



# Equality impact of 2023/24 budget proposals: Summary

January 2023

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## Overview

This document provides an assessment of the equality implications of the Council's budget proposals for 2023/24.

For those proposals where it has been identified that there may be an impact on those with protected characteristics, an Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared. These assessments are provided at Annex 1. They are provided to assist members in taking a decision on the final budget proposals, and reflect the outcomes of consultation on the draft budget.

## List of budget proposals and summary of equality impact

### Council Tax

Service or function	Description	Initial impact assessment
<b>Revenues, Benefits &amp; Fraud / Finance</b>	To increase Council Tax by the referendum limit (which the Government has confirmed to be up to a 3% increase which equates to £7.25 per year for a Band D property)	May impact on those with protected characteristics, a full Equality Impact Assessment will need to be undertaken.

### Services: Pay

Service or function	Description	Initial impact assessment
<b>Customer Contact</b>	Saving from deletion of a vacant post	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Communications</b>	Saving from deletion of a vacant post	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Finance</b>	Saving from team restructure	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Human Resources</b>	Forecast savings from planned review of team (FTE saving details TBC)	None identified at this stage, proposals will need to be assessed once more information is available.
<b>Legal</b>	Saving from deletion of a vacant post	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>IT</b>	Saving from deletion of a vacant post	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided

<b>Planning</b>	Saving following salary budget review	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Economic prosperity</b>	Growth as a result salary budget review	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Place Delivery</b>	Capitalisation of salary costs	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Growth as a result of deletion of historic capitalised salary budget	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Revenues, Benefits &amp; Fraud</b>	Saving following salary budget review	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Community Partnerships</b>	Saving following salary budget review	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Emergency Planning</b>	Growth as a result of confirmation of funding for Emergency Planning resource in the base budget	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided

### Services: Non-Pay

<b>Service or function</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Initial impact assessment</b>
<b>Communications</b>	Growth to cover additional data protection expenses	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>IT</b>	Growth to cover software licence fee increases	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Property</b>	Rental grant subsidy budget alignment	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided

<b>Property</b>	Savings from reduction in printing / postage costs	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Electoral Services</b>	Alignment of budgets with the forecast baseline cost of administering a borough Council election	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Democratic Services</b>	Implementation of Independent Remuneration Panel recommendations 2023/24	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Corporate Policy</b>	Sustainability budget saving	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Building Control</b>	Reduction in this Council's Partnership contribution in line with the business plan	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Planning &amp; Development</b>	Income increase – planning performance agreements	None, optional service for developers
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Small works assistance scheme – transfer from capital programme to revenue budget	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Licensing budget – alignment with forecast income	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Budget saving from SCC's decision to cease the highways grass cutting contract	None identified – SCC will continue to maintain verges to statutory standards
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Off street parking – budget alignment with forecast income receipts	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided

<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Garden waste – budget alignment with forecast income receipts	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Place Delivery</b>	Various non-pay budget savings	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Economic Prosperity</b>	Grants to local businesses – to be funded in future through a call on revenue reserves	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Community Partnerships</b>	Voluntary and Community Sector funding review	May impact on those with protected characteristics, a full Equality Impact Assessment will need to be undertaken
<b>Community Partnerships</b>	Various non-pay budget savings	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Leisure &amp; Intervention</b>	Increased Harlequin income target	None identified at this stage, individual proposals will need to be assessed.
<b>Leisure &amp; Intervention</b>	Deletion of historic budget for contribution to a Surrey-wide initiative that is no longer required	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Leisure &amp; Intervention</b>	Income increase – location filming at Council premises	None identified at this stage, individual proposals will need to be assessed.
<b>Leisure &amp; Intervention</b>	Income increase – contracted increase in the management fee received from the Leisure Management Provider	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Housing</b>	Contribution from Homelessness Prevention grant funding	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided

<b>Revenues, Benefits &amp; Fraud</b>	Reduction in the service's legal cost budgets	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided
<b>Revenues, Benefits &amp; Fraud</b>	Software licence fee increase	None – will not impact on individuals or the overall service provided

### Changes to fees and charges

<b>Service</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Initial impact assessment</b>
<b>Planning &amp; Development</b>	Fee increase – pre-application fees	None, optional service for those considering development
<b>Planning &amp; Development</b>	New charge – street naming and numbering	None, service primarily used by developers, optional service for residents
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Fee increase – taxi and private hire licences (vehicle, operator and driver), includes some new (optional) charges	None, changes proposed to ensure cost recovery and to address inflationary costs
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Fee increase - Mobile home site licences	None, charges apply to owners and operators of sites which are generally run as commercial businesses
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Fee increase – allotments	None, charge increase limited to lower than inflation and represents marginal increase overall.
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Fee increase – cemeteries	None, changes proposed to ensure cost recovery and to address inflationary costs
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Fee increase – outdoor events	None, changes proposed to ensure cost recovery and to address inflationary costs

<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Fee increase – sports pitch fees	None, changes proposed to ensure cost recovery and to address inflationary costs
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Fee increase - banner advertising	None, optional service for organisations
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Fee increase – car parking charges and permits	May impact on those with protected characteristic, a full Equality Impact Assessment will need to be undertaken
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	New charge – Town Hall pay and display on weekdays	None, car park is not currently available on weekdays
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Fee increase – bulky waste collections	None, optional service
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Fee increase – garden waste	None, optional service
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Fee increase – waste containers and sacks	None, lower than inflation increase to cover rising costs
<b>Neighbourhood Operations</b>	Fee increase – trade waste	None, optional service for commercial businesses
<b>Community Partnerships</b>	Fee changes – Community Centres room hire	May impact on those with protected characteristics, a full Equality Impact Assessment will need to be undertaken
<b>Revenues, Benefits &amp; Fraud</b>	Fee increase – summons and liability orders	May impact on those with protected characteristic, a full Equality Impact Assessment will need to be undertaken





## Annex 1: Equality Impact Assessments

## **Proposal: To increase Council Tax by the referendum limit (up to a 3% increase which equates to £7.25 per year per Band D property)**

### **Introduction**

This document summarises – in an accessible format – the outcomes of the Council’s draft Equality Impact Assessment for the proposal to increase Council Tax by the referendum limit (up to a 3% increase which equates to £7.25 per year per Band D property) for 2023/24, including the outcome of the Stage 1 Relevance Screening Assessment and the Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment.

The proposal was assessed by the Revenues, Benefits & Fraud Service in November 2022 and finalised in January 2023.

### **Summary of the proposal**

To increase the Reigate & Banstead Borough Council element of Council Tax by the Government-set referendum limit from 1 April 2023. This is anticipated to be £7.25 for the average Band D property.

Council Tax is reviewed annually as part of the Service & Financial Planning exercise. The increase for the financial year 2023/24 is being proposed due to the financial challenges being faced by the Council due to the withdrawal of government revenue support grant and the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on Council income streams and inflationary increases on costs. Further explanation of the funding pressures faced by the Council is included in the draft budget report provided to the Executive in November 2022.

### **Assessment of Relevance**

The Stage 1 Relevance Assessment has concluded the following:

- The proposal will not introduce a change which will affect how services or functions are delivered
- The proposals will affect people – for example service users, employees or the wider community

The group of people which will be affected by the proposal has been identified as all residents.

This proposal affects all persons who are liable to pay Council Tax in respect of their home (residential address), including those properties which are currently empty. The list of liable parties is maintained in the Council Tax system. The Borough Equality Profile on the Council website provides information about the protected characteristics of all residents within the borough.

The proposal will affect any resident who pays Council tax, including any residents with one or more of the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act.

The following Equality Duty aims have been identified as being relevant for this assessment:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.

Overall, the relevance assessment has concluded that this proposal has a relevance to equality of Moderate. The outcome of the relevance assessment is therefore that a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment is required.

## Equality Impact Assessment

It has been identified that:

- The proposal in question does not intentionally target one or more protected characteristic groups.
- The proposal does not intentionally exclude one or more protected characteristic groups.
- The proposal does not have the potential to reduce inequality or improve outcomes for protected characteristic groups (although note that support is available for some residents in respect of Council Tax payments).

### **Information about the protected characteristics of the intended audience and/or people who might be affected**

In summary, the following information is available about the protected characteristic groups of the intended audience and / or people who might be affected by the proposal

#### Age

General information about the age profile of borough residents who are owner occupiers is available from the Census and ONS mid-year estimates and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report, which is available on the Council's website at [www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/equality](http://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/equality).

