

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Executive Member for Policy and Performance)	Council	1 March 2011

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF 2011/2012 BUDGET PROPOSALS

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide Members with an assessment of the impact of the budget proposals on equality, health and sustainability

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. It is recommended that Members use the information provided in this report and the appendices to inform the budget process to ensure that fair financial decisions are made.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. Under equality legislation in the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have legal duties to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality with regard to race, disability and gender, including gender reassignment, as well as to promote good race relations. The law requires that this duty to pay 'due regard' be demonstrated in the decision making process, including financial decisions
4. To meet this requirement in relation to the budget proposals 2011/2012, work has been undertaken to assess the impact of the proposals made for the 2011/2012 budget. This report presents the findings and recommendations based on this work.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

5. To ensure that we are fulfilling the duties required by law in relation to the Equality Act, and that decisions are made on an equitable basis.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

6. To not undertake the impact assessment process of the budget, this was rejected on the basis that it is the most suitable way to meet statutory requirements and ensure the needs of customers are met.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

7. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Strong Family Support		Education and Jobs	
Being Healthy		Pride in Quality Homes and Clean Neighbourhoods	
Safe Respectful Communities		Quality Community Services and Spaces	
Vibrant Local Economy		Thriving Town Centre, Local Attractions and Villages	
A Council that is a consistently Top Performing Organisation and Delivers Excellent Value for Money			✓

BACKGROUND

8. Assessing the potential equality impact of proposed changes to policies, procedures and practices is one of the key ways in which public authorities can show 'due regard' in terms of the Equality Act. This includes financial decisions, as set out in the recent guidance *Using the Equalities Duties to make fair financial decisions*, as published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, September 2010
9. These assessments must be carried out at a formative stage in the development of a policy, procedure or practice, and can take any form appropriate as long as the legal duties are met. The framework that has been used in this process is to undertake integrated impact assessments - this includes an assessment of equality, sustainability, health, and reputation.
10. To support the decision making process around the development of the budget, a series of impact assessments have been undertaken on proposals that could have an impact on customers or staff. These assessments are available as background papers to this report. An overall impact assessment has been developed on the proposed budget. This includes a consideration of the potential impact of the whole budget, as well as including the findings of the more detailed assessments. The overall assessment is attached at Appendix A.

RESULTS OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

11. Following both the individual and overall assessments, a number of recommendations have been made to ensure that the impact of any changes proposed do not have a negative impact if they are approved. Those recommendations are set out the bullet points below:
- Introduce different parking meters – ensure there is consideration of the potential additional needs of disabled people when procuring new parking meters.
 - Inflationary rise in fees and charges – monitor the take up of services, particularly market stalls to ensure that any adverse affects are mitigated and managed promptly.
12. In addition to the assessment undertaken on the proposals contained within the budget, an impact assessment has been undertaken on the Council's restructures policy. This is available as a background paper to this report. It recommends that monitoring is undertaken during each restructure to ensure that no one equality target group is adversely affected by changes. This monitoring has been undertaken on restructures completed during 2010/2011, and the affects of restructures have not adversely affected any equality target group.

13. In line with the Council's Equality Scheme, any further changes made to service delivery as part of the budget process will be assessed to ensure that any potentially negative impacts are mitigated or avoided.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

14. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	✓
Legal		No significant implications in this area	

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS

15. This report support the Council in fulfilling its duty to have due regard to eliminate discrimination and promote equality, as required by the Equality Act. Members should consider the implications and recommended actions during their decision making.

DONNA HALL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Chris Sinnott	5337	16 February 2011	Budget Impact Report

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Integrated Impact Assessments for budget proposals.	16 February 2011	Policy Team shared drive	Union Street Offices
Equality Impact Assessment on Restructure Policy			

Integrated Impact Assessment

Name of the service, policy, strategy or project being assessed	Overall budget proposals
What does the service, policy, strategy or project do?	Makes proposals for the budget setting process for 2011/2012. NB: Individual impact assessments have been undertaken on proposals that could potentially lead to a reduction in investment in service or potentially change the way in which customers access services. This assessment correlates the results of those separate assessments.
Who is it intended to benefit and how?	Chorley residents – by considering these policy options the Council will be better placed to protect priorities and frontline services.
Officer responsible for completing the assessment	Sarah James and Chris Sinnott
Date of Assessment	25/01/2011

