

Budget 2017-2018

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Swindon Borough Council values diversity, and considers it as an important part of policy making. This is not just about addressing inequality, important though that is; it is also about ensuring that the strength in the diversity of the borough's communities and council's workforce is realised.

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in the Equality Act 2010, Swindon Borough Council is required to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different protected groups when making decisions. The groups protected by law, also known as protected characteristics, are age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. Although socioeconomic status (people on low income, young and adult carers, part-time workers, people living in deprived areas, groups suffering multiple disadvantage, etc) is not a characteristic protected by the Equality Act 2010, Swindon Borough Council is committed to considering the impact of these vulnerable groups not covered within the other protected characteristics, ensuring that they are not disproportionately affected by its proposals.

The PSED does not prevent decision makers from making difficult decisions in the context of the requirement to achieve a significant level of savings across all operations. It supports the Council to make robust decisions in a fair, transparent and accountable way that considers the diverse needs of all our local communities and workforce. Consideration of the duty should precede and inform decision making. It is important that decision makers have regard to the statutory grounds in the light of all available material, including relevant diversity impact assessment (DIA) and consultation findings. If there are significant negative equality impacts arising from a specific proposal, then decision makers may decide to amend, defer for further consideration or reject a proposal after balancing all of the information available to them.

Members are reminded that the budget can be described as a financial plan of the Council's current operational intent. Where known, the equality impact of change must be disclosed.

All saving proposals have been subject to the Council's DIA screening process to assess their potential/likely impact, if any, on service users with protected characteristics. For some proposals where there is no change to service or staffing a DIA has not been completed. Other proposals, which are at an early stage of development have uncompleted DIAs – however in these cases the potential areas of impact have been identified.

Where it is not possible at this stage to fully assess the impact from individual proposals, these will be subject to separate decisions informed by a separate DIA prior to implementation.

However, Officers' preliminary assessments conclude that the impact of adopting these proposals on front-line services or vulnerable groups would be relatively minor. This is not to imply that there would not be any negative impact on service users, if the proposals are approved. Having confronted difficult decisions early in the financial planning cycle the Council is now able to build into its financial plans the benefits of significant efficiency gains via the following themes:

Growing Economy.

There are limited identified equality impacts in the proposals which are linked to the growing economy theme. However, the Council will need to ensure that any of these developments must be delivered in a way that advances equality of opportunity and so pay attention to minimum standards of accessibility and how the reach of any of this work is developed in such a way that the diversity of the Borough's population can participate and benefit.

Going Local.

A number of adverse impacts are identified in the proposals linked to this theme. Primarily these are on the basis of age, sex, disability and ethnicity. Mitigations are identified and these should be given due consideration. Where the aspiration is that parishes and community organisations take on responsibility for some of these services, the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) must be taken into account

Building Resilience.

The greatest numbers of identified potential adverse impacts are linked to this theme, primarily on the basis of age and disability. Where possible, mitigations have been identified.

Many of the proposals will have an impact on staff, especially where the majority of the saving proposals are made up of staffing costs. Given the scale of staffing reductions, there is potential for these proposals to have a significant impact on the workforce. There are some services that due to their nature consist of predominantly female or male members of staff, and it is important that changes are not disproportionate in terms of their impact. The council's Managing Change, Restructuring, Redeployment & Redundancy Policy provides a framework to be followed during times of organisational change to minimise the risk of a negative impact on any equality groups. The Managing Change Policy requires that staffing changes undergo DIA to ensure that the restructure process is conducted in a fair, transparent and non-discriminatory manner.

Proposal	Total Changes Proposed for 2017-18 £'000	Service	Notes
Reintegration / retendering of services insourced from SEQOL	(250)	Adults	Adult demand DIA http://www.swindon.gov.uk/downloads/file/2534/adult_demand_programme_dia_2016
Supporting People - financial impact of work already completed to review and reprocure contracts requirements and support provider to access other income sources.	(200)	Adults	DIA not required
Reduction in Public Health services in line with the estimated reduction in specific grant plus containing inflationary pressures	(371)	Adults	DIA not required
On-going review of care packages mainly across Learning Disabilities to ensure effective use of universal services and packages of care that support the needs of clients	(2,179)	Adults	Adult demand DIA completed - Updated 2016 (see above)
Release of budget for revenue costs linked to implementation of a replacement for Swift. The implementation has been delayed and the revenue implications will need to be considered as part of the implementation.	(140)	Adults	DIA not required
Commercialisation opportunity for the Council to build and sell small scale housing developments on Council-owned land. Whilst there is confidence in this figure being achievable there is a timing risk for 17-18	(3,000)	C&P	Initial DIA considerations have identified no adverse impact. DIA to be finalised.
Saving as a result of the June Cabinet decision to withdraw Council funding for local services such as grounds maintenance and street cleaning from 2017-18. Savings in 2016-17 of £500k were achieved by withdrawing such services in currently Parished areas, which have subsequently been taken on by Parish Councils.	(2,600)	C&P	DIA for parishing completed for June 2016 Cabinet http://www.swindon.gov.uk/downloads/file/2186/transfer_of_services_to_parish_councils_2016

