Service and Resource Planning 2017/18 -2018/19
Cross-cutting Service and Community Impact Assessment

Introduction and approach to budget setting

The County Council has made savings over the last six years by taking difficult decisions that have involved changing the services delivered to match the reduction in resources, in an environment of a rising demand for services. Since 2010 we have saved around £300m by being more efficient and targeting funding at service users and communities with the greatest needs.

The councils budget for this year, 2016/17 required us to deliver the biggest amount of savings £53 m from any year since we first had funding reductions in 2010/11. In 2017/18 we will have to save a further £38m.

The main new proposal this year is the transformation programme which details how the council will reduce £15 m over the next two years to 2018/19. The transformation savings will result from four different work streams that will deliver a more efficient, streamlined local authority. The savings that will be identified through these work streams will take time to redesign and implement and at this stage it is not possible to take a detailed assessment of the specific equalities impact. However detailed impact assessments will be undertaken as the scope and scale of transformation develops to ensure the potential impact on different individuals, groups and communities are fully considered and mitigated where possible.

There are a very small number of new proposals for changes to services this year as many of the identified savings for 2017/18 are a result of decisions taken last year, and the potential impact of this on individuals and communities was considered in 2016/17. Many of these proposals have now been implemented and the actual impact of these savings will continue to be monitored.

There are two proposals which were identified last year which were at an early stage and these have now been revised and have been included this year. The proposals detail possible options for changing the support we offer to Carers and Daytime Support which both have a number of options that are currently out for public consultation. Both of these proposals will have an impact on specific groups of people and the mitigation for the impact is contained in the individual SCIAs.

Evidence / Intelligence

We hold and actively use data and other evidence to ensure that the Council, as far as is possible, is aware of and able to serve the needs of particular communities and groups in Oxfordshire. Key datasets about the Council are available on the Oxfordshire Insight website, for use by staff, partner organisations, and the wider community. We use all these tools as a guide to support individual service level impact assessments and ensure that decisions that are being taken, as far as possible, protect services for those most in need.

Overarching Impact Assessment

Age & Disability

17 % of the population is over 65 and this is expected to increase to over 20 % by 2013. Numbers of the very elderly (85 years plus) are projected to more than double by 2013.

In the 2011 Census, 14% of residents reported having a limiting long-term illness, health problem or disability which limited their daily activities or work.

Older people and those with disabilities are more likely to be users of adult social care services than the rest of the population. There are three options currently out for public consultation to remodel daytime support. The potential positive impacts of the remodelling of services is through the development of new opportunities to fill existing gaps and more flexible council provided support, meeting a wide range of needs. However there will be potential negative impacts for some people with daytime support needs and their carers. Mitigation for the impact of these changes include support and funding for community and voluntary services to continue and transition support for people affected. A wide range of people who use services have been involved in the early discussions about the development of the new models and the council have taken these into account in developing a new,sustainable model.

There is evidence that the majority of carers in the county are aged 65 or over, and a significant percentage of carers have a long term health condition or disability themselves. The proposal for removing or reducing the level of personal budget award to carers has three options that will be confirmed in early 2017 following the feedback of a public consultation. The agreed option will have an impact on carers who have been currently receiving a personal budget and an impact on those who haven't had a personal budget but might in the future.

Sex

Women use public services more than men. For example there are more women in old age than men and therefore women are more likely to access social care and are more likely to spend a much greater proportion of their time on caring responsibilities

– for elderly relatives. The impact of the savings proposals from adult social care has the potential to be significant for this group.

Over 70% of the council's workforce is female and changes in staffing might affect women in greater numbers. We will continue to carefully monitor the impact of changes to the workforce as a result of the budget proposals, to ensure employment policies are applied fairly and to minimise any disproportionate impact on any particular groups.

Rural and Urban Communities

Oxfordshire is a mixture of urban and rural areas; two of Oxfordshire's five districts (West and South Oxfordshire) are among the most rural in England. Vale of White horse also has a majority of residents in rural settlements, and Cherwell has a significant rural population. At the same time, two-thirds of the population live in built up areas with a population of 10,000 or more. The largest settlement is Oxford.

The remodelling of daytime support could lead to an increased risk of social isolation in more isolated, rural communities without public transport links.

With Digitalisation of frontline services there would be a potential for disadvantaging those rural areas that have lower levels of access to broadband although the current Better Broadband for Oxfordshire programme will raise the access across the county. Library provision will also provide a community hub focus to ensure rural areas have access and support.

Deprivation

Oxfordshire has low overall levels of deprivation relative to England overall. However there are ten areas in Oxford City and four in Banbury and one in Abingdon which fall within the 20% most deprived areas in the county.

Deprived communities and individuals are often more frequent and intense users of many public services. The overall budget proposals have been developed with the objective of effectively targeting services to those in most need. With regards to the proposed changes to the carers grant and day opportunities there may be a greater impact on individuals in deprived communities. However we will continue to work with voluntary and community partners to help mitigate the impact of changes.

Deprived communities and individuals may also be less likely to access digital services however the digital first work stream of the transformation programme will ensure that although the website will be the main channel for contact, telephone and face to face will continue for individuals who are unable to access a digital service.

Other protected characteristics

At this stage we have not identified any specific impacts of our proposals on people sharing the protected characteristics listed below, beyond those issues discussed above.
- Sexual orientation

- Race
- Religion/belief
- Marriage/civil partnerships
- Gender reassignment

This will be kept under review as more detailed proposals are developed and mitigating actions identified wherever possible.