



Norfolk County Council

Environment, Development and Transport Committee budget proposals 2019-2020

Equality and rural assessments – findings and recommendations

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This assessment helps you to consider the impact of service changes on people with protected characteristics and in rural areas. The assessment can be updated at any time to inform service planning and commissioning.

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The purpose of equality and rural assessments

1. The purpose of equality and rural assessments is to enable elected members to consider the potential impact of decisions on different people and communities prior to decisions being taken. Mitigating actions can be developed if detrimental impact is identified.
2. It is not always possible to adopt the course of action that will best promote the needs of people with protected characteristics or in rural areas. However, assessments enable informed decisions to be made, that take into account every opportunity to minimise disadvantage.

The Legal context

3. Public authorities have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to consider the implications of proposals on people with protected characteristics. The Act states that public bodies must pay due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act¹;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic² and people who do not share it³;
 - Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it⁴.
4. The full Act is available [here](#).

The assessment process

5. This assessment comprises three phases:
 - **Phase 1** – evidence is gathered on the proposal, to examine who might be affected and how. This includes reviewing the findings of related assessments and public consultation, contextual information about local populations and other relevant data. Where appropriate, public consultation takes place.
 - **Phase 2** – the results are analysed. The assessments are drafted, making sure that any potential impacts are fully assessed. If the evidence indicates that a proposal may have a detrimental impact on people with protected characteristics or in rural communities, mitigating actions are considered.
 - **Phase 3** – the findings are reported to service committees, to enable any impacts to be taken into account before a decision is made.

EDT Committee's budget proposals 2019-2020

6. EDT Committee has put forward 10 budget proposals for 2019-2020:

	Title of proposal	Description
1.	Capitalisation of activities to release a revenue saving	Capitalisation of some activity that is currently revenue funded, within the financial rules. Switching to this type of funding means that the revenue budget is available for saving, without the need to make any changes to the level and type of activity. This proposal relates to various elements of capitalisation in the highways service.
2.	Further roll-out of street lighting LEDs	Roll-out of more LED street lights, which enables an energy saving. This proposal is to implement on residential streets and is in addition to the significant investment we have already made in LED technology on street lights. As with previous LED roll-outs, there is a need for investment to enable this to progress, on an invest to save basis, and this has been agreed with the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services. Discussions with our contractor, Amey, are well progressed and no issues identified.
3.	Changing back office processes and efficiency	We are reviewing our back office spend across the whole of CES and looking to harvest all of the savings available. This proposal includes savings in staff travel, subsistence and training budgets.
4.	Vacancy management	This relates to posts in the Support and Development, Environment, Highways and Waste services. As part of the overall recruitment approach in the department, we actively review vacancies and, where they arise, take opportunities to test out new ways of working, including alternative ways to structure work allocation within teams.
5.	Household Waste Recycling Centres – reuse shops	The proposal is to put reuse shops in place at further three recycling centres (Wells, Bergh Apton and Snetterton), in addition to the nine already in place. This will enable additional income generation and will reduce waste volumes for disposal, which will deliver a saving, and we will look to make further contract efficiencies.
6.	Review and management of contracts in Highways and Waste	The saving will be delivered by working with contractors to review and renegotiate existing contract arrangements to enable savings. This will include reducing overhead costs and reviewing application of inflation to rates. This relates to contracts in the highways and waste services. There will be no changes to front-line service standards or service delivery.
7.	Highways Commercialisation	Savings delivered through the Commercialisation of the highways services. Members discussed highways commercialisation at the September Committee meeting and agreed the proposal in principle, and further work is being carried.
8.	Re-model back office support structure	This relates to a re-structure of some teams in the Support and Development Group. The majority of this saving amount is on the basis that the proposal for highways commercialisation proceeds, which would provide the opportunity to re-work processes and ways of working and reduces the back-office support requirement from the service. The detailed work to deliver the saving has not yet been carried out. Should the highways commercialisation

	Title of proposal	Description
		project not proceed, for whatever reason, we will seek to deliver the saving through alternative means e.g. further vacancy management. The service has a relatively high turnover of staff, as it is often an entry point into the organisation.
9.	Highways Services	More streamlined arrangements with Norwich City Council for the management of the Highways Agency Agreement in Norwich, which sees the City Council carry out highways services in the City on behalf of the County Council. Work is underway, with the City Council, to review existing arrangements and to identify areas for potential saving. At this stage, this work is not complete.
10.	Income Generation	There are two elements of income generation. £220k relates to income through the introduction of the DIY waste policy previously agreed by Members. Now that the new arrangements have been in place for some months, we are clearer about the level of income the service generates and are confident that a further £220k can be delivered, in addition to the saving already agreed by Members. The remaining £5k relates to additional income generation by the developer services team through their continued work to provide advice and guidance to developers.

Who is affected?

