

## **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

It is a statutory requirement that the Council show how it has assessed the impact that policies, decisions' and procedures might have on age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or sexual orientation assessments – referred to as 'protected characteristics'.

The purpose of this report is to summarise the work undertaken in relation to impact assessment outlining the issues and the responses and action taken by the Council.

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. The council commenced its consultation process on 2012/13 budget proposals on 14 October 2011 and for the first time, draft impact assessments were made available alongside the budget proposals. This included Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs), Community Safety Impact Assessment as well as the cumulative impact of budget proposals that were identified as requiring impact assessments. At that stage, it was recognised that these were not complete and comprehensive assessment due to the following reasons:
  - Some assessments were still being reviewed as further work is needed
  - Some proposals were dependent on reviews being completed or policy changes and therefore the full impact can be considered only when the recommendations are known and this is still the case for those areas where reviews have not been started or completed.
  - The cumulative impact of staffing had not been completed.
2. This year assessments have only been completed to meet statutory equality duties, community safety requirements and additionally, the impact relating to poverty. This is in recognition of the potential additional impact on people and families in low incomes of the changes nationally to Welfare Reforms and the impact of the recession. In addition, the cumulative assessments also reflect the potential impact of any relevant national changes, particularly the Welfare Reforms.

### **BEST VALUE GUIDANCE**

3. Best Value authorities are under a general Duty of Best Value to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. Under the Duty of Best Value therefore, authorities should consider the overall value, including economic, environmental and social value, when reviewing service provision. As a concept, social value is about seeking to maximise the additional benefit that can be created by procuring or commissioning goods and services, above and beyond the benefit of merely the goods and services themselves.
4. The original deadline for the end of the consultation period (which started on 14 October 2011) was 20th January 2012. However, this deadline was extended to 6

February 2012 in order to allow as much time as possible for the unions and staff to provide feedback on their budget proposals before the budget is finally agreed at the Full Council meeting on the 15 February 2012.

## **LEGAL FRAMEWORK – EQUALITIES**

5. The Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 (in force from 1 October 2010) not to discriminate against any person on the basis of a protected characteristic (such as disability). This includes discrimination by way of less favourable treatment (direct discrimination) or by introducing a rule, policy or practice that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who have a protected characteristic (indirect discrimination). Direct discrimination will always be unlawful. Indirect discrimination will not be unlawful if it can be justified, (i.e. it can be shown that the rule, policy or practice was intended to meet a legitimate objective in a fair, balanced and reasonable way).
6. 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 savings, (such as raising charges across the board or cutting other services).

The Council must show that it has 'had regard' to the impact of its decision on its equality duties and the need to advance equality of opportunity between people who have protected characteristics and those who do not.
7. The Equality Duty is a duty on public bodies and came into force on 5 April 2011. There have been revisions recently and further guidance is expected. The Equality Duty is a duty on public bodies and others carrying out public functions. It ensures that public bodies consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work in shaping policy, in delivering services, and in relation to their own employees. The Equality Duty is set out in section 149 of the Act.
8. The new Equality Duty replaces the three previous public sector equality duties, for race, disability and gender. The new Equality Duty covers the following protected characteristics:
  - ii) Age
  - iii) Disability
  - iv) Gender reassignment
  - v) Pregnancy and maternity
  - vi) Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
  - vii) Religion or Belief – this includes lack of belief
  - viii) Sex
  - ix) Sexual orientation
9. It also applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.

## **LEGAL FRAMEWORK – COMMUNITY SAFETY**

10. Community Safety is a broad term which 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. Community Safety encompasses anti-social behaviour and disorder, (including behaviour adversely affecting the local environment), and the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances.
11. A legal responsibility, 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 that in all policies, strategies and service delivery there is a need to consider the likely impact on crime and disorder. This responsibility affects all employees of the council.
12. The Home Office issued guidance that describes the legal responsibility as:  
*'a general duty on each local authority to take account of the community safety dimension in all of its work. All policies, strategies, plans and budgets will need to be considered from the standpoint of their potential contribution to the reduction of crime and disorder'.*

## **INFORMED DECISION MAKING AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

13. The new Equality Duty supports good decision-making – it encourages public bodies to understand how different people will be affected by their activities so that policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people's needs. By understanding the effect of their activities on different people, and how inclusive public services can support and open up people's opportunities, public bodies are better placed to deliver policies and services that are efficient and effective. The Equality Duty therefore helps public bodies to deliver the Government's overall objectives for public services. The new Equality Duty is designed to reduce bureaucracy while ensuring public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all.
14. The Equality Duty has three aims the first of which is the requirement for public bodies to have *due regard* to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act. Having *due regard* means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making. This means that consideration of equality issues must influence the decisions reached by public bodies – such as in how they act as employers; how they develop, evaluate and review policy; how they design, deliver and evaluate services, and how they commission and procure from others.