## **Disability**

General information about the disability characteristics is available from the Census and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

## **Gender reassignment**

General information about the representation of trans-people in the population generally is available from national and regional annual population survey data from the ONS, however is not currently available at a borough level. National and regional data is reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

## **Marriage and civil partnership**

General information about borough residents' partnership arrangements is available from the Census and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

## **Pregnancy and maternity**

General information about live births and lone parents in the borough is available from the Census and other ONS data sources and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

## **Race or ethnicity**

General information about the ethnicity of the borough's residents is available from the Census and the ONS Annual Population Survey and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

## **Religion or belief (or lack of)**

General information about the religion and/or beliefs of borough residents is available from the Census and the ONS Annual Population Survey and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

## **Sex**

General information about the gender profile of borough residents is available from the Census and ONS mid-year estimates and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

## Sexual orientation

General information about the representation of trans-people in the population generally is available from national and regional annual population survey data from the ONS. National and regional data is reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report, although the 2021 report did not have access to the most recent census results and these figures are therefore estimates.

## Other vulnerabilities

Information about the geographic spread of deprivation across the borough is available from the Index of Multiple Deprivation, which is reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report. Specific information about those receiving Council Tax support is also held by the Council.

## Consultation

The Council conducted a public consultation on its draft budget proposals between 21 November 2022 and 16 January 2023, inviting responses from community members and local organisations on the proposals.

Overall, 59% of respondents supported the proposal. The results of the consultation and the feedback provided are captured within an annex to the budget report.

Comments made in response to the consultation drew attention to the potential for Council Tax increases to increase burdens on those already facing pressures around the cost of living, which might include those identified as otherwise vulnerable. There were also a number of comments on the need for Council services to be properly funded to support those in need.

## Action to increase positive equality impacts or reduce negative equality impacts

The proposed Council Tax increase will affect all residents who have a liability for Council Tax. For those residents on low income, the Local Council Tax Support scheme is in place to provide support in the form of reductions in the liable amount, and further reductions can also be applied under discretionary powers contained in Section 13(1)(C) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. Children and persons under the age of 18 are not legally liable for Council Tax and therefore not affected by this proposal

## Assessment of potential impact

This section summarises our assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on protected characteristic groups.

## **Age**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to age, and no positive impact in relation to age. Elderly residents facing financial hardship may be supported by the Local Council Tax support scheme or other discretionary powers.

## **Disability**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to disability, and no positive impact in relation to disability. Disabled residents facing financial hardship may be supported by the Local Council Tax support scheme or other discretionary powers.

## **Gender reassignment**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to gender reassignment, and no positive impact in relation to gender reassignment. Trans residents facing financial hardship may be supported by the Local Council Tax support scheme or other discretionary powers.

## **Marriage and civil partnership**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to marriage and civil partnership, and no positive impact in relation to marriage and civil partnership. Regardless of their partnership status, residents facing financial hardship may be supported by the Local Council Tax support scheme or other discretionary powers.

## **Pregnancy and maternity**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to pregnancy and maternity, and no positive impact in relation to pregnancy and maternity. Pregnant women and mothers facing financial hardship may be supported by the Local Council Tax support scheme or other discretionary powers.

## **Race or ethnicity**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to race or ethnicity, and no positive impact in relation to race or ethnicity. Residents from ethnic minority groups facing financial hardship may be supported by the Local Council Tax support scheme or other discretionary powers.

## **Religion or belief (or lack of)**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to religion or belief, and no positive impact in relation to religion or belief. Residents with religious beliefs

or none facing financial hardship may be supported by the Local Council Tax support scheme or other discretionary powers.

### **Sexual orientation**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to sexual orientation, and no positive impact in relation to sexual orientation. Residents of any sexual orientation facing financial hardship may be supported by the Local Council Tax support scheme or other discretionary powers.

### **Other vulnerabilities**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to other vulnerabilities, and no positive impact in relation to other vulnerabilities. Vulnerable residents facing financial hardship may be supported by the Local Council Tax support scheme or other discretionary powers.

### **Monitoring and review**

The Local Council Tax Support scheme is in place to support all residents who are on a low income and experiencing financial hardship. Residents that already receive support through this scheme will see their support increased in line with the increase. Additionally, reductions of Council Tax liability can also be made at the discretion of the Council under relevant legislation.

The Council will monitor numbers of residents in receipt of Council Tax support to ensure their continued effectiveness. Council tax rates are reviewed annually.

## Proposal: Savings from a reduction in Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) funding (Stripey Stork)

### Introduction

This document summarises – in an accessible format – the outcomes of the Council’s draft Equality Impact Assessment for the reduction in funding to Stripey Stork, including the outcome of the Stage 1 Relevance Screening Assessment and the Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment.

The proposal has been assessed by the Community Partnerships Team in November 2022 and finalised in January 2023.

### Summary of the proposal

The proposal is to reduce the Council’s annual £3000 grant funding for Stripey Stork to £1000 from 2023/24. Stripey Stork is a ‘baby bank’ providing clothing, baby essentials and equipment such as pushchairs, cots, school bags etc to families in financial difficulty. They can provide clothing and essential items for children 0-18 and some maternity clothing.

The Community Partnerships Team has reviewed voluntary sector grants and identified potential savings as part of the Council Financial Sustainability Programme. The reduction in annual grant that Stripey Stork receive has been identified as one of the savings proposals.

### Assessment of Relevance

The Stage 1 Relevance Assessment has concluded the following:

- The proposal will not introduce a change which will affect how Council services or functions are delivered but may impact the delivery of third party VCS services, which may in turn affect people who rely on those third party services.

The groups of people which might be affected by the proposal have been identified as – directly - Stripey Stork as an organisation, which will receive less funding from the Council.

Stripey Stork has indicated that it will need to fundraise further to fill the gap of this reduction. The organisation has indicated that the VCS funding landscape is currently reduced and competitive. In addition, donations are down as a reflection of the wider cost of living crisis. This may mean that filling this funding gap is a challenge. If they were unable to fill this gap this could mean they can only respond to fewer referrals and/or have reduced stock to supply



to families. Several Council teams (Housing, Family Support, Community Development) refer residents to Stripey Stork so a reduction in funding could have an impact on these referrals

The following evidence, information and/or engagement has been used to assess the proposal for its relevance to equality:

- Information provided to the Council by organisations about the people that use their services.

The protected characteristic groups that could be affected by the proposal are:

- Pregnancy and maternity
- People with other vulnerabilities

It is recognised that parents (whether male or female) may benefit from the support provided by Stripey Stork, as will their children.

The following Equality Duty aims have been identified as being relevant:

- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Overall, the relevance assessment has concluded that this proposal has a relevance to equality of Moderate. The outcome of the relevance assessment is therefore that a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment is required.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

The proposal in question does not directly target one or more protected characteristic groups, however families and children experiencing deprivation and pregnant women on low incomes access the support from Stripey Stork. A reduction in their funding may have an impact on the number of people they are able to support and reduction to their offer, unless the funding gap can be filled.

The proposal does not intentionally exclude one or more protected characteristic groups. It has been identified that the proposal does not have the potential to reduce inequality or improve outcomes for protected characteristic groups.

## **Information about the protected characteristics of the intended audience and/or people who might be affected**

In summary, the following information is available about the protected characteristic groups of the intended audience and / or people who might be affected by the proposal.

The services Stripey Stork provide are demand led. That demand has increased over recent years and if they are unable to fill the funding gap caused by this proposal it could have an impact on keeping up with demand. We are aware that funding streams for VCS has reduced and competition has increased so there is a possibility that other funding streams will be harder to come by for this organisation. All referrals to Stripey Stork will be for children and families in need and they will be on low incomes and likely to be living in areas of deprivation. We cannot say the numbers of service users that would have protected characteristics, but we anticipate a significant proportion would be likely to fall into a protected group or be otherwise vulnerable.

### **Age**

Essential items and goods supplied are predominately aimed at babies and children. Therefore, a funding reduction – if Stripey Stork is unable to fill the funding gap -would have greatest impact on goods for young children.

General information about population ages and children in the borough is available from the Census and other ONS data sources and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

### **Pregnancy and maternity**

In 2021/22 Stripey Stork received 3498 referrals. General information about live births and lone parents in the borough is available from the Census and other ONS data sources and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report. It is recognised that any parents may benefit from the charity's services.

### **Other vulnerabilities**

In 2021/22 Stripey Stork received 3498 referrals and provided goods worth a total of £240,200 to families on a low income.

## **Consultation**

A meeting was held with all voluntary sector commissioned services in July 2022 to let them know about the context of a funding review and to ask for their input into the process. Stripey Stork along with the other commissioned organisations were asked to complete a funding

review survey to better understand how they might manage a funding reduction. Stripey Stork told us that the immediate impact of this funding reduction would be the pressure to fill the gap with additional fundraising. It would not cause any services to reduce or end but would increase the pressure on fundraising.

The Council conducted a public consultation on its draft budget proposals between 21 November 2022 and 16 January 2023, inviting responses from community members and local organisations on the proposals.

Overall, only 23% of respondents supported the proposal to reduce funding to some VCS partners. Feedback from the consultation drew attention to the particular potential impacts of the proposal in relation to children, and the implications regarding the protected characteristic of age were therefore further reviewed.

Comments also expressed concerns regarding the general impact of reductions in voluntary and charitable sector funding for the vulnerable people at a time of wider financial pressures.

The results of the consultation and the feedback provided are captured within an annex to the budget report.