7. The proposals will affect staff, residents, visitors and businesses in Norfolk, including people with protected characteristics and in rural areas:

People of all ages	YES
Disability (all disabilities and long-term health conditions, including but not limited to people with, for example, reduced mobility; Blind and visually impaired people; Deaf and hearing impaired people; people with mental health issues; people who are neurodiverse (e.g. on the Autism spectrum); people with learning difficulties and people with dementia).	YES
Gender reassignment (e.g. people who identify as transgender)	YES
Marriage/civil partnerships	YES
Pregnancy & Maternity	YES
Race (different ethnic groups, including Gypsies and Travellers)	YES
Religion/belief (different faiths, including people with no religion or belief)	YES
Sex (i.e. men/women/people who identify as intersex)	YES
Sexual orientation (e.g. lesbian, gay and bisexual people)	YES

Potential impact

8. At this stage, there is no evidence to indicate that these proposals will have a detrimental impact on people with protected characteristics or in rural areas.
9. The proposal to further roll-out LED street lighting is likely to have a positive impact on older and disabled people, including people who are visually impaired, as LED lights provide a better quality of lighting. The proposal to increase the number of reuse shops will also have a positive impact for residents with protected characteristics and in rural areas, as it will increase the reuse locations available for members of the public to visit.
10. The reasons for this are provided below:

	Title of proposal	Impact
1.	Capitalisation of activities to release a revenue saving	There is no evidence to indicate that this proposal would have any detrimental impact on people with protected characteristics or in rural areas. This is because there is no change to service standards, quality or delivery.
2.	Further roll-out of street lighting LEDs	There is no evidence to indicate that this proposal would have any detrimental impact on people with protected characteristics or in rural areas. This is because there is no change to service standards, quality or delivery. It is likely that this proposal would have a positive impact on older and disabled people, including people who are visually impaired, as LED lights provide a better quality of lighting.
3.	Changing back office processes and efficiency	There is no evidence to indicate that this proposal would have any detrimental impact on people with protected characteristics or in rural areas. This is because there is no change to service standards, quality or delivery.
4.	Vacancy management	There is no evidence to indicate that this proposal would have any detrimental impact on people with protected characteristics or in rural areas. This is because vacancy management will not lead to changes to service standards, quality or delivery. Staff with protected characteristics will not be disproportionately affected compared to other staff.
5.	Household Waste Recycling Centres – reuse shops	This proposal will have a positive impact for residents, including residents with protected characteristics and in rural areas, as it will increase the reuse locations available for members of the public to visit.
6.	Review and management of contracts in Highways and Waste	There is no evidence to indicate that this proposal would have any detrimental impact on people with protected characteristics or in rural areas. This is because there is no change to service standards, quality or delivery.
7.	Highways Commercialisation	At this early stage, there is no evidence to indicate that this proposal would have any detrimental or disproportionate impact on people with protected characteristics or in rural areas. This is because commercialisation will not lead to changes to service standards, quality or delivery. Staff with protected characteristics will not be disproportionately

	Title of proposal	Impact
		affected compared to other staff.
8.	Re-model back office support structure	There is no evidence to indicate that this proposal would have any detrimental impact on people with protected characteristics or in rural areas. This is because remodelling will not lead to changes to service standards, quality or delivery. Staff with protected characteristics will not be disproportionately affected compared to other staff.
9.	Highways Services	There is no evidence to indicate that this proposal would have any detrimental impact on people with protected characteristics or in rural areas. This is because there is no change to service standards, quality or delivery.
10.	Income Generation	There is no evidence to indicate that this proposal would have any detrimental impact on people with protected characteristics or in rural areas. This is because there is no change to service standards, quality or delivery.

Accessibility considerations

11. Accessibility is a priority for Norfolk County Council. Norfolk has a higher than average number of disabled and older residents compared to other areas of the UK, and a growing number of disabled young people.
12. The services reporting to the EDT Committee are universal services in that they are used by all residents and visitors in Norfolk. Disabled and older people have a greater reliance on the accessibility of the physical infrastructure of their community, to access the things they need day-to-day.
13. Accessibility considerations are taken into account as part of day-to-day processes and working. Because of the importance of ensuring that accessibility is integrated into ongoing service planning and commissioning of EDT services, consideration will continue to be given to opportunities for maximizing this in 2019.

Recommended actions

	Action	Lead	Date
1.	HR Shared Service to continue to routinely monitor whether staff with protected characteristics are disproportionately represented in redundancy or redeployment figures, and if so, take appropriate action.	Senior HR Consultant (Workforce Insight)	From 1 April 2019

Human rights implications

14. Public authorities in the UK are required to act compatibly with the Human Rights Act 1998. There are no human rights issues arising from the proposals.

Evidence used to inform this assessment

- Norfolk budget proposals 2019/20 – consultation documents and background papers and results of public consultation
- Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Business intelligence and management data, as quoted in this report.

Further information

15. For further information about this equality impact assessment please contact Jo Richardson, Equality & Diversity Manager, Email jo.richardson@norfolk.gov.uk



If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact Jo Richardson on 0344 800 8020.

¹ Prohibited conduct:

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have, or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a condition, rule, policy or practice in your organisation that applies to everyone disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.

Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”.

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

2 The protected characteristics are:

Age – e.g. a person belonging to a particular age or a range of ages (for example 18 to 30 year olds).

Disability - a person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment

Marriage and civil partnership

Pregnancy and maternity

Race - refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion and belief - has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (such as Atheism).

Sex - a man or a woman.

Sexual orientation - whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

3 The Act specifies that having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity might mean:

- Removing or minimizing disadvantages suffered by people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of others;
- Encouraging people who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such people is disproportionately low.

4 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between people and communities involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.