## **EVIDENCING DECISION MAKING**

15. While the Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an EIA, it does require public bodies to show how they considered the Equality Duty and that they have been consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making. That will entail understanding the potential effects of the organisation's activities on different people and a record of how decisions were reached. Producing EIA after a decision has been reached will not achieve compliance with the Equality Duty.

As we need to have a consistent council wide mechanism to evidence how decisions were reached and that they did take into account equality and safety considerations, the council's existing Impact Assessment framework has been used.

16. The summary of the key potential cumulative impacts and the mitigating actions to be considered by the council are available in Members' Rooms. In addition, Senior Managers have completed individual EIAs for those proposals that they identified as requiring such an assessment.

## **IMPACT ON EMPLOYEES**

17. The main impacts on employees to be consider relate to:

- Policy changes
- Impact of reductions in budget that may require changes to structures and/ or individual and team responsibilities and work programmes

18. The main policy changes relate to the proposed changes to Terms and Conditions identified in the budget proposals in February 2011. An EIA was completed for this at that time and is available on request. An EIA in respect of the final proposals for changes to the discretionary redundancy scheme is being prepared and will be made available to Members prior to Council on 15 February 2012.

## **SUMMARY OF CUMULATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS AND MITIGATING ACTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED – BUDGET PROPOSALS 2012/13**

### **CONTEXT**

1. In order to give the right perspective to the budget proposals, the draft EIAs and Cumulative Impact Assessments need to be considered in light of the available information on the City's profile, service user and non-user information and staffing profiles as well as the proportion of the council's budget that is currently spent on targeted groups or communities. The detailed Cumulative Impact Assessment and individual assessments for identified budget proposals are available on request.
2. Council Spend

<b>Council Budget 2011/12</b>		
<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Budget £M</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Adult Social Care & Health	96.3	22
Children's Services	92.9	21
Environment & Transport	69.3	16
Housing	5.2	1
Leader's Portfolio	13.4	3
Leisure, Culture and Heritage	17.3	4
Resources and Workforce Planning	121.9	28
Local Services and Community Safety	16.7	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>433.0</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>DSG – Schools</i>	<i>124.7</i>	

### 3. City Profile

#### a) The Population Profile of the City:

- Total Population: 239,700
- Residents with an ethnic origin other than White British: 27,600 (11.5%). The most recent estimates provided by ONS (2007) indicate that Southampton's non-white population accounts for almost 12% of the population or 27,600 residents. The largest proportion of this non-white population comes from the Asian or Asian British ethnic group (5%).
- Students: 43,425 (18.1%)
- 14,900 (6.2%) of residents living in the City's top 5 priority areas (LSOAs in the IMD 2010)
- Children under 16: 38,300 (16%)
- Working age population aged 16-64: 170,200 (71%)
- People aged over 60: 41,900 (17.4%)
- People aged over 70: 22,800 (9.5%)

## b) Poverty

### Unemployment and Claimants

5,359 or 3.1% of Southampton's working age resident population were unemployed and claiming Job Seekers Allowance in July 2011, representing a small reduction on the previous month. Overall, just over 20,000 residents aged 16-64 are claiming key out-of-work benefits. At 12% of the total, this is notably higher than across the South East as a whole and close to the average for Great Britain.

### Child Poverty

Key points on child poverty are:

- Southampton has second highest rate of child poverty in South East region - only Hastings is higher at 28.8%.
- A recent report by Save the Children estimated around 6,000 children in the city were living in severe poverty.
- Workless Households: 80% of children in poverty in the city are in households claiming Jobseekers Allowance/Income Support.
- Lone Parent Families: 73.5% of children in poverty in the city are in lone parent households.

