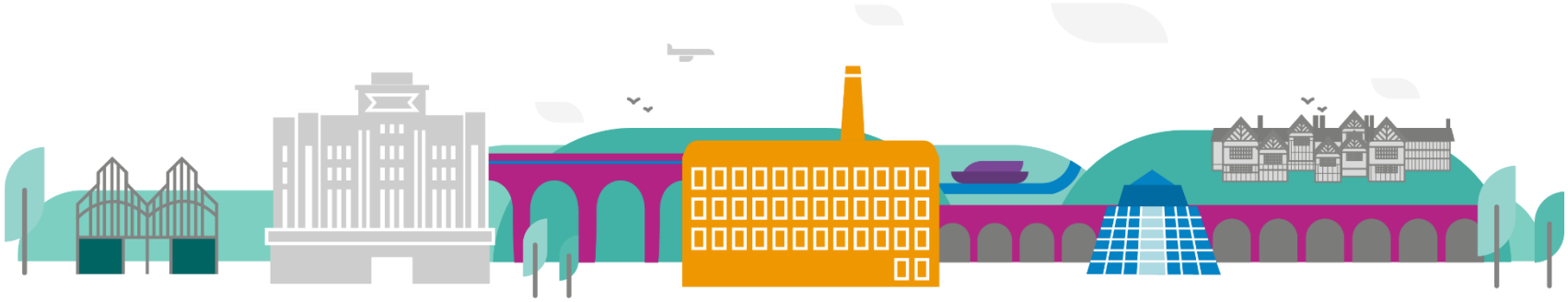
STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Equality Impact Assessment
Medium Term Financial Plan – Robust Corporate Governance
January 2022



Equality Impact Assessment

Title of report or proposal	Mid Term Financial Plan – Robust Corporate Governance		
Lead officer(s)	Business Relationship / Transformation Managers	**Date**	January 2022

Aims and desired outcomes of the proposal
Are you trying to solve an existing problem?

The council's assessments of the financial impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Council, outlined within the latest review of our medium-term financial plan (MTFP), identifies a budget gap of £34.185m to 2023/24. The council has committed to a transformation led strategy which aims to manage service demand, deliver services more efficiently ensuring value for money is achieved, and focus on the outcomes for Stockport residents and businesses. We have identified a contribution in 2022/23 of over £10m in savings from transformation and robust corporate governance from across the organisation. This will be delivered through four programmes of work:

- Demand management
- Value for money and commissioning
- Robust corporate governance
- Radically digital

To understand the impact of our proposals on our community we will undertake Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) for each of these programmes of work.

This EqIA aims to assess the impacts of the Robust Corporate Governance programme of work, and should be considered alongside EqIAs for the remaining three programmes of work as well as a cumulative review for the whole of the MTFP programme. For this programme of work we will continue to ensure we are applying robust corporate governance to how we spend public money throughout the organisation. This includes a thorough review of non-staffing spend; ongoing reviews of service structures; service design in line with an affordable resource envelope and fees and charges continuing to be set in line with inflation and existing 'balancing the cost of services' policy.

Scope of the proposal
Include the teams or service areas from the Council and outward-facing services or initiatives

Areas of focus for this work programme include:

- Vacancy management / reduction / change in the way we deliver services – reviewing vacancies and not backfilling posts, reduction in the number of posts within some services. Services include; Data services, Information Technology, Strategy and Design, Cemeteries and Crematoriums, People and Organisational Development, Business Support, Finance and Legal and Democratic Services.
- Review of all spend – such as moving to electric Mayoral car, stopping internal tea and coffee provision and a spend review of the museums
- Corporate Asset review – reduced overheads and generate additional income, for example renting out floor space to other organisations
- Highways discretionary budget and review of parking permit charging – cut the highways discretionary budget to zero plus savings on related staffing and / or complete a review of parking permit charging.

