

Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment - Process

STEP 1 - Screening

As early as possible as the policy is being developed, screen it!

- Describe the policy
- Is an EFSIA needed?



STEP 2 – Scoping - Determine what is needed for the EFSIA

- What do you already know?
- What further information do you need?

STEP 3 – As the policy is being developed

- Review the information already available
- Gather any additional information needed
- Consult with stakeholders

STEP 4 – Decision

- Review findings
- Revisit the policy and make a decision/recommendation:
 - Option 1: No major change
 - Option 2: Adjust the policy
 - Option 3: Continue the policy
 - Option 4: Stop and remove the policy
- Record the reasons for the decision/recommendation

Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment - Screening

Title of Policy:	Clackmannanshire Council Budget 2024/25
Service:	Clackmannanshire Council
Team:	N/a

Will the policy have to go to Council or committee for approval	Yes
Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?	Yes
Does it relate to functions that previous involvement activities have identified as being important to particular protected groups?	Yes
Does it relate to an area where the Council has set equality outcomes?	No
Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities?	Yes
Does it relate to a policy where there is significant potential for reducing inequalities or improving outcomes?	Potentially

IF YES - Move on to an Equality & Fairer Scotland Assessment

IF NO - Explain why an Equality & Fairer Scotland Assessment is not required

APPROVAL

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE
Cherie Jarvie	Senior Manager Partnership and Transformation	11/01/2023

NB This screening exercise is not to be treated as an assessment of impact and therefore does not need to be published. However, if you decide not to assess the impact of any policy, you will have to be able to explain your decision. To do this, you should keep a full record of how you reached your decision.

Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment - Scoping

Purpose of the proposed policy or changes to established policy

The purpose of the change is to ensure that Clackmannanshire Council is able to set a balanced budget, as required by statute, for the year 2024/25 and to meet a funding gap of £11.56m.

Clackmannanshire Council is consulting on proposals which require a policy change and this Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment scoping document sets out the Council's initial assessment on any potential impacts arising from proposals. Feedback from our consultation process will inform the final Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment which will be published on the Council's webpages and will be included as part of the final decision making process on the 24/25 budget by Council.

As in previous years, a budget engagement process is being undertaken to inform decisions for the 2024/25 budget. We are consulting on a range of policy proposals which seek to contribute to the funding gap for 24/25. The proposals are summarised below:

- a) Increase in Fees and Charges by 6.7%
- b) Rent review for commercial properties
- c) Review of licensing charges
- d) Introduction of new charges for supporting commercial events
- e) Increase charges for leisure services by 10%
- f) Implement council tax on second homes.
- g) School Meals cost increase
- h) Stop funding to community Halls on phased basis by 26/27.
- i) Reduce Third Sector funding for Children's Services
- j) Review of leisure services
- k) Review of customer services and libraries.
- l) Review of school management
- m) Review community learning and development service
- n) Review of educational psychology service
- o) Review of home to school transport
- p) Review of primary school classes
- q) Change school janitor arrangements
- r) Reduce winter service
- s) Reduce land maintenance
- t) Reduce levels of street cleaning

Through the budget engagement exercise we are seeking to consult with protected groups to identify specific equality and Fairer Scotland impacts and any mitigations that we need to consider under our equalities duties. Details on the proposals are set out in the Budget Engagement Booklet 24/25 which can be accessed on our consultation webpage.

Copies of previous equality and fairer Scotland impact assessments can be accessed on our website here <https://www.clacks.gov.uk/council/eqia/> and information on previous budget consultations can be found here <https://clackmannanshire.citizenspace.com/>

The current rate of charges can be found on our website <https://www.clacks.gov.uk/>