## **CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF THE BUDGET PROPOSALS ON KEY GROUPS**

### 4. Older People

- a) The main impact would be a potential increase in social isolation, reduced financial flexibility due to increase in costs of services and reduced access to early intervention services. The potential increased social isolation could also have health and cost implications for the City Council, Health and other public sector organisations. The cumulative impact of these proposals needs to be considered alongside other factors that may impact on older people in Southampton. These include:
- The national reduction in winter fuel payments
  - Southampton City Council budget saving proposals relating to disabled people and sex.
  - National changes to the cost and provision of social care that are currently being considered.
  - Budget reductions being considered by partner agencies, particularly Health & Police.
  - Capacity of the voluntary sector to continue existing levels of support/services to older people.
- b) Charges for Health and Adult Social Care services will continue to be individually assessed and based on ability to pay. Income maximisation support will continue to be offered as part of the financial assessment. Charging will continue to be applied equitably in line with Fair Access to Care Services guidance. Separate impact assessments will be undertaken for each specific recommendation before a change to council policy is introduced. No individual assessed as requiring a service will be refused social care support because of an inability to pay.
- c) Measures to mitigate the potential impact of the budget proposals include:
- Ensure the Big Society work is focused on engaging older people in their communities.

- The move towards greater personalisation provides an opportunity for many of the social care services affected to be re-provided in other ways. This better targeting of provision may require market development support to ensure provision is available.
  - Ensure older people are consulted as part of service changes and supported and signposted to alternative provision available.
  - Those with complex needs who also fall into other groups, for example disabled older people, should be considered carefully as part of any service reduction.
  - Health and Adult Social Care services will continue to be provided to those who are assessed with a need for services in line with Fair Access to Care Services guidance. Support will be provided to those people receiving Self Directed Support to ensure they can access the services that they require. There is a need to undertake appropriate planning to ensure there are alternative services available.
- d) Following approval of the budget, mitigating measures will be considered and actions will be agreed by the relevant Senior Managers or their nominated representatives: Senior Managers for Integrated Joint Commissioning; Provider Services (Adults); Skills, Economy and Housing Renewal; Community Safety and Neighbourhood Services; Planning, Transport and Sustainability and Education and Joint Commissioning.

## 5. Young People

- a) A number of proposals identified in the table impact on early years provision across the city, including the impact on support, advice offered to vulnerable families through the Children Centres. This is at a time when birth rates are increasing in the city (since 2006/07 to 2010/11 there has been an increase of 605 total live births in the city). The proposed reductions to ASB activities and Housing Development Services and bus subsidies could impact on young people and families through early preventative action on ASB and access to affordable housing. In addition, the proposal to charge event organisers in parks could reduce the number of events held. This is likely to have the greatest impact on young people and families from the most deprived areas of the city due to their greater need for accessible and affordable activities in their locality.
- b) The cumulative impact of these proposals needs to be considered alongside other factors that may impact on young people in Southampton including:
- National changes to public services and welfare benefits
  - Southampton City Council budget saving proposals relating to race and ethnicity, disabled people and gender.
  - Budget proposals of partner organisations in Southampton. These include
  - Police –a) Cuts to preventative strategies / activities and b) lack of recruitment opportunities for those who might wish to join the Police Force.
  - Fire Service - a) Cuts to preventative strategies / activities
  - Further Education - Impact of EMA being withdrawn may affect numbers of students staying on at college. This may affect the reductions being seen in the numbers of NEETs.
  - Higher Education - The big unknown is the impact of the increased tuition fees from Sept 2012, this could lead to significant numbers of English students leaving the UK to study in Europe.
- c) Measures to mitigate the potential effects of the proposals include:
- Extra commissioning and voluntary sector funding.

- Ensure Big Society work is focused on engaging younger people in their communities.
  - Better targeting of provision.
  - Signposting to alternative services available.
  - Relative protection of funding to safeguard children and young people.
- d) Following approval of the budget, mitigating measures will be considered and actions will be agreed by the relevant Senior Managers or their nominated representatives: Senior Managers for Education and Joint Commissioning; Children's Safeguarding; Community Safety and Neighbourhood Services; Planning, Transport and Sustainability; Integrated Joint Commissioning and Skills, Economy and Housing Renewal.

