

March 2014

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
EQUALITY ANALYSIS / IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)**

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You need to start your Equality Analysis and data collection when you start to create or change any policy, procedure project or service

When developing high-level strategies under which other policies will sit, if those policies are jointly owned by KCC and partner organisations, they will need to take the partnership approach to EqIAs,

Directorate: Strategic & Corporate Services - Finance and Procurement

Name of policy, procedure, project or service

Draft 2016/17 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan

What is being assessed?

Proposed Budget & Council Tax 2016/17

Responsible Owner/ Senior Officer

Dave Shipton

Date of Initial Screening

October 2014

Date of Full EqIA :

Update each revised version below and in the saved document name.

Version	Author	Date	Comment
1	Dave Shipton	October 2014	
2	Dave Shipton	October 2015	

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Screening Grid

Characteristic	Could this policy, procedure, project or service, or any proposed changes to it, affect this group less favourably than others in Kent? YES/NO If yes how?	Assessment of potential impact HIGH/MEDIUM LOW/NONE UNKNOWN		Provide details: a) Is internal action required? If yes what? b) Is further assessment required? If yes, why?	Could this policy, procedure, project or service promote equal opportunities for this group? YES/NO - Explain how good practice can promote equal opportunities
		Positive	Negative	Internal action must be included in Action Plan	If yes you must provide detail
Age	Yes	Med/ High	Med	<p>a) Yes internal action is required- Following agreement on the strategy,</p> <p>b) Yes -Impact Assessment will be undertaken when draft budget plans are disseminated to Budget holders. Also responses to budget campaign will be taken into consideration when the final decisions are made.</p> <p>c) See Column 6</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>The budget proposals include income generation and efficiency, transformation and policy savings necessary to balance spending with the likely funding available to the Council. In determining this funding we have had to estimate the grant from government and keep Council Tax as low as possible.</p> <p>Efficiency savings can be categorised as those which provide the same or similar levels of service as the current year but at lower cost. Transformation savings provide services in a different and improved way at less cost.</p> <p>Policy savings require a change in KCC policy regarding either the level at which services are provided or who services are provided for</p> <p>Further individual Impact Assessment will be undertaken following</p>

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					consultation prior to the publication of detailed budget in January
Disability	Yes	Med/ High	Med		Yes- As above
Gender	Yes	Med/ High	Med		Yes- As above
Gender identity	Yes	Med/ High	Med		Yes- As above
Race	Yes	Med/ High	Med		Yes- As above
Religion or belief	Yes	Med/ High	Med		Yes- As above
Sexual orientation	Yes	Med/ High	Med		Yes- As above
Pregnancy and maternity	Yes	Med/ High	Med		Yes- As above
Marriage and Civil Partnerships	Yes	Med/ High	Med		Yes- As above
Carer's responsibilities	Yes	Med/ High	Med		Yes- As above

Part 1: INITIAL SCREENING

Proportionality - Based on the answers in the above screening grid what weighting would you ascribe to this function – see Risk Matrix

Low	Medium	High
Low relevance or Insufficient information/evidence to make a judgement.	Medium relevance or Insufficient information/evidence to make a Judgement.	High relevance to equality, /likely to have adverse impact on protected groups

State rating & reasons

HIGH

Context

Each year the County Council is responsible for agreeing the overall revenue and capital budgets and in particular the amount of Council Tax it requires to precept from district councils and the consequence on the rate for Council Tax charged for County Council services for each property band. The budget approved by County Council sets out the amounts to be delegated to individual directorates and their overall proposals how this is planned to be spent. Corporate Directors and/or Cabinet Members have delegated authority to make in-year changes within prescribed limits, changes above these limits have to be agreed buy the Leader/Cabinet

The Council's overall medium term plan is set out in the strategic statement "Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes". The Council's transformation programme is set out in the "Facing the Challenge Strategy" as reported to County Council. This draft budget and MTFP supports these strategic plans. The strategic statement and Facing the Challenge both recognise that we will need to deliver our services with less funding and that the Council structure will have to be as efficient as possible.

This Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on the overall budget strategy and considers the impact of the major changes within individual proposals. All the individual proposals will be subject to their own separate Equality Impact Assessment, consultation and assessment procedures at the relevant time. Corporate Directors and Cabinet Members will have delegated authority to make changes to their individual spending plans following consultation and detailed evaluation of the impact of proposals.

Aims and Objectives

The draft budget and MTFP for the budget campaign represents a high level strategic plan setting out:

- summary of the forecast position for the next financial year and estimates for the following years

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- the overall resources estimated as likely to be available for the forthcoming year
- the Council Tax to precept from district councils for the forthcoming year
- an indication of how the resources would be deployed to the main service areas of the council
- a picture of the major changes at county level between 2015/16 and proposals for 2016/17 and 2017/18

Issues raised during the campaign will be considered by Cabinet Members and reported to individual Cabinet Committees in January following publication of full draft budget proposals prior to the committee meetings. This full draft will include any amendments arising from the consultation through the budget campaign and the outcome of the Government's Spending Review due to be announced on 25th November. Committees will be asked to consider the full draft budget as it affects their portfolios, whether it reflects the views expressed following the campaign, and recommending any further changes to the final draft budget prior to consideration at full County Council on 10th February.

The final draft budget (including any changes from committees) will be presented to Cabinet at the end of January together with the outcomes from consultation.

