



**Budget Proposals February 2022
Equality and Safety
Cumulative Impact Assessment**

February 2022

Equality and Safety Cumulative Impact Assessment

Introduction

1. Southampton City Council, in line with its statutory responsibilities, undertakes Equality and Safety Impact Assessments (ESIAs). ESIAs provide a systematic way of assessing the impact of policies, strategies, programmes, projects, services or functions on different equality groups - and on poverty and community safety. During the council's annual budget cycle, ESIAs are completed for all proposals identified as requiring them to inform decision making.
2. This document draws into one place a summary of all the ESIAs for the 2022/23 February budget proposals. This assessment focuses on service based proposals identified as having a direct impact on customers/residents.
3. It is important to fully understand the impact of the budget proposals on equality groups (identified in paragraph 9) and on community safety, poverty and health and wellbeing. The council, working with others, will need to take action to mitigate the collective impact of any such proposals. Mitigating actions could include re-shaping services to target more efficiently and to reduce the potential of disproportionate impacts on equalities groups, community safety, poverty and health and wellbeing.

Context

4. Over recent years, Southampton City Council has had to change significantly in response to ongoing changes in the city's profile, trends in customer behaviour, national and local policies and the austerity challenges. This has been accompanied by ongoing challenges in the shape of rising demand in adults and children's social care.
5. Since March 2020, COVID-19 has affected us all, our residents, communities, public institutions, all types of businesses, as well as the voluntary sector and community organisations. It has been a public health crisis, unlike any seen in this country for the last hundred years, as well as creating an economic crisis. Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic has been the priority not only for central Government, but also local government. Southampton City Council has played a critical role in helping to lead the local response.
6. This Cumulative Impact Assessment covers the budget proposals for the financial year 2022/23 which are being considered by Cabinet in December 2021 and will be proposed to Full Council in February 2022.

Legal Framework – Equalities

7. The Public Sector Equality Duty, section 149 of the Equality Act, came into effect on 5th April 2011 and places a duty on all public bodies and others carrying out public functions.

8. The Public Sector Equality Duty (the Equality Duty) replaced three previous public sector equality duties – for race, disability and gender, and broadened the breadth of protected characteristics to include:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirements to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race – ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
 - Religion or Belief – including lack of belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation.
9. The Act was designed to ensure public bodies consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work, including: shaping policy, delivering services and employment of employees. It requires public bodies, such as local councils not to discriminate against any person on the basis of a protected characteristic such as disability. The legislation strengthened existing provisions about discrimination to also include associative and perceive discrimination as well as direct and indirect discrimination.
10. Direct discrimination occurs when a rule, policy or practice offers less favourable treatment to a group and indirect discrimination occurs by introducing a rule, policy or practice that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who have a protected characteristic. Direct discrimination will always be unlawful. Indirect discrimination will not be unlawful if it can be justified, for instance it can be shown that the rule, policy or practice was intended to meet a legitimate objective in a fair, balanced and reasonable way.
11. In considering whether or not any indirect discrimination is justified, the council must consider whether or not there is any other way to meet their objective that is not discriminatory or is less likely to disadvantage those with protected characteristics. This may well mean setting out clearly whether or not consideration has been given to other ways of achieving these objectives.
12. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment, rather it requires public bodies to demonstrate their consideration of the Equality Duty and the conscious thought of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making. This entails an understanding of the potential effect the organisation's activities could have on different people and a record of how decisions were reached. Producing an Equality Impact Assessment post decision making is non-compliant with the Public Sector Equality Duty. For this reason the council requires adherence to the existing impact assessment framework.

Legal Framework - Community Safety

13. Community Safety is a broad term. It refers to the protection of local communities from the threat and consequence of criminal and anti-social behaviour by achieving reductions in relation to both crime and the fear of crime.

14. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, as amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006, requires responsible authorities to consider crime and disorder, including antisocial behaviour and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment; and the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in the exercise of all their duties, activities and decision-making. This means consideration must be given to the likely impact on crime and disorder in the development of any policies, strategies and service delivery. This responsibility affects all employees of the council.

Other considerations

15. In line with the [Southampton Joint Health and Wellbeing 2017-2025](#), the council has committed to ensuring that health inequalities are taken into account in policy development, commissioning and service delivery. This means that consideration will be given to impacts on health and wellbeing in the ESIA's.

16. The council's approach on assessing the impact of its policies, proposals and decisions, is designed to demonstrate that it has acted over and above its statutory duties. This is reflected in including poverty in the ESIA, as the council is committed to addressing the impact on poverty for people in work and unemployed and for other low-income households.

17. The ESIA's also consider any other significant impacts that in relation to the proposal and decision.

Scope and our approach

18. This assessment identifies areas where there is a risk that changes resulting from individual budget proposals, may have, when considered together, negative impacts on particular groups.

19. It is important to note this is an ongoing process. As individual budget proposals are developed and implemented, they will be subject to further assessment. This assessment also describes mitigating actions that will need to be considered.

