



# Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) was introduced as part of the Equality Act 2010, which protects people from discrimination in the workplace, in the provision of services and in wider society.

The duty requires all public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people

Public bodies demonstrate this due regard in different ways, including producing robust equality impact assessments when considering changes to policies and services.

An EqIA enables us to check the potential impacts on residents and employees of our policies, services and projects. It's an opportunity to challenge how we currently do things.

Carrying out an EqIA should not create extra work; it should be part of your normal service planning process. Most of the information required should already be available to you through other work already undertaken e.g. service user monitoring, analysis of complaints and national research.

The purpose of an EqIA is to *take account* of equality as plans develop, to promote and assist the consideration of equalities issues arising in plans and proposals and to ensure that where possible adverse or disproportionate impacts are minimised and positive impacts are maximised. As such where possible an EqIA should be started at the outset of a project/proposal and continually be developed and reviewed until a final proposal is adopted. An EqIA should be used to ensure decision makers have all the information they need regarding potential impacts to ensure they have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty when making judgements.

Carrying out EqIAs should be an integral part of policy or service development/change and larger projects may need more than one EqIA if different areas are impacted by the change.

Any project that requires consultation will automatically require an EqIA.

All approved and signed EqIAs are recorded in a central register. Please email your completed draft EqIA to [equalities@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@buckinghamshire.gov.uk). Previous EqIAs can be made available for information upon request. For any questions or if you require support in completing your EqIA please contact Maria Damigos and Natalie Donhou Morley directly.



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## Part A (Initial assessment) - Section 1 - Background

Proposal/Brief Title: Draft Revenue Budget and Capital Programme (MTFP) 2025-2026

OneDrive link to report/policy:

Related policies: Unknown at present

Date: 09/12/2024

Type of strategy, policy, project or service:

Please tick one of the following:

- Existing
- New or proposed
- Changing, update or revision
- Other (please explain)

This assessment was created by:

Name: Matt Strevens

Job Title: Head of Corporate Finance

Email address: matthew.strevens@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Briefly describe the aims and objectives of the proposal below:

The Draft budget and Capital Programme set out the draft proposals for income and expenditure of the Council for future years. We are statutorily obliged to produce a balanced budget on an annual basis.

It is inevitable the authority has to review the way it provides services and look for opportunities to deliver different or better outcomes for our users for less public money.

Equalities impacts have been considered throughout the development of the proposals within the draft budget, but proposals remain in draft format at present. These proposals are subject to change as the Local Government Finance Settlement from Central Government will not be known when these proposals are presented to Cabinet. Review by the Council's Budget Scrutiny Committee and further feedback from residents on the draft proposals may also result in changes. The Final budget will be presented to Full Council in February 2025 which may be subject to change resulting from the Local Government Finance Settlement.

What outcomes do we want to achieve?

To ensure that the Council is able to operate legally and on a financially sustainable basis going forward whilst delivering its Corporate Priorities as expressed in the Corporate Plan.



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The medium-term outlook for Council finances remains challenging with significant pressures identified in relation to both inflation and ongoing increases in demand for key services being experienced nationally. The focus of the draft budget proposal is therefore to ensure that core services continue to be delivered to residents whilst ensuring that resources are used as efficiently as possible and through driving efficiency, service reviews income generation and savings plans. It is inevitable that that there will be changes to how some services to our residents and customers are delivered. However, we will try to improve services and minimise impact on service delivery wherever possible.

Implementation of the proposals within this draft budget, and the final budget to be agreed in February 2025, is the responsibility of individual Portfolio holders.

Does this proposal plan to withdraw a service, activity or presence? Unclear

Please explain your answer:

The Draft Budget proposals includes changes to the delivery of many services. At this stage it is not possible to detail the exact changes proposed as this is only a draft budget. As individual projects which deliver the changes outlines within this draft budget are developed in detail to deliver the changes individual re-assessment of Equalities impacts will be undertaken for each change.

Does this proposal plan to reduce a service, activity or presence? Unclear

Please explain your answer:

The Draft Budget proposals includes changes to services. At this stage it is not possible to detail the exact changes proposed as this is only a draft budget. As the individual projects which will deliver the changes are developed there will be further detailed re-assessment of Equalities impacts.

Does this proposal plan to introduce, review or change a policy, strategy or procedure?

Unclear

Please explain your answer: Unclear

The Draft Budget proposals includes changes to services. At this stage it is not possible to detail changes to individual strategies, policies or plans. As the individual projects which will deliver the changes are developed there will be further detailed re-assessment of Equalities impacts.

