

Equality Impact Assessment

Title:

Stockport Council Plan 2021/22

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Stage: draft

Lead Officer:

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Stage 1: Do you need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)?

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is required for the Stockport Council Plan as this sets out Stockport Council's ambitions for the next 12 months, framed by the shared outcomes of our Borough Plan.

The Council Plan is reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis, therefore this assessment builds upon previous Council Plan EqIAs. It should also be considered in conjunction with the EqIA produced in relation to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) proposals being submitted to the Budget Council Meeting.

It is not within the scope of this EqIA to evaluate the potential equality implications of specific activity outlined within the Plan. Individual EqIAs will be carried out on delivery plans and strategies separately as appropriate.

The scope of this EqIA therefore covers:

- Data and intelligence used to inform strategic priorities within the Plan;
- How the Council Plan has been developed;
- Engagement approach, methodology and insight

Stage 2: What do you know?

The Council is committed to assessing the impact any of its proposals may have on those who identify with the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010¹. Individual EqIAs are carried out where appropriate, to identify potential impacts of policies and proposals on these protected characteristics. Given the range of impacts from the Covid-19 pandemic on different communities, individuals who identify across multiple characteristics are likely to experience more significant disadvantage.

We know that not all our residents and families have the same opportunities. Stockport is

¹ The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are as follows: Age; Disability; Gender reassignment; Marriage and civil partnership; Pregnancy and maternity; Race; Religion or belief; Sex; and Sexual orientation

one of the most polarised boroughs in the country and inequality affects people's health, education outcomes and aspirations. Although not a protected characteristic as defined by the Act, socio-economic inequalities are key to assessing the potential impacts on different groups.

A range of data, intelligence and insights have been used to inform the development of the draft Council Plan to ensure that they are focused on the needs and aspirations of our population. These are set out below;

Socio-economic

- Stockport is a polarised borough (8th in England), with a number of residents living in some of the most affluent and least affluent areas in England
- In 2019, 0.56% of households in Stockport were noted to have experienced destitution. It is likely that the pandemic will increase this number further. Since October 2019, Universal Credit claimants have doubled from 4,725 to 10,685.
- Most children and young people in Stockport live in settled families, are healthy and do well at nursery, school and college – however inequalities significantly affect how children start life and grow-up;
- Children living in poverty in Stockport do less well in education and have poorer health and life chances than children living in poverty nationally and in similar boroughs.

Age

- Stockport is ageing, with an increasing population aged over 65. The percentage of residents aged 65+ is higher than regional and national averages and this will continue to be the case- it is projected that 2 in 9 residents will be aged 65 or above in 2030
- Children and young people will represent a smaller proportion of the population in future, but the reduction is smaller compared to regional and national averages
- Stockport has a much smaller proportion of younger adults (aged 20-34) compared to Greater Manchester
- Since October 2019, Universal Credit claimants have doubled from 4,725 to 10,685. Under 25's now make-up a third of all new claimants.

Disability

- Stockport residents on average have good health outcomes and life expectancy that have been improving year on year
- 44% of the Stockport population have a long-term health condition, rates increase with age to 92% of those aged 85 and over. In recent years the prevalence of diabetes and dementia diagnoses have increased in particular.
- The proportion of children and young people with SEND is twice as high in the more deprived areas of Stockport. In 2018/19, 16% of children with special educational needs or disabilities in Stockport achieved a good level of development, compared to 29% nationally.
- An estimated 6,430 children and young people aged 5-19 years have a mental health disorder and an estimated 6,100 children and young people aged 5-19 have low mental wellbeing. Rates of poor wellbeing have almost doubled from pre-pandemic levels

Race

- The population continues to become more ethnically diverse, especially in younger populations to the west of the borough including the areas of
- Heald Green, Cheadle & Gatley and Heaton South. In each of these areas there are particularly high rates of the population who identify themselves as from an

Asian, Pakistani or Indian background²

- People from Black and Asian ethnic backgrounds are more likely to experience inequalities in access to health, education and employment.

LGBTQ+ (sexual orientation and gender reassignment/ confirmation)

- There is limited data on the outcomes of LGBTQ+ communities in Stockport, which is part, due to the limited monitoring of gender identity, trans status and sexual orientation within public services and a limited number of people disclosing their sexual orientation or trans status³
- The 2016/2017 Needs Assessment for LGBT people in Stockport showed that:
 - rates of smoking, drug and alcohol use were higher among LGBTQ+ residents than those in the population of the borough as a whole. .
 - LGBTQ people experience disproportionately worse health outcomes than heterosexual people with Trans people experiencing some of the most significant health inequalities⁴
 - LGBT people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds experience compounding inequalities and are less likely to have their health needs met by services that targeted at Black, Asian, other Minority Ethnic communities, or LGBT communities separately

In addition to the factors outlined above, we know that Covid-19 is exacerbating existing inequalities in health and standards of living and that different communities and demographic groups are feeling the impact of Covid-19 differently. These include:

²Stockport JSNA Demographics and Population (2019)

https://stockport-haveyoursay.citizenspace.com/public-health/jsna-2020demographicspopulation/supporting_documents/2020%20JSNA%20%20Demographics%20%20Population%20update.pdf

³ Stockport NHS Foundation Trust & LGBT Foundation (2017) 'Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans People in Stockport Needs Assessment'

<http://www.stockportjsna.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Stockport-LGBT-Needs-Assessment.pdf>

⁴NHS England (2018) <https://www.england.nhs.uk/about/equality/lgbt-health/>

- People of Black and Asian ethnic backgrounds are at increased risk of dying from Covid-19 than those in other ethnic groups⁵
- Households with low or no income have been hit hardest by the economic impacts of Covid-19 and are more likely to have limited access at a time when support services and schooling moved online
- Women have been more likely to need to take unpaid leave to look after children and more likely to be struggling with their mental health as result of balancing home schooling and childcare responsibilities with work⁶
- The number of people struggling with their mental health has doubled nationally as a result of Covid-19, with younger adults (16-39), women, (men from Black and Ethnic minority backgrounds, individuals who are struggling financially and disabled people most likely to be experiencing depression⁷
- Lived Experience accounts for LGBTQ+ people and older people highlight increased mental health difficulties due to isolation from usual support networks and pauses in care.⁸

Development of the Council Plan

The Council Plan continues to be based around the shared outcomes framework agreed within the existing Borough Plan. It identifies the local priorities which will need to be delivered by the Council in order to achieve longer-term outcomes for the borough.

Within each of the shared outcomes, a number of specific priorities are referenced, alongside key delivery plans, strategies and programmes. These priorities have been informed by a range of engagement over the last 12 months, for example:

- Borough Plan engagement;
- Engagement on SEND (special educational needs and disabilities (e.g. development of our co-production charter and services with parents and carers);
- Development of priorities in our Children and Young People's Plan

As part of the project / programme management governance for specific change proposals, individual EqlAs are carried out ahead of any significant changes which may impact on residents, for example in relation to our plans to address climate change.

We know that there are significant inequalities in the opportunities and outcomes for our residents, many of which have been exacerbated by Covid-19. Because of these existing

⁵ Public Health England (2020) 'Beyond the data: Understanding the Impact of Covid 19 on BAME groups' https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/892376/COVID_stakeholder_engagement_synthesis_beyond_the_data.pdf

⁶ ONS (2020) 'Parenting in lockdown: Coronavirus and the effects on work-life' balance <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/parentinginlockdowncoronavirusandtheeffectsonworklifebalance/2020-07-22>

⁷ ONS (2020) 'Coronavirus and depression in adults, Great Britain: June 2020' [https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/coronavirusanddepressioninadultsgreatbritain/june2020#:~:text=the%20coronavirus%20pandemic-,Almost%20one%20in%20five%20adults%20\(19.2%25\)%20were%20likely%20to,July%202019%20to%20March%202020\).](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/coronavirusanddepressioninadultsgreatbritain/june2020#:~:text=the%20coronavirus%20pandemic-,Almost%20one%20in%20five%20adults%20(19.2%25)%20were%20likely%20to,July%202019%20to%20March%202020).)

⁸ LGBT Foundation (2020) 'Hidden Figures: Health Inequalities in the UK' <https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/lgbt-website-media/Files/b9398153-0cca-40ea-abe8-f7d7c54d43af/Hidden%2520Figures%2520FULL%2520REPORT%2520Web%2520Version%2520Smaller.pdf>

inequalities and the challenge posed by future uncertainties, it is vital that everyone in Stockport benefits from our long-term vision and we are committed to ensuring that this is focused on inclusion and minimising these inequalities.

We are a council that is built around its communities, and the Council Plan continues to put people at the heart of everything we do. This has shaped how we will deliver on our ambitions, with a focus on inclusion and reducing inequality, alongside our early intervention and prevention approaches. Key actions to address inequalities within Stockport and create a more inclusive borough are set out under the respective priorities in the Plan.

Listening to and understanding the experiences of our communities, partners and workforce is integral to shaping our future services and this is something we have developed during 2020, through building our approach to engagement and capturing feedback and insight, in particular looking ahead to shaping a collective vision for the future.

Stage 3: Results and Measures

The insight that we've captured from conversations across 2020 with communities, businesses, public sector partners and elected members shaping our longer-term shared plan is also reflected in our Council Plan priorities.

During 2020 all residents had the opportunity to share their priorities for the future of Stockport in two borough-wide engagement exercises focussing on the experiences of Covid-19 and our priorities for Stockport.

The approach taken to engagement on the Borough Plan has endeavoured to be inclusive of different ages, ethnicities, genders, sexualities and localities within our borough. However, we recognise that as engagement was online due to Covid-19 restrictions it has not been fully inclusive of residents with learning disabilities and those who are digitally excluded.

Key themes and priorities that came through from the engagement in relation to strengthening equality, diversity and inclusion, influencing several deliverables across the Council Plan, include:

- Health and care services that are accessible for all our residents and meet the needs of the communities they serve
- Inclusive employment, education and training opportunities, particularly for young people. LGBTQ+ people, people from ethnic diverse communities, and veterans
- Action to address tackling racism and other forms of prejudice and discrimination in our organisations and communities
- The importance of access to parks and greenspaces for good physical and mental health
- Working with communities to understand issues as they develop and create solutions together

The priorities in this Council Plan – the Council's contributions to delivering the shared plan – will be reviewed in line with ongoing development and adoption of a new Borough Plan.

The Council is committed to continuing to assess the impact of specific plans through

robust, inclusive and proportionate consultation and engagement with partners, residents and service users both to inform the way we work in the future and to assess the impact on stakeholders.

In addition, there are a number of overarching monitoring and mitigation arrangements in place which are designed to ensure no equality group is unfairly affected by the cumulative impact of our plans:

The Council's Corporate and Portfolio Performance and Resource Reporting Framework (CPRR and PPRRs) provide an overview of performance against the priority outcomes set out in the Council Plan. The PPRRs are aligned with the shared outcomes to provide the information decision makers need to monitor the impact on local residents and communities.

During 2021, where possible, we will develop this framework to monitor the impact of our plans in our communities and ensure that emerging inequalities are identified. We will also use the results from the forthcoming **2021 Census** to update our analysis, and have been working closely with our ONS Census representative to identify the 'hard to reach' groups in our local communities. We are helping the ONS to liaise with partners, council services and our voluntary and community sector organisations to ensure that we spread the word and people are helped to access support to complete the census where they need it. Whilst the full results aren't expected until later in 2022, they will provide a rich source of data to inform our future priorities.

Delivery of the Council's Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and savings programme is also monitored regularly, ensuring that these are on track. The Corporate Risk Register is also monitored to provide assurance that key risks are being identified and managed, avoiding negative impacts on specific groups.

Stage 4: Decision Stage

This EIA will accompany the 2021/22 Council Plan through the approval stages listed below and will be placed on the Council's website alongside the Council Plan once a final decision has been made.

- CRMG Scrutiny Committee – 25 Jan 2021
- Cabinet – 9 Feb 2021
- Budget Council Meeting (with MTFP Budget Proposals) – 25 Feb 2021

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