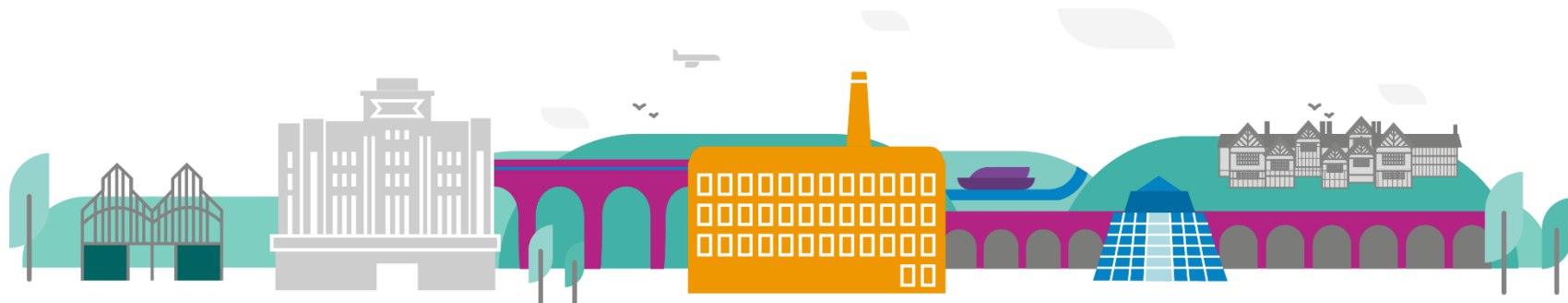




Children & Families
Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Proposals
Equality Impact Assessment
December 2023



Equality Impact Assessment

Title of report or proposal	Children & Families Scrutiny Committee – Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Proposals		
Lead officer(s)	Transformation Lead/ Business relationship manager	Date	December 2023
Aims and desired outcomes of the proposal Are you trying to solve an existing problem?			
<p>The report analysed in this EqlA outlines our strategic approach in responding to the review of the medium-term financial plan (MTFP). The budget proposals being considered by the Cabinet aim to address financial and demand challenges, enable longer term transformation, and ensure the delivery of shared strategic partnership ambitions. Our collective focus is on actions which deliver outcomes to support and enhance our communities and businesses across Stockport.</p> <p>To understand the impact of our proposals on our residents and communities we will undertake Equality Impact Assessments (EqlAs) for each of these programmes of work. This EqlA aims to assess the impacts of the proposals brought to the Children & Families Scrutiny Committee, and should be considered alongside EqlAs for the remaining programmes of work as well as a cumulative assessment for the whole of the MTFP programme.</p>			
Scope of the proposal Include the teams or service areas from the Council and outward-facing services or initiatives			
<p>All proposals are within scope of the Children, Families & Education portfolio and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-Cost Placements - Internal Sufficiency Programme • High-Cost Placements - Evidence Based Interventions • Housing – 18+ Accommodation • Health • SEN Transport <p>Details of all proposals can be found in the corresponding reports.</p>			
What are the possible solutions you have been / will be exploring? You should refer to any business cases, issues papers or options appraisals			
<p>All proposals being explored are listed in the corresponding reports.</p>			

Who has been involved in the solution exploration?

Please list any internal and external stakeholders

Senior management from the Childrens directorate and relevant service teams have been consulted during proposal development.

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.

Population information gathered from: Census 2021 data; service user data, JSNA data.

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?

It is important to note that details for some of the proposals are not known at time of writing. It is recommended that EqIAs are performed at the project level whilst these projects are being shaped.

Step 1: Establishing and developing the baseline

Characteristic	Demographic of residents / service users
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stockport has more older people and fewer younger adults than the national average. The median age of Stockport is 42 compared to the national average of 40. 2021 data shows 20% of Stockport's population are over 65. 61% are aged 15-64, and 20% are under 15 years old.
Disability Consider people with physical disabilities, sensory impairments, learning disabilities and mental health issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 44% of Stockport residents have a long-term health condition, which increases with age with 92% of those 85 and over. In 2022 there has been a 37% rise in EHCP referrals and now maintain over 3,000 EHCP plans (3,046) an 8% rise in year. The proportion of children with SEND is twice as high in more deprived areas of Stockport. 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2021 data suggests that less than 0.5% of the Stockport population is transgender.
Maternity and pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to 2021 data, in Stockport 46.4% of people are married or in a civil partnership. 45.1% are same-sex couples living together, and 0.4% are opposite-sex couples living together. 0.9% of residents are married or in a civil partnership but are not living together.
Race Not all ethnic groups will have the same experiences so if possible specify whether the 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2021 data shows that Stockport is as ethnically diverse as the national average for England. 87% of Stockport residents are White and 12% are from a Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority background. Ethnically diverse communities tend have a younger age profile than the rest of the borough. People who are 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, Gatley, and the Heaton being particularly diverse. Some of these areas, the proportion of ethnically diverse communities is over a third of the total population.
Religion or Belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to 2021 data, the largest religious group in Stockport is Christianity with 48% of the population identifying as Christian, although this is decreasing over time (a 15% percentage point decrease since 2011). Those with no religion are the second-most common (40%), which has been increasing alongside the Muslim population (5.5%).