20. This Cumulative Impact Assessment reflects the latest assessment of impacts of the relevant budget proposals.

City Profile

21. The most recent data available for the population of Southampton is from the Office of National Statistics mid-year estimate 2020. This puts the total figure at 252,872. There were 129,669 (51%) males and 123,203 (49%) females. Southampton's population is predicted to rise by 7.1% between 2018 and 2043.¹ This is an increase of 18,000 people from 252,800 people in 2018 to 270,800 people in 2043.

¹<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/localauthoritiesinenglandtable2>

22. However, the 2011 Census provides a more detailed population profile for the city. According to this, in 2011 the city's population profile comprised 236,900 residents and:

- There were 122,368 females and 127,168 males, a 49% to 51% split.
- 77.7% of residents were white British (compared to 88.7% in 2001).
- The 'Other white' population, which includes migrants from Europe, increased by over 200% (from 5,519 to 17,461) compared to Census 2001.
- The largest percentage increase is in our 'other Asian' population, which increased from 833 to 5,281 people compared to Census 2001.
- It is estimated that there are 26,929 residents whose main language is not English; of these 717 cannot speak English at all and a further 4,587 do not speak it well. In 2021 there were 149 different languages spoken in schools across Southampton.
- 4,672 residents in Southampton are aged 85 or over, of whom 834 are in bad or very bad health and have a long-term illness or disability.

23. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) provide another range of data about the city. This focuses on the geographical profile of poverty but there is also a link between equality strands and risk factors for poverty. The most recent IMD was published in 2019 and is largely based on data from 2015/16. This indicates that, since the last IMD published in 2015, Southampton has become relatively less deprived compared to other places in the country. Of the 317 local authorities in England, Southampton is now ranked 55th most deprived, compared to 54th in IMD 2015 where 1 is the most deprived.

Table1:

Budget Proposals: Impact By Protected Characteristics, Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing and Poverty.

Code	Description of Proposal	Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment	Marriage & Civil Partnership	Pregnancy & Maternity	Race	Religion & Belief	Sex	Sexual Orientation	Community Safety	Poverty	Health & Wellbeing	Other
Communities, Culture and Heritage														
1	Cultural Venues Income Increase	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Our Greener City														
2	Discontinuation of sports and recreation services at St Mary's Leisure Centre	X	X				X	X	X		X	X	X	
A Council that works with and for you														
3	Registration – Income rises													
4	Bereavement Services – Income Targets							X				X		
5	Heating charge increase	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

24. **Cultural Venues Income Increase** – a 38% increase in income of £300,000 has been set for the service. Increasing ticket prices will be part of this strategy alongside promotion of venues through the City of Culture bid, Destination Management Plan and a new marketing plan. Increased Ticket price increases will potentially impact on all protected groups acting as a barrier to access. Demonstrating value for money and considering concessions and offers to local residents could help to mitigate this impact, alongside the wide range of events and activities conducted by the service and the availability of resources online.
25. **Discontinuation of sports and recreation services at St Mary’s Leisure Centre** – A management agreement with Solent University has enabled the delivery of services at this centre for 9 years. In July 2019 a further agreement was made whereby the council covers the cost and takes on the risk for of income. This agreement concludes in December 2021. During this period there has been a reduction in use of SMLC and due to the condition of the building, the ability to deliver a wide range of leisure activities is limited. A number of community activities are now offered at the Solent University East Park Terrace academic leisure facility which are open to public use. The school which previously used SMLC has been offered a time to use these facilities as well.
26. A consultation will be with users and members of the community will enable a better-informed assessment of the impact, should the building be closed for this type of activity, albeit it is likely that the loss of these services will impact on a number of protected groups:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Race
 - Religion & Belief
 - Sex
 - Community Safety
 - Poverty
 - Health & Wellbeing
27. The consultation will inform any final decision, to be made in February 2022.
28. **Registration – Income rises** – fees charged cannot increase as they are set by government, therefore promoting the service to encourage more bookings and generate more income will be the focus. There is no identified significant negative impact on any protected groups. Increased promotion and awareness of the services offered create potentially more choice and a positive impact on:
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
 - Health and Wellbeing
29. **Bereavement Services – Income Targets** - proposals to increase the fees for burials and cremations to provide a suitable level of provision in line with other local providers. This will help to meet local expectations and need as well as achieve national standards. A result of the increase in fees could impact those in poverty. If there is a difference in the increase between burials and cremations this could impact the protected characteristic of religion and belief if a particular group uses one over the other. This will need to be considered in price changes.
30. **Heating charge increase** – the proposals include an increase to the heating charge to those receiving landlord-controlled heating. This is due to the increased cost of

heating to the council and the need to balance the heating account, which is separate to the Housing Revenue Account. The increase will affect 5,443 properties. The proposal also includes putting a hold on rent and service charge increases. This will go some way to offset the increase in the heating charge for those affected properties. It should be noted that an increase in the cost of utilities will be experienced by all households in the wider population in 2022-23 at a rate likely to be higher than 6%. The increase set out in the proposal will affect all protected characteristics but will likely have the biggest impact on those in poverty. The rise in Universal Credit and Housing Benefit have been identified as potential ways to mitigate against this impact for those in receipt of these benefits.