

Equality at Stevenage Borough Council

Stevenage Borough Council as a service provider, employer and community leader is committed to achieving equal opportunities for everyone. We want to deliver services that are fair, accessible and open to everyone who needs them.

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) are an important part of the process in ensuring that our intention is translated into action. They help to ensure that decisions 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 making decisions, updating policies and starting new projects:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marital status
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

Although non-statutory, the Council has chosen to adopt the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion in considering the impact on people in terms of their social or economic background.

EqIAs also help the council to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). The 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 unlawful under this Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

FINANCIAL SECURITY: 2018/19 APPENDIX G

Overall Equality Impact Assessment of proposals

Savings Proposals 2018/19

Prior to their consideration at Executive in November 2017, all savings proposals were reviewed to determine any potential impact on Stevenage residents in terms of their protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. The majority of these have no public impact and so have not been subject to any further EqIA.

Where a negative, positive or disproportionate impact is likely, assistant directors and other appropriate managers have drafted Brief EqIAs. These have been summarised over the following pages and will inform the recommendations made at Executive on 23 January and 14 February 2018. Action to further analyse or mitigate the impact on equality groups is identified where appropriate.

The following activity has taken / will take place:

November 2017 – February 2018 EqIAs finalised considering further evidence as
– necessary

January and February 2018 – Consideration of all completed EqIAs at Council meetings

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Summary of draft Equality Impact Assessments

Saving Ref	Saving proposed	Summary of impact	Action	Contact Officer
HFS1	Tree works budget saving of £10,000	<p>Negative – low and not likely Age, Disability, Pregnancy & Maternity, Socio-economic: SBC’s Concessions Policy provides for a 25% discount for works carried out by the council. However after this concession the cost of tree work may still be unaffordable for some people.</p> <p>However we do not need to complete an EqIA because based on current levels of spending there should be no impact on the service. A residual budget of £8,000 has been retained compared to the spend of £5,774 in 2016/17.</p>	No further action or EqIA is required	Jaine Cresser
FS2	Additional Pay and Display parking bays at Coreys Mill Lane	<p>Positive Disability Blue Badge holders will be entitled to park for free in P&D bays and are also permitted to park on double yellow lines.</p> <p>Negative Socio-economic Charging for parking can be considered detrimental to people in financial difficulty but these would remain affordable in relation to the charges within the Lister Hospital and the overall cost of motoring. There are strong bus links to the hospital which may prove to be more cost-effective for people on lower incomes.</p>		Zayd Al-Jawad
FS24	Proposed new Woodland Burial service	<p>Positive All characteristics Any and all will be able to use and benefit from the woodland burial service if requested.</p>	Purchase of temporary pathway matting for mourners to access the graveside (to be removed as the woodland matures)	Kevin Basford (interim) on behalf of Craig Miller

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Summary of draft Equality Impact Assessments

Saving Ref	Saving proposed	Summary of impact	Action	Contact Officer
HF42	Remove Death in Service benefit for ex-SHL staff	<p>Staff groups</p> <p>Age 27% of the staff affected are over 60 and none under 30. The whole group represents 11% of the workforce, the remaining 89% does not have access to the benefit</p> <p>Sex 67% of the 73 staff are female, however the majority of SBC female staff do not have access to this benefit but do have access to the pension scheme.</p> <p>Socio-economic 22% or 16 of the 73 staff are a grade 3 or below, however the wider SBC staff group do not have access to this benefit, but can access through the pension scheme.</p>		Jackie Foglietta
HF40	Introduction of charge for support service in independent living / Flexicare schemes	<p>Age Hertfordshire County Council are consulting with non-residential residents about charging for some of their community based adult social care services that they currently provide for free. This will impact on a lot of people over 60 in the independent living/flexicare schemes as they are more likely to be in receipt of some care due to their age/medical conditions. Charges will be effective from 15 April 2018. Level of charges unknown as people will need reassessing.</p> <p>Hertfordshire County Council funding for Flexicare housing related alarm contract ends in January 2018 and for support at the end of March 2018 which would mean more cost to Stevenage Borough Council which we may need to pass on to residents.</p> <p>Socio-economic</p>	Complete a full EqlA to further assess impact (December 2018)	Jaine Cresser

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Summary of draft Equality Impact Assessments

Saving Ref	Saving proposed	Summary of impact	Action	Contact Officer
		<p>Any increase/ new charges in future years need to be affordable and considered in conjunction with other changes in charges. Support charge is not eligible for housing benefit and could have a negative impact for those on lower incomes.</p> <p>Other Government proposals for supported housing funding through 'sheltered rent' to be implemented in 2020. The details are still being worked on and are out for consultation until Jan 2018</p>		

Brief Equality Impact Assessment For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

What is being assessed?	HFS1: Tree works budget saving of £10,000	What are the key aims of it?	This £18,000 budget was introduced for tree works in gardens where tenants could not afford the works themselves. This recommendation is to reduce the budget in line with actual spend.		
Who may be affected by it?	Vulnerable tenants				
Date of full EqIA on service area (planned or completed)					
Form completed by:	Jaine Cresser	Start date	30 October 2017	End date	
		Review date			

