The City of Edinburgh Council

10.00am, Thursday 12 February 2015

Council Revenue Budget Framework 2015/18 – Impact Assessments – referral report from the Finance and Resources Committee

Item number 4.2(d)

Report number

Wards All

Executive summary

The Finance and Resources Committee on 3 February 2015 considered a summary of the main potential equality and rights impacts of the proposals described within the draft Revenue Budget Framework 2015/18. The report has been referred to the City of Edinburgh Council for consideration at the Council budget meeting on 12 February 2015.

Links

Coalition pledges See attached report
Council outcomes See attached report
Single Outcome See attached report
Agreement

Appendices See attached report



Terms of Referral

Council Revenue Budget Framework 2015/18 – Impact Assessments

Terms of referral

- 1.1 The Finance and Resources Committee on 3 February 2015 considered a series of savings and additional income proposals that were set out in the Council's Draft Revenue Budget Framework for 2015/18. A summary was presented of equality and rights impact assessments (ERIA) of these proposals and of associated mitigating actions to address negative impacts, all of which should inform the budget decision taken on 12 February 2015.
- 1.2 The Finance and Resources Committee agreed:
 - 1) To pay due regard to the potential equality and rights impact associated with the revenue budget 2015/18 options, and the recommendations to mitigate potential negative impacts.
 - 2) To note the cumulative equality and rights impacts across all revenue budget options.
 - 3) To note the summary analysis of carbon, prevention and partnership impact assessment of revenue budget options.
 - 4) To refer the report for consideration at the Council budget meeting on 12 February 2015.

For Decision/Action

2.1 The Finance and Resources Committee has referred the report to The City of Edinburgh Council for consideration as part of setting the 2015/16 revenue budget.

Background reading / external references

Council Revenue Budget Framework 2015/18 - Impact Assessments

Carol Campbell

Head of Legal, Risk and Compliance

Contact: Veronica MacMillan, Committee Clerk

E-mail: veronica.macmillan@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 529 4283

Links

Coalition pledges	See attached report
Council outcomes	See attached report
Single Outcome Agreement	See attached report
Appendices	See attached report

Finance and Resources Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 3 February 2015

Council Revenue Budget Framework 2015/18 – Impact Assessments

Item number 7.4

Report number Executive/routine

Wards All

Executive summary

This report presents a summary of the main potential equality and rights impacts of proposals described within the draft Revenue Budget Framework 2015/18, and identifies recommendations for mitigating any potential negative equality and rights impacts.

It also provides a summary of carbon impact assessments of revenue budget proposals.

In addition, a brief analysis is provided of the results of prevention and partnership impact assessments, which were undertaken for the first time.

Links

Coalition pledgesAllCouncil outcomesAllSingle Outcome AgreementAll



Report

Council Revenue Budget Framework 2015/18 – Impact Assessments

Recommendations

- 1.1 Members of the Finance and Resources Committee are recommended to:
 - 1.1.1 Pay due regard to the potential equality and rights impacts associated with the revenue budget 2015/18 options, and the recommendations to mitigate potential negative impacts.
 - 1.1.2 Consider the cumulative equality and rights impacts across all revenue budget options.
 - 1.1.3 Note the summary analysis of carbon, prevention and partnership impact assessments of revenue budget options.
 - 1.1.4 Refer this report for consideration at the Council budget meeting on 12 February 2015.

Background

- 2.1 The Council's Draft Revenue Budget Framework 2015/18 sets out a series of savings, and additional income proposals. This report presents a summary of equality and rights impact assessments (ERIA) of these proposals, and of associated mitigating actions to address negative impacts, all of which should inform the budget decision taken on 12 February 2015.
- 2.2 Under the 'Framework to Advance Equality and Rights 2012-2017', the Council is implementing a five year corporate programme of ERIA. The programme is comprised of ongoing ERIAs of all relevant existing policies and services, and any proposed changes to policies and services. Budget proposals and decisions are a key feature of this programme.
- 2.3 As well as meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 public sector equality duty, and human and children's rights conventions, ERIA enables the Council to assess the positive and negative impacts on vulnerable citizens, equalities groups in the city and Council staff. It also enables the development of mitigating actions to counteract negative impacts.
- 2.4 In addition, the report provides a brief summary of carbon, prevention and partnership impact assessments of revenue budget proposals. It should be noted that prevention and partnership impacts of draft revenue budget proposals were considered systematically for the first time by council officers.