- Increased income through inflationary increases in fees and charges and further income generation – increased income target charge uplift across a number of areas, for example; lease electronic billboard sites on major routes and town centre; adjustment of Cemeteries and Crematoriums income targets to match forecast income; planning pre-app charges; increase income potential with school buy back.
- Efficiencies in Adult Social Care policy, process & income arrangements – we will work to ensure that we have the most appropriate funding arrangements in place to support packages of care and equipment. We will work with our partners to develop robust policies, funding arrangements and integrated pathways.
- Service reviews – maximising existing grants; Troubled Families contribution to alliance contract for preventative services; review of adolescent services; workforce development review; team / service remodelling, 4% savings applied within identified areas. This proposal will bring a more integrated and efficient service offer within the new financial envelope. The design of this will take place over the next 6 months and will consider the outcomes of significant consultation and will be co-produced with stakeholders. We will review this EqIA following the development of our proposals.
- Reduction in AGMA fees – efficiencies and changes in support agreed with Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)

The following proposals within the Robust Corporate Governance business case don't have a direct impact on service provision or staff and therefore an EqIA is not required:

- Corporate Asset Review. No change to service provision or staff.
- Highways Discretionary Budget. This budget is available to Councillors to spend on highways and local initiatives on an ad-hoc basis. Therefore, the public will see no change to service delivery. Highways and transport initiatives will still continue through normal business as usual.
- Vacancy management / reduction / change in the way we deliver services - most proposals are for vacancy management and therefore no impact on service provision.
- Review of all spend - mayoral car and cessation of internal tea and coffees at Stopford House and Fred Perry House.
- Increase income target in Schools' Traded Services. No change to service provision or staff.
- Reduction in AGMA fees. No change to service provision or staff.
- Efficiencies in Adult Social Care policy, process & income arrangements
- Reduction in COVID-19 Recovery Budget

What are the possible solutions you have been / will be exploring?
You should refer to any business cases, issues papers or options appraisals

Service reviews – Proposed solutions currently under development and will be included once complete.

The business case for this programme of work was approved by Cabinet in September 2021. This can be found here, in item 6(ii): Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 21st September, 2021, 6.00 pm - Stockport Council

Who has been involved in the solution exploration?
Please list any internal and external stakeholders

- Members
- Service users
- Residents

Service reviews –

- Senior Managers of services in scope

What evidence have you gathered as a part of this EqIA? Which groups have you consulted or engaged with as part of this EqIA?
Sources can include but are not limited to: Statistics, JSNAs, stakeholder feedback, equality monitoring data, existing briefings, comparative data from local, regional or national sources.
Groups could include but are not limited to: equality / disadvantaged groups, VCSFE organisations, user groups, GM Equality panels, employee networks, focus groups, consultations.

This equality impact assessment is a live document and will include evidence gathered from engagement and consultation as the project progresses.

The following proposals that are a part of this workstream that are likely to require consultation and / or engagement are:

- Vacancy management / reduction / change in the way we deliver services
- Review of subscriptions and all spend
- Review of parking permit charging
- Service reviews – service reductions and budget alignment

<u>Baseline data</u>

The data used in Step 1 are from widely available datasets such as.

- Census 2011 data for Stockport (the most recent Census data available)
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNA) data for Stockport

Are there any evidence gaps that make it difficult or impossible to form an opinion on how the proposed activity might affect different groups of people?