### **Action to increase positive equality impacts or reduce negative equality impacts**

A £2000 reduction in funding to Stripey Stork will increase the need to secure other external funding or fundraising to maintain their current response level. The funding provided by the Council represents 0.3% of their gross income (based on 2021 accounts). The task of fundraising has become more difficult due to the wider pressures on funding for the voluntary sector nationally in part due to the cost-of-living pressures. In 2023/24 the Council will seek to develop plans to launch other funding schemes to support the local VCS such as a local lottery model. This could potentially offer another source of future funding. The Council will continue to offer Stripey Stork other in-kind support such as access to meeting rooms, low cost printing and storage space for the Santa Stork project.

### **Assessment of potential impact**

This section summarises our assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on protected characteristic groups.

#### **Age**

Whilst the items Stripey Stork provide are mainly focused on babies and children, the funding reduction is at a level that the organisation anticipates that the reduction could be filled by other donations or fundraising.

### **Disability**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to disability.

### **Gender reassignment**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to gender reassignment.

### **Marriage and civil partnership**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to marriage and civil partnership.

### **Pregnancy and maternity**

The assessment has indicated a potential disproportionate negative impact in relation to pregnancy and maternity.

It is hard to identify the scale of impact this funding reduction could have as it will be dependent on operational decisions and the success of alternative fundraising, therefore monitoring and regular review will be important. The funding provided by the Council is a small percentage of their overall income (approximately 0.3% of gross income based on 2021 accounts) so it would be hoped this funding gap could be filled.

In terms of action to address any potential negative impact the Council will continue to offer other support to Stripey Stork including property during Santa Stork and Discretionary Rate Relief.

### **Race or ethnicity**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to race or ethnicity.

### **Religion or belief (or lack of)**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to religion or belief.

### **Sex**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to sex, it is recognised that any parents may benefit from the services provided by Stripey Stork.

### **Sexual orientation**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to sexual orientation.

### **Other vulnerabilities**

The assessment has indicated a potential disproportionate negative impact in relation to other vulnerabilities, specifically those on lower incomes.

It is hard to identify the scale of impact this funding reduction could have as it will be dependent on operational decisions and the success of alternative fundraising, therefore monitoring and regular review will be important. The funding provided by the Council is a small percentage of their overall income (approximately 0.3% of gross income based on 2021 accounts) so it would be hoped this funding gap could be filled.

In terms of action to address any potential negative impact the Council will continue to offer other support to Stripey Stork including property during Santa Stork and Discretionary Rate Relief.

### **Monitoring and review**

The Community Partnerships Team will go back to Stripey Stork next year to understand if the funding reduction has had negative consequences such as a reduction in number of families supported or the amount of goods they are able to provide. The Community Partnerships Team holds regular meetings with Stripey Stork and receives monitoring data in a quarterly scorecard. This data will be used to help identify any negative consequences of the funding reduction at an early stage.

The Community Partnerships team will continue to meet with Stripey Stork to monitor the impact of funding across the year. The Council's Community Partnerships team will explore the possibilities of developing other funding sources such as a community lottery or crowdfunding. This may offer alternative funding that Stripey Stork could apply for.

## **Proposal: Savings from a reduction in Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) funding (Citizens Advice Reigate & Banstead)**

### **Introduction**

This document summarises – in an accessible format – the outcomes of the Council’s draft Equality Impact Assessment for reduction in funding to Citizens’ Advice Reigate & Banstead (CARB), including the outcome of the Stage 1 Relevance Screening Assessment and the Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment.

The proposal has been assessed by the Community Partnerships Team in November 2022 and finalised in January 2023.

### **Summary of the proposal**

To reduce the annual £111,000 grant for Citizens Advice Reigate & Banstead (CARB) by 15% to £94,500 from 2023/24. CARB provide information, advice and guidance free of charge to residents of the borough. This is delivered, online, over the phone, face to face and via outreach work. CARB provide advice on a huge variety of legal and financial concerns and provide advice on benefits, employment and debt.

The Community Partnerships Team was tasked with reviewing voluntary sector grants and identifying savings as part of the Council Financial Sustainability Programme. The annual grant that Citizens Advice Reigate & Banstead receive has been identified for a 15% reduction.

### **Assessment of Relevance**

The Stage 1 Relevance Assessment has concluded the following:

- The proposal will not introduce a change which will affect how Council services or functions are delivered but may impact the delivery of third party VCS services, which may in turn affect people who rely on those third party services.

The groups of people which might be affected by the proposal have been identified as – directly – CARB as an organisation, which will receive less funding from the Council.

CARB offers advice and guidance to all residents of the borough, free of charge. Their services are most commonly accessed by residents in financial hardship or isolated from other services due to ill health or disability. CARB service users will be likely to fall into multiple protected characteristic groups. CARB have told us that this funding reduction will lead to a reduced staff and volunteer offer across the week and a reduced offer will impact access to this service. In the past year CARB responded to 17,480 issues and demand has increased year on year across the past 3 years. Partner agencies and Council departments may also be impacted by the funding reduction as other services will frequently refer residents to CARB.

The following evidence, information and/or engagement has been used to assess the proposal for its relevance to equality:

- Information provided to the Council by organisations about the people that use their services.

The protected characteristic groups that could be affected by the proposal are vulnerable residents who may need services from CARB.

The following Equality Duty aims have been identified as being relevant:

- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Overall, the relevance assessment has concluded that this proposal has a relevance to equality of Moderate. The outcome of the relevance assessment is therefore that a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment is required.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

The proposal in question does not directly target one or more protected characteristic groups, however proposal will reduce the funding of CARB. CARB have told us that this reduction in funding will lead to reduced staff/adviser hours and thus a reduced service unless they are able to fill the funding gap. If there is a reduced/limited service, this will indirectly impact residents with protected characteristics that are in need of advice and guidance

The proposal does not intentionally exclude one or more protected characteristic groups. It has been identified that the proposal does not have the potential to reduce inequality or improve outcomes for protected characteristic groups.

## **Information about the protected characteristics of the intended audience and/or people who might be affected**

In summary, the following information is available about the protected characteristic groups of the intended audience and / or people who might be affected by the proposal.

In 2021/22 CARB supported 4456 residents with 17,480 issues. The most common needs are benefits advice, universal credit support, debt and employment advice and guidance. CARB has estimated that the reduction in funding will mean they reach 200 fewer clients per quarter, a reduction of 800 across a year. This is because the funding reduction will lead to a reduction staffing and therefore a reduction in volunteers that can work at one time and a reduction in centre opening times. In the past year the Council provided 25% of CARB's overall income but this will vary this year as other funding streams are coming to an end.

It is likely that residents with a variety of protected characteristics use CARB's services. Information from CARB's 2021 annual accounts indicates that 24% of clients had long term health conditions and that 22% were from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities; both of these percentages are higher than the overall levels for the borough as reported in the census.

It is difficult to fully assess the impact of this funding reduction. CARB may be able to access additional funding or find operational efficiencies, but we know that other funding sources for VCS have reduced or will be targeted to new projects rather than core costs. CARB have told us that this funding reduction would therefore lead to a service reduction as they would need to reduce staff and volunteer time. At this stage we are unable to be specific amount the number of residents with protected characteristics that could be impacted but we know that the service is likely to be used by residents with a variety of needs.

## **Consultation**

There was a meeting with all VCS Commissioned Services in July 2022 to tell them about the funding review and seek their input into the impact of a funding reduction. All commissioned organisations including CARB were asked to complete a survey to tell us about the likely impact of funding reductions. In October a meeting was held with CARB to tell them about initial proposals for a funding reduction and the next steps. CARB have informed the Council that a reduction in funding will lead to reduced adviser and volunteer hours unless they are able to access additional funding to use for core costs.

Overall, only 23% of respondents supported the proposal to reduce funding to some VCS partners. The Council conducted a public consultation on its draft budget proposals between 21 November 2022 and 16 January 2023, inviting responses from community members and local organisations on the proposals.



Comments in response to the consultation on the draft budget expressed concerns regarding the risks of long term harm to those unable to access essential services or without adequate access to financial and accommodation support, particularly those who were otherwise vulnerable. Attention was also drawn to the timing of the proposed grant reductions coinciding with wider financial pressures being faced by many, and to concerns that the reductions in funding might be counterproductive in leading to additional support needs in future.

The results of the consultation and the feedback provided are captured within an annex to the budget report.

### **Action to increase positive equality impacts or reduce negative equality impacts**

The Council will be exploring other opportunities to create funding for the local voluntary sector such as developing a local lottery. This may be able to offer some future funding to CARB if it is established. The Council will continue to offer in-kind support to VCS organisations such as meeting room hire and low cost printing.

The Council can also ensure that support and advice services (including CARB) are widely advertised so that residents still have services they can contact free of charge for advice across the week.

### **Assessment of potential impact**

This section summarises our assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on protected characteristic groups.