Main report

- 3.1 In line with their responsibility for ERIA activity, under the 'Framework to Advance Equality and Rights 2012-2017, each council service area undertook a summary ERIA of their respective revenue budget options, utilising a council template specifically designed for the budget process. It should be noted that this template differs from the standard full ERIA template, which is more detailed. Consequently, some recommendations refer to undertaking further detailed ERIA work, if options are approved.
- 3.2 Support and advice was provided to staff by the Equality and Rights Lead Officers in each service area. Completed templates were returned to Corporate Governance, which co-ordinates the whole ERIA programme, and provides summary analysis. Copies of completed budget ERIA templates are available to members for more detailed consideration.
- 3.3 Information gathered from the budget engagement process was used as evidence to inform the ERIA analysis of the budget options. In addition, individual lead officers may have undertaken specific engagement activity with staff, service users or representative groups to inform their respective ERIAs.
- 3.4 In total, there are over 150 individual savings or additional income proposals contained within the draft 2015/18 budget framework. In order to facilitate necessary implementation planning, and allow for public engagement to focus on those proposals most affecting frontline services, some sixty "early approval" proposals were considered by Council on 23 October 2014. The potential equalities and rights and carbon impacts of these proposals were reported to Council as part of that consideration to ensure that members paid due regard to these issues, and the proposed mitigating actions, in reaching their decisions.
- 3.5 Of the proposals considered by Council, the majority were approved for implementation, with a remaining four referred on to form part of the full public budget consultation exercise. These proposals are thus included within the scope of this report.
- 3.6 There are a number of proposals which may impact negatively on equality and rights if approved. However, there is a range of mitigating actions in place to address such impacts, and further impact analysis is planned for some proposals if approved. In addition, it should be noted that no officer impact analysis at this stage indicates that any of the savings options will be regarded as illegal, with respect to the Equality Act 2010, or any rights based legislation.
- 3.7 The following section provides a summary of the main potential ERIA impacts, alongside proposed mitigating actions, of all proposed revenue budget options:
 - Children and Families –7 options have potential equality and rights negative impacts:
 - i. CF5 Reduce Education Welfare Officer Posts Impacts The Education Welfare Service is a statutory service which has a legal

- responsibility to monitor and support the attendance of children and young people. Potential negative impacts have been identified for vulnerable children and young people, specifically equality of opportunity and rights related to education. **Mitigation** A review of service would be required to prioritise the allocation of staff throughout the city. A risk based approach to non attendants to prevent high levels of truancy within specific groups of pupils will be implemented. A proportionate model to ensure support where it is most needed will be introduced. Not all clusters will have full-time dedicated support, but all will have access to support according to need following rigorous analysis
- ii. CF13 Reduction in operational services for Community Services Impacts The reduction in operational budgets for community services including reducing staff numbers and revenue for grant awards and funding for specific programmes may reduce the opportunity to support people in accessing their rights with regard to quality of life, education and learning, involvement in productive and valued activity, improved individual, family and social life, identity expression and respect and being able to participate, influence and be heard. Mitigation Further detailed engagement and consultation with all the key stakeholders. Change management resulting in other council service areas taking on key aspects of service delivery e.g. administration of international visits.
- iii. CF15 Review Weekend Services Impacts There may be some initial impact on the number of families who currently use this service.
 Mitigation Self Directed Support implementation will ensure outcomes are met. To develop a detailed communication plan to advise parents, service users and stakeholders of the changes.
- iv. CF16 Service wide reductions to grant and contract funding for third parties Impacts Potential negative impacts on a range of equalities and rights of vulnerable service users from reductions in service.
 Mitigation Negative impacts on equalities or rights of any proposed reduction of spend on grants or contracts will be considered at the time of proposal and discussed with the service provider. The intention will be to ensure that levels of support to service users are maintained or delivered in alternative ways and to minimise negative impact on any equalities group where possible. This will vary across the range of current providers and agreed mitigating actions will be specific to the user group in question.
- v. CF18 Review Throughcare Service Impacts Whilst there would be no specific impact on children's rights, care would be taken to ensure young people received the appropriate information about their entitlements and support to access relevant services wherever possible. For those with a disability, supplying information about entitlements and support may not be enough and would require to be further explored.