## 6. Disability

- a) A number of the proposals identified impact on the ability of disabled people to access services and in some cases, to the standards they have received to date. This includes impact through changes to current service eligibility criteria, service reductions, less responsive to meeting the specific needs of disabled people (e.g. potential reduction in the percentage/ number of new affordable properties developed that are suitable for those with a disability), reduced attendance at activities due to reduced awareness, and an increase in demand for acute services in the longer term.
- b) The costs to disabled people accessing social care is likely to increase as a result of a number of measures including the potential changes in price of contracted Day Care services, altering the charging policy for clients in residential and non residential care, and changes in the charging policy relating to day domiciliary and extra care schemes. The costs of mobility and travel are also likely to increase through increased charges through the Blue Badge Scheme.
- c) When considering these proposals collectively it could represent a significant negative impact for disabled people, particularly for those who will have to face an increase in costs. It could lead to some disabled people to have reduced access to services which could be seen as early intervention or prevention and this may result in increased demand for acute services in the longer term. Disabled people could also become more isolated, having to withdraw from community involvement, engagement and activity due to access, mobility and cost issues. The financial impact on disabled people who are dependent on benefits, or are on low incomes needs further consideration when the local impact of the Welfare Reforms is better understood.
- d) The savings proposals also have some potential to affect other council activities and funding. For example, the financial impact on some disabled people may result in problems with rent arrears or a reduction in their disposable income available to contribute to care packages. This may mean there could be a need to factor a percentage reduction of loss of income in to another part of the council's business. The potential increased social isolation could also have health and cost implications for the City Council and other public sector organisations.
- e) The cumulative impact of these proposals needs to be considered alongside other factors, particularly poverty and age, that may impact on disabled people in Southampton. These include:
- Welfare Reforms - Introduction of the Personal Independence Payment, reform of Incapacity Benefits and Disability Living Allowance and reductions in care and mobility support will impact on disabled people.



In the City, of the 3,000 Incapacity Benefit Claimants found fit for work, it is possible that 900 may no longer be eligible for any benefits under these changes and this figure could be as high as 1,500 as a result of the combined effect of all the changes. Disability Living Allowance changes will impact on claimants' access to other means tested benefits, access to additional support, entitlement to Independent Living Fund (a vital funding stream for Independent Support Living) and potentially increased demand for Personal Budgets.

- Budget reductions being considered by Health agencies in the City.
- Capacity of the Voluntary Sector to maintain the level of support they currently provide to disabled people.

f) Measures to mitigate the potential impact of the budget proposals include:

- The move towards greater personalisation provides an opportunity for many of the social care services affected to be provided in other ways. This better targeting of provision may require market development support to ensure provision is available.
- Health and Adult Social Care services will continue to be provided to those who are assessed with a need for services in line with Fair Access to Care Services guidance. Support will be provided to those people receiving Self Directed Support to ensure they can access the services that they require. There is a need to undertake appropriate planning to ensure there are alternative services available.
- Charges for Health and Adult Social Care services will continue to be individually assessed and based on ability to pay. Income maximisation support will continue to be offered as part of the financial assessment. Charging will continue to be applied equitably in line with Fair Access to Care Services guidance. Separate impact assessments will be undertaken for each specific recommendation before a change to council policy is introduced. No individual assessed as requiring a service will be refused social care support because of an inability to pay.
- Introduction of a revamped Child Development Service as a basis for a potential 'cradle to grave' approach to support for disabled people and their families.
- Work with disabled customers to assess the potential impact on individuals and explore mitigation in light of the council's financial challenges.
- Publicity to explain the rationale behind the proposals.

g) Following approval of the budget, mitigating measures will be considered and actions will be agreed by the relevant Senior Managers or their nominated representatives: Senior Managers for Provider Services (Adults); Personalisation and Safeguarding; Integrated Joint Commissioning; Children's Safeguarding; Education and Joint Commissioning; Planning, Transport and Sustainability.

## 7. Race, Religion or Belief

a) The proposals do not seem to have a disproportionate direct impact on Black and Minority Ethnic groups but it is possible that the take up these services is proportionally higher from BME groups than the general population. Therefore, it is important to be satisfied with evidence that there is no indirect discrimination in the following areas:

- Deletion of Linguistic and Cultural Adviser capacity (particularly in light of the recent changes to the Community Languages Service).
- Reducing access to information for service users in the Central Children's Centre.