Subject to Cabinet decision on Libraries Strategy - Community Assets and Libraries Change Programme - 2017-18 savings being targeted over and above the £300k in 2016-17. Consultation is currently underway on the future of the Libraries Service and this number will be finalised in December when the feedback from the consultation process has been considered and the proposal way forward confirmed.	(800)	C&P	DIA completed for December 2016 cabinet. Adverse impacts identified. http://www.swindon.gov.uk/downloads/file/2650/dia_libraries_strategy_nov_2016
Target the work of the Enviro-crime team to reduce the levels of littering and fly tipping. Increased income will reduce the net cost of the service.	(45)	C&P	DIA not required
It is proposed that all public toilets outside of formal parks will be closed from April 2017 unless alternative funding sources can be identified. The final saving figure will be confirmed in the February Budget report.	(109)	C&P	Initial DIA undertaken to be updated following consultation. Adverse Impact identified regarding age, sex & disability.  DIA Closing Public Toilets 2017.pdf
Introduce car parking charges at Stanton Park following the trial at Lydiard House and Coate Water Country Park. Tariffs are recommended to be set at the same level as Coate Water. The estimated income figure shown is net of associated costs.	(25)	C&P	 DIA Country Park Car Parking Charge I DIA completed
School Crossing Patrols - work is progressing on identifying new funding streams or reducing the number of patrolled crossings. Further information will be included in the final Budget to be agreed in February 2017	(20)	C&P	Initial DIA completed – to be updated after consultation. Adverse impacts identified on basis of age, disability, sex.  DIA - School Crossing Patrols 2016
Financial impact of the renegotiation of the Dial A Ride contract for the 2 years ending 31st August 2018 over and above the £100k saving achieved in 2016/17	(69)	C&P	DIA completed pre implementation

			 DIA Dial a Ride August 2016.pdf
Increase in the current charge for the green waste service from £40 to £50 linked to an improved digital service through the use of in-cab technology and an automated payments method with the saving being net of higher disposal costs.	(150)	C&P	DIA being completed.
Efficiencies within the waste & recycling service area by combining clinical, bulky and bin delivery resources	(25)	C&P	DIA not required
Reshaping the opening hours of the Household Waste recycling centre to allow cost reductions.	(20)	C&P	 DIA HWRC and bring site changes 2016.pdf DIA completed
Full-year impact of efficiency savings plus further cost reductions within the waste and recycling service due to the implementation of rounds based on route optimisation over and above the part year 16/17 saving of £140k.	(160)	C&P	 DIA Waste Collection 2016.pdf DIA
Transfer of garages from the HRA to the General Fund to reflect that over 50% are now private lets - net saving after appropriation of assets that are of benefit to the HRA from the General Fund in exchange for the reduction in garage income.	(500)	C&P	DIA not required
Reduction in facility management costs (cleaning, security etc.) through identified saving on current contracts	(20)	C&P	No DIA required
Undertake a review of the current highways winter maintenance arrangements by benchmarking against those provided by other Local Authorities. A specific reserve is set aside in the event of severe winter weather and salt levels will be maintained at appropriate levels.	(20)	C&P	DIA completed. Initial potential adverse impact on basis of age and  DIA review of winter service 2017.pdf disability.

Efficiencies within highways service area through the introduction of hand-held technology and a comparison of current service standards on the highway. Part year saving £40k - full year saving £80k. Health & safety standards will be maintained at appropriate levels.	(40)	C&P	DIA not required
Extension of the current programme of bus lane enforcement measures at identified sites to support bus priority measures and to contribute towards service costs.	(20)	C&P	DIA not required
Updated bus strategy approved by the Cabinet in September, 2016 with details of services to be provided in the future. Savings to the general fund over and above the £100k in 2016/17. This figure will be updated in the final Budget to be agreed in February 2017.	(120)	C&P	DIA completed for Cabinet Sept  DIA Review of Bus Services and Local Bu 2016
Reduction in front door assessments by 200 per annum through effective Multi Agency working (MASH) enabling the reduction of 1 social work post	(44)	Children	DIA not required
Full-year impact of 2015-16 reduction of 2 agency staff from the Assessment and Child protection team due to effective multi agency working (MASH)	(75)	Children	DIA not required
Music service to be self-funded through grant funding, trading with schools and parental contributions.	(25)	Children	DIA completed http://www.swindon.gov.uk/downloads/file/2649/dia_music_service_2016
Training offer to early years providers to be reviewed and income expectation increased	(10)	Children	DIA completed http://www.swindon.gov.uk/downloads/file/2648/dia_early_years_training_2016
Advisory service to schools to be provided from within school improvement team	(19)	Children	DIA completed http://www.swindon.gov.uk/downloads/file/2644/dia_advisory_service_to_tuition_service_budget_change_-_cabinet_budget_proposal_dec_2016