- **Mitigation** Throughcare and aftercare staff will take all possible steps to support young people to access appropriate healthcare advice, guidance and services and will be trained and supported to provide this. Assistance to access the support may be required for those with communication difficulties or mental health conditions, and this should be built in to forward planning for these client groups
- vi. *CF19 Efficiencies in financial assistance payments* Impacts There may be a disproportionate impact on vulnerable families with multiple problems and those without recourse to public funds. In turn, this may have a subsequent impact on families within specific equalities groups. This would only be evidenced over time through the monitoring of implementation and potential negative impacts. *Mitigation* Practice teams will prioritise support to those with greatest need to make best use of available resources. Signpost clients to alternative services to maximise entitlement to benefits and work collaboratively with Citizen's Advice Bureaux and other voluntary organisations to encourage uptake of, and access to, other support available, such as food banks. Implementation of this proposal should take account of the potential for there being an increased call on other services and resources and ongoing monitoring and assessment of impact will be built in.
- vii. CF20 Review Day Care Services Impacts There will be some impact on vulnerable families as services reduce, however, increases in early years provision for vulnerable two year olds and increases in nursery hours to 600 a year will help to mitigate the impact. Mitigation Services will be targeted at those most at risk of becoming looked after. Alternative provision would be identified in early years services for some children through the funding provided for looked after two year olds as part of the Children and Young People's Act.
- **Corporate Governance –** 2 options have potential equality and rights negative impacts:
 - i. CG5 Reduction in Service Payment Edinburgh Leisure Impacts Work is ongoing by Edinburgh Leisure to identify the full range of impacts that may arise from this option. **Mitigation** Edinburgh Leisure is currently developing an options paper to be considered by the Council which will detail the impact of the proposed reduction in service payment upon special programmes, core services and facilities. Based on the existing business model, it is likely that the scale of the reductions identified (£2.1m p.a. reduction by 2017/18) may lead to some facility closures and a displacement of existing users. There will also likely be an inability to continue providing special targeted programmes at existing levels. The special programmes include the following: Active Lives for inactive adults living in multi-deprivation areas; High Flyers targeting

- children and young people with disabilities; a swim programme for under fives living in areas of multiple deprivation and young people with additional support needs; Looked After and Active physical activity programme for young people in care for whom the Council is the Corporate Parent; and Positive Destinations development programme for young people not in employment, education or training. However, the formal review of all Council-owned sports facilities and services began in July 2014 and it is anticipated that this review may identify new ways of working across other Council services and may result in more efficient and effective ways of delivering service outcomes.
- ii. CG8 Reduction in Activcity budget Impacts There may be a negative impact on equality. The Activcity budget supports a wide range of sport events, some of which are targeted specifically at women, girls; people with disabilities; the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community, and older people. Mitigation - As far as possible, prioritise expenditure on events targeted at vulnerable groups with protected characteristics.
- **Economic Development –** 1 option has potential equality and rights negative impacts:
 - ED3 Reduction in third Party Grants Impacts There may be impacts arising from this proposal once the specific funding reductions are identified. Mitigation – High quality engagement, co production activities and a renewed focus on key target groups will enable the mitigation of many negative impacts.
- **Health and Social Care** 3 options have potential negative equality and rights impacts:
 - i. HSC17 Social Strategy Impacts A reduction to grant supported services to reduce Health Inequalities (30 services) and Social Justice (15 services) may lead to an impact on individual rights to access services, but there would be small reductions in access arrangements for priority equality groups. The reductions may limit further development of facilities for vulnerable groups and communities of interest such as migrants, and LGBT, BME, disabled and economically disadvantaged people.
 Mitigation Funding proposals have been selected to minimise the impact and prevent any complete loss of preventive services. Most affected services indicated that they would seek efficiencies which enable a continuation of service levels and reduce overhead costs. The net effect would be to reduce the range of activities available to people rather than reduce the number of people in contact.