- The cumulative impact of these proposals needs to be considered alongside other factors outlined in the assessments, particularly poverty and age (Children and Young People) and in particular:
- Welfare Reforms
- Budget reductions being considered by other agencies in the City.

b) Measures to mitigate the potential impact of the budget proposals include:

- Deletion of Linguistic and Cultural Adviser capacity – consider training and support to others so that they can respond better to linguistic and cultural needs of a diverse population in the City.
- Work with BME customers, communities and groups to assess the potential impact on individuals and explore mitigation in light of the council's financial challenges.
- Target publicity and ensure this is done using appropriate channels and languages to explain the rationale behind the proposals.

c) Following approval of the budget, mitigating measures will be considered and actions will be agreed by the relevant Senior Managers or their nominated representatives: Senior Managers for Education and Joint Commissioning and Integrated Joint Commissioning.

## 8. Sex

a) There are limited direct cumulative impacts of service reduction on the women of Southampton as proposals are more individual in their nature. Possible cumulative impacts include:

- Older women: A large proportion of the proposed health cuts and increase in charges are likely to impact on the elderly population. The higher proportion of older women than men in later years is reflected by the fact that adult social care female clients over 65 significantly outnumber the number of men. Therefore, the majority of cuts and additional charges being proposed to services such as day care and residential care are likely to have a greater impact on elderly women than men. Women accessing mental health services can be particularly vulnerable in mixed settings.
- Supporting families: There are also some services that are more likely to be accessed by women than men because of their continued traditional position as primary carers for children. These include proposals relating to children's disability services and early years services that may potentially have a greater negative impact on women through their access to these services.
- Safety: The proposals to reduce discretionary spend on community safety may have a greater impact on the safety of women, and their fear of crime.

b) The cumulative impact of these proposals needs to be considered alongside other factors that may impact on women in Southampton. These include:

- National changes to Welfare Reforms – A potential adverse impact on women has been identified as a result of subsuming a wide range of benefits into Universal Credit payments. Payment will be paid in full (except in exceptional cases) to one member of a couple, including money for children and childcare costs. This may result in money being transferred from women to men.
- Any budget reduction by partner agencies.
- Capacity of the Voluntary Sector to provide continued support and service.

c) Measures to mitigate the potential impact of the budget proposals include:

- Children's Services and Learning will continue to provide services to those who are assessed with a need in line with the Eligibility criteria.
- Health and Adult Social Care services will continue to be provided to those who are assessed with a need for services in line with Fair Access to Care Services guidance. Support will be provided to those people receiving Self Directed Support to ensure they can access the services that they require. There is a need to undertake appropriate planning to ensure there are alternative services available.
- Charges for Health and Adult Social Care services will continue to be individually assessed and based on ability to pay. Income maximisation support will continue to be offered as part of the financial assessment. Charging will continue to be applied equitably in line with Fair Access to Care Services guidance. Separate impact assessments will be undertaken for each specific recommendation before a change to council policy is introduced. No individual assessed as requiring a service will be refused social care support because of an inability to pay.
- Charges are not applicable to statutory services in respect of children and young people.
- Raise key issues for women, especially later years, at Safe City Partnership, Children and Young People's Trust and Health and Well Being Board, when this has been established. The continued arrangement for an older people's champion will maintain the profile of Older People's needs.

d) Following approval of the budget, mitigating measures will be considered and actions will be agreed by the relevant Senior Managers or their nominated representatives: Senior Managers for Personalisation and Safeguarding; Integrated Joint Commissioning; Education and Joint Commissioning; Planning, Transport and Sustainability; Community Safety and Neighbourhood Services.

#### 9. Sexual Orientation, Gender Reassignment, Marriage & Civil Partnership and Pregnancy & Maternity

- a) It is difficult to assess at this stage whether any of the proposals will have a disproportionate negative impact on people with these personal backgrounds. Individual services will need to consider any particular effects on both users and non-users of their services by involving them directly.
- b) The cumulative impact of these proposals needs to be considered alongside other factors which include:
- National changes to public services and Welfare Reforms
  - Southampton City Council budget saving proposals relating to race and ethnicity, disabled people and gender.
  - Budget proposals of partner organisations in Southampton. These include Hampshire Constabulary, Southampton PCT, the Probation Service, Job Centre Plus, and schools.
- c) Individual Senior Managers will consider whether proposals in their service areas may have an impact on people with these personal backgrounds.