What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Tree work expenditure code. Record of work carried out to date for tenant tree work.	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	None
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Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	Negative. Concessions policy only gives 25% discount for works carried out by the council. Even after this concession the cost of tree work may still be unaffordable.	Race	N/A
Disability	Negative. Concessions policy only gives 25% discount for works carried out by the council. Even after this concession the cost of tree work may still be unaffordable.	Religion or belief	N/A
Gender reassignment	N/A	Sex	N/A
Marriage or civil	N/A	Sexual orientation	N/A

partnership			
Pregnancy & maternity	Negative. Concessions policy only gives 25% discount for works carried out by the council. Even after this concession the cost of tree work may still be unaffordable.	Socio-economic ¹	Negative. Concessions policy only gives 25% discount for works carried out by the council. Even after this concession the cost of tree work may still be unaffordable.
Other	Overall, a negative impact is not likely to occur as based on current levels of spending there should be no impact on the service. A residual budget of £8,000 has been retained compared to the spend of £5,774 in 2016/17.		

Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment		Promote equal opportunities		Encourage good relations	

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
None			

Approved by Strategic Leadership Team
Date: TBC

¹Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

Brief Equality Impact Assessment

For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

What is being assessed?	FS2: Additional Pay & Display parking bays at Coreys Mill Lane	What are the key aims of it?	To manage parking provision along Coreys Mill Lane.		
Who may be affected by it?	All members of the public				
Date of full EqlA on service area (planned or completed)	TBC				
Form completed by:	Zayd Al-Jawad	Start date	30 October 2017	End date	
		Review date			

What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	EqlA for saving option S103 in January 2014.	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	No
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Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	None identified.	Race	None identified.
Disability	Blue Badge holders will be entitled to park for free in P&D bays and are also permitted to park on double yellow lines so will not be adversely affected by these proposals.	Religion or belief	N/A
Gender reassignment	N/A	Sex	N/A
Marriage or civil partnership	N/A	Sexual orientation	N/A
Pregnancy &	N/A	Socio-	11 respondents to a Café Choice survey in 2013 attended

maternity		economic ²	<p>the hospital regularly and so would be impacted by the introduction of parking charges. A further four stated that 'money generally' was a concern for them.</p> <p>Charging for parking can be considered economically detrimental to those who are struggling financially but the charges would remain affordable in relation to those charged within the Lister Hospital car park and in relation to the overall cost of motoring.</p> <p>Pay and Display parking has been in place in the town centre for some years and this has not caused any equality challenges. There are strong bus links to Lister Hospital which may prove to be more cost-effective for people on lower incomes.</p>
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Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	N/A	Promote equal opportunities	N/A	Encourage good relations	N/A

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline

Approved by Strategic Leadership Team
Date: TBC

²Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

Brief Equality Impact Assessment For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

What is being assessed?	FS24: Proposed New Woodland Burial Service	What are the key aims of it?	To provide an alternative natural woodland burial service		
Who may be affected by it?	Visitors, Staff, Funeral Directors				
Date of full EqIA on service area (planned or completed)	October 2017				
Form completed by:	Kevin Basford / Paul Seaby / Claire Skeels	Start date	20 October 2017	End date	25 October 2017
		Review date	April 2021		

What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	Main EqIA Site Inspection Proposal Plans Planning Guidance	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	We have been asked by our planning consultation questions regarding the safe egress of mourners to the graveside. Subsequently, a temporary pathway is to be laid using chequered heavy duty re-usable panels to be removed as the woodland matures.
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Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	positive	Race	positive
Disability	positive	Religion or belief	positive
Gender reassignment	positive	Sex	positive
Marriage or civil partnership	positive	Sexual orientation	positive
Pregnancy & maternity	positive	Socio-economic ³	positive
Other	positive		

³Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	Any and all will be able to use and benefit from the woodland burial service if requested.	Promote equal opportunities	Any and all will be able to use and benefit from the woodland burial service if requested.	Encourage good relations	Any and all will be able to use and benefit from the woodland burial service if requested.

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
Purchase of temporary pathway matting	Claire Skeels / Cristian Pinta	Procured in accordance with SBC's policy	March 2018

Approved by Strategic Leadership Team

Date: TBC

Brief Equality Impact Assessment

For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

What is being assessed?	HF42: Remove Death in Service benefit for ex-SHL staff	What are the key aims of it?	When ex SHL transferred back to SBC the Death in Service was seen as a preserved right. The benefit for existing SBC staff was removed from 2010/11 onwards. The scheme costs £8.3K for those eligible staff. Death in service is a benefit for those staff in the pension scheme of 3xsalary. Of the 73 staff this applies to (out of 663 paid in September), currently 18 are not in the pension scheme.		
Who may be affected by it?	73 staff or 11% of workforce				
Date of full EqIA on service area (planned or completed)					
Form completed by:	Clare Fletcher Jackie Foglietta	Start date	20 October 2017	End date	
		Review date			

