Legal Services: Restructure of clerical support for elections, land charges, information service</p>	<p>Neutral: Limited impact on service due to improved deployment of existing resources</p>	N/A	Borough Solicitor
10	<p>Property and Estates: Reduction in Cavendish Road FM budget (DA110) as proposed in SMB report dated 12 April 2011 (para:</p>	<p>Neutral: The current level of service can be delivered from within remaining budgets so there should be no measurable effect on the users and therefore no disproportionate impact</p>	N/A	Head of Property and Estates

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	4.3.3.3) Service users include SBC Environmental Services and SHL staff based at the Depot, principally in the office accommodation there.	Potential to cause adverse impact or discrimination and potential to make a positive contribution to promoting equality on any particular group of people.	Could reasonable adjustments be made to the proposal to address the Equality Impacts? Could other actions be taken to mitigate impact?	
11	Property and Estates: Reduced hours for Facilities Management team Service users include staff, visitors and tenants using Daneshill House, Swingate House and Cavendish Road Depot.	Neutral: This is a “back office” reduction in management/supervisory time so there should be no measurable effect on the users and therefore no disproportionate impact on any particular group of people. This saving would not lead to existing staff reducing their current hours as the two posts affected are already part time.	N/A	Head of Property and Estates
12	Property and Estates: Reduce garage rent statements for direct debit customers from quarterly to annual Service users are customers renting a garage (or garages) from the Council and who currently pay through direct debit.	Neutral: There should be no measurable effect on the users and therefore no disproportionate impact on any particular group of people. Low negative socio-economic impact: some tenants may find it more difficult to manage their payments without quarterly statements.	Prior to the start of the new financial year each garage tenant who is on direct debit will receive a “Method of payment letter” which will have a schedule of payments set out for that year. If the tenant falls into arrears then they will be sent a revised schedule of payments before the next payment is taken to inform them of the change to the amount due. If customers wish to check their payments on a more regular basis than annual, then their bank statements will show the	Head of Property and Estates

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		Potential to cause adverse impact or discrimination and potential to make a positive contribution to promoting equality	Could reasonable adjustments be made to the proposal to address the Equality Impacts? Could other actions be taken to mitigate impact?	
13	<p>Property and Estates: Deletion of Market Services Improvement Officer Post ES11122</p> <p>Service users include market traders and market customers.</p>	Neutral: This is a “back office” change so there should be no measurable effect on the users and therefore no disproportionate impact on any particular group of people.	payments.	Head of Property and Estates
14	Parking enforcement: £20k in a full year with effect from 2012/2013	Neutral: It is not considered there will be any impact on the users of this service as the levels of service remain the same. The saving has been delivered because of re letting the contract at a lower price.	N/A	Head of Planning Regeneration and Transport
15	Finance: Reduce Exchequer staff by 1 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) post	Neutral: Volume of work has decreased and a post could be deleted from the service without significant impact	N/A	Head of Finance
16	Finance: Delete vacant reconciliation assistant	Neutral: The team is looking at using Exchequer staff for holidays and the return of the HRA should offer efficiencies.	N/A	Head of Finance
17	Communications: Produce staff magazine Link four times a year In the past Link has been produced monthly and two monthly. It has been produced four times a year for the last two years. Link is produced by the Communications team, and is complemented by other internal communications media.	Neutral: This proposal is to formalise the current frequency so that the financial saving can be made permanent. There has been no adverse impact to date. The Communications team manages internal communications and ensures that the most appropriate and effective medium is used, depending on the message and audience.	N/A	Head of Housing, Partnerships and Communications