

Appendix 15: Equality Impact Assessment

Introduction

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a method for assessing the effects or impacts of a council policy or function on removing barriers to equality.

The Equality Act 2010 includes a public sector equality duty which requires public authorities to try and eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it and promote equality and good relations across a range of protected characteristics.

The protected characteristics are:

Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment
Marriage and civil partnership	Pregnancy and maternity	Race
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)	Sex	Sexual orientation

An EqIA should be completed with the full range of protected characteristics considered during the initial stages of developing new strategies, policies, functions or services, prior to starting a procurement exercise and before decisions are made.

Examples of when an EqIA should be completed are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any proposals to introduce or add to a service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any proposals to adopt policy priorities, strategies and plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any proposals to remove, reduce or alter a service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Changes to staffing structure where groups of employees are likely to be negatively affected
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any new policies or changes to policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any proposals in relation to procured or commissioned services

Stage 1 - Equality Screening

Whenever a policy/service or function is reviewed, changed, developed or removed an initial equality impact assessment stage 1 will need to be undertaken. This is a screening template and will help establish whether a full assessment is needed. This should be done at an early stage of the process so that it is part of policy development.

Stage 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

This is the full EqIA and seeks to identify the equality considerations that have been taken into account including any mitigating actions proposed and ensures decisions are based on evidence. The EqIA will need to be agreed with the appropriate Head of Service or Director and should be included on the decision making report, along with commentary on the assessment in the main body of the report.

STAGE 1 – Equality Screening

1. Identify the policy, project, function or service change

a. Person responsible for this Equality Impact Assessment

Officer responsible: Gemma Bell	Service Area: Finance & Assets
Title: Director of Finance & Assets (Deputy s151 Officer)	Date of assessment: January 2025

b. Is this a policy, function, strategy, service change or project?

Other

If other, please specify:

This is the final budget proposal for 2025/26 for the general fund.

c. Name of the policy, function, strategy, service change or project

The Final General Fund Revenue & Capital Budgets for 2025/26

Is this new or existing?

New

Please specify reason for change or development of policy, function, strategy, service change or project

The Local Government Finance Regulations require a draft budget to be presented for consultation for both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account in advance of a final budget being presented to Full Council.

d. What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes and who is likely to benefit from it?

Aims and Objectives:	To propose a final budget for the general fund revenue and capital budgets for 2025/26 and report on the forecast budget position for 2024/25.
Outcomes:	To approve the budget proposals in advance of the 2025/26 financial year.
Benefits:	To provide a balanced budget for the general fund and housing revenue account which will allow services to be continued to be delivered whilst building back reserves following a period of significant financial pressure.

e. What are the expected impacts?

Are there any aspects, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could have an impact on the lives of people, including employees and customers.

Yes

Do you expect the impacts to be positive or negative?

Positive

Please provide an explanation for your answer:

Some of the savings and efficiencies required to deliver the budget proposal may impact on the lives of employees, tenants and customers. This will be determined as services are re-aligned and merged more closely between the general fund and housing. If this is the case, any specific decisions will be subject to appropriate risk assessments and separate consultation where required.

Any impact of savings and efficiencies is expected to be offset by the investment in growth and the overall outcome of allowing the Council to continue to deliver core local services in Cheltenham.

If your answer to question e identified potential positive or negative impacts, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

f. Identify next steps as appropriate

Stage Two required

Yes

Owner of Stage Two assessment

Leadership Team

Completion date for Stage Two assessment

As service re-organisation is determined.

Please move on to Stage 2 if required ([intranet link](#)).