Which aspects of the policy are particularly relevant to each element of the Council's responsibilities in relation to the General Equality Duty and the Fairer Scotland Duty?
General Equality Duty -
➤ Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct
Impacts are assessed as low, however data and evidence on impacts is invited as part of the consultation process.
➤ Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
<p>The proposed changes may have an impact on those with protected characteristics and further information is required to better understand any direct impacts on protected groups and how these could reasonably be mitigated. Clackmannanshire Council is seeking to consult with protected groups to gather information on likely or potential impacts arising from the proposals.</p> <p>A number of budget proposals are identified which may have impacts on protected groups. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase charges for leisure services by 10% School Meals cost increase Stop funding to community Halls on phased basis by 26/27. Reduce Third Sector funding for Children's Services Review of leisure services Review of customer services and libraries. Review of community learning and development service Review of educational psychology service Review of home to school transport Review of primary school classes Change school janitor arrangements Reduce levels of street cleaning
➤ Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
There are potential impacts, however data and evidence is invited as part of the consultation process. The proposals which may impact this part of the duty include: funding to community halls; funding to Children's Services; review of community learning and development; review of educational psychology; change to school janitorial arrangements.
Fairer Scotland Duty -
➤ Reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage
Residents experiencing socio economic disadvantage may be disproportionately impacted by proposals included in the budget engagement for 24/25, however a range of mitigations are already in place to protect these residents. Further information, data and evidence is invited as part of the consultation process to understand impacts and any additional reasonable mitigation that can be put in place.

A number of budget proposals are identified which may have impacts on residents experiencing or likely to experience social or economic disadvantage. These are:

- Increase in Fees and Charges by 6.7%
- Increase charges for leisure services by 10%
- School Meals cost increase
- Stop funding to community Halls on phased basis by 26/27.
- Reduce Third Sector funding for Children's Services
- Review of leisure services
- Review of customer services and libraries.
- Review of community learning and development service
- Review of educational psychology service
- Review of home to school transport
- Change school janitor arrangements
- Reduce levels of street cleaning

The proposed changes may increase the charges residents pay for services. Whilst these are universal charges the change may disproportionately impact residents who are vulnerable or experience socio-economic disadvantage. A range of support schemes are already in place to ensure that the most vulnerable residents are protected from financial crisis including Council Tax Reduction, crisis and financial welfare and concessionary schemes. However we are mindful of the current cost of living pressures and as such further information is sought from protected groups on impacts and any additional mitigation that the Council should consider.

The proposed changes include funding to community halls and funding for Children's Services which includes Young Carer's Project and Alloa Community House. Users of these projects and services are likely to include residents experiencing socio economic disadvantage and also potentially fall under one or more protected characteristic. Impacts on residents experiencing socio economic disadvantage are possible with a reduction of funding to the Community House given its geographic location in Alloa South and East and the services provided to local residents who may also have protected characteristics. Further information is sought on impacts and potential mitigation.

Proposals on a review of customer services and libraries provision and a review of leisure services could potentially have a disproportionate impact on protected groups and those already experiencing or likely to experience socio economic disadvantage, however further information is sought from protected groups on impacts and any mitigation that the Council should consider.

Proposal relating to the increase in cost of school meals; review of home to school transport; and a review of school janitor arrangements may potentially impact protected groups and those already experiencing or likely to experience socio economic disadvantage.

A review of community learning and development services and review of educational psychology service could potentially have a disproportionate impact on protected groups and those already experiencing or likely to experience socio economic disadvantage however further information is sought on impacts and potential mitigation.

Proposals relating to a reduction in levels of street cleaning may have a disproportionate impact on protected groups however further information is sought to understand the extent of any impact and potential mitigation.