To be determined post-consultation

Step 1: Establishing and developing the baseline

Characteristic	Demographic of residents / service users	What works well How does the current provision or service meet the needs of people in different protected characteristics?	Current problems / issues This could include low levels of access or participation from certain demographic groups in current service or scheme; or disadvantages or barriers for particular groups
Age	• Stockport has more older people and fewer younger adults than the national average. The median age of Stockport is 41 compared to the national average of 39. • 2018 data estimated that 18.4% of Stockport residents are aged 0-14; 9.7% are aged 15-24; 51.9% are aged 25-64; and 19.9% are aged 65 and over. • Of those aged 65 and over, 9.4% are 75+; 2.8% are 85+; and 1.0% are 90+. • It is likely that the older population of Stockport will increase – projections show that 2 in 9 residents will be aged 65 or over by 2030. • Older populations are more common in more affluent areas. • Older residents are less likely to have the means (whether connection, devices or skills) to access services and information digitally.		
Disability Consider people with physical disabilities, sensory impairments, learning disabilities and mental health issues	• 44% of Stockport residents have a long-term health condition, which increases with age with 92% of those 85 and over. • 34% of Stockport households have at least one member with a disability. • The proportion of children with SEND is twice as high in more deprived areas of Stockport.	<u>Parking permits</u> • Those in receipt of a Blue Badge currently receive their resident's parking permit for free and the proposal suggests that this continues.	<u>Parking permits</u> • There is a mixture of disabled people without a Blue Badge who either pay for their permit or get it for free depending on where they live • Families of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability i.e. Autism may also rely on parking permits

Characteristic	Demographic of residents / service users	What works well How does the current provision or service meet the needs of people in different protected characteristics?	Current problems / issues This could include low levels of access or participation from certain demographic groups in current service or scheme; or disadvantages or barriers for particular groups
	• An estimated 6,430 of young people (age 5-19) have a mental health disorder.		
Gender reassignment A person whose individual experience of gender may not correspond to the sex assigned to them at birth.	• It is not known how many transgender people live in Stockport, but UK-wide estimates believe this to be around 1% of the population.		
Maternity and pregnancy	• Birth rates have risen since 2000 in Stockport, although over the last 5 years, fertility rates have been stable, with 3,302 live births in 2018, a rate of 64.3 per 1,000 women. • Birth rates have grown most rapidly in the most deprived areas of Stockport, which represent 35% of the population yet account for 45% of new births.		
Marriage and Civil Partnership	• According to 2011 data, in Stockport 47.5% of people are married, 10.8% cohabit with a partner of the opposite sex, 0.7% cohabit with a partner of the same sex, 24.2% are single and have never married or been in a registered same sex partnership, 8.9% are separated or divorced.		
Race Not all ethnic groups will have the same experiences so if possible specify whether the	• 2011 data shows that Stockport is less ethnically diverse than the national average. 92% of Stockport residents are White and 8% are from a Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority background. This data is from 2011 and it is expected that		

Characteristic	Demographic of residents / service users	What works well How does the current provision or service meet the needs of people in different protected characteristics?	Current problems / issues This could include low levels of access or participation from certain demographic groups in current service or scheme; or disadvantages or barriers for particular groups
impact is likely to be different for different ethnic groups e.g. Indian people, people of Black Caribbean heritage. This also includes Gypsy and Traveller populations	these groups have changed since then as the diversity of the borough is increasing over time. • Diverse communities having a younger age profile than the rest of the borough. • People who identify as Asian Pakistani are the biggest non-White British / Irish population. • The distribution of diverse communities within Stockport is not even, with the areas of Heald Green, Cheadle and Gatley, and Heatons South being particularly diverse where the BAME population reached 20% in the 2011 Census.		
Religion or Belief	• The largest religious group in Stockport is Christianity with 63% of the population identifying as Christian, although this is decreasing over time. Those with no religion are the second-most common (25%), which has been increasing alongside the Muslim population (3.3%). • These populations are also not even across Stockport. 50% of Muslims in the borough live in Heald Green, Cheadle and Gatley, and Heatons South. Gatley has a large Jewish community.		
Sex	• 50.5% of the population of Stockport is female and 49.5% is male, in line with the national average.		
Sexual orientation	• It is not known how many lesbian, gay or bisexual people live in Stockport, but		