#### 10. Community Safety

- a) The budget proposals may impact on the following aspects related to community safety:

- The City's image
  - Reduced support from the Supporting People programme for homeless people who may have high levels of alcohol and drug issues, a history of criminal behaviour and include ex-offenders.
- b) Safety of individuals as a result of changes to the charging policy (reduction in Day Care services may result in an increase in adult safeguarding issues); reduced prevention services from the integrated Youth Offending service within the City Council; safety of children impact on Tier 3 safeguarding (impact on Advisory groups); a negative impact on Southampton's high levels of home accidents as a result of the proposals to reduce safety advice and home safety equipment and reduced support for vulnerable clients, especially homeless people.
- c) Increase in crime incidents, especially anti-social behaviour:
- Reduced diversion activities for young people will directly impact on school attendance, and the prevention of anti-social behaviour and prevention of youth offending.
  - Reduced support for vulnerable adults with longer-term support needs may result in increased offending.
  - Reduction in discretionary community safety activity may increase crime levels due to reduced partnership support, reduced crime prevention operations and impact on service improvements due to reduced project development.
  - Empty properties can blight neighbourhoods and be a source of ASB for neighbours and the wider community.
  - Reduction in discretionary community safety activity includes less public reassurance activities and campaigns that could result in less reduction in the fear of crime and public perception of safety.
- d) Proposals relating to parks maintenance and usage for events could reduce opportunities for social interaction and increase isolation. Lower levels of environmental cleanliness have been demonstrated to clearly link to heightened levels of crime and ASB (the "broken windows" theory); reduce responses to clean up graffiti.
- e) Reduced community cohesion and increased hate crime could result where cleansing standards are reduced especially in city centre and priority areas identified in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2010. Proposals relating to parks maintenance particularly the reduction in daily attention and proactive approach to street cleansing in areas of cultural diversity such as Newtown and Nicholstown could impact on the ability to take preventative action to reduce social tensions and assist community cohesion. A reduced frequency of service and lower levels of environmental cleanliness could work adversely with other negative social and economic trends to heighten community tensions. The loss of management capacity will reduce the ability to monitor and manage community tensions and tackle hate crime and harassment. This will be further affected by the proposed withdrawal of an equality officer, reduced community engagement work, NTE support reductions and grants to voluntary organisations which could result in reduced awareness of any tensions building.
- f) The groups most affected by these proposals are likely to be *younger people and families and older people and the areas within the city that are likely to be impacted the most will be:*
- All priority areas as they have high levels of under 16s and children in poverty
  - Priority areas of Millbrook and Redbridge, as they experience the highest crime levels especially domestic violence and ASB

- The City's housing estates as they have greater numbers of people who are either vulnerable and/or live in and have a high reliance on public services.

g) Other factors to consider include:

- Assessments for poverty, race and young people
- Reductions planned by Hampshire Constabulary who are working towards 14% cuts by closing customer contact points, reducing preventative activity and concentrating on a reactive core business.
- Southampton's strong multi-agency approach has seen the overall crime levels falling year on year although our relative comparative position to other similar areas needs further improvement.
- The Safe City Plan 2011/12 priorities are:
  - i) reducing violent crime
  - ii) reducing dwelling burglary
  - iii) increasing the involvement of individuals and communities to improve safety in their neighbourhoods and improve public perception of safety

h) Measures to mitigate the potential impact of the budget proposals include:

- Prioritising services to support people and locations at greatest risk of crime and harm.
  - Targeting and signposting of services where most in need.
  - Providing clear and early information and guidance especially around friends, events and groups to encourage the development of the Big Society.
  - Continuing and increasing multi-agency and partnership working, particularly in prevention services.
  - Policies that ensure the most vulnerable continue to receive the required level of support.
- i) Following approval of the budget, mitigating measures will be considered and actions will be agreed by the relevant Senior Managers or their nominated representatives: Senior Managers for Community Safety and Neighbourhood Services, Integrated Joint Commissioning; Education and Joint Commissioning; Personalisation and Safeguarding; Customer and Business Improvement. This will be followed by discussions with key members of the Safe City Partnership to agree a way forward for the City.

