

Savings proposals Equality Analysis Summary - 2025/26

Outlined below is a summary of initial equality analysis (EA) which support the budget proposals for 2025/26, and beyond. EAs are assessments that public authorities carry out and consider prior to taking decisions to implement any policies and service changes, with a view to predicting their impact on equality, and planning mitigation accordingly. The Equality Act 2010 does not specifically require an equality analysis to be carried out, although they are a way of facilitating and evidencing compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Duty requires decision makers to have 'due-regard' to matters of equality at a time when a particular policy or service change is being considered. Each summary below considers the individual and isolated impact of each budget proposal on the 'protected characteristics' as defined by the Equalities Act, as well as the additional groups identified by Southend-on-Sea City Council. However, the Council should note the wider context and resulting compounding impacts of multiple proposals on specific protected groups. Nationally, data tells us that those groups also experience a compounding issue of lower income.

It will be important that where changes are required, they are communicated in a timely way so that people have time to plan and adjust, with inclusive language through a variety of avenues, to support those with digital barriers.

Importantly, the proposed overall budget package continues to provide targeted support to those who experience the most vulnerabilities that society places upon them, as they will enable statutory services for adults and children to continue to operate.

| Ref | Description | EA Assessment | EA Mitigation |
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| Corporate Initiatives | | | |
| COI-01 | Transformation Programme | Planned workstreams are focussing on reviews of current processes, efficiencies and internal challenge so no specific equality issues identified currently. Requirements for any EA's will need to be revisited once the reviews are completed. | Monitor transformation workstreams to ensure potential impacts for protected groups are considered. Clear, transparent and timely communication of any changes to service provision. |
| Efficiency and Productivity | | | |
| EAP-01 | Estate Efficiencies | Consideration will need to be given to staff who will be disproportionately impacted by a change in their workplace location. Groups could include people with disabilities, older people, carers, people from minority ethnic groups and those with challenging financial situations. | Clear, transparent communication as far in advance as possible would best mitigate this impact to allow the additional adjustment and planning time. |
| Organisation Redesign | | | |
| ORE-01 | Voluntary Redundancy | Staff are actively choosing this option, however there may be some impact on the remaining staff and workloads. | Internal staff planning is needed to see what activity is revised, paused or stopped to mitigate impact to the remaining team members. |
| ORE-02 | Strategy and Change Management Structure | When considering a reduction in staff or removal of vacant posts, this will likely impact on remaining staff who may see increased workloads or periods of adjustment. The remaining team may have | Giving staff as much advance warning of the change as possible, will best allow them to adjust to the change and plan for the impact. The communication of this change will need to be as clear and inclusive as |

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| ORE-03 | Property and Asset Management Staffing Restructure | different abilities to cope with a change if they have experiences from the protected characteristics. | possible where staff are given every opportunity to be advised of the support measures in place. Internal staff planning is needed to see what activity is revised, paused or stopped to account for less staff members, this will mitigate some of the impact to the remaining team members. |
| Service Offer Changes | | | |
| SOC-01 | Connected Southend Transformation: Prevention and Independence | Continuation of previously agreed Connected Southend transformation programme. Focused on preventative support and maintaining independence and review of service packages. This should result in improved more appropriate services for local citizens including those with protected characteristics. | Clear, transparent and timely communication of any changes to service provision. Continue to monitor transformation for any potential impacts for protected groups. |
| SOC-02 | Connected Southend Transformation: Focused care package review | | |
| SOC-03 | Southend Care Limited Transformation | Restructure and remodelling to support new services in line with previously agreed Connected Southend which aims to provide improved services for local citizens including those with protected characteristics. | Reference equality analysis as transformation continues to monitor potential impacts for protected groups. Clear, transparent and timely communication of any changes to service provision. |
| Third Party Payments / Contractual Arrangements | | | |
| TPP-01 | Community Sector Discretionary Grants | The initial phase of this proposal is a full review of all Voluntary spend by the council and NHS, so no equality issues identified. Requirements for an EA will need to be revisited once the review is completed. | Monitor outcome of initial review. Clear, concise, timely and inclusive communication is needed to advise of any resulting change. Providing community groups and individuals with information about alternative support will further mitigate any potential impacts. |
| TPP-02 | Market Contract and Inflation Negotiation | No equality issues identified | None needed |
| TPP-03 | Essex County Council (ECC) Transferred Debt | No equality issues identified. | None needed. |

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| Income Generation Capabilities | | | |
| IGC-01 | Increased Fees and Charges Yield | An increase to fees will disproportionately impact those with limited financial means and lower household incomes, or those with higher outgoings. This is likely to include people from minority ethnic groups, larger families, people with disabilities, pregnancy or maternity and those on welfare benefits. | Mitigating factors may include offering a variety of ways to pay, including instalments. There may need to be a financial assessment to establish the disposable income, and close links to support services that may be able to offer grants or contributions. Communicating change in advance is vital to manage expectations and allow affected residents and partners time to adjust or make alternative plans. |
| IGC-02 | Investment Income | No equality issues identified. | None needed. |
| IGC-03 | Rental Lease Income | No equality issues identified | None needed |
| IGC-04 | Court of Protection | The additional fees are set by statute and will impact nationally. Those accessing Court of Protection services will be impacted including those with protected characteristics. | Clear, transparent, inclusive and timely communication of the changes to service users. |
| IGC-05 | Community Safety | No equality issues identified | None needed |
| IGC-06 | Pier Admission Charging | Increasing the price of tickets is likely to impact all users, some of which will be from protected groups. The people likely to be disproportionately impacted are those groups who commonly experience a reduced income such as people with disabilities, carers, families with young children, those with limited financial resource and older people on day trips. | Communicating change in advance is vital to manage expectations and allow affected residents and partners time to adjust or make alternative plans. Exploration of a reduced cost annual pass may help to mitigate for regular visitors. |
| IGC-07 | Passenger Transport Office and Fleet | No equality issues identified | None needed |