

Midlothian



Midlothian Council

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) of Budget Proposals

Name of Budget Saving	Revenues Service Review
Department and service area	Customer and Housing Services
Completion Date	5 January, 2018
Lead officer	Kevin Anderson

Aims and Objectives

1. Does the proposed budget saving affect people? Yes ☒ ☐ No

2. What is/are the reason(s) for your proposed budget saving?

As a result of government funding cuts, the Midlothian Council budget gap will increase in future years and the Council needs to cut costs and change our service design and delivery model to make sure that we are able to deal with the future demands of a growing and ageing population.

A review of the Revenues service is proposed as there is significant change planned in the model of local taxation through Council Tax and also the rents and benefits systems will change as a result of the UK Government Welfare Reform, also the Universal Credit Full Service level in Midlothian implemented from April, 2017, and further planned

devolution of powers to the Scottish Government, which is developing a Social Security System for Scotland to be established.

A Service Review is scheduled in 2018/19 to allow the timescales and effects of Universal Credit full service, the local taxation changes and Scottish Social Security system to be implemented and determined and the resulting impact on workforce planning.

The potential for a shared service is to be explored.

3. Impact

Which of the protected characteristics* will the proposed budget saving have an impact upon?

Equality Target Group*	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Relevant evidence/ information
Age			No current evidence from the customer contact data gathered. Tenancy sustainment is monitored for council housing to evidence successful or negative outcomes for the household.
Disability			No current evidence from the customer contact data gathered. Tenancy sustainment is monitored for council housing to evidence successful or negative outcomes for the household.
Gender Reassignment			No current evidence from the customer contact data gathered. Tenancy sustainment is monitored for council housing to evidence successful or negative

			outcomes for the household.
Marriage & Civil Partnership	.		No current evidence from the customer contact data gathered. Tenancy sustainment is monitored for council housing to evidence successful or negative outcomes for the household.
Pregnancy and maternity			No current evidence from the customer contact data gathered. Tenancy sustainment is monitored for council housing to evidence successful or negative outcomes for the household.
Race		Hate crime is monitored	
Religion or Belief		Hate crime is monitored	
Sex		Gender based violence is monitored	
Sexual Orientation		Hate crime is monitored	

4. How will the implementation of the proposed budget saving be communicated to those affected by any changes?

The *Shaping our Future* public consultation exercise in 2016 feedback was in favour of the change programme.

There has been no response to date in the public engagement sessions for the budget review in 2018/19, *“Addressing the Financial Challenge to 2021/22”*.

There is a need to focus driving more customer activity onto the digital platform. Services from Midlothian Council will be available on-line and through a range of digital devices and platforms wherever possible with the objective of reshaping to achieve financial savings whilst also seeking to improve access. Further transformation is required to develop and promote digital services, to adopt a mobile-first approach for online customers.

Customer and Housing Services are committed to improving customer outcomes and are working together with other partners who share the same objective. The vision is to “make our customer service the best it can be by being responsive to customer need”.

Information published by Midlothian Council can be provided on request in many of the community languages and also in large print, Braille, audio tape or BSL. For more information, please contact the Equality , Diversity & Human Rights Officer on 0131 271 3658 or equalities@midlothian.gov.uk

5. How will you monitor the impact of the changes proposed? When is the budget due to be reviewed?

The budget review in 2018/19 is *“Addressing the Financial Challenge to 2021/22”*.

There is no evidence currently of negative impact on service outcomes.

The proposal is developed in the context of the legislative change in UK Government Welfare Reform and subsequent Scottish Government arrangements in local taxation and a planned Scottish Social Security system, yet to be determined. There will be a clear need in establishing service stability through the effective sharing of experience, skills and knowledge to implement service improvements necessary to improve our customer experience.

6. Please use the space below to detail any other matters arising from the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) process.

A Service Review is scheduled in 2018/19 to allow the timescales and effects of Universal Credit full service, local taxation changes and Scottish Social Security system to be implemented and determine the resulting impact on workforce planning.

Any staffing review would be conducted through the Council’s Organisational Change Policy to consult with employees scoped into the service and management reviews. Informal briefings and staff meetings have been held to discuss the budget proposals.

Further formal consultation with affected staff and representative unions would take place.