

Equality Impact Assessment Form **Reference –**

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| **Assessed by** | Imran Rathore | **Date created** | 01.12.21 |
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The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to

* eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
* advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and
* foster good relations between different groups

# Section 1: What is being assessed?

**1.1 Name of the proposal to be assessed.**

1% Social Care Precept

**1.2 Describe the proposal under assessment and what change it would result in if implemented.**

**Context**

The latest statistics from Projecting Older People Population Information (POPPI) and Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information (PANSI) project a 2% yearly increase in the number of service users up to 2030.

In addition to this demographic growth, the service is also facing pressures from other challenges which include:

* Meeting the more complex needs of older people, those with disabilities and mental health issues
* Increasing cost of care packages for growing numbers of people, both older and younger adults with complex needs, and their families.
* Unstable independent care market
* Additional demand arising from Covid related hospital discharge and long Covid support needs for those who already have siginifcant health and social care support requirements.
* Recruit and retain a skilled and caring workforce to meet existing and potential spikes in demand.
* Meeting our statutory duties to provide good quality of care.

**Proposal**

That as part of our wider Council tax proposals for 22-23, we are proposing an increase of 1% to the government’s Council Tax precept for adult social care to help fund the rising cost of providing adult social care services. Indicatively, a 1% Social Care precept will raise an additional £2.1m.

A 1% increase would result in an extra £14.99 a year per Band D property per year.

It needs to be noted that the amount charged and raised by the Council’s Social Care precept is lower than for many comparable authorities, and is insufficient to keep pace with increasing demand and rising costs.

**Approach**

We are working with our partners within the Health and Social Care System to combine our collective resources to develop more integrated and aligned support solutions while promoting a culture that moves from a dependency model to one that promotes independence and resilience.

The additional funding secured from the precept will be used to maintain our support levels and most importantly provide assurance that:

* people are effectively discharged from the hospital and supported within their own homes and settings.
* people are supported effectively to regain skills and confidence to remain independent, and where appropriate enhance the use of technological solutions and other aids to support them
* we are able to reduce inequalities by co-producing culturally appropriate and sensitive needs-based support with communities and individuals
* we provide equal access to services regardless of age and disability
* we can increase access to community-based prevention and early intervention support solutions to reduce demand for Adult and Social Care support..
* we can implement a whole system to support and improve people’s mental health and wellbeing and address isolation/loneliness
* we can identify and proactively support those people who are at risk of declining health and wellbeing or at risk of safeguarding, through community-based support solutions.

**Background and statutory requirements:**

In 2016-17 the government introduced a separate Council Tax increase for adult social care services, without holding a referendum - this became known as the adult social care precept. This was introduced in response to the significant cost pressures facing local authorities with adult social care responsibilities and must be used to fund adult social care services. The initial period for the precept was for 2017, 2018, and 2019. However, since then the Government has allow the LA to

In relation to the year beginning 2020 and subsequent years, the Government has allowed Local Authorities to continue to charge the additional social care precept this appears to be the most recent position as per the Chancellor’s Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) assumptions.

# Section 2: What the impact of the proposal is likely to be

* 1. **Will this proposal advance equality of opportunity for people who share a protected characteristic and/or foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not? If yes, please explain further.**

Yes, the funding generated from the Social Care Precept will enable the Adult Social Care Department to continue to provide support and services to the most vulnerable groups across the district, while ensuring the provision of support meets the person care needs and outcomes in line with the duties set out within the Care Act.

The provision of needs-based more cost-effective and sustainable services will facilitate the integration of people into the community and will enable them to gain greater access to community services and resources. It will enable them to participate in the broader social networks outside their homes and so improve their opportunities to access services (including services that may lead to employment) and foster good relations between different groups of service users by ensuring equality and transparency of service access and with the local community

* 1. **Will this proposal have a positive impact and help to eliminate discrimination and harassment against, or the victimisation of people who share a protected characteristic? If yes, please explain further.**

Yes, discrimination and harassment may include unintended exclusion from opportunities or isolation from family, friends, and the community. The additional funding will enable the service to provide and secure ongoing equally accessed support for vulnerable people who share a protected characteristic to retain their independence within their own home (or supported living) while enabling them to continue to actively engage in their wider community. The approach we are taking should help reduce the potential for such exclusion and isolation.

* 1. **Will this proposal potentially have a negative or disproportionate impact on people who share a protected characteristic? If yes, please explain further.**

No

**2.4 Please indicate the level of negative impact on each of the protected characteristics?**

(Please indicate high (H), medium (M), low (L), no effect (N) for each)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Protected Characteristics:** | **Impact**  (H, M, L, N) |
| Age | L |
| Disability | L |
| Gender reassignment | L |
| Race | L |
| Religion/Belief | L |
| Pregnancy and maternity | L |
| Sexual Orientation | L |
| Sex | L |
| Marriage and civil partnership | L |
| **Additional Consideration:** |  |
| Low income/low wage | M |

**2.5 How could the disproportionate negative impacts be mitigated or eliminated?**

(Note: Legislation and best practice require mitigations to be considered, but need only be put in place if it is possible.)

We are proposing a number of measures will be put in place to help mitigate the impact of Council Tax and Adult Social Care precept increases – these include:

* + *that a £50 discount to Council Tax bills will be applied to working-age Council Tax Reduction Scheme recipients in 2022-23 at a one-off cost of c£1.6m.*
  + *The Government provided one-off funding during the pandemic for Council Tax hardship schemes in 2020-21 and 2021-22, where discounts of £150, and £100 respectively were provided. This Government funding has now ended, but this budget proposal would see the continuation of a discount for a further year for the c32,000 working age Council Tax Reduction Scheme recipients.*
  + *That the Carer Leavers discount is increased to 100% exemption –currently Care leavers aged 21 or receive a Council Tax discount of up to 50% up to the age of 25.*
  + *That the we extend Council Tax support to care leavers up to age 25 who no longer live in the district. On current case numbers, the total cost of this proposal is £52k*

**3.1 Please consider which other services would need to know about your proposal and the impacts you have identified. Identify below which services you have consulted, and any consequent additional equality impacts that have been identified.**

The departmental leadership team within Adult Social Care has consistently engaged with our partners within the Health and Social Care System to develop and refine our plans. No additional issues of equality impacts have been identified from these conversations.

# Section 4: What evidence you have used?

**4.1 What evidence do you hold to back up this assessment?**

Poppi and Pansi data

ONS population projections.

Carers feedback

Service user feedback

**4.2 Do you need further evidence?**

# Section 5: Consultation Feedback

**5.1 Results from any previous consultations prior to the proposal development.**

*The proposal will allow increased/improved provision based on the assessed need of the client. No consultation has been undertaken, other than the normal feedback mechanisms already in place.*

**5.2 The departmental feedback you provided on the previous consultation (as at 5.1).**

**5.3 Feedback from current consultation following the proposal development (e.g. following approval by Executive for budget consultation).**

**5.4 Your departmental response to the feedback on the current consultation (as at 5.3) – include any changes made to the proposal as a result of the feedback.**