Characteristic	Demographic of residents / service users	What works well How does the current provision or service meet the needs of people in different protected characteristics?	Current problems / issues This could include low levels of access or participation from certain demographic groups in current service or scheme; or disadvantages or barriers for particular groups
People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual	UK-wide estimates believe this to be around 5-7% of the population.		
Socioeconomic status	• 2016 data shows that 38% of the population of Stockport live in areas of higher than average deprivation. • 6% of residents in Stockport claim Job Seekers' Allowance / Universal Credit. From October 2019 to February 2021, Universal Credit claimants doubled from 4,725 to 10,685. • 2019 data showed that 0.56% of households in Stockport were noted to have destitution, and it is likely that the pandemic has increased this. • Residents living in poverty or from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to have the means (whether connection, devices or skills) to access services and information digitally.		
Other Please add in here any additional relevant comments or feedback where the protected characteristic is not known			
You are encouraged to consider the below characteristics where you have relevant data, especially if your proposal is predicted to disproportionately impact one or more of these groups.			
Carers	• Around 30,000 people have caring responsibilities in Stockport, including 4,230 children.		

Characteristic	Demographic of residents / service users	What works well How does the current provision or service meet the needs of people in different protected characteristics?	Current problems / issues This could include low levels of access or participation from certain demographic groups in current service or scheme; or disadvantages or barriers for particular groups
Those experiencing homelessness			
Veterans			
Asylum seekers and refugees			

Step 2: Identifying impacts the proposal will have compared with the baseline

Impact no.	Characteristic	Positive or negative impact	Impact source	Impact details and rationale	Additional information
Add more rows where needed		*Is the impact positive or negative?*	*How have you become aware of an impact or inequality? Is it from research, have you been advised by another party, has a member of the public or a stakeholder made you aware, did someone from this or another characteristic make the claim?*	*What is the impact or inequality that has been identified? What is the frequency of claim for it? What is the rationale behind the issue, inequality or impact claimed?*	*Is there any evidence to support or deny the claim? Provide full details. Has the inequality or impact claimed been tested with people from the relevant characteristic? Have you researched the claimed issue? If yes, what has been learned and from what source(s)?*
1	**Age – older people**	Negative	Business case	<u>Parking permits</u> Any change or reduction to the parking permit offer may negatively affect people who depend on this to access places via car. This will include many older people.	

Impact no.	Characteristic	Positive or negative impact	Impact source	Impact details and rationale	Additional information
2	**Age – younger people**	Positive	Business case	Service Reviews Any changes to integrate the adolescent service offer will have a positive impact on young people aged 8 -19 years ensuring they receive timely support via a number of integrated, high quality, multi-disciplinary services to ensure effective early intervention, assessment care and support for those children and young people and for their families.	
3	**Disability**	Negative	Business case	Parking permits Any change or reduction to the parking permit offer may negatively affect people who depend on this to access places via car. If the proposal is implemented, some disabled people may choose not to purchase a permit and may have to park further away from their home	
4	**Disability**	Negative		Reduction in COVID-19 Recovery Budget Any funding towards supporting people with long Covid-19 and mitigating health inequalities of Covid-19 will benefit those who have had their heath affected by the virus. Disabled people are more likely to be severely affected by catching Covid-19.	
	Gender reassignment			No impacts specific to this group identified	
5	**Maternity and pregnancy**	Negative	Business case	Parking permits Some residents who are pregnant or have small children may choose not to purchase a parking permit and therefore could have to park further away from their home.	
	Marriage and Civil Partnership			No impacts specific to this group identified	
	Race			No impacts specific to this group identified	
	Religion or Belief			No impacts specific to this group identified	

Impact no.	Characteristic	Positive or negative impact	Impact source	Impact details and rationale	Additional information
	Sex			No impacts specific to this group identified	
	Sexual orientation			No impacts specific to this group identified	
6	**Socioeconomic status**	Negative	Business case	<u>Parking permits</u> The removal of permit discounts for the Town Centre will negatively affect people on low incomes as this impact their ability to make use of the discounts available. If they are less able to access the Town Centre then this limits their access to services, shops and will negatively affect their wellbeing.	
7	**Socioeconomic status**	Negative	Business case	<u>Parking permits</u> Those on a lower income may feel they are unable to pay for a parking permit	
You are encouraged to consider the below characteristics where you have relevant data, especially if your proposal is predicted to disproportionately impact one or more of these groups.					
8	**Carers**	Negative	Business case	<u>Parking permits</u> Any change or reduction to the parking permit offer may negatively affect people who depend on this to access places via car. If the proposal is implemented, some carers may choose not to purchase a permit and may have to park further away from their home or places they must access to provide care	
	Those experiencing homelessness			No impacts specific to this group identified	
	Veterans			No impacts specific to this group identified	

