

Cross-Cutting Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA)

Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21-2023/24

Context

Oxfordshire County Council has delivered significant savings over the last decade, both as part of our role in bringing down the public sector deficit through reduced government funding, and in order to reinvest in meeting demand growth and funding priorities.

The County Council's budget is designed to enable us to meet our key priorities for a Thriving Oxfordshire – thriving people, thriving communities, and a thriving economy. This is achieved through priority-based budget setting and listening to residents so that we can continuously improve our services and provide value for money.

Meeting the rising demand of caring for older people, adults with disabilities and keeping children safe remain key priorities.

To meet these pressures, we need to work more efficiently, redesign our services delivery to reflect the changing needs of our communities and maximise our income and investment opportunities.

Service and Community Impact Assessments

At each annual budget, and when major changes are proposed outside of the budget setting process, Service and Community Impact Assessments (SCIAs) enable us to review the potential impact of new and updated policies and service delivery decisions on specific individuals, communities, partner organisations and providers.

A SCIA does not guarantee that a change will never have a negative impact but it is intended to ensure policies meet the diverse needs of individuals. SCIAs also ensure that the outcomes of a proposal are considered, with the potential benefits maximised and possible challenges mitigated, to the extent possible within the overall funding available.

We publish the SCIAs produced every year during the budget setting process, in addition to completing an overarching SCIA drawing together the information from across the budget into a coherent high-level assessment.

In considering the impact of budget proposals before they are formally agreed, the Council undertakes a detailed process of democratic and community engagement. This includes:

- Using the Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment of health and wellbeing needs, and the associated Equalities Briefing, to consider the impact of proposals as they are drawn up, as SCIAs for each proposal are developed, and as the cross-cutting SCIA is prepared. The Council's

JSNA can be found here: <http://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/joint-strategic-needs-assessment>

- A democratic process including agreement of proposals by Cabinet, analysis and comment on those proposals by Performance Scrutiny, and adoption of a budget by Full Council, at each of which the public, and representatives of particular organisations or population groups, are entitled to request to speak, in order

Individual SCIA's are produced for each proposal to ensure the appropriate level of detailed analysis is completed and action taken where identified to mitigate any potential negative impacts and maximise potential benefits and so that all decisions are taken with full understanding of their potential implications.

Equalities

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 ("the 2010 Act") imposes a duty on the Council to give due regard to three needs in exercising its functions. This proposal is such a function. The three needs are:

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

Complying with section 149 may involve treating some people more favourably than others, but only to the extent that that does not amount to conduct which is otherwise unlawful under the new Act.

The need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages which are connected to a relevant protected characteristic and which are suffered by persons who share that characteristic,
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and which are different from the needs other people, and
- encourage those who share a relevant characteristic to take part in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such people is disproportionately low.
- take steps to meet the needs of disabled people which are different from the needs of people who are not disabled and include steps to take account of a person's disabilities.

The need to foster good relations between different groups involves having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

These protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability

- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership

Assessing Service and Resource Planning Proposals:

Potential Impact on Individuals and Communities:

- **Age**

Oxfordshire's population during the last JSNA assessment in March 2019 was estimated to be 682,400. The 85+ population is predicted to increase by 63% (10,900) by 2032.

The proposal to reduce care home placements by 1% (approximately 7-8 placements) is more likely to impact on older people. Our overarching aim is to ensure that people are supported to live in their own homes as independently as possible for as long as possible. In order to mitigate the loss of care home placement packages, better support will be provided to enable people to stay in their own homes which is in line with the wishes of older people who were consulted as part of developing our Older People's Strategy.

For younger people, the JSNA highlights that Oxfordshire has a higher than average rate of people aged 0-4 and 20-24 but this includes students attending the universities.

The proposal to reduce floating support for people at risk of homelessness by up to 5% may result in greater pressure on adult and young people's homelessness pathway services and may have an adverse effect on families, particularly children who may need to move or miss education if at risk of homelessness. Further work will be required to fully understand the potential impact of this and develop appropriate mitigating actions, working closely with Children and Family Services, providers, and service users. A full impact assessment will be developed alongside the proposal itself.

The proposal to increase self-testing services for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV as part of the Integrated Sexual Health Service (ISHS) may impact more positively on younger people. The proposal involves users accessing self-sampling testing kits through the post rather than needed to attend a sexual health clinic for a face-to-face appointment. Intelligence gathered from service users as part of moving to the tariff-based system suggested that an online service may appeal more to those aged under 25 than those aged 35+. In order to appeal to all age groups, face-to-face appointments will still be offered alongside the promotion of the digital service.

- **Disability**

The JSNA highlights that around 16% of the South East population has a known disability which would equate to around 129,700 people in Oxfordshire.

Proposals to reduce care home placements by 1% will be offset by facilitating people to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible and this would include those living with long-term health conditions and disabilities.

The Learning Disability outreach service currently supports 51 adults with a learning disability. The proposal will see services purchased by individuals through their personal budgets when the contract comes to an end. To mitigate the effects of this change, the Council is currently developing its strength-based approach to community services which will focus on prevention and may result in lower demand for the service. For individuals affected by the change, the Council will work with providers to understand how provision can be prioritised and delivered. A full impact assessment will be developed alongside the proposal itself to consider the potential impact and mitigating actions.

In Oxfordshire, whilst levels of smoking are generally relatively lower, it is noticeably higher for those with a serious mental illness (36.4% locally, compared to 38.5% regionally and 40.5% nationally) and 22.7% of those living with a long-term mental health condition are likely to be smokers. These groups will continue to be a priority area for advice and support.