#### **Age**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to age.

#### **Disability**

CARB has identified that 24% of its clients have long term health conditions. This is higher than the borough average, however it is not possible to gauge the specific impact on the funding reduction on those with disabilities as the specific service impact is not fully known at this stage.

#### **Gender reassignment**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to gender reassignment.

### **Marriage and civil partnership**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to marriage and civil partnership.

### **Pregnancy and maternity**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to pregnancy and maternity.

### **Race or ethnicity**

CARB has identified that 22% of its clients are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. This is higher than the borough average, however it is not possible to gauge the specific impact on the funding reduction on minority ethnic groups as the specific service impact is not fully known at this stage.

### **Religion or belief (or lack of)**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to religion or belief.

### **Sex**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to sex.

### **Sexual orientation**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to sexual orientation.

### **Other vulnerabilities**

The assessment has indicated a potential disproportionate negative impact in relation to people with vulnerabilities generally, which may include residents with one or more protected characteristics. All residents are able to access universal advice and guidance via CARB but they specifically support vulnerable residents with low income that may not have access to other sources of support.

CARB has indicated that without alternative funds being found they will have to reduce paid adviser time by 3 days and this will mean that 12 volunteers will be unable to offer advice on those days. It also means that the Redhill centre will be closed two days a week and the Banstead centre one day a week. CARB estimates that they will be able to help 800 fewer people across the year. We know that CARB is used by residents with vulnerabilities including residents with protected characteristics so they may face delays in receiving support. Demand for citizen advice services is increasing nationally due to the impact of cost of living increases.

CARB provides universal advice to residents free of charge and there is no other equivalent universal service locally. However, there are some other money advice and debt advice services that residents can access. We know these services are also seeing increased demand but they may offer an alternative for some residents. The Council will continue to work with CARB and support the local advice service offer via networking groups that can identify common issues and seek collaboration on key areas of development. Monitoring will be important to ensure that the impact of the removal of funding on service provision and residents is fully understood and can be responded to if necessitated.

### **Monitoring and review**

The impact of the proposal and progress towards the delivery of identified actions will be monitored as follows.

The impact will be monitored via quarterly meetings with CARB and review of their monitoring scorecard. Grant monitoring tracks the number of clients, those with protected characteristics and issues as well as types of need so it will be possible to see if client and issue numbers reduce as a result of this funding reduction. CARB also share staff and volunteer hours so it will be possible to see how these are impacted by the proposed funding reduction.

A service reduction is known to have already been put in place as other funding streams have come to an end. This will lead to an impact on the service offer and will need to be closely monitored across the year.

Monitoring information will help us identify issues, needs and gaps. The Council Partnerships team will research options for creating other funding sources such as a community lottery or crowdfunding. These models may be able to provide additional funding for CARB in the future if our review identifies a negative impact.

## **Proposal: Savings from a reduction in Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) funding (services provided by Age Concern Banstead, Age Concern Merstham, Redhill & Reigate, and MHA East Surrey Communities)**

### **Introduction**

This document summarises – in an accessible format – the outcomes of the Council’s draft Equality Impact Assessment for the reduction in funding for older people’s services (Age Concern Banstead, Age Concern Merstham, Redhill & Reigate, and MHA East Surrey Communities), including the outcome of the Stage 1 Relevance Screening Assessment and the Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment.

The proposal has been assessed by the Community Partnerships Team in November 2022 and finalised in January 2023.

### **Summary of the proposal**

The proposal is to reduce the amount of funding paid to the commissioned older people’s service providers (Age Concern Banstead, Age Concern Merstham, Redhill & Reigate, and MHA East Surrey Communities) by £10,000 in total. Proposed reductions per organisation are as follows:

- Age Concern Banstead: Reduction from £10,000 to £7,500 – a reduction in £2,500 or 25%
- Age Concern Merstham, Redhill & Reigate: Reduction from £15,000 to £11,250 – a reduction in £3,700 or 25%
- MHA East Surrey Communities: Reduction from £15,000 to £11,250 – a reduction in £3,700 or 25%

The three organisations provide services, accessible to all people over the age of 55 years, to help reduce loneliness and isolation as well as volunteering opportunities to support residents to remain active and engaged with the local community.

The Community Partnerships Team has been tasked with reviewing voluntary sector grants and identifying savings as part of the Council Financial Sustainability Programme. The reduction in annual grant that the three older people’s service providers receive has been identified as one of the savings proposals

## Assessment of Relevance

The Stage 1 Relevance Assessment has concluded the following:

- The proposal will not introduce a change which will affect how Council services or functions are delivered but may impact the delivery of third party VCS services, which may in turn affect people who rely on those third party services.

The groups of people which might be affected by the proposal have been identified as – directly – the three organisations, which will receive less funding from the Council.

Indirectly, the proposal may therefore impact older residents who use the organisations to access support and friendship, helping maintain independence, improve well-being and reduce isolation and loneliness. In 2021/22 the organisations delivered 2684 befriending sessions, there were 4293 attendances at group sessions and 5463 journeys were provided. There were 9321 volunteer hours given to the older people's services. In year membership increased by 288 people. As of September 2022, there had been 153 new members access services. The average age of the members is 75+, the majority of whom are frail and with limited alternative support.

The following evidence, information and/or engagement has been used to assess the proposal for its relevance to equality:

- Quarterly monitoring meetings are held with each of the three commissioned services. They are each required to produce a scorecard providing data on financial viability, paid & volunteer hours, number of service users for both group and individual activities, new referrals, promotion of their services and contribution to the sector. They also report on their successes, customer insight / needs analysis as well as risks, challenges and concerns. These quarterly reviews provide valuable insight into the provision of service and unmet need in the borough. The three partners each have different operational models. With some services being more in depth whilst others are light touch. Some services are able to recover costs whilst others are delivered free of charge e.g. information and advice, befriending, bereavement and dementia support

The protected characteristic groups that could be affected by the proposal are Age and Disability, along with older residents with other vulnerabilities.

The following Equality Duty aims have been identified as being relevant:

- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Overall, the relevance assessment has concluded that this proposal has a relevance to equality of Moderate. The outcome of the relevance assessment is therefore that a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment is required.

## Equality Impact Assessment

The proposal in question does not directly target one or more protected characteristic groups, however proposal will reduce the funding of older persons' services.

The proposal may impact indirectly on people with the protected characteristic of age, disability and vulnerability. A reduction in funding may have an impact on the range of services that the organisations are able to provide, especially those that do not generate income e.g., bereavement support, befriending. The majority of service users are frail elderly residents who require support to maintain social interactions, thereby reducing loneliness and isolation.

The proposal does not intentionally exclude one or more protected characteristic groups. It has been identified that the proposal does not have the potential to reduce inequality or improve outcomes for protected characteristic groups.

### **Information about the protected characteristics of the intended audience and/or people who might be affected**

In summary, the following information is available about the protected characteristic groups of the intended audience and / or people who might be affected by the proposal.

The services provided by the three older people's service providers are demand led. That demand has increased over recent years and if they are unable to fill the funding gap caused by this proposal it could have an impact on keeping up with demand. We are aware that funding streams for VCS have reduced, and competition has increased so there is a possibility that other funding streams will be harder to come by for these organisations. Most referrals to these older people's service providers will be for frail elderly people in need and they are likely to be on low incomes and likely to be living with limited support from family and friends.

### **Age**

The RBBC Equality Information: Borough Characteristics 2021 indicates that 18.3% of borough residents are age 65 or over (27,296 residents). Projections suggest that the older population will increase considerably over the next 20 years

It is estimated, based on service user data for the first six months of 22/23, that 1,660 unique service users will engage with the 3 service providers during the year. This is in addition to the 250 volunteers who find a sense of fulfilment and connectivity through volunteering with the services. (In total 7% of the population over 65 years of age are either service users or volunteers).

In 2021/22 the income generated by the three organisations was:

- Age Concern Banstead - £31,362
- Age Concern Merstham, Redhill and Reigate - £133,033
- MHA -£65,170

The proposed reduction in funding is equivalent to:

- Age Concern Banstead – 8% of annual income
- Age Concern Merstham, Redhill and Reigate - 3% of annual income
- MHA – 6% of annual income

## Disability

The RBBC Equality Information: Borough Characteristics 2021 provides general information about the disability characteristics of the borough's population.

Monitoring of service users by the three organisations suggests that a significant number of service users have long term health conditions associated with old age, including mobility, frailty and hearing and sight loss.

## Other vulnerabilities

The RBBC Equality Information: Borough Characteristics 2021 provides general information about the distribution of deprivation across the borough.

Monitoring of service users by the three organisations suggests that a significant number of services users live alone and do not have local family support available to them. A reduction in service provision may increase their isolation and vulnerability.

## Consultation

The three older people's service providers were made aware of the potential cut to their budgets and were asked to say what the impact of this may be on service delivery.

