

Summary of the Equality Impact Assessment of Leicestershire County Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024-28

Equalities implications of the budget proposals

The assessment of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024-28 has been completed to:

- enable decision makers to make decisions on an informed basis which is a necessary component of procedural fairness
- inform decision makers of the potential for equality impacts from the budget changes
- consider the cumulative equality impacts from all changes across all Departments
- provide some background context of the local evidence of cumulative impacts over time from public sector budget cuts

Equalities issues

The Council complies with equalities legislation and decision makers must be cognisant of the Public Sector Equality Duty¹. Specifically, the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equalities Act 2010. Regard should also be had to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons with protected characteristics² and persons who do not share those characteristics. Decision makers should also have regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Census data from 2020 showed that 16.5% of Leicestershire's population have a minority ethnic identity, 20.8% are aged 65 and over, 8.4% had a religion other than Christianity, 16.6% considered themselves disabled, and 2.4% are lesbian, gay, or have another sexual identity.

The Leicestershire Community Insight Survey of residents for July to September 2023 found that 92.9% of people agree that Leicestershire is a place where people of different backgrounds get on well. 81.8% of residents agree that Leicestershire County

¹ Per Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010

² The protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

Council treats all types of people fairly. Whilst these figures are high, there has been a decrease from previous years when the survey was conducted.

The County Council also chooses to look at the impact on other communities of interest. These include:

- People serving within the armed forces or ex-armed forces
- Gypsy and Traveller communities
- Asylum seeker and refugee communities
- Migrant workers and other new arrivals
- Looked after children
- Care leavers
- Deprived or disadvantaged communities

Assessment Findings

The Council continues to be committed to having due regard for equalities objectives across its work and this assessment does not remove the requirement to conduct Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) on the Council's policies, projects and programmes. Each proposal within the MTFs will need to be subject to a separate EIA, to identify the potential impacts on people with protected characteristics and appropriate mitigations.

Many of the proposals in the MTFs 2024-28 were agreed as part of the previous MTFs, and others are amendments to existing plans that have already been agreed.

There are several areas where there are opportunities for positive benefits for people with protected characteristics from the additional investment the County Council is making. There is growth in funding for the following services:

- Older people community and residential social care
- Adult learning disabilities
- Adult mental health
- Physical disabilities
- Child social care

- Children with special educational needs
- Transport for social care and children with special educational needs.
- Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children

However, due to the rising number and increasing complexity of eligible cases, there is a risk that this investment will not keep up with demand, impacting on the outcomes for people with protected characteristics who use these services.

Overall, the assessment finds that the Council's budget proposals risk a greater impact on older people, children, and disabled people more than people without these characteristics. This is as expected given the nature of the services provided by the Council.

Proposed savings with potential significant equalities implications.

Proposal Reference	Proposed title	Department	Proposal Description	Protected Characteristic
SAVINGS				
CF1	Innovation Partnership	Children & Family Services	Creation of assessment and resources team in residential accommodation	Age (children & young people) Disability
CF3 and 6	Defining CFS For the Future Programme	Children & Family Services	Smarter commissioning and procurement, departmental efficiencies.	Age (children and young people); Disability
AC1	Increased income	Adults & Communities	Fairer charging and removal of subsidies	Age (working age and older people); Disability
AC2	Digital Assisted technology for service users	Adults & Communities	Increased use of digital assisted technology	Age (older people) Disability
AC10	HART and CRS reviews	Adults & Communities	Improving outcomes for homecare assessment and reablement team / community response service	Disability Age

ET2	Assisted Transport Programme	Environment and Transport	Assisted Transport Programme	Age (children and older people) Disability
CR4	Customer Programme	Corporate Resources	Moving towards a greater digital offer for customers	Age Disability
	Transforming SEND and Inclusion in Leicestershire	Dedicated Schools Grant	Transforming SEND and Inclusion in Leicestershire	Age (children and young people); Disability