What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	MALE	24	AGE	Number of staff	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	No info is available for the 73 other than age, gender and grade.
	FEMALE	49	under 30	0		
			30-40	8		
			41-50	16		
			50-60	29		
			over 60	20		
			Total	73		
			Grade	Number of staff		
			1-3	16		
			4-6	46		
		7-9	7			
		10 and over	4			

Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	27% of the staff affected are over 60 and none under 30. The whole group represents	Race	Not envisaged to have an unequal impact on race

	11% of the workforce, the remaining 89% does not have access to the benefit		
Disability	Not envisaged to have an unequal impact	Religion or belief	Not envisaged to have an unequal impact
Gender reassignment	Not envisaged to have an unequal impact	Sex	67% of the 73 staff are female, however the majority of SBC female staff do not have access to this benefit but do have access to the pension scheme.
Marriage or civil partnership	Not envisaged to have an unequal impact	Sexual orientation	Not envisaged to have an unequal impact
Pregnancy & maternity	Not envisaged to have an unequal impact	Socio-economic ⁴	22% or 16 of the 73 staff are a grade 3 or below, however the wider SBC staff group do not have access to this benefit, but can access through the pension scheme.
Other			

Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment	Not envisaged to have an unequal impact	Promote equal opportunities	Removing this benefit for a small number of staff is a more equitable position. Furthermore auto enrolment means all staff who meet the relevant criteria are entered into the pension scheme which has this benefit and pension contributions are based on the staff members pay.	Encourage good relations	

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline

Approved by Strategic Leadership Team

⁴Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.



Date: TBC

Brief Equality Impact Assessment

For a minor operational change / review / simple analysis

What is being assessed?	Introduction of charge for support service in independent living/flexicare schemes for people who get a free service		What are the key aims of it?	Introduction of a £2.00 charge for those 670 people in independent living/flexicare schemes that do not pay anything towards the cost of the 24 hour/7 day a week emergency response service via the alarm or providing the alarm equipment or the support service provided to them through the supported housing officer. This is due to the supporting people/housing related support grant legacy where no one in receipt of housing benefit or fairer charging paid for the service and also protected people from 2003 (19 people). The support service is not eligible for housing benefit, but this introductory charge of £2.00 is a move to make some charge for the service since the grant from HCC has been removed. This option has the support of the housing portfolio holder.		
Who may be affected by it?	Residents living in sheltered housing/flexicare schemes who currently don't pay for anything for the support service (those on housing benefit, fairer charging, protected due to supporting people implementation in 2003)					
Date of full EqIA on service area (planned or completed)	December 2018					
Form completed by:	Karen Long		Start date	Nov 17	End date	Jan 18
			Review date	Nov 18		

What data / information are you using to inform your assessment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data of those on full/partial housing, fairer charging or those that are protected due to supporting people implementation in 2003. • Age profile of sheltered/flexicare housing tenants • Scheme profile data 	Have any information gaps been identified along the way? If so, please specify	
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Explain the potential positive, negative or unequal impact on the following characteristics and how likely this is:			
Age	<p>Hertfordshire County Council are consulting with non-residential residents about charging for some of their community based adult social care services that they currently provide for free. This will impact on a lot of people over 60 in the independent living/flexicare schemes as they are more likely to be in receipt of some care due to their age/medical conditions. Charges will be effective from 15 April 2018. Level of charges unknown as people will need reassessing.</p> <p>Hertfordshire County Council funding for Flexicare housing related alarm contract ends in January 2018 and for support at the end of March 2018 which would mean more cost to Stevenage Borough Council which we may need to pass on to residents.</p>	Race, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual orientation	Residents – no impact Staff – no impact
Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage or civil partnership, Pregnancy & maternity	Residents – no impact Staff – no impact	Socio-economic ⁵	Any increase/ new charges in future years need to be affordable and considered in conjunction with other changes in charges. Support charge is not eligible for housing benefit and could have a negative impact for those on lower incomes.
Other	Government proposals for supported housing funding through ‘sheltered rent’ to be implemented in 2020. The details are still being worked on and are out for consultation until Jan 2018		

⁵Although non-statutory, the council has chosen to implement the Socio-Economic Duty and so decision-makers should use their discretion to consider the impact on people with a socio-economic disadvantage.

Where there is a likely positive impact , please explain how it will help to fulfil our legislative duties to:					
Remove discrimination & harassment		Promote equal opportunities	The government proposals for Supported Housing funding would mean that long-term supported housing will remain funded via the welfare system and will ensure the best outcomes for tenants and manage costs.	Encourage good relations	

What further work / activity is needed as a result of this assessment?

Action	Responsible officer	How will this be delivered and monitored?	Deadline
Complete a full EqIA to further assess impact	Karen Long	This will be completed as part of the review of service charges for 2019 and reviewed after the outcome of the government proposals and HCC proposals.	Dec 2018

Approved by Strategic Leadership Team

Date: TBC