To which of the equality groups is the policy relevant?		
Protected Characteristic	Yes/No*	Explanation
Age	Yes	There may be disproportionate impacts on certain age groups. Proposals relating to the increase in cost of school meals; review of primary school classes; review of home to school transport; review of school management and review of school janitor arrangements are likely to impact on children and young people. Proposals relating to a review of community learning and development service and educational psychology service are also likely to impact children and young people. Proposals relating to customer services and libraries, funding to community halls and leisure services may disproportionately impact older residents. Proposals relating to funding for Children's Services are likely to impact children and young people.
Disability	Yes	There may be disproportionate impacts on people with disabilities arising from a number of proposals particularly where unemployment and low incomes are prevalent. Review of community learning and development, review of educational psychology, review of funding to Children's Services and a reduction in level of street cleaning may impact on people with a disability. Further information is sought to understand impacts and to identify mitigation.
Gender Reassignment	Potentially	There may be disproportionate impacts on people proposing to undergo, undergoing or having undergone a process to reassign their sex (as defined in the Equality Act 2010). Proposals relating to a review of community learning and development and education psychology may impact this protected characteristic however this is assessed as likely to be low.
Pregnancy and Maternity	No	There is no indication at this stage that this protected characteristic would be impacted.
Race	No	There is no indication at this stage that this protected characteristic would be impacted.
Religion and Belief	No	There is no indication at this stage that this protected characteristic would be impacted.
Sex	Yes	There may be disproportionate impacts on sex. Our poverty and economic baseline assessment indicates that weekly incomes for women are relatively low. Women also represent the majority of lone parent families in Clackmannanshire. Proposals relating to a review of third and voluntary sector organisations may disproportionately impact women however further information is sought to understand impacts and any additional mitigation the Council should consider.
Sexual Orientation	Potentially	There may be disproportionate impacts on sexual orientation (as defined in the Equality Act 2010). Proposals relating to a review of community learning and development and education psychology may impact this protected characteristic however this is assessed as likely to be low.

What evidence is already available about the needs of relevant groups, and where are the gaps in evidence?

Our analysis indicates that low incomes, poverty and inequality and health inequality are significant issues for Clackmannanshire possibly worsened by cost of living pressures. Previous data deep-dives and impact assessments have been carried out to help inform our understanding of Clackmannanshire and we continue to improve the ways that we use data to help with strategic decision making.

In addition data and evidence from previous budget engagement activity, as well as other consultation, is retained on record and is reviewed as part of the Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment process.

Whilst we have data and evidence from previous budget engagement which has indicated that similar proposals had no significant impact on residents, there are evidence gaps which relate to the full proposals set out in this document. We also recognise that circumstances change and as such seek to gather additional information on the needs of relevant groups, impacts relating to the proposals and any reasonable mitigation that the Council should consider.

Which equality groups and communities might it be helpful to involve in the development of the policy?

The Council is seeking views from protected groups, and in particular from: young and older residents; those with a disability; sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment persons and groups; individuals and groups experiencing economic disadvantage, low income families and/or communities and from organisations supporting residents with protected characteristics. We are also seeking views from residents in deprived communities or areas which have high levels of social or economic disadvantage. We are seeking information on any impacts arising from the proposals and any additional reasonable mitigation that we should consider.

We will update and publish this impact assessment following completion of the budget consultation exercise and analysis of feedback. The final impact assessment and all feedback and evidence will be considered by Council as part of its budget setting process for 2024/25.

Next steps

We are seeking views through our online survey which can be accessed here:
<https://www.clacks.gov.uk/>

Alternatively views on impacts can be sent in writing to: customerservice@clacks.gov.uk or

Customer Services
Kilncraigs
Greenside Street
Alloa
FK10 1EB

If you require this document in an alternative language or format please contact Clackmannanshire Council on 01259 450000, email customerservice@clacks.gov.uk or write to us at the above address.

Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment - Decision

Evidence findings		
This section will be completed following review of information and feedback received on the proposal.		
Details of engagement undertaken and feedback received		
Decision/recommendation		
Having considered the potential or actual impacts of this policy, the following decision/ recommendation is made:		
Tick	Option 1: No major change The assessment demonstrates that the policy is robust. The evidence shows no potential for unlawful discrimination and that all opportunities have been taken to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review.	
	Option 2: Adjust the policy – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality or to foster good relations. It may be possible to remove or change the aspect of the policy that creates any negative or unwanted impact, or to introduce additional measures to reduce or mitigate any potential negative impact.	
	Option 3: Continue the policy – this means adopting or continuing with the policy, despite the potential for adverse impact. The justification should clearly set out how this decision is compatible with the Council’s obligations under the duty.	
	Option 4: Stop and remove the policy – if there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, consideration should be given to stopping the policy altogether. If a policy leads to unlawful discrimination it should be removed or changed.	
Justification for decision		
APPROVAL		
NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE