

## **Housing**

### **Equality impact assessment framework for budget proposals**

#### **Introduction: high level assessment**

*“The Council has a duty to ensure that an evidence base is prepared at an early stage and that equalities are considered at the start of the decision making process”.*

In working through budget options departments should consider and document the needs of its service users and non users with specific reference to the equality strands as set out through Southwark's Equalities and Human Rights Scheme (but also giving consideration to the eight “protected characteristics” of the Equalities Act 2010). Consideration should be made as to whether the Council’s ability to meet these needs will be affected by initial budget proposals.

This initial assessment should take the form of a high level assessment of need and impact. When preparing these initial assessments departments and services should give due consideration to the following:

- What is the Council’s duty to provide a service – is this a statutory or discretionary service or a combination of both?
- The profiling of the service
- High level assessment of the implications of service re-configuration, or service reduction giving particular consideration to those groups who may be disproportionately affect

## **Housing**

### **Equalities impact assessment on budget options**

The majority of services delivered by Housing are direct services to the all residents, or the provision and maintenance of universally accessible infrastructure such as highways, lighting and parks.

The majority of Housing front facing services have carried out Equalities Impact Assessments over the last three years in terms of how they deliver their services to the community and how that delivery is differentiated to users.

In relation to these budget proposal an initial high level assessment has been carried out by the service, and the likely impact of implementing the proposal scored. This score is a judgement of the impact on the community (in terms of affecting all residents

as a loss of universal amenity – 5 being the complete withdrawal of a accessed service) and an equalities impact (in terms of impact on specific groups identified under the current equalities scheme). The rating is from 0 (no impact) to 5 (complete loss of provision to that group) for both. An combined overall score is given.

Equalities Impact	
Rating	Description
0	No impact
1	Indirect impact on an equalities group with potential for minor loss of amenity
2	Indirect impact on an equalities group with some loss of amenity
3	Direct impact on an equalities group with some loss of amenity
4	Direct impact on one or equalities group with a cessation of service
5	Direct impact on multiple equalities groups with a cessation of service

Community Impact	
Rating	Description
0	No impact
1	Indirect impact on some of the community with potential for minor loss of service
2	Indirect impact on some of the community with some loss of service provision
3	Direct impact on sections of the community with some loss of service
4	Direct impact on large sections of the community with loss of service
5	Direct impact on the whole community with a cessation of service

		Equalities impact					
		0	1	2	3	4	5
Community impact	0	0	1	2	3	4	5
	1	1	2	3	4	5	6
	2	2	3	4	5	6	7
	3	3	4	5	6	7	8
	4	4	5	6	7	8	9
	5	5	6	7	8	9	10

For each proposal possible controls have been suggested to mitigate the potential impact and risk. It has also been considered whether the delivery of service is statutory, and the standard that must be delivered to satisfy statutory requirements. This is marked in the “nature of service” column with S (Statutory service) or N (Non-statutory service).

## Housing management

Division / Business Unit	Description of Savings Proposal	Risks/ Comments	Nature of service (S / D)	Areas impacted	Equalities impact rating	Community impact rating	Overall impact	Mitigation / control
<b>AREA HOUSING MANAGEMENT UNIT</b>								
Staff savings	Area management modernisation	Reducing area management posts. The restructure is expected to be implemented by the end of September 2011.	<b>S</b>	Council tenants and leaseholders. However see mitigation/control column	3	3	6	Management and efficiency measures to safeguard front line services
Overtime	Reduce overtime budget by 85%	Cut the use of overtime by no longer allowing overtime payments and offering TOIL for work required outside of normal business hours. With appropriate management, this saving will be delivered with little impact on service delivery.	<b>D</b>	Non-emergency out of hours work	0	1	1	Appropriate management
Electricity	Reduce energy costs by 5% by transferring electricity bills from EDF Kent County Council energy consortium.	By negotiating a lower energy tariff, saving can be achieved without any service cuts.	<b>S</b>	–	0	0	0	–

Division / Business Unit	Description of Savings Proposal	Risks/ Comments	Nature of service (S / D )	Areas impacted	Equalities impact rating	Community impact rating	Overall impact	Mitigation / control
Council tax	The re-housing of Heygate and Aylesbury tenants, due to the regeneration programme, has reduced the number of long term voids being held for decants. This has resulted in a reduced Council tax charge and the associated saving.	There is a risk that the number of long term void properties could increase over the coming years now that the Heygate regeneration programme nears completion. However, this is unlikely based on the number of tenants that require re-housing under the Aylesbury regeneration programme.	S	-	0	0	0	-
Marketing and publicity	By ensuring the level of expenditure does not increase on previous years and ensuring that paper based publicity is kept to a minimum, 60% savings could be delivered.	This budget has under spent by £100k in the last two years. As long as expenditure remains consistent and web-based publicity is used instead of more expensive paper options, this saving could be delivered without any significant service reductions.	D	- Council tenants and leaseholders.  - Groups with lower web use such as low income groups and older people	1	1	2	- Web-based publicity - Signposting of residents to help mitigate the impact on groups with low web use
Legal and court fees	Move to a fixed charging arrangement with legal.	Reduce the costs of the current SLA agreement by moving to a fixed cost arrangement	D	-	0	0	0	-

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Garages	Maximise garage lettings and income. This includes centralising the management and letting of all garages	-	D	-	0	0	0	-
Income collection	Centralise income collection function. Strengthen support to those who have difficulty paying their rent	-	S	-	-	-	-	-
Front facing access	Reduction in number of Housing receptions	To ensure service delivery we will establish a number of local office hubs for face to face meetings and reception services. In addition a mobile office is proposed, to visit the more distant estates on a regular basis, with regular surgeries.	D	- Older people - People with literacy difficulties	3	1	4	- 4 local office hubs for face to face meetings and reception services - In addition, a mobile office is proposed

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<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT PLANNING UNIT</b>								
Staffing	Restructure AMIP (Asset Management and Investment Planning unit)	Reduce the level of staff to be in line with staffing levels of similar organisations of our size. Savings are expected to be implemented by end of September 2011.	<b>D</b>	None	0	0	0	–
New contractor financial models	Incentives to contractors to deal with orders right first time and at the best possible price A new model for the delivery of voids will ensure that voids are turned around more quickly and at a lower price.	-	<b>S</b>	None	0	0	0	–
Voids		The Council's lettable standard is being reviewed and consulted on from January 2011.	<b>S</b>	Tenants moving into new lets	0	0	0	–