

Equality and Safety Impact Assessment

The **public sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the council to better understand the potential impact of the budget proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Brief Description of Proposal	Local response to welfare reforms
Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)	The people likely to be hardest hit by the impact of the reforms are people living in priority neighbourhoods, on housing estates, traditionally ‘hard to reach’ groups such as young single people, lone parents, disabled people, BME groups and those where English is not their first language as well as older people close to retirement.
Summary of Impact and Issues	The Welfare Reforms represent the biggest changes to benefits in 60 years. All working age people on benefits will see some form of reduced income, with the only way to change this to move off benefits and into work, at a time of increased economic austerity. Those that are most affected are living in the most deprived areas of the city and are already experiencing poverty. This reduced income is likely to not only increase financial hardship and lead to increased debt but also affect other aspects of their lives including relationships and health and life chances.
Potential Positive Impacts	The national changes largely protect pensioner’s benefits. Locally, the council has agreed to protect the non

	ringfenced funds to develop a sustainable model of Local Welfare Provision.
Responsible Service Manager	<u>Vanessa Shahani</u> <u>Communities and Improvement Manager</u>
Date	<u>29/4/2013</u>

Approved by Senior Manager	<u>Suki Sitaram</u>
Signature	
Date	

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	Young single people, older people close to retirement are amongst those groups likely to be hardest hit by the reforms, resulting in reduced income.	<p>Setting aside a contingency fund of £100,000 as part of the Local Welfare Provision model to respond to unpredicted gaps in provision.</p> <p>Protecting the non-ringfenced funds for Social Fund Transition/development of a Local Welfare Provision model for two years and developing a sustainable model based on existing local providers.</p> <p>Establishing a two year multi-agency Welfare Reforms Monitoring Group to monitor the impacts of the reforms and work with city leaders to minimise their long term impact.</p> <p>Council policy changes over the next two years to</p>

		<p>take into account the impact of the Welfare Reforms.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the impact of the Welfare Reforms by working with partners to develop a response.</p>
Disability	Disabled people are amongst the groups of people likely to be hardest hit by the reforms with a reduction in income.	<p>As above.</p> <p>Increase opportunities for pathways to employment.</p>
Gender Reassignment	Transgendered people may also live in priority neighbourhoods or could fall into one of those groups of people likely to be hardest hit by the reforms.	As above
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Although married people and those in a civil partnership are not identified as likely to be hardest hit by the reforms they could fall into other groups and therefore experience a reduction in income.	As above
Pregnancy and Maternity	Although pregnant women and those on maternity leave are not identified as likely to be hardest hit by the reforms they could fall into other groups and therefore experience a reduction in income.	As above
Race	BME groups are amongst the groups of people likely to be hardest hit by the reforms with a reduction in income.	As above
Religion or Belief	BME groups are amongst the groups of people likely to be hardest hit by the reforms with a reduction in income.	As above
Sex	Lone parents are amongst the groups of people likely to be hardest hit by the reforms with a reduction in income.	As above
Sexual Orientation	Although LGBT people are not identified as likely to be hardest hit by the reforms they could fall into other groups and therefore experience a reduction in income.	As above

<p>Community Safety</p>	<p>Increasing hardship could lead to a rise in petty crime. Three recent burglaries resulted in householder's food being stolen.</p>	<p>Ensure referral routes to food banks and other forms of support such as money advice well publicised.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the impact of the Welfare Reforms by working with partners to develop a response.</p>
<p>Poverty</p>	<p>People living in low incomes and on in-work or out of work benefits are amongst the groups of people likely to be hardest hit by the reforms with a reduction in income.</p>	<p>Establishing a council tax discretionary fund for the most vulnerable.</p> <p>Setting aside a contingency fund of £100,000 as part of the Local Welfare Provision model to respond to unpredicted gaps in provision.</p> <p>Protecting the non-ringfenced funds for Social Fund Transition/development of a Local Welfare Provision model for two years and developing a sustainable model based on existing local providers.</p> <p>Establishing a two year multi-agency Welfare Reforms Monitoring Group to monitor the impacts of the reforms and work with city leaders to minimise their long term impact.</p> <p>Council policy changes over the next two years to take into account the impact of the Welfare Reforms.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the impact of the Welfare</p>

		Reforms by working with partners to develop a response. Increase opportunities for pathways to employment
Other Significant Impacts	None other identified at this time.	Not applicable