- **Gender reassignment**

No specific issues relating to gender reassignment have been assessed as likely to be impacted as a result of this budget round. The Integrated Sexual Health Service (ISHS) already provides services for those who have undergone gender reassignment and will continue to do so.

- **Pregnancy and maternity**

Whilst smoking levels in the County are relatively low at 10.4%, the proportion of women who smoke whilst they are pregnant is 7.5% in the County compared to 9.7% regionally and 10% nationally. The proposal to move from a universal smoking cessation service towards a targeted service that focuses on tobacco control will therefore continue to have pregnant women and young mothers who smoke as a high priority area for targeted support. Further engagement will take place with smokers and non-smokers as part of a wider needs assessment for the service.

- **Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality**

In 2011 107,000 people in Oxfordshire were of an ethnic minority background which was an increase of 60,900 from 2001. The JSNA highlights that around 16% of the county's population is from an ethnic minority background.

The floating support service that aims to prevent people being made homeless is often used by Black and Ethnic Minority communities, particularly Asian women and non-white British people. Proposed reductions in the service may be more likely to affect these groups. To mitigate this, service providers will be encouraged to collaborate and share expertise to ensure that services are sensitive to cultural needs and individuals are able to access appropriate support. A full impact assessment will be developed alongside the proposal, including engagement with current providers and service users, to inform further mitigating actions where appropriate.

- **Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief**

No specific issues relating to religion or belief have been assessed as likely to be impacted as a result of this budget round.

- **Sex**

Asian women are a more common user of the homeless prevention floating support service, it is our intention that we encourage service providers to work together and share good practice to be aware of cultural sensitivities and to ensure that this group continues to receive the support that they need.

- **Sexual orientation**

Our sexual health screening services actively encourage men who have sex with men to get regular tests as this group is at higher risk of STIs and HIV, the proposed budget changes will not affect promotion to this group.

- **Marriage and civil partnership**

No specific issues relating to marriage and civil partnership have been assessed as likely to be impacted as a result of this budget round.

- **Rural communities**

Oxfordshire is the most rural county in the South East and the majority of residents are concentrated in Oxford city centre. Rural districts have a much higher proportion of older people. In 2017 the older population made up around 20% of people living in rural areas compared to 12% in the city centre this means that our proposal to reduce care home placements by 1% may be more likely to affect people living in rural areas if they are older.

The proposal to increase the availability of online/self-testing STI screening may be a benefit to people living in rural areas as they would otherwise need to travel to attend a face-to-face appointment.

- **Areas of deprivation**

Oxfordshire has low overall levels of deprivation relative to England overall. However there are ten areas in Oxford City, four in Banbury and one in Abingdon which fall within the 20% most deprived areas in the country, with two of the Oxford city areas falling within the 10% most deprived. Inequalities also exist beyond these specific areas, with averages across an area not always telling the story of the individuals and families within it.

These communities and individuals are necessarily often more frequent users of many public services. The overall budget proposals have been developed with the objective of effectively targeting services so that we continue to meet our obligations to protect the most vulnerable and fulfil our statutory duties.

The proposal to increase the availability of online/self-testing STI screening may benefit people living in areas of deprivation. Online service will increase access to service which will be delivered to the choice and convenience of service users.

17% of people who work in routine and manual occupations in Oxfordshire are likely to be smokers (compared to 25% regionally and 25.4% nationally) and are also more likely to live in areas of deprivation. This group will therefore remain a priority area for support to stop smoking.

Potential Impact on Staff:

Proposals to reduce the number of hot desks available at Jubilee House will have a potential impact on Oxfordshire County Council staff that use these facilities as there will be fewer places to work at this location. Consultation with staff has been undertaken prior to the proposal and has highlighted that current hot desks are not used at full capacity; staff will also be able to use Wi-Fi facilities in breakout areas if all hotdesking facilities are in use.

Potential Impact on other Council services:
--

Proposals to reduce community outreach facilities for adults with learning disabilities and people at risk of homelessness may increase demand on other service areas including those delivering statutory services. There may also be increased work for Customer Services, complaints and social work teams as any changes are implemented, this will be mitigated by preparing a full communications plan to ensure staff are aware of changes and how to signpost to advice.

A full needs assessment will be undertaken prior to implementing any proposed changes in order to understand the potential impact on other service areas and we will continue to work with voluntary and partner organisations to explore alternative methods of service delivery.

Potential Impact on Providers:

The proposal to remove four minor civils gangs who currently support the highways maintenance programme and minor improvements scheme may impact on our provider (SKANSKA) but mitigations are in place to redeploy individuals affected wherever possible.

Reducing the overall number of care placements may put additional pressure on services that provide support at home, the Council is committed to developing a range of different services that provide this care as set out in its most recent Market Position Statement.

Social Value

If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area.

How might the proposal improve the economic well-being of the relevant area?

The budget proposals are intended to maximise the economic wellbeing of the area, both by working more efficiently, redesigning our services delivery to reflect the changing needs of our communities and maximising our income and investment opportunities.

Meeting the rising demand of caring for older people, adults with disabilities and keeping children safe remain key priorities. This includes ensuring that any negative financial impact on individuals is minimised and that the sustainability of provision is maintained and improved.

How might the proposal improve the environmental well-being of the relevant area?

The Council has acknowledged the climate emergency, and made a number of commitments to address this by reducing its own use of carbon and encouraging others to do the same. All proposals have been developed within this context, and will be tested to ensure their climate and overall environmental impact is minimised.

Some proposals (such as implementation of LED streetlighting) are intended to have a direct positive impact on the environment, whereas others (such as reducing care home placements and people being supported in their own homes for longer) could have an indirect impact by reducing people's need to travel to visit family and friends.