- Age Concern Banstead report that a 25% cut in Council funding would result in reduced hours of the visiting staff, which is a service which cannot self-fund (some

services are chargeable but never recovers full costs (e.g., lunch clubs) and some are non-chargeable (e.g., information /advice). The cuts would impact on activities such as lunch clubs, befriending, benefit support, bereavement support and dementia support. More time would need to be given to fundraising activities and bid writing as opposed to service delivery and partnership working

- Age Concern Merstham, Redhill and Reigate has indicated that any reduction in RBBC funding would need to be sought from other external funding bids, as the option to increase charges for their services would exclude people who are already severely struggling financially.
- MHA Communities has indicated that a 25% cut would mean they would have to stop their weekly lunch club at Horley Community Centre and reduce the hours for their Horley focussed Community Coordinator which would impact on other Horley activities (twice monthly pub lunches in Horley and matching members with volunteers for active face to face companionship). MHA Communities is advocating for a tapered cut if a cut has to happen. The organisation has also indicated that any cut will reduce the ability to focus on partnership working with other older people's organisations as more focus will need to be on fundraising.

The Council conducted a public consultation on its draft budget proposals between 21 November 2022 and 16 January 2023, inviting responses from community members and local organisations on the proposals.

Overall, only 23% of respondents supported the proposal to reduce funding to some VCS partners. Comments in response to the consultation on the draft budget expressed concern that the reductions in funding for voluntary and charity sector organisations would prevent vulnerable people from receiving necessary support, and would lead to additional difficulties for those affected in future. Concern was also expressed regarding reductions in support being made at the same time as residents and organisations faced other increases in costs.

The results of the consultation and the feedback provided are captured within an annex to the budget report.

### **Action to increase positive equality impacts or reduce negative equality impacts**

The three older people's service providers could seek to close the funding gap from increased fundraising activities or by reducing costs by reducing the services they offer or a combination of both.

The Council can help to publicise and promote other service providers operating within the borough, including the three council owned community centres.



The Council maintains a webpage providing [details of support for Older People](#). It will also continue to provide support in kind for VCS organisations.

## Assessment of potential impact

This section summarises our assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on protected characteristic groups.

### Age

The assessment has indicated a potential disproportionate negative impact in relation to age. The proposed funding cuts will impact the organisations capacity to offer services for frail, elderly people who are experiencing loneliness and isolation and do not have alternative resources to meet these needs.

The following action will be taken to address this potential impact:

- The 3 commissioned services will signpost to other providers working across Surrey.
- The organisations will seek to increase their fundraising.
- The three Council Community Centres will continue to offer and develop free and low-cost activities for older people.
- The older people services steering group will continue to work on identifying and addressing common issues that will support and develop the local offer to older people.
- The Council maintains a webpage with information about [services for vulnerable and older people](#).

### Disability

The assessment has indicated a potential disproportionate negative impact in relation to disability. A significant number of service users have long term health conditions associated with old age, including mobility, frailty and hearing and sight loss.

The services provided, by the 3 older people's services providers, are universal. With the exception that, service users must be capable of entering and exiting the building, and where provided transport, with minimal support and are not in need of personal care (they can take themselves to the toilet), there is no assessment of disability when providing services.

The following action will be taken to address this potential impact:

- The 3 commissioned services will signpost to other providers working across Surrey.

- The organisations will seek to increase their fundraising.
- The three Council Community Centres will continue to offer and develop free and low-cost activities for older people including those with disabilities.
- The older people services steering group will continue to work on identifying and addressing common issues that will support and develop the local offer to older people including those with disabilities.
- The Council maintains a webpage with information about [services for vulnerable and older people \(including those with disabilities\)](#).

### **Gender reassignment**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to gender reassignment.

### **Marriage and civil partnership**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to marriage and civil partnership.

### **Pregnancy and maternity**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to pregnancy and maternity.

### **Race or ethnicity**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to race or ethnicity.

### **Religion or belief (or lack of)**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to religion or belief.

### **Sex**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to sex.

### **Sexual orientation**

The assessment has indicated no impact in relation to sexual orientation.

### **Other vulnerabilities**

The assessment has indicated a potential disproportionate negative impact in relation to other vulnerabilities, specifically vulnerable older residents.

A significant number of services users live alone and do not have local family support available to them. A reduction in service provision may increase their isolation and

vulnerability. Whilst data exists on the number of older people claiming single person Council tax discount over the age of 65, we do not have the data on the number of people who live alone and access these services.

The following action will be taken to address this potential impact:

- The 3 commissioned services will signpost to other providers working across Surrey.
- The organisations will seek to increase their fundraising.
- The three Council Community Centres will continue to offer and develop free and low-cost activities for vulnerable older people.
- The older people services steering group will continue to work on identifying and addressing common issues that will support and develop the local offer to vulnerable older people.
- The Council maintains a webpage with information about services for vulnerable and older people [https://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/info/20074/health\\_and\\_wellbeing/1264/support\\_for\\_older\\_people\\_or\\_vulnerable\\_people/10](https://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/info/20074/health_and_wellbeing/1264/support_for_older_people_or_vulnerable_people/10)

## **Monitoring and review**

The Partnerships Team will continue to meet with the three older people's service providers to monitor the impact of funding cuts across the year. The organisations have quarterly monitoring meetings and provide data in a scorecard, so it will be possible to identify the impact of the proposed funding reduction through these meetings. The Partnerships Team will also explore opportunities to create a local lottery fund to support VCS organisations.

Monitoring information will help us identify issues, needs and gaps. If there are concerns about the impact of this change we can work with the older people's service providers and other older people's service providers, via the Older People Services Steering group to propose changes or developments that could be considered as part of future service development. The Council Partnerships team will seek to explore other funding models such as a community lottery or crowdfunding model. This may provide additional funding pathways that could provide funding to these organisations if negative impact to local older people was identified in the review.

## Proposal: Changes to room hire charges in community centres

### Introduction

This document summarises – in an accessible format – the outcomes of the Council’s draft Equality Impact Assessment for proposals to change room hire charges at its Community Centres, including the outcome of the Stage 1 Relevance Screening Assessment and the Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment.

The proposal has been assessed by the Community Partnerships service in November 2022 and finalised in January 2023.

### Summary of the proposal

The proposal is to update the charges for room hire at the Council’s three community centres (Horley, Woodhatch and Banstead) in order that there is greater transparency and consistency in the charges (including private and community hire rates), that the charges where possible fully recover associated costs, and that the levels of charges are set with an understanding of the hire costs of competitor facilities.

The community centres returned to the Council in April 2020, having been outsourced to a charity from 2016 – 2020. Fees and charges have not been reviewed since the centres have returned to back to the Council. Historically there has been a lot of local discretion at centre level, which dates back to the charity-run period, and even to the period pre-2016 where whilst the centres were funded by the Council, they were operationally managed by management committees.

The community centres have been through a transformation programme since their insourcing in 2020. As a result of the disruption of the Covid pandemic, a review of fees and charges has not happened until now. The transformation, approved at Executive in July 2021, set out the vision for the centres to be community centres for all rather than centres focussing on an older age group. As the centres evolve to meet this political direction, it is timely to review fees as there is a particular focus on new hirers, as well as ensuring that longer established hirers are paying an appropriate fee for the space that they use.

### Assessment of Relevance

The Stage 1 Relevance Assessment has concluded the following:

- The proposal will introduce a change which will affect how services or functions are delivered
- The proposals will directly affect existing and potential hirers of the spaces, which includes private individuals, small businesses (often sole traders such as exercise instructors), and partner organisations.
- The proposal also has the potential to indirectly affect individuals if:
  - through the changes to fees and charges any current hirers choose to cease their use of the community centres. In such circumstances, the activity may relocate to a non-RBBC premises which may be equally accessible to current service users. If the activity does not relocate (or does not relocate to an equally accessible non-RBBC premises) then there may be some impact on individuals.
  - The hirers choose to pass on any increased hire costs to their individual service users

The groups of people which might be affected by the proposal have been identified as:

- Residents
  - Residents on occasion privately hire spaces within our community centres and we are aiming for this to happen more in future.
  - Residents also are users of our centres and the activities within them. Where those activities are run in spaces hired by private or community users, residents would be indirectly impacted by the changes in hire fees if the hirer sought to pass these higher costs on to their service users or if the hirer stopped running the activity at the community centre. The impact would potentially be minimal if the activity relocated to a competitor premises in the locality.
- Local businesses
  - Local businesses such as sole trading exercise instructors, beauticians, etc currently hire spaces in our community centres. The majority of hire charges will be increasing by between 5% and 10%, with charges decreasing in a few instances, and a few instances where increases will be above 10%. In these instances it reflects a heavy discretionary discount having been applied to the advertised hire charge by the previous charitable operator.
- Partners (including voluntary/community/faith sector organisations)
  - Partner organisations including NHS organisations, food banks, older people's organisations and young people's charities currently hire spaces in our community centres. The majority of hire charges will be increasing by between 5% and 10%, with charges decreasing in a few instances, and a few instances where increases will be above 10%. In these instances it reflects a heavy

discretionary discount having been applied to the advertised hire charge by the previous charitable operator

Information about current room hirers has been used to assess the proposal for its relevance to equality.