- ii. HSC22 Reducing staffing ratios in day services for people with disabilities – Impacts - Reduced staff support to some adults with learning disabilities using day services may reduce their participation in community activities and social opportunities. Mitigation - Staff will work to mitigate the risks as far as possible by ensuring targeted staff time with those most in need, and reviewing day activities and community based options for people affected by reduced staffing ratios.
- iii. *HSC24 Reduce the Volunteer Support Team* Impacts The main risk is a potential increase in social isolation for service users currently visited by volunteers. **Mitigation** Consider an approach to improve targeting activity of the Volunteer Support Team.
- **Services for Communities –** 9 options have potential equality and rights negative impacts:
 - i. SFC3 Reform parking charges structure Impacts This could impact on elderly and disabled customers' standard of living, and potentially reduce mobility to access individual, social and family life. **Mitigation** - A clearly defined pricing strategy will be produced which is transparent and understandable to the Council's customers. It is recommended that a review of usage and complaints received is completed in six months time, and again six months after that, to identify if there is negative impact.
 - ii. SFC4 Increase allotment charges Impacts A threat of legal challenge framed in terms of the Equality Act 2010 has been submitted. Increasing rental costs for allotments could result in some plot holders having to give up their allotment and therefore impacting on access to social and health related activities. Mitigation There will be enhanced community engagement, referring those who may lose allotments to other appropriate activities, ensuring allotments are available to those most in need and trying to better monitor the equality and rights impacts on current allotment holders.
 - iii. SFC5 Increased income from implementation of concessionary lets policy Impacts Increase in rents may result in a tenant potentially ceasing or reducing its operations. Mitigation If an increase in rent results in the tenant potentially ceasing or reducing its operations, organisations may seek a grant from the relevant Council service area. There will be an assessment as to whether the tenant and associated services meet Council outcomes. The proposal could be trialled for a pilot period with the impacts being monitored and revisited at the end of the pilot period. The Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy will address disposals by sale or lease to local third sector organisations. This will provide an alternative means of providing accommodation to some groups. Stepped rents would be offered when necessary to provide for a

- gradual increase in rent to market level over a few years. Rent free periods may be available to tenants to compensate for the cost of improvement works carried out by the tenant. Assistance would be provided to help organisations find alternative premises. Affected organisations would be encouraged to work together and share properties where possible.
- SFC17 Reduce third sector / partner agency grants Impacts The iv. services funded via the commissioning budget are available for many clients with the protected characteristics e.g. clients with disabilities, young people, women, and clients from the BME communities. Additional savings from these services may affect future provision. Many services assist clients to access housing, health, care and other services, that they would not be able to access without support. Many services work to eliminate harassment, discrimination and victimisation and to promote understanding of the specific issues facing clients who are homeless or at risk of homelessness across the protected characteristics. Grants to the Police could affect new clients who may not be able to access the services they need, which could have a negative impact on their safety related rights. The service allows clients in neighbourhoods to access support in relation to crime, including hate crime. Community policing also engages with young people in certain areas. Reduction of funding may result in reductions in community policing resources in areas of deprivation, but many services should still be available city wide. Mitigation - How the savings are to be split has yet to be decided and will be informed by the budget consultation process. The effects of previous savings should be considered when discussing these proposals, particularly in relation to advice and homelessness services. Specific mitigating actions for Police grants include reviewing the current funding model, and analysing crime and anti social behaviour data to ascertain which community policing services equality groups are accessing.
- v. SFC18 Library opening hours Impacts Potential negative impacts may include reduced access to library information and learning resources, events and activities, fewer cross service health promotion events, either for individuals or as part of a community group. There is a possibility that people with disabilities will be adversely affected, especially people with visual impairments and disabilities, who require access to assistive technology and staff support to access library facilities. The change in library opening hours may also impact on diversionary activities and events for children and young people, community language book groups, womens book groups, newspapers and computer and internet access for low income families, and access to stock and software in community languages (especially in McDonald Road and Muirhouse Libraries).
 Mitigation Additional tailored sessions for visually impaired people to support easier access to assistive technology and devices across libraries

at other times of the week. Running additional events, and children's events, on a Saturday. Moving book groups and other activities to weektime sessions. Active promotion of resources and children's activities online via the library service website. Library services will provide additional staff supported sessions to promote libraries online information resources, e-books and membership services. Customers will be signposted to online resources which are available 24/7. Continued free access to computers in Kirkliston neighbourhood office and Gate 55. Promotion of free computer access in Royston Wardieburn community centre for Granton residents. More activities on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, signposting to Library Link and Housebound services, book drop service and tailored support to access more library services online. In addition, library visitors and customers will be encouraged to use the five libraries during their new opening hours and to access other neighbouring library services which are open across the city on Monday and Wednesday mornings, Thursdays and Tuesday evenings.