Does this proposal affect service users and/or customers, or the wider community? Yes

Please explain your answer:

The changes proposed to deliver a balanced budget are likely to impact on service users and/or customers. Details of the impacts will not be known until individual projects to



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deliver the changes begin to develop delivery plans for the changes. These will be considered through the development of these detailed plans and there will be further detailed re-assessment of Equalities impacts at this time.

Does this proposal affect employees? Yes

Please explain your answer:

The changes proposed to deliver a balanced budget are likely to impact on employees as savings are made. Details of the impacts will not be known until individual projects to deliver the changes begin to develop delivery plans for the changes. These will be considered through the development of these detailed plans and there will be further detailed re-assessment of Equalities impacts at this time. It should be noted that the Council has a strong commitment to providing opportunities for redeployment where posts are affected by changes.

Will employees require training to deliver this proposal? Unclear

Please explain your answer:

There may be a need for training when proposals are developed in detail.

Has any engagement /consultation been carried out, or is planned in the future? Yes

Please explain your answer:

A high-level budget consultation was undertaken between 29<sup>th</sup> August 2024 and 13<sup>th</sup> October 2024. Where individual budget proposals require consultation, these will be conducted as part of the plan to deliver these proposals.

## Section 2 - Impacts

Please highlight potential impacts (including unintended impacts or consequences) for each protected characteristic\*/equality groups below. Where there are negative or positive impacts please give more details of the impact. Where the impacts are unclear please explain why.

Age\*

Positive

Negative

Unclear

None

Details: Both positive and negative impacts are possible. Projects to deliver elements of the budget will identify the impacts as they are developed.

Disability\*



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Positive

Negative

Unclear

None

Details: Both positive and negative impacts are possible. Projects to deliver elements of the budget will identify the impacts as they are developed.

Pregnancy & maternity\*

Positive

Negative

Unclear

None

Details:

Race & Ethnicity\*

Positive

Negative

Unclear

None

Details: Both positive and negative impacts are possible. Projects to deliver elements of the budget will identify the impacts as they are developed.

Marriage & Civil Partnership\*

Positive

Negative

Unclear

None

Details:

Religion & Belief\*

Positive

Negative

Unclear

None

Details:

Sex\*

Positive

Negative

Unclear

None

Details:

Sexual Orientation\*

Positive

Negative

Unclear

None

Details:

Gender Reassignment\*

Positive

Negative

Unclear

None

Do you anticipate any impacts on military families/veterans in relation to the Armed Forces Act 2021 requirements on local authorities to have due regard to the Armed forces Covenant? No



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Are there any other additional groups/impacts that the EqIA should evaluate in relation to the proposal? Unclear

Carers

Both positive and negative impacts are potentially possible for a number of groups including carers, care leavers and those currently facing socio-economic deprivation. Projects to deliver elements of the budget will consider potential impacts as they are developed.

## Section 3 – Is a full assessment required?

**If you have answered yes to any of the initial assessment questions in section 1 of this EqIA, or have indicated a negative or unclear impact in section 2, it is likely you will need to complete part B of the EqIA form. Should you need guidance as to whether a full EqIA is needed at this time please contact Maria Damigos or Natalie Donhou Morley before continuing.**

Following completion of part A, is part B completion required?

- Yes
- No
- Not required at this time

Explain your answer:

There will likely be difficult decisions that need to be made in order to implement the Budget proposals to ensure that we can deliver the services that we are legally obliged to do, and which our customers need.

Whilst projects pertaining to the delivery of the budget are in very early stages it is difficult to ascertain how each of these will impact on our communities and the people within them. However, any reduction in service is more likely to negatively impact on those who are already vulnerable, including older people, those with disabilities, carers, those facing financial difficulty and those in more deprived areas of the authority. Improvements to delivery of services are also more likely to benefit these groups.

In addition, we anticipate that proposed changes will likely impact on additional groups, include staff, stakeholders and external partners.

A more detailed review of impacts can only take place once the key strategic parameters have been agreed by the Council members. This overarching screening will be reviewed once this has taken place and individual project proposals/elements of the Budget, which are subject to their own implementation timeframe, will be subject to their own separate Equality Impact Assessments, consultation and assessment procedures.



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**Have you completed an DPIA for this project/change? No, any DPIA's required would be completed in line with the EQIA's for the projects to deliver the individual changes within these budget proposals**

(As you are completing an EqIA, you may also require a DPIA - for more information please contact [dataprotection@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@buckinghamshire.gov.uk))

## **Section 4 – Sign off (Only complete when NOT completing Part B)**

Officer completing this assessment: Matt Strevens Date: 09/12/2024

Equality advice sought from: Natalie Donhou Morley Date 09/12/2024

Service Director sign off: Lisa-Marie Williams xx/12/2024

CMT sign off: Sarah Ashmead Date: xx/12/2024

Next review Date: January 2025