Anyone who currently hires a room may be impacted by the changes, regardless of whether or not they have any protected characteristics. However, evidence indicates that organisations supporting older people and that support disadvantaged residents currently hire rooms.

The following Equality Duty aims have been identified as being relevant:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act

Overall, the relevance assessment has concluded that this proposal has a relevance to equality of Moderate, and therefore a stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment is required.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

The proposal in question does not intentionally target one or more protected characteristic groups.

The proposal does not intentionally exclude one or more protected characteristic groups.

It has been identified that the proposal does have the potential to reduce inequality or improve outcomes for protected characteristic groups, as the proposal addresses inconsistencies in the current charging arrangements which will improve fairness for current hirers.

### **Information about the protected characteristics of the intended audience and/or people who might be affected**

In summary, the following information is available about the protected characteristic groups of the intended audience and / or people who might be affected by the proposal. We have limited information about the specific protected characteristics of all those who hire rooms although good information about the groups and businesses that hire rooms regularly. It may be possible to collect further equalities data on an 'opt in' basis.

## **Age**

Information about who currently hires the rooms suggests that partner organisations including NHS organisations, food banks, older people's organisations and young people's charities current hire spaces in our community centres. Currently there is a high proportion of activity users who are older people, although a growing number of newer family focused activities in particular at Woodhatch Community Centre.

## **Disability**

Information about who currently hires the rooms suggests that partner organisations including NHS organisations, food banks, older people's organisations and young people's charities current hire spaces in our community centres. Currently there is a high proportion of activity users who are older people, who may have some mobility issues or other disabilities.

## **Gender reassignment**

Those that hire the spaces includes a range of residents, activity providers and businesses but no specific information is available about the gender reassignment characteristics of current room hirers.

## **Marriage and civil partnership**

Those that hire the spaces includes a range of residents, activity providers and businesses but no specific information is available about the partnership characteristics of current room hirers.

## **Pregnancy and maternity**

A growing number of newer family focused activities are using our community centres in particular the centre at Woodhatch.

## **Race or ethnicity**

Those that hire the spaces includes a range of residents, activity providers and businesses but no specific information is available about the race or ethnicity characteristics of current room hirers.

## **Religion or belief (or lack of)**

Those that hire the spaces includes a range of residents, activity providers and businesses but no specific information is available about the religion / belief characteristics of current room hirers

## Sex

Those that hire the spaces includes a range of residents, activity providers and businesses but no specific information is available about the sex or gender of current room hirers.

## Sexual orientation

Those that hire the spaces includes a range of residents, activity providers and businesses but no specific information is available about the sexual orientation of current room hirers.

## Other vulnerabilities

Partner organisations including NHS organisations, food banks, older people's organisations and young people's charities currently hire spaces in our community centres. Some of the hirers, in particular food banks, support disadvantaged residents.

## Consultation

The Council conducted a public consultation on its draft budget proposals between 21 November 2022 and 16 January 2023, inviting responses from community members and local organisations on the proposals.

Overall, 48% of respondents supported the proposed change to fees and charges. Comments in response to the budget consultation expressed concerns that increased costs of room hire would disproportionately affect voluntary and community sector groups and organisations using the facilities, and that the potential to reduce access to community facilities would undermine the wellbeing benefits they would otherwise provide.

The results of the consultation and the feedback provided are captured within an annex to the budget report.

## **Action to increase positive equality impacts or reduce negative equality impacts**

The transformation programme implemented by the Council aims to make our community centres welcoming for all rather than just focusing on the older age group. The proposal addresses inconsistencies in the current charging arrangements which will improve fairness for current hirers.

## **Assessment of potential impact**

This section summarises our assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on protected characteristic groups.



## Age

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to age.

Although partner organisations providing services for older and younger people currently hire spaces, and residents who may be older or younger may also currently hire spaces, no disproportionate impact has been identified.

The majority of hire charges will be increasing by between 5% and 10%, with charges decreasing in a few instances, and a few instances where increases will be above 10% due to a heavy discretionary discount having previously been applied.

If a hirer chooses to no longer hire the space in our community centres as a result of the increase in charges, the hirer may relocate that activity to another premises, meaning that those people with protected characteristics could still access that service, albeit in an alternative venue. If a hirer chooses to pass on an increase in room hire costs to activity users, this could impact on the affordability of the activity to some users. However, any cost increases that are passed on should be modest and proportionate when compared against inflationary trends.

The proposal may also have a positive impact as it addresses inconsistencies in the current charging arrangements which will improve fairness for all current hirers.

## Disability

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to disability.

Although partner organisations providing services for older people who may have disabilities currently hire spaces, and residents who may have disabilities may also currently hire spaces, no disproportionate impact has been identified.

The majority of hire charges will be increasing by between 5% and 10%, with charges decreasing in a few instances, and a few instances where increases will be above 10% due to a heavy discretionary discount having previously been applied.

If a hirer chooses to no longer hire the space in our community centres as a result of the increase in charges, the hirer may relocate that activity to another premises, meaning that those people with protected characteristics could still access that service, albeit in an alternative venue. If a hirer chooses to pass on an increase in room hire costs to activity users, this could impact on the affordability of the activity to some users. However, any cost increases that are passed on should be modest and proportionate when compared against inflationary trends.

The proposal may also have a positive impact as it addresses inconsistencies in the current charging arrangements which will improve fairness for all current hirers.

### **Gender reassignment**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to gender reassignment.

If a hirer chooses to no longer hire the space in our community centres as a result of the increase in charges, the hirer may well relocate that activity to another premises, meaning that those people with protected characteristics could still access that service, albeit in an alternative venue. If a hirer chooses to pass on an increase in room hire costs to activity users, this could impact on the affordability of the activity to some users. However, any cost increases that are passed on should be modest and proportionate when compared against inflationary trends. The proposal may also have a positive impact as it addresses inconsistencies in the current charging arrangements which will improve fairness for all current hirers.

### **Marriage and civil partnership**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to marriage or civil partnership.

If a hirer chooses to no longer hire the space in our community centres as a result of the increase in charges, the hirer may well relocate that activity to another premises, meaning that those people with protected characteristics could still access that service, albeit in an alternative venue. If a hirer chooses to pass on an increase in room hire costs to activity users, this could impact on the affordability of the activity to some users. However, any cost increases that are passed on should be modest and proportionate when compared against inflationary trends. The proposal may also have a positive impact as it addresses inconsistencies in the current charging arrangements which will improve fairness for all current hirers.

### **Pregnancy and maternity**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to pregnancy or maternity.

Although partner organisations providing services for young or growing families currently hire spaces, and residents who have families may also currently hire spaces, no disproportionate impact has been identified.

The majority of hire charges will be increasing by between 5% and 10%, with charges decreasing in a few instances, and a few instances where increases will be above 10% due to a heavy discretionary discount having previously been applied.

If a hirer chooses to no longer hire the space in our community centres as a result of the increase in charges, the hirer may relocate that activity to another premises, meaning that those people with protected characteristics could still access that service, albeit in an alternative venue. If a hirer chooses to pass on an increase in room hire costs to activity users, this could impact on the affordability of the activity to some users. However, any cost increases that are passed on should be modest and proportionate when compared against inflationary trends.

The proposal may also have a positive impact as it addresses inconsistencies in the current charging arrangements which will improve fairness for all current hirers.

### **Race or ethnicity**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to race or ethnicity.

If a hirer chooses to no longer hire the space in our community centres as a result of the increase in charges, the hirer may well relocate that activity to another premises, meaning that those people with protected characteristics could still access that service, albeit in an alternative venue. If a hirer chooses to pass on an increase in room hire costs to activity users, this could impact on the affordability of the activity to some users. However, any cost increases that are passed on should be modest and proportionate when compared against inflationary trends. The proposal may also have a positive impact as it addresses inconsistencies in the current charging arrangements which will improve fairness for all current hirers.

### **Religion or belief (or lack of)**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to religion or belief.

If a hirer chooses to no longer hire the space in our community centres as a result of the increase in charges, the hirer may well relocate that activity to another premises, meaning that those people with protected characteristics could still access that service, albeit in an alternative venue. If a hirer chooses to pass on an increase in room hire costs to activity users, this could impact on the affordability of the activity to some users. However, any cost increases that are passed on should be modest and proportionate when compared against inflationary trends. The proposal may also have a positive impact as it addresses

inconsistencies in the current charging arrangements which will improve fairness for all current hirers.

## **Sex**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact.

If a hirer chooses to no longer hire the space in our community centres as a result of the increase in charges, the hirer may well relocate that activity to another premises, meaning that those people with protected characteristics could still access that service, albeit in an alternative venue. If a hirer chooses to pass on an increase in room hire costs to activity users, this could impact on the affordability of the activity to some users. However, any cost increases that are passed on should be modest and proportionate when compared against inflationary trends. The proposal may also have a positive impact as it addresses inconsistencies in the current charging arrangements which will improve fairness for all current hirers.