Impact no.	Characteristic	Positive or negative impact	Impact source	Impact details and rationale	Additional information
	Asylum seekers and refugees			No impacts specific to this group identified	

Step 3: Identifying mitigating factors to minimise negative impacts

Impact no.	Impact summary	Suggested mitigation and rationale	Source of suggestion	Evidence for solution	Feasibility
	Give a brief summary of the issue/inequality /impact	*What is being suggested to mitigate for this. What is the rationale behind the suggestion?*	*Where does this suggestion come from? Have you consulted the characteristic(s) affected for solutions?*	*What evidence is there that the suggestion would solve the problem? How have you learned this? Has this been done elsewhere?*	*Within the financial envelope, how feasible is this solution? What are the cost implications? Could it indirectly affect anyone else? Can any other body help with the solution? If yes, how?*
1, 3, 5–8	Removal of parking permit discounts	We will use the data and research gathered in engagement and consultation to understand further any impacts. Once we have this analysis we will use it to inform our mitigation.			N/A
4	Reduction in recovery budget impacting on disabled people	We will use the data and research gathered in engagement and consultation to understand further any impacts. Once we have this analysis we will use it to inform our mitigation.			N/A

Please state if there are any additional comments or suggestions that could promote equalities in the future.

Step 4: Conclusions and outcome

If you have <u>not</u> undertaken any community engagement for this EqIA, please indicate this and explain why.
This document will include evidence gathered from engagement and consultation as the proposals progress.
If there are impacts identified that cannot be mitigated against, are there any justifications for not taking any action to improve the negative impacts that have been identified?
Due to the nature of the MTFP process there are likely to be many and immediate negative impacts upon residents of Stockport and council staff. The council faces many financial pressures and risks and balancing the pandemic response, alongside core service delivery requirements, whilst delivering longer term change is acutely challenging. Delivering a resilient budget can only be achieved through difficult decisions, robust prioritisation and ambitious changes in the way we work if we are to continue to meet the needs of local people today and in the future. The longstanding lack of clarity regarding medium term local government financing remains a significant challenge in providing resilient public services. We will be continuing to work closely with leaders across Local Government to continue to lobby for a fair and sustainable funding regime for local public services.
Are there any adverse impacts that can be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group, or for any other reason? Please state why.
N/A
Are there any other proposals or policies that you are aware of that could create a cumulative impact? This is an impact that appears when you consider services or activities together. A change or activity in one area may create an impact somewhere else.
Any cumulative impacts of the MTFP proposals will be addressed in an upcoming officer report for cabinet in January 2022.

Based on your equality impact analysis, please indicate the outcome of this EqIA.

Please indicate the outcome of the EqIA and provide justification and / or changes planned as required.		
A.	No major barriers identified, and there are no major changes required – proceed.	☐
B.	Adjustments to remove barriers, promote equality and / or mitigate impact have been identified and are required – proceed.	☐
C.	Positive impact for one or more of the groups justified on the grounds of equality – proceed.	☐
D.	Barriers and impact identified, however having considered available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice – proceed with caution, knowing that this policy or practice may favour some people less than others. Strong justification for this decision is required.	☒
E.	This policy identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination – stop and rethink.	☐

Please describe briefly how this EqIA will be monitored. When will this be reviewed? What mitigating actions need to be implemented and when?
Many of the proposals contained within this document are in their early stages. Therefore this will be a live document which is updated as each programme progresses in line with the milestones referenced within the business cases.