

Equality Impact Assessment [version 2.9]



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| Title: Budget Proposal Static Debt Management & Duplicate Payment | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Budget Proposal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changing |
| Directorate: Resources | Lead Officer name: Kevin Smith |
| Service Area: Finance | Lead Officer role: Revenues Operation Manager |

Step 1: What do we want to do?

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment is to assist decision makers in understanding the impact of proposals as part of their duties under the Equality Act 2010. Detailed guidance to support completion can be found here [Equality Impact Assessments \(EqIA\) \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

This assessment should be started at the beginning of the process by someone with a good knowledge of the proposal and service area, and sufficient influence over the proposal. It is good practice to take a team approach to completing the equality impact assessment. Please contact the [Equality and Inclusion Team](#) early for advice and feedback.

1.1 What are the aims and objectives/purpose of this proposal?

Briefly explain the purpose of the proposal and why it is needed. Describe who it is aimed at and the intended aims / outcomes. Where known also summarise the key actions you plan to undertake. Please use [plain English](#), avoiding jargon and acronyms. Equality Impact Assessments are viewed by a wide range of people including decision-makers and the wider public.

Budget context:

Bristol City Council is required by law to set a balanced budget however we face a potential gap in our core budget next year. With this challenge the budget cannot be balanced without additional funding, making greater efficiencies (doing the same for less money) or by transforming the way we do things.

The Council has defined statutory responsibilities, but deliver against a far broader agenda, providing universal services benefiting the whole community, and targeted services aimed at individuals, communities with particular needs, and businesses – administered by our workforce, city partners, stakeholder organisations and commissioned services.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been far reaching, with a lasting impact on our people and our economy. Our finances are stretched to the limit, and the UK Government has stopped funding local COVID-19 responses. Up and down the country councils are facing this funding crisis with less money to keep services going. This is because more money is needed to: help citizens with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; support low-income households and local businesses in need of support post-COVID-19; support more people than ever with mental health and social care services; and meet the rising need and cost of home to school transport for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) etc. At the same time, the pandemic saw us receive less income from business rates, commercial rentals, parking, sports facilities, and our museums, shops and cafes.

The [Medium Term Financial Plan](#) underpins the Council's financial planning process and outlines the approach we will take to meet the challenges presented by focusing primarily on delivering efficiencies, service re-design programmes which cut across directorate boundaries, and increasing external income and Invest to Save revenue.

This proposal will implement enhanced processes for more effectively tackling static and written off debt. Re-working individual cases using a combination of tracing (e.g. gone away, not known at address),

recovery and other techniques to collect debt that would otherwise remain unproductive, identifying invoices that have been submitted for payment, that match invoices submitted and paid previously. Risk score each invoice to allow our finance teams to investigate the potential duplication and where appropriate take action accordingly to recover the payments.

These are enhanced process improvements – attributed to charges previously made, invoiced for goods and services and have gone through standard processes.

1.2 Who will the proposal have the potential to affect?

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Bristol City Council workforce | <input type="checkbox"/> Service users | <input type="checkbox"/> The wider community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commissioned services | <input type="checkbox"/> City partners / Stakeholder organisations | |
| Additional comments: | | |

1.3 Will the proposal have an equality impact?

Could the proposal affect access levels of representation or participation in a service, or does it have the potential to change e.g. quality of life: health, education, or standard of living etc.?

If 'No' explain why you are sure there will be no equality impact, then skip steps 2-4 and request review by Equality and Inclusion Team.

If 'Yes' complete the rest of this assessment, or if you plan to complete the assessment at a later stage please state this clearly here and request review by the Equality and Inclusion Team.

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|------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | [please select] |
|------------------------------|--|-----------------|

These are enhanced process improvements – attributed to charges previously made, invoiced for goods and services. There are standard processes improvements and as such do not have a negative or positive equality impact. Therefore, we do not envisage there will be an equality impact on staff or services users.

Step 5: Review

The Equality and Inclusion Team need at least five working days to comment and feedback on your EqIA. EqIAs should only be marked as reviewed when they provide sufficient information for decision-makers on the equalities impact of the proposal. Please seek feedback and review from the Equality and Inclusion Team before requesting sign off from your Director¹.

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| Equality and Inclusion Team Review: Reviewed by the Equality and Inclusion Team | Director Sign-Off: Denise Murray: Service Director - Finance |
| Date: 22/12/2021 | Date: 22/12/21 |

¹ Review by the Equality and Inclusion Team confirms there is sufficient analysis for decision makers to consider the likely equality impacts at this stage. This is not an endorsement or approval of the proposal.