## **Sexual orientation**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to sexual orientation.

If a hirer chooses to no longer hire the space in our community centres as a result of the increase in charges, the hirer may well relocate that activity to another premises, meaning that those people with protected characteristics could still access that service, albeit in an alternative venue. If a hirer chooses to pass on an increase in room hire costs to activity users, this could impact on the affordability of the activity to some users. However, any cost increases that are passed on should be modest and proportionate when compared against inflationary trends. The proposal may also have a positive impact as it addresses inconsistencies in the current charging arrangements which will improve fairness for all current hirers

## **Other vulnerabilities**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to residents with other vulnerabilities.

Although partner organisations providing services for disadvantaged residents currently hire spaces, no disproportionate impact has been identified.

The majority of hire charges will be increasing by between 5% and 10%, with charges decreasing in a few instances, and a few instances where increases will be above 10% due to a heavy discretionary discount having previously been applied.

If a hirer chooses to no longer hire the space in our community centres as a result of the increase in charges, the hirer may relocate that activity to another premises, meaning that those people with protected characteristics could still access that service, albeit in an alternative venue. If a hirer chooses to pass on an increase in room hire costs to activity users, this could impact on the affordability of the activity to some users. However, any cost increases that are passed on should be modest and proportionate when compared against inflationary trends.

The proposal may also have a positive impact as it addresses inconsistencies in the current charging arrangements which will improve fairness for all current hirers.

### **Monitoring and review**

Monitoring will be undertaken of the impact of the changes to hire charges on patterns and users of room hire.

Charges will be regularly reviewed to ensure that they comply with the Council's fees and charges policy – as part of this, the results of monitoring (patterns and users of room hire). If this monitoring suggests a disproportionate negative impact on any protected characteristic groups, it would be possible for the Council to consider discretionary reductions.

## Proposal: Increase in car park charges

### Introduction

This document summarises – in an accessible format – the outcomes of the Council’s draft Equality Impact Assessment for changes to car park charges, including the outcome of the Stage 1 Relevance Screening Assessment and the Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment.

The proposal has been assessed by the Neighbourhood Services team in October 2022 and reviewed in January 2023.

### Summary of the proposal

The proposal is to increase the fees and charges in the off-street car parks owned and managed by the Council. This relates to the amounts charged for pay and display tickets and the amount charged for season tickets. On average prices are proposed to increase by 10% however due to rounding of figures the exact % increase for different time periods may be slightly higher or lower than this. In real terms, the price increase (as it is a % increase) is greater for longer term stays, therefore the cost increase to residents wishing to use council car parks for short stay trips (eg to run errands) will be small (on average 10p for a stay of up to 1 hour).

Off street parking and season ticket fees and charges have not been increased since 2016, a potential increase in 2019 was delayed by the pandemic, which affected revenue severely as people worked from home for the duration.

### Assessment of Relevance

The Stage 1 Relevance Assessment has concluded the following:

- The proposal will not introduce a change which will affect how services or functions are delivered
- The proposals will affect people who normally use council car parks for their parking.

The group(s) of people which might be affected by the proposal includes residents and businesses that may use the Council’s pay and display car parks. Additionally local businesses near the car parks may be affected.

Information is not held about the demographic or equality characteristics of pay and display car park users. However it is possible that those with limited mobility or with childcare

responsibilities are more reliant on private car and therefore our car parks. Blue badge holders are not required to pay for any parking in the RBBC car parks. Those on lower or no incomes may have a reduced ability to pay additional costs.

A detailed breakdown of the real cost of the % increase has been undertaken to determine the cost implication for different stay lengths at different car parks.

The protected characteristic groups that could be affected by the proposal have been identified as older people, those with disabilities, pregnant women or parents/carers with small children, along with residents with other vulnerabilities.

The following Equality Duty aims have been identified as being relevant:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Overall, the relevance assessment has concluded that this proposal has a relevance to equality of Low however a stage 2 equality impact assessment has been undertaken to consider any potential issues or mitigation arising.

The reason for a conclusion of low is:

- Those who hold a blue badge and who would therefore fall within the protected characteristics of age and/or disability are not required to pay for any parking.
- Parking charges have not been increased since 2016 and the proposed increases therefore do not exceed inflationary trends over this period. The real cost increase for short-stay trips (for example to enable residents to carry out errands) is on average 10p for a 1 hour stay. It remains the case that other parking and transport opportunities are also available for those who do not wish to pay this increased charge.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

The proposal in question does not intentionally target one or more protected characteristic groups.

The proposal does intentionally exclude one or more protected characteristic groups, specifically the changes will not impact those with Blue Badges who are exempt from paying charges in the Council's off street car parks.

It has been identified that the proposal does not have the potential to reduce inequality or improve outcomes for protected characteristic groups. Whilst it could be considered that those with Blue Badges (ie with disabilities) could be better off as a result, this is because everyone else will be required to pay slightly more for parking.

### **Information about the protected characteristics of the intended audience and/or people who might be affected**

In summary, the following information is available about the protected characteristic groups of the intended audience and / or people who might be affected by the proposal

#### **Age**

ONS mid-year estimates suggest that there are 27296 RBBC residents aged 65 or over (18.1% of the total population). More information about ward level distribution is provided in the Borough Equality report available at [www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/equality](http://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/equality).

#### **Disability**

1.6% of the population of the South East hold blue badges, so based on population of RBBC (149243) there are approximately 2388 blue badge holders eligible for free parking in RBBC car parks.

#### **Gender reassignment**

General information about the representation of trans-people in the population generally is available from national and regional annual population survey data from the ONS, however is not currently available at a borough level. National and regional data is reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

#### **Marriage and civil partnership**

General information about borough residents' partnership arrangements is available from the Census and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

#### **Pregnancy and maternity**

General information about live births and lone parents in the borough is available from the Census and other ONS data sources and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.



### **Race or ethnicity**

General information about the ethnicity of the borough's residents is available from the Census and the ONS Annual Population Survey and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

### **Religion or belief (or lack of)**

General information about the religion and/or beliefs of borough residents is available from the Census and the ONS Annual Population Survey and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

### **Sex**

General information about the gender profile of borough residents is available from the Census and ONS mid-year estimates and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

### **Sexual orientation**

General information about the representation of trans-people in the population generally is available from national and regional annual population survey data from the ONS, however is not currently available at a borough level. National and regional data is reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

### **Other vulnerabilities**

The Index of Multiple Deprivation - in 2019, Reigate & Banstead borough was ranked 276 out of 317 local authorities (where 1 = the most deprived). There are areas of RBBC where deprivation appears in the top 20% nationally.

### **Consultation**

The process of raising fees and charges for off street parking includes a four week consultation period published in the local press (Surrey Mirror), online and notices placed at the car parks. Comments raised as a result are considered prior to implementation of any rise.

This consultation will be taking place following the consideration of the main annual budget report. Any equality implications identified regarding the proposals to increase car parking charges emerging from this consultation will therefore be reviewed by officers in consultation with relevant Members of the Council and as necessary an updated equality impact assessment will be undertaken. Where any additional mitigation or monitoring requirements

are required, these will be addressed through powers set out in the Officer Scheme of Delegation, as set out in the Council's constitution.

### **Action to increase positive equality impacts or reduce negative equality impacts**

In preparing the proposal, the following actions have been taken to increase the positive impacts for people with protected characteristics:

A survey of car park users for the various sites could be considered to tease out the information on car park usage by the protected and vulnerable in future.

In preparing the proposal, the following actions have been taken to reduce potential negative impacts on people with protected characteristics:

Any rise in price is carefully considered so that as few people as possible are excluded from the car parks, this does however affect those with the least disposable income, a group not included within protected characteristics.

The Council will continue to enable those with Blue Badges to park for free, meaning that less mobile older people or those with disabilities will be unaffected by the price rises.

More generally, the Council is continuing to work with Surrey County Council to encourage walking and cycling as an alternative means of travel to reduce reliance on the private car, and to promote and support public transport usage. This includes through the provision of new walking/cycling infrastructure in town centres and other support to encourage behaviour change. This will provide more viable alternatives for those on lower incomes to avoid or minimise fuel and/or parking costs

### **Assessment of potential impact**

This section summarises our assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on protected characteristic groups.

#### **Age**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to age. Disproportionate negative impact is avoided by the continuation of fee Blue Badge parking for older residents with mobility issues as well as continued work with SCC to encourage active travel as an alternative to the private car. It remains the case that other parking and transport opportunities are also available for those who do not wish to pay this increased charge

### **Disability**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to disability. Disproportionate negative impact is avoided by the continuation of fee Blue Badge parking for residents with disabilities.

### **Gender reassignment**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate impact in relation to gender reassignment.

### **Marriage and civil partnership**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate impact in relation to marriage and civil partnership.

### **Pregnancy and maternity**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate impact in relation to pregnancy and maternity. It remains the case that other parking and transport opportunities are available for those who do not wish or are not able to pay the increased charge. In real terms the price increase for essential short (1hr) stays is small (10p on average). Continued work is ongoing with SCC to encourage active travel as an alternative to the private car.