School improvement post funded by Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)	(20)	Children	DIA not required
Increased income expectation for Governor Services team	(10)	Children	DIA completed http://www.swindon.gov.uk/downloads/file/2647/dia_early_years_and_school_improvement_2016
Early years post funded by Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)	(15)	Children	DIA not required
Education Welfare - increasing the penalty charge income budget to reflect current levels of income being achieved.	(10)	Children	DIA not required
Youth Service Provision - a report will be going to the February Cabinet for a decision to be made on the level of service provision. Final figure will be updated in the February report based on the decision taken.	(136)	Children	DIA completed. Adverse impacts are identified for each of the options presented.  DIA Youth Engagement Review :
Use insurance reserve to partly meet the cost of insurance excess liabilities and remove the base budget. This will result in the level of reserves held to meet future liabilities being reduced over 3 years so that rather than holding funding to cover 2 years of maximum liabilities, funding for one year will be held instead	(500)	Corporate	DIA not required
Reduction in Debt Charges costs through an MRP review to extend the period of capital loan repayments, use of capital receipts to repay debt.	(5,500)	Corporate	DIA not required
A review of operations at the Steam Museum to increase commercial opportunities across the site and reduce costs. Targeted additional income of £100k as current income falling £50k short of budgeted level	(50)	Economy	DIA not required
Consolidation of catering provision across the Borough to generate additional commercial opportunities	(30)	Economy	DIA not required
Commercialisation of some Building Control services to generate new income within the team	(20)	Economy	DIA not required
Reduction in the adult learning grant contribution from the Economy & Skills budget	(16)	Economy	DIA not required

Income from Commercial Investment Strategy	(500)	Economy	DIA not required
Redesign of ICT infrastructure to accommodate applications currently in the Capita Private Cloud (CPC). This work has been funded from the ICT reshaping reserve in order to deliver revenue savings from implementation. This saving may increase by the time the final Budget is approved in February 2017.	(32)	Resources	DIA not required
Implementation of a Customer Portal to provide 24/7 self serve access for some Council services resulting in reduced staffing costs in Customer Services and a reduction in IT licencing costs. The cost of the technology, development work and dual running of systems is £254k and this project pays back in just under 2 years. The work has been funded from the ICT reshaping reserve in order to deliver revenue savings from implementation date.	(126)	Resources	DIA drafted – no adverse impact identified  DIA Citizen Portal 2016.pdf
Mobile phones contract re-procurement - part-year saving	(35)	Resources	DIA not required
Redesign of services across the People, Performance and Engagement function.	(175)	Resources	Fair application of the council's recruitment processes guaranteed. No change in service.
Customer Services - more cost effective recruitment and reductions in hours across the team. Also includes a contribution of £15k to a post to support maintenance of web content to support the success of promoting the use of on-line services.	(30)	Resources	DIA not required
Review of staff car mileage to replace some mileage with more cost-effective pool cars, increase car sharing opportunities and review mileage rates and introduce staff car parking charges for Town Centre parking.	(226)	Resources	Initial DIA written to accompany staff consultation. This will be updated when drafting a final  Staff Car Parking and Mileage Rates - £ proposal.
Digitisation - review of back office processes to make them more efficient making use of technology and reducing paper.	(500)	Resources	 DIA Digital Programme 2016.pdf DIA completed

Reorganisation of work across Committee Services resulting in a reduction of 2 posts	(80)	Resources	DIA not required
Print contract procurement savings of £125k less £39k investment in resource required to manage the multi-functional device (MFD) estate. The new print contract provides opportunities for further savings linked to behaviour change and digitalisation as this work develops.	(86)	Resources	DIA not required
Internal Audit savings from staffing and non-salary budgets.	(25)	Resources	DIA not required
Finance Team staff saving following a reorganisation of roles within the team.	(80)	Resources	DIA not required
Revenues and Benefits Capita contract savings linked to a reduction in council tax inspectors, reduced benefits claims and call volumes	(116)	Resources	DIA not required
Procurement savings from a review of terms and contract management arrangements for a number of HR related contracts	(48)	Resources	DIA not required
Customer & Business Services - Review and redesign of specialist support roles across Customer and Business Services.	(70)	Resources	DIA completed http://www.swindon.gov.uk/downloads/file/1572/customer_and_business_services_review_2016
Remove Council Tax Empty & Unfurnished discount of 50%	(420)	Resources	 DIA Council Tax Empty Discounts char DIA completed
Reduce Council Tax Structural Alterations discount to 25% discount for a maximum of 3 months	(15)	Resources	DIA not required - considerations are referenced in previous DIA
Strategic Procurement Review delivering savings through contracts and contract management.	(500)	Resources	DIA not required
Introduction of new and extended services within Cems & Crems including Trees of Remembrance and organist service.	(30)	Resources	DIA not required