- vi. SFC20 Catering Service Delivery Impacts There are potential negative impacts in relation to staff currently employed by the Council to deliver the in house service. Depending on the catering service model chosen to replace the current service, there could be a positive or negative impact on people with specific dietary requirements due to their race and/or religion/belief. **Mitigation** As part of the review, scrutiny of the quality and range of food to be undertaken.
- vii. SFC21- Review of garden waste collection Impacts Potential negative impacts on disabled and older people. **Mitigation** Ensure information is communicated to customers regarding the availability of special uplifts and access to community recycling Centres. Undertake work with community organisations who may be able to provide support.
- viii. SFC26 - Review taxi card provision - Impacts - The proposed £20 administration charge could negatively affect those on a low income who could find their access to transport reduced, potentially leading to social isolation. It could be that elderly and disabled people will have reduced opportunity to engage in all aspects of daily life including engagement with family and social networks. Use of the taxi card is also linked to other services and benefits payments enabling access to other forms of transport. Mitigation – Further dedicated equality and rights impact assessment work is required. A dedicated group would be established to do this and link to the wider accessible transport review. It is this group that would coordinate a further customer consultation programme. Current users of the service will be advised that the service will continue to be delivered by accessible suppliers. If changes are made then the performance of the service will be closely monitored, as will feedback from users and their representatives.

- ix. SFC31 Improve efficiencies of library reminders and notifications Impacts Negative impacts on older people and those on low incomes who may incur library charges for overdue materials. Mitigation Online options for reminders will be actively promoted to encourage greater signup. Promote the use of the 'library app' on smart phones with digital surgeries in all libraries. Use the 'Get online' programme to support digital access and use of online reminders. Ensure library staff engage with customers to ensure people do not incur overdue charges. Promote use of self service machines which issue printed receipts with a return date indicated. Promote use of adaptive screens on self service machines in libraries. Establish working practice with Royal Voluntary Service who deliver housebound and library link services to keep customers informed of return dates and availability of material.
- 3.8 A significant consideration identified as a result of the ERIA programme is the range of cumulative impacts that may arise as a result of revenue budget proposals, and associated changes to services, which need to be considered when setting the budget. For example:
 - i. Lack of employment, or reductions in income, for council staff as a result of employee cost savings targets, coupled with increased cost of living and changes to welfare benefits, mean that some people may be less able to live with independence and security, and secure necessary nutrition, clothing, housing warmth, utilities, services and transport. There may be specific negative impacts for some disabled staff, lower grade staff, or part-time and older-aged female staff, as research indicates these groups are more vulnerable to income loss and increased costs of living. Therefore, some further analysis of who is most likely to be affected by staffing reductions is required and, if appropriate, action identified to mitigate impacts e.g. additional support in council redeployment, or in seeking alternative employment, establishing career transition schemes, or delivering enhanced benefits and pension advice.
 - ii. Some disabled and older citizens and service users may face changes and reductions in the health and social care services that they receive. This may make it more difficult to access free or low cost activities, lead to social isolation, with associated negative health and wellbeing impacts.
 - iii. Services that visit vulnerable people's homes could reduce and increase isolation, and proposed changes to transport mean that some people may find it more difficult to get out to access employment, maintain a social life or participate in leisure activities.
 - iv. Reductions to services or community assets in some areas of higher social deprivation could further widen inequality gaps for some families, neighbourhoods or communities.