Characteristic	Demographic of residents / service users
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These populations are also not even across Stockport. People living in the south of the borough are more likely to be Christian and Muslims make up around 20-25% of the population in areas of Heald Green and Gatley. Gatley also has a large Jewish community.
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 51% of Stockport residents are female and 49% are male, in line with the national average.
Sexual orientation People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021 data shows that around 3% of the Stockport population are lesbian, gay, bisexual or other. • 2021 data shows 1.2% of the Stockport population is living as a same-sex couple (this includes couples who are married, in a civil partnership, or unmarried / never registered a civil partnership).
Socioeconomic status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021 data looking at 4 areas of potential deprivation (education, employment, health and housing) shows that 49% of households in Stockport were deprived in at least one of these 4 areas. • Areas of deprivation were more common in the central and northern parts of the borough. • 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 and the cost of living crisis has increased this.
Other Please add in here any additional relevant comments or feedback where the protected characteristic is not known	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to 2021 data, 2.3% of households in Stockport had no members that have English as their main language, and 0.8% cannot speak English at all. • 91% of people living in Stockport were born in the UK. 4.8% of people in Stockport have a non-UK identity
Carers	
Care leavers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of Looked After Children in Stockport is 77 per 10,000. Stockport is still one of the lowest in the Northwest (average rate 100 per 10,000), however we are slightly above that of our statistical neighbours (70 per 10,000).
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
	Age – older people	-		There is no known evidence to suggest that these groups will be disproportionately impacted by the proposals.	
	Age – younger people	-	Proposals	Any changes to children’s social care, including proposals under this portfolio, will have an impact on children and young people.	
1	Age – younger people	Positive	Proposals	Internal sufficiency programme The proposals to deliver additional internal children’s placements will likely result in more children and young people being offered delivery places in children’s homes.	
	Disability Consider people with physical disabilities, sensory impairments, learning disabilities and mental health issues	-		More children, young people and families are presenting with increased complexity of needs, including mental health problems. Any changes to children’s social care will disproportionately impact children and families with these conditions.	
2	Disability	Positive	Proposals	SEN Transport The roll out of further travel training for young people would be a positive impact as they would then have the benefit of confident independent travelling into adulthood. Parent/carers would need to be in full agreement that this was the most appropriate option for their child. The roll out of incentives for personal budgets would be positive for service users financially and would give them greater choice and flexibility over their transport arrangements.	
	Gender reassignment A person whose individual experience of gender may not correspond to the sex	-		There is no known evidence to suggest that these groups will be disproportionately impacted by the proposals.	

Impact no.	Characteristic	Positive or negative impact	Impact source	Impact details and rationale	Additional information
	assigned to them at birth.				
	Maternity and pregnancy	-		There is no known evidence to suggest that these groups will be disproportionately impacted by the proposals.	
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	-		There is no known evidence to suggest that these groups will be disproportionately impacted by the proposals.	
	Race Not all ethnic groups will have the same experiences so if possible specify whether the 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	-		There is no known evidence to suggest that these groups will be disproportionately impacted by the proposals.	
3	Religion or Belief	Negative	Proposals	SEN Transport Although already in place, the further strengthening of the non-provision of transport to schools of parental preference which is not the nearest viable option will impact on some families. If the parental preference school is due to religious belief, this could negatively impact families of particular religions.	
	Sex	-		There is no known evidence to suggest that these groups will be disproportionately impacted by the proposals.	
	Sexual orientation	-		There is no known evidence to suggest that these groups will be disproportionately impacted by the proposals.	

Impact no.	Characteristic	Positive or negative impact	Impact source	Impact details and rationale	Additional information
	Consider how the proposed policy may differently impact people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual				
4	Socioeconomic status	Negative		SEN Transport Although already in place, the further strengthening of the non-provision of transport to schools of parental preference which is not the nearest viable option will impact on some families. The financial burden of getting the child to and from school is passed on to the family if they make the choice to send their child to the school of their preference.	
5	Socioeconomic status	Potential negative		SEN Transport There is a risk that increasing the use of personal budgets may result in families that are not financially resilient being unable to use the budget to its full potential without sufficient guidance and support.	

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	-		There is no known evidence to suggest that these groups will be disproportionately impacted by the proposals.	
6	Care leavers	Positive	Proposals	Housing – 18+ Accommodation The proposal to increase accommodation options to meet the needs of the increasing numbers of care leavers when they leave care at 18 years so they can move on into suitable accommodation will positively benefit care leavers.	
	Those experiencing homelessness	-		There is no known evidence to suggest that these groups will be disproportionately impacted by the proposals.	
	Veterans	-		There is no known evidence to suggest that these groups will be disproportionately impacted by the proposals.	

Impact no.	Characteristic	Positive or negative impact	Impact source	Impact details and rationale	Additional information
7	Asylum seekers and refugees	Positive	Proposals	Housing – 18+ Accommodation The proposal to increase accommodation will positively benefit asylum seekers.	

Step 3: Identifying mitigating factors to minimise negative impacts

Impact no.	Impact summary	Suggested mitigation and rationale	Evidence for solution	Feasibility
3-5	Changes to SEN transport provision might mean costs are passed on to low-income families or families who want to send their children to schools for religious reasons may be prevented from doing so.	In-depth EqlAs at the project level will be undertaken to ensure that adverse impacts on equality groups are fully understood and monitored. All decisions will take into account various preferences and characteristics of the child and their family.		Included in proposals.

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 not undertaken any community engagement for this EqlA, please indicate this and explain why.

We have sought views on all our change proposals through our overall budget public consultation

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?

<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>Please see MTFP cumulative equality analysis.</p>

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.	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.	Adjustments to remove barriers, promote equality and / or mitigate impact have been identified and are required – proceed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
C.	Positive impact for one or more of the groups justified on the grounds of equality – proceed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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.	<input type="checkbox"/>
E.	This policy identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination – stop and rethink.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please describe briefly how this EqlA will be monitored.

When will this be reviewed? What mitigating actions need to be implemented and when?

This EqlA will be returned to at various stages of proposal development.

It is recommended that EqlAs should be implemented at the project level.