Equality Impact Assessment	Yes	No	Evidence		
1. Have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that this particular activity will create problems which are specific to them?		✓	It is not appropriate to undertake consultation at this stage in the consideration proposals, although some specific areas may need further consultation if agreed.		
What potential impact does this activity make to:					
	P	N	U	NI	Evidence
2. Equality of opportunity amongst customer groups of different racial backgrounds (Race)				✓	No proposals should have a differential affect on any customers because of these characteristics.
3. Equality of opportunity amongst male and female customers (Sex)				✓	No proposals should have a differential affect on any customers because of these characteristics.
4. Equality of opportunity amongst able bodied customers and customers with a disability (Disability)			✓		Discussion on this is included in the assessment of parking fees proposals. <i>The proposed new ticket machines should not impact differently upon those with a disability. Many will be blue badge holders and so will not need to use the machines. Consideration, however, should be given to the possible needs of disabled people who do not qualify for a blue badge when procuring new machines.</i>
5. Equality of opportunity amongst customers of different ages (Age)				✓	No proposals should have a differential affect on any customers because of these characteristics.
6. Equality of opportunity amongst customers of different sexual orientations (Sexual Orientation)				✓	No proposals should have a differential affect on any customers because of these characteristics.
7. Equality of opportunity amongst customers of different religions (Religion or Belief)				✓	No proposals should have a differential affect on any customers because of these characteristics.
8. Equality of opportunity amongst customers that live in different parts of Chorley (Rurality)				✓	No proposals should have a differential affect on any customers because of these characteristics.

Sustainability Impact Assessment	P	N	U	NI	Evidence
What potential impact does this activity make upon:					
<p>1. The effective protection of Chorley's environment. Possible issues to consider are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limiting waste generation & encouraging recycling • Limiting factors that contribute to climate change • Protection of and improving access to the natural environment 				✓	No proposals should have a detrimental effect on effective protection of the environment.
<p>2. Prudent usage of natural resources. Possible issues to consider are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limiting use of non sustainable energy, water, minerals and materials • Reducing the need to travel and encouraging walking, cycling and low carbon modes of travel 				✓	No proposals should have a detrimental effect on prudent use of natural resources.
<p>3. Social progress amongst all of Chorley's communities. Possible issues to consider are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for education and information • Provision of appropriate and sustainable housing • Reduced fear of crime and community safety • Access to cultural and leisure facilities • Encouraging engagement and supporting volunteering 			✓		<p>There is an unclear potential effect if the proposals around increasing fees and charges are agreed.</p> <p>There is a potential that customers from lower incomes could be more affected by any increase, although this would be mitigated by limiting the increase to an inflationary rise.</p>
<p>4. A vibrant local economy in Chorley. Possible issues to consider are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting better quality jobs and developing the skills of local residents • Supporting local business by procuring goods and 			✓		<p>There is a potentially positive impact if the proposals around investment in the town centre are agreed.</p> <p>There is a potentially negative impact if the proposals around increasing fees and charges are agreed:</p> <p><i>There is a potential that increase in fees on the markets could discourage some stall holders, although this should be mitigated by</i></p>

Sustainability Impact Assessment	P	N	U	NI	Evidence
services locally <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening links with public, private and third sector partners 					<i>limiting the increase to an inflationary rise, and by the proposal to invest in the town centre.</i>

Health Impact Assessment	P	N	U	NI	Evidence
What potential impact does this activity make upon:					
1. Encouraging healthy lifestyles across Chorley's population. Possible issues to consider are; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diet and nutrition Exercise and physical activity Substance use: tobacco, alcohol and drugs Risk taking behaviour Education and learning, or skills 				✓	No proposals should have a detrimental effect on encouraging healthy lifestyles.
2. Promoting a positive social environment for all of Chorley's residents. Possible issues to consider are; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social status Employment (paid or unpaid) Social/family support Stress/Mental Health Income 	✓				The proposed investment in the town centre would have a potentially positive impact in encouraging a thriving town centre and therefore a positive social environment for residents to enjoy.

Health Impact Assessment	P	N	U	NI	Evidence
<p>3. Promoting a positive physical environment across Chorley. Possible issues to consider are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living conditions • Working conditions • Accidental injuries or public safety • Transmission of infectious disease 				✓	No proposals should have a detrimental effect on the physical environment.

Reputational Impact Assessment	P	N	U	NI	Evidence
What potential impact does this activity make upon:					
<p>1. Chorley Council's reputation. Possible issues to consider are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proving to residents that we provide value for money • Informing and engaging with local residents • Building trust and confidence in Chorley Council • Improving customer satisfaction with council services • Chorley Council's role as a community leader 				✓	<p>The proposed investment in the town centre would have a potentially positive impact on Chorley Council's reputation.</p> <p>The proposals regarding an inflationary rise of fees and charges, introduction of different parking meters, and consultation may have a detrimental impact on the Council's reputation. Discussion about these is included in the relevant assessments.</p>
<p>2. Our ability to deliver the Corporate Strategy. Issues to consider are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community aspirations are delivered through the efficient use of resources and performance management ▪ An excellent community leader ▪ A provider and procurer of high quality, coordinated 				✓	Overall, the Corporate Strategy will continue to be delivered through key projects and business improvement planning.

Reputational Impact Assessment	P	N	U	NI	Evidence
public services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Excellent council that is continually striving to improve ▪ Reducing the council's energy consumption 					
3. Our ability to deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy. Issues to consider are; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Family Support • Education and Jobs • Being Healthy • Pride in Quality Homes and Clean Communities • Safe Respectful Communities • Quality Community Services and Spaces • Vibrant Local Economy • Thriving Town Centre, Local Attractions and Villages • Sustainable Places and Transport 				✓	Overall, the Community Strategy will continue to be delivered through the SCS Delivery Plans.