## 11. Poverty

a) The main impacts to consider are:

- Increased costs to the most vulnerable people on low incomes
- Reduced standards of services and higher thresholds making it difficult for some people to access services

b) A number of the budget proposals will add service charges, increased costs or change the threshold for eligibility resulting in residents on low income with unable to pay or access services. Additional costs or loss of services will hit those receiving benefits harder at the same time as they change to universal credit which may mean their payments are reduced. As a consequence their ability to manage their money and demand for advice services will be increased.

c) Proposals for reductions in the Supporting People programme will mean there is less of a focus on education, training and employment for homeless people.

Reduced support and advice to those on mental health patients on lower incomes would see a reduction in advocacy support and signposting potentially leading to longer-term problems for individuals and increased services costs in the future.

- d) There is a risk that clients may choose to reduce the level of services they purchase if the charges increase. This may result in an increase in adult safeguarding issues and increased referrals in the future when costs of providing a service may be greater. Reduced support for vulnerable clients, especially where they are homeless, could result in this vulnerable group with complex needs having increased safeguarding issues in the future.
- e) Due to the needs and make up of residents and the environment, a large number of the proposals may adversely impact in the priority (IMD 2010) areas of the city. Areas of higher levels of social deprivation often need higher resource inputs to achieve the same standards across the city. Lower levels of environmental cleanliness have been demonstrated to clearly link to heightened levels of crime and ASB. Reductions to youth offending team and community safety team could further reduce prevention and cohesion work impacting on levels of reassurance and overall crime rates.
- f) Reductions proposed to early years, careers advice to schools and non-statutory play and youth services may serve to negatively impact on the future job opportunities and aspirations of young people in the priority areas where employment and income levels are already low.
- g) Disabled residents and their carers, and those that find it hard to get out and about may find it increasing difficult to find affordable access to public services. Reduced spend on child disability placements may add to the pressure on carers to cope both financially and mentally, especially alongside the welfare reforms already affecting them.
- h) Proposals to reduce services such as housing development functions and reduction in cleanliness may have a negative impact on the perception of the city as a place to invest and live in.

## 12. Other factors to consider

- a) This assessment needs to be considered alongside the cumulative impacts for community safety, race, disability and young people as well as the recommendations relating to a commissioning model for grants to voluntary organisations.
- b) These proposals will significantly impact on the ability of the most vulnerable and lower income people and families, a high proportion of which live in the most deprived areas of the city, to access services through charges or higher thresholds of eligibility. A reduced standard of service will have a greater impact on the environment, safety and opportunities in the priority areas, where greater resources are needed to reach service delivery standards. Ultimately this may have a wider impact on the mental health and wellbeing of residents in the priority areas and add pressure on other service providers such as health and the police.
- c) These proposals should also consider the longer term impacts of the welfare benefit changes. In particular, the switch to Universal Credit by 2013 will have a marked impact on disabled people, larger families, lone parents and singles under 35. The above proposals also relate to the Southampton Connect priority project, 'Gateway to a better future' led by Job Centre Plus which aims to assess and mitigate the impact of welfare benefit changes through a coordinated city-wide response.



Measures to mitigate the potential impact of the budget proposals include:

- Developing policies so that access to social care services is not restricted because of an inability to pay.
- Offering reduced charges for benefit claimants.
- Clearer guidance and signposting to alternative funding, providers and service.
- Developing partnership, multi-agency working and targeted services in priority (IMD 2010) areas.
- Encouraging the development of the Big Society initiatives in communities.
- Developing strategies and plans that ensure that prioritise support for the needs of the most vulnerable children, people and families with the most complex needs.

e) Following approval of the budget, mitigating measures will be considered and actions will be agreed by the relevant Senior Managers or their nominated representatives: Senior Managers for Community Safety and Neighbourhood Services, Integrated Joint Commissioning; Education and Joint Commissioning; Skills, Economy and Housing Renewal; Customer and Business Improvement. This will be followed by discussions with key members of the Southampton Connect (particularly the priority project being led by Job Centre Plus) and voluntary organisations to agree a way forward for the