### **Race or ethnicity**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate impact in relation to race or ethnicity.

### **Religion or belief (or lack of)**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate impact in relation to religion or belief.

### **Sex**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate impact in relation to sex.

### **Sexual orientation**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate impact in relation to sexual orientation.

### **Other vulnerabilities**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate impact in relation to other vulnerabilities, specifically those facing financial hardship. It remains the case that other parking and transport opportunities are available for those who do not wish or are not able to pay the

increased charge. In real terms the price increase for essential short (1hr) stays is small (10p on average). Continued work is ongoing with SCC to encourage active travel as an alternative to the private car.

### **Monitoring and review**

The parking team will continue to monitor levels of car parking usage / ticket sales to understand the overall impact of the proposals.

Consultation provides the opportunity for all car park users, businesses and residents to comment on the proposed rises. A survey of car park users will allow better understanding of the demographics and protected characteristics of those who use our car parks and further consideration within a new EIA carried out soon after. This will also inform any future proposals with respect of our car parks including impact mitigation measures.

## **Proposal: Increase in fees for issuing of Summons and obtaining Liability Orders for Council Tax and Business Rates**

### **Introduction**

This document summarises – in an accessible format – the outcomes of the Council’s draft Equality Impact Assessment for an increase in fees for the issuing of summons and obtaining liability orders for Council Tax and Business rates non-payment, including the outcome of the Stage 1 Relevance Screening Assessment and the Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment.

The proposal has been assessed by the Revenues, Benefits & Fraud service in November 2022 and finalised in January 2023.

### **Summary of the proposal**

The fees and charges for Summonses and Liability Orders for non-payment of Council Tax and NNDR have not been increased since 2016. The charges are being increased to reflect the increased costs to the Council for producing Summonses and progressing the outstanding debts to Magistrates Court. Costs are proposed to be increased by 9.1%.

### **Assessment of Relevance**

The Stage 1 Relevance Assessment has concluded the following:

- The proposal will not introduce a change which will affect how services or functions are delivered
- The proposals will affect people. Specifically the proposed increase in costs will put a further burden on impacted residents and businesses. However, prior to the summons stage, the Council issues bills, reminders and final notices to those residents who are not paying their council tax or business rates.

The groups of people which might be affected by the proposal are residents and businesses. In 2021/22 Summonses were issued to 2,938 residents and 167 businesses. Due to the closure of the Courts during 2020/21, this number will increase in 2022/23 as the Council looks to take recovery action against non-payers of Council Tax and Business Rates.

This proposal affects all persons who are liable to pay Council Tax and Business Rates in respect of their home (residential address) or business address, including those properties which are currently empty. The list of liable parties is maintained in the Council Tax & Business rates system. The Borough Equality Profile on the Council website provides

information about the protected characteristics of all residents within the borough. For Businesses, this will affect both individuals as well as limited companies.

The proposal could potentially impact individuals in any protected characteristic group.

The following Equality Duty aims have been identified as being relevant:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act

Overall, the relevance assessment has concluded that this proposal has a relevance to equality of Moderate. The outcome of the relevance assessment is therefore that a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment is required.

## Equality Impact Assessment

The proposal in question does not intentionally target one or more protected characteristic groups.

The proposal does not intentionally exclude one or more protected characteristic groups.

It has been identified that the proposal does not have the potential to reduce inequality or improve outcomes for protected characteristic groups.

### **Information about the protected characteristics of the intended audience and/or people who might be affected**

In summary, the following information is available about the protected characteristic groups of the intended audience and / or people who might be affected by the proposal

#### **Age**

General information about the age profile of borough residents who are owner occupiers is available from the Census and ONS mid year estimates and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report, which is available on the Council's website at [www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/equality](http://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/equality).

#### **Disability**

General information about the disability characteristics is available from the Census and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

### **Gender reassignment**

General information about the representation of trans-people in the population generally is available from national and regional annual population survey data from the ONS, however is not currently available at a borough level. National and regional data is reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

### **Marriage and civil partnership**

General information about borough residents' partnership arrangements is available from the Census and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

### **Pregnancy and maternity**

General information about live births and lone parents in the borough is available from the Census and other ONS data sources and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

### **Race or ethnicity**

General information about the ethnicity of the borough's residents is available from the Census and the ONS Annual Population Survey and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

### **Religion or belief (or lack of)**

General information about the religion and/or beliefs of borough residents is available from the Census and the ONS Annual Population Survey and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

### **Sex**

General information about the gender profile of borough residents is available from the Census and ONS mid-year estimates and reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

### **Sexual orientation**

General information about the representation of trans-people in the population generally is available from national and regional annual population survey data from the ONS, however is not currently available at a borough level. National and regional data is reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report.

## Other vulnerabilities

Information about the geographic spread of deprivation across the borough is available from the Index of Multiple Deprivation, which is reported in the Council's annual Borough Equality Information report. Specific information about those receiving Council Tax support is also held by the Council.

## Consultation

The Council conducted a public consultation on its draft budget proposals between 21 November 2022 and 16 January 2023, inviting responses from community members and local organisations on the proposals.

Overall, 70% of respondents supported the proposal. No additional impacts of the proposal were identified by the responses to this consultation in relation to any protected characteristics or other vulnerabilities. The results of the consultation and the feedback provided are captured within an annex to the budget report.

## Action to increase positive equality impacts or reduce negative equality impacts

The increase in fees for Summonses and Liability Orders will affect any residents that do not maintain payments of Council Tax or Business Rates. Before this stage, there is a recovery process in place to give people the opportunity to engage with the Council and to bring their payments up to date. There are measures in place to assist any residents who are financially vulnerable including the discretion to reduce Council Tax liability under Section 13(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Children and persons under the age of 18 are not legally liable for Council Tax or Business Rates and therefore not affected by this proposal.

## Assessment of potential impact

This section summarises our assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on protected characteristic groups.

### Age

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to age. There is a recovery process in place to give people the opportunity to engage with the Council and to bring their payments up to date and measures in place to assist any residents who are financially vulnerable including the discretion to reduce Council Tax liability.



### **Disability**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to disability. There is a recovery process in place to give people the opportunity to engage with the Council and to bring their payments up to date and measures in place to assist any residents who are financially vulnerable including the discretion to reduce Council Tax liability.

### **Gender reassignment**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to gender reassignment. There is a recovery process in place to give people the opportunity to engage with the Council and to bring their payments up to date and measures in place to assist any residents who are financially vulnerable including the discretion to reduce Council Tax liability.

### **Marriage and civil partnership**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to marriage and civil partnership. There is a recovery process in place to give people the opportunity to engage with the Council and to bring their payments up to date and measures in place to assist any residents who are financially vulnerable including the discretion to reduce Council Tax liability.

### **Pregnancy and maternity**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to pregnancy and maternity. There is a recovery process in place to give people the opportunity to engage with the Council and to bring their payments up to date and measures in place to assist any residents who are financially vulnerable including the discretion to reduce Council Tax liability.

### **Race or ethnicity**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to race or ethnicity. There is a recovery process in place to give people the opportunity to engage with the Council and to bring their payments up to date and measures in place to assist any residents who are financially vulnerable including the discretion to reduce Council Tax liability.

### **Religion or belief (or lack of)**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to religion or belief. There is a recovery process in place to give people the opportunity to engage with the

Council and to bring their payments up to date and measures in place to assist any residents who are financially vulnerable including the discretion to reduce Council Tax liability.

## **Sex**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to sex or gender. There is a recovery process in place to give people the opportunity to engage with the Council and to bring their payments up to date and measures in place to assist any residents who are financially vulnerable including the discretion to reduce Council Tax liability.

## **Sexual orientation**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to sexual orientation. There is a recovery process in place to give people the opportunity to engage with the Council and to bring their payments up to date and measures in place to assist any residents who are financially vulnerable including the discretion to reduce Council Tax liability.

## **Other vulnerabilities**

The assessment has indicated no disproportionate negative impact in relation to other vulnerabilities. There is a recovery process in place to give people the opportunity to engage with the Council and to bring their payments up to date and measures in place to assist any residents who are financially vulnerable including the discretion to reduce Council Tax liability.

## **Monitoring and review**

The Local Council Tax Support scheme is in place to support all residents who are on a low income and experiencing financial hardship. Residents that already receive support through this scheme will see their support increased in line with the increase. Additionally, reductions of Council Tax liability can also be made at the discretion of the Council under relevant legislation. The Council will monitor numbers of residents in receipt of Council Tax support to ensure their continued effectiveness.

The Summons stage is towards the end of the recovery process, and prior to this all residents and businesses receive bills and reminders where Council Tax and Business Rates remain unpaid, thereby giving all groups the opportunity to engage with the Council.

The Council will monitor the number of Summonses and Liability Orders granted, as well as the levels of residents receiving Council Tax Support.