

Summary of the Equality Impact Assessment of Leicestershire County Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2026-30**Equalities implications of the budget proposals**

The assessment of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2026-30 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 people with protected characteristics² and people who do not share those characteristics. Decision makers should also have regard to the need to foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. The Council decided in 2024 to include care leavers in the group of people with protected characteristics. In December 2025 the Council also decided to give special consideration of carers.

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 2025/26 found that 85.6% of people agree that Leicestershire is a place where people of different backgrounds get on well, and 80.3% of residents agree that Leicestershire County Council treats all types of people fairly. 27.9% of people report being affected by service changes. Interestingly people with disabilities report being more able than others to influence County Council decisions.

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

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.

- 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
- 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 2026-30 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
- Disabled Children Service

There will be savings or increased income through:

- Implementation of digital assisted technology in adult social care
- Fairer charging
- Review of contracts
- Review of assisted transport programme
- Alternative accommodation and support for children in care

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	Title	Dept.	Proposal Description	Protected Characteristic
CF2	Defining CFS For the Future Programme - Phase 2 - Social Care Workforce Strategy (Recruitment and Retention)	CFS	Recruitment and retention strategies for the social care workforce	All
CF4	Smarter Commissioning, Procurement and demand management – social care placements and externally commissioned services	CFS	Series of measures to manage commissioning and procurement of external services	All
AC1	Increased income from fairer charging and removal of subsidy/aligning increases	A&C	Increasing charges for adult social care services	All
AC2	Implementation of digital assistive technology to service users	A&C	Introducing digital assistive technology	Age, disability, and carers
AC14-16	Transforming commissioning	A&C	Procurement of major contracts relating to home care and community life choices	All
AC17-20	Prevention reviews	A&C	Review of cases, supported living, hospital discharge and partway to adulthood	All
ET1	Assisted Transport Programme	E&T - HT	Reducing the Assisted Transport Programme	Disability, age, carers and socio-economic status
CE2	Additional Registrars fees and income	CE	Increasing fees for Registrar services	Marital status, age, sexual orientation
CR2	Customer Programme (Cross cutting)	CR	Review of customer services	All
	<u>Dedicated Schools Grant</u>			
	Deficit Reduction		Integrated programme of six strategic actions to create a whole-system transformation that address the root causes of rising EHCP demand and inefficient placement patterns	Disability, age, and socio-economic status, carers

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