Beneficiaries

Anyone who is liable to pay Council Tax in Kent and Kent residents
KCC service recipients
Local businesses
Voluntary sector organisations
KCC staff
Kent County Council elected Members

Information and Data

A profile of the population of Kent can be found on this link:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-and-data/Facts-and-figures-about-Kent/equality-and-diversity-data>

The Council has a statutory responsibility to consult on its proposed budget and level of Council Tax under the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The County Council plans to discharge this responsibility via the following:

- a public launch of the draft budget proposals via the budget campaign which is covered in local media
- a summary of the overall budget proposals setting out forecast income from Government and Council Tax, spending demands and savings options

- this summary will inevitably be less detailed than the full draft budget and MTFP issued in January but will provide enough detail to provide respondents with a sufficient overview of budget plans to be able to comment
- a simple response form covering the Council Tax options for 2016/17
- a budget modelling tool which enables respondents to identify spend which is most and least value to them from a list of different service areas
- a free text section which allows respondents to make any other comments about the budget proposals
- all the published information will be available via the Council's website and will also be available in alternative formats on request
- all beneficiaries listed above will be invited to submit comments/suggestions on the proposals in the budget campaign
- views will be sought from focus groups of residents conducted by a independent market research firm
- workshops will also take place with staff and key stakeholders
- detailed discussion will take place with Trades Union representatives
- Elected county councillors will have the opportunity to examine the proposals in the draft budget prior to County Council

The campaign is being launched in October. Inevitably this means that figures can only be estimates. In particular we will not have received the outcome of the Government's Spending Review, or have detailed grant settlements or the calculation of the Council Tax base from district councils. Nonetheless, launching the campaign early allows the council to set out its estimates including some of the additional spending demands which need to be addressed no matter what the outcome of these unknown aspects. It also allows respondents the ability to comment about local spending priorities in advance of Government announcements.

Consultation on the overall budget proposals is not a substitute for consultation or undertaking EqIA before implementing individual elements of the proposed budget. Rather, this will help to inform future decisions. Having set the budget this will not preclude making changes following detailed consultation as long as changes are in accordance with the Council's Constitution and Financial Regulations

The Council has reviewed the presentation of its budget book and MTFP over the last few years to try to make it more transparent and make the data more understandable. In particular we have published the budget in diagram format on the council's website which enables the budget to be examined at varying degrees of detail. Inevitably the budget is a plan and there will be variations arising during the year. These variations are reported through the in year budget monitoring. We have reviewed both the Budget Book and monitoring reports to make the data sources consistent.

Involvement and Engagement

Potential Impact

Budget proposals could impact on staff working in particular services, clients of those services and stakeholders involved with those services.

The consultation process outlined above provides an opportunity for those affected to comment on the impact of both the overall strategy and the main proposals within the draft budget.

The proposed budget has been developed in line with the Council's strategic statement and the best estimate of the fiscal environment for local government and Kent County Council in particular. The budget plan aligns the estimated limited financial resources with the priorities set out in these strategy documents. To that extent we have assessed the impact against these priorities and there has been a positive impact in terms of investing additional spending into areas of highest priority

More detailed assessments will be carried out by individual directorates prior to implementing any changes. It may be necessary to commence the more detailed consultation on individual elements prior to the County Council agreeing the budget in February. Where this is the case it will be made clear that any consideration is subject to the County Council agreeing the overall budget. Without this separation of consideration of the overall strategic parameters it would be impossible to carry out detailed impact assessments.

Adverse Impact:

It is inevitable that some of the changes in the draft budget proposals will be viewed as having an adverse impact. In a time of reduced public spending to meet the government's deficit reduction targets it is inevitable the authority has to review the way it provides services and we cannot carry on providing services in the same way as we have in the past. One of the aims of the transformation savings is to produce different or better outcomes for less public money. Efficiency savings are aimed at delivering the same or similar outcomes for less money. Policy savings will require some changes to KCC policy and are likely to have the biggest impact (and therefore most focus for EQIA)

Positive Impact:

The budget proposals include some discretionary investment, particularly to support maintaining capital investment programme and adjusting budgets in light of the latest forecast spending trends. Maintaining the capital programme is a key element of the stimulating economic regeneration including supporting local jobs working on local projects, stimulating housing,

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I have noted the content of the equality impact assessment and agree the actions to mitigate the adverse impact(s) that have been identified.

Senior Officer

Signed:

Name: **Dave Shipton**

Job Title:

Date: October 2015

DMT Member

Signed:

Name: **Andy Wood**

Job Title:

Date: October 2015

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Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Protected Characteristic	Issues identified	Action to be taken	Expected outcomes	Owner	Timescale	Cost implications
ALL	Potential impact on all Kent residents	Consultation with residents	Better understanding of the impact of proposals on residents. Opportunity for innovation explored	Andy Wood	13 October- 24 November 2015	BAU
ALL	Potential Impact on service	Consultation with VCS	Better understanding of the impact of proposals on VCS and service users. Opportunity for innovation explored	Andy Wood	13 October- 24 November 2015	BAU
ALL	Cumulative impact on specific protected characteristics	Key stakeholders and interest groups relating to Protected Characteristics identified pre consultation to be included in consultation.	Better understanding of the impact of proposals in relation to Protected Characteristics. Opportunity for innovation			

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			explored			