- 3.9 As in previous years, the ERIA of draft revenue budget proposals has led to a number of lessons learnt and future improvement actions. In summary, these relate to improving support and training to council officers, improving engagement with equality groups as part of the budget consultation programme, and improving impact assessment quality assurance systems. Further work will be undertaken by equality and rights lead officers to identify and deliver improvement actions.
- 3.10 As part of the budget proposal development process, officers were also asked to consider whether carbon emissions resulting from energy use in buildings, transport, waste and street/stair lighting were likely to increase, decrease or remain the same. As with the equalities and rights assessments, supporting information for the "early approval" proposals was advised as part of Council's earlier consideration of relevant savings on 23 October 2014.
- 3.11 Of all the proposals within the framework, only three were returned with no note of likely carbon impacts. One proposal, SFC21 (Review of garden waste collection), indicated the possibility of an increase in emissions from increased waste sent to landfill, adding to the Council's overall landfill tonnage and carbon emissions, but noted that promotion of home composting and relevant facilities within community recycling centres would mitigate such impacts. Around 20% of assessments noted a likely slight decrease in emissions, with the remainder stating that carbon emissions were expected to remain essentially unchanged. Completed carbon impact assessment templates for individual budget proposals can be supplied on request.
- 3.12 As indicated above, this year, for the first time, the Council undertook summary impact assessments of each revenue budget proposal relating to prevention and partnership. Several assessments, and some consultation responses, identified some potential negative impacts on preventative work, specifically proposed reductions in grants or contracts to third parties. As a result, it is possible that there may be increased demand on statutory or third party crisis intervention services in the future. It is difficult to project any detailed costs or impacts in this regard. However, ways to monitor any impacts over several years should be put in place. With regard to partnership impact assessments, proposals relating to third party payments were regarded as presenting the most risk to partnership relations.

Measures of success

4.1 Due regard to the equality and rights impacts has been given to each of the savings, and additional income budget options.

- 4.2 The potential equality and rights impacts are taken into account when budget decisions are being made, and recommendations for mitigating negative impacts are implemented.
- 4.3 The potential cumulative (both annual and incremental) equality and rights impacts are taken into account, and mitigating actions are identified when each year's budget decisions are being made.

Financial impact

5.1 This report identifies the potential risks in relation to equality and rights. The Council could be the subject of a legal challenge if these risks are not considered and addressed. Other financial risks relate to savings derived from preventative services which may result in increased demand on other crisis intervention services.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 The incorporation of equalities and rights, carbon, prevention and partnership impact assessments as an integral part of the budget development process reflects both good practice and relevant legal duties. This activity enables the Council to highlight any unintended consequences of specific proposals on vulnerable service users, climate change and partnership and prevention activity, increasing the effectiveness of the mitigating actions.
- 6.2 The process is also aligned to wider council and Edinburgh Partnership strategies and plans, enabling more effective prioritising of available resources in a way that best supports the needs of vulnerable service users and groups.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 Undertaking equality and rights impact assessment is intended to ensure that any negative impacts, including cumulative impacts, for protected characteristic groups set by the Equality Act 2010 are reduced.
- 7.2 It also ensures that the Equality Act 2010 public sector equality duty is met with regard to (i) eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment; (ii) advancing equality of opportunity and (iii) fostering good relations, and that any infringements on human and children's rights are minimised.

Sustainability impact

8.1 Carbon impacts assessments have enabled consideration of the public body duties under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. The findings of these assessments will also help to achieve a sustainable Edinburgh with regard to progressing climate change, social justice and community wellbeing objectives.

Consultation and engagement

9.1 Relevant feedback from the budget engagement, that has taken place in the months leading up to budget setting, has informed equality and rights, carbon, prevention and partnership impact assessment analysis.

Background reading/external references

<u>Draft Council Revenue Budget Framework 2014/18 – Equality and Rights Impact</u> Assessment – referral from Finance and Resources Committee

A Framework to Advance Equality and Rights 2012-2017 (Policy and Strategy Committee, 12 June 2012)

Alastair D Maclean

Director of Corporate Governance

Contact: Nick Croft – Corporate Policy and Strategy Manager

E-mail: nick.croft@edinburgh.gov.uk Tel: 0131 469 3726

Pamela Roccio - Corporate Policy and Strategy Officer

E-mail – Pamela.roccio@edinburgh.gov.uk Tel: 0131 469 3907

Links

Coalition pledges	All
Council outcomes	All
Single Outcome Agreement	All
Appendices	None