

ANGUS COUNCIL

SPECIAL COUNCIL – 27 FEBRUARY 2020

EQUALITY IMPACT AND FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY ASSESSMENTS

JOINT REPORT BY MARGO WILLIAMSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND IAN LORIMER, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

ABSTRACT

This report presents the assessments relating to equalities legislation which have been undertaken while considering the various changes required to support the Council setting a balanced budget for Financial Year 2020/21. Council is required to fully consider the assessments and to pay 'due regard' to equality in the decision making process.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 It is recommended that the Council:

- (i) fully considers, and takes into account, the Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) covered by this report;
- (ii) fully considers, and takes into account, the Fairer Scotland Duty assessment covered by this report; and
- (iii) notes that all the documentation relating to recommendations (i) and (ii) above can be accessed via the relevant hyperlinks included in the body of this report.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/ CORPORATE PLAN

2.1 This report contributes to the local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan, Locality Plans and Council Plan.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 As part of its approach to setting a balanced budget, the Council has carried out a number of assessments in relation to equalities legislation to ensure that all the relevant change proposals that are emerging as part of the budget setting process do not lead to unlawful discrimination.

3.2 Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are used by the Council to consider if a change proposal has an impact, positive or negative, on groups of people with protected characteristics under equalities legislation. By using this method the Council aims to ensure that equal opportunities' implications are duly considered. The Council's approach covers all the protected characteristics as follows:

- age,
- disability,
- gender,
- gender re-assignment,
- pregnancy and maternity,
- marital/civil partnership status,
- race,
- religion/belief, and
- sexual orientation.

3.3 In addition, the Fairer Scotland Duty places a legal responsibility on the Council to actively consider how it can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions. This assessment is therefore also a key requirement to be developed and considered while setting a balanced budget for the forthcoming financial year.

3.4 Members will appreciate that the significant and long running financial challenges the Council has had to contend with over the last 8 years or so, have meant significant changes in services and the way they are provided has been required. The Council continues to seek ways to mitigate the impact of such service changes on all citizens of Angus, but the unrelenting nature of the financial pressures makes this more difficult each year. This financial context is important to understand particularly in relation to the Council's ability to address inequalities of outcome.

3.5 Any final decisions to be taken by officers on changes required to support the Council setting a balanced budget will be made following a full EIA outlining the differential impact, if any, on those with protected characteristics. In the event that a negative equality impact is found and there is no recommendation to change the proposed policy or action as a result, there will either be additional measures taken to remove or mitigate the negative impact or to better advance equality or to foster good relations. Where negative equality impacts are identified and there is no mitigating action that is to be taken then this will be fully explained and justified and a report provided to elected members for a final decision.

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 Council is required to fully consider the assessments and to pay 'due regard' to equality in the decision making process. All documents are subject to member consideration as part of this report, while taking cognisance of all the related budget setting information.

4.2 New EIAs have been developed in relation to each of the new projects that have savings included in the Council's Change Programme (included in the Finance & Change Plan 2020/21 – 2023/24). It is highlighted that there are 16 of these and that a number of the other existing Change Programme projects already have EIAs approved as part of a previous years' budget setting process. The **existing EIA assessments** are available by following the hyperlink. The **new EIA assessments** listed below are available by following the hyperlink:

- 1 - Tayside Contracts – Contractual Arrangements
- 2 - 3rd Sector Enterprise Development
- 3 - Solar Farm at Restenneth (ground lease element)
- 4 - New Energy Initiative
- 5 - Decarbonising our Environment
- 6 - Commercialisation – Increase in Fees – Phase 2
- 7 - Governance Review
- 8 - Roads – Review of Professional Services
- 9 - Review of Strategic Policy & Economy
- 10 - Assets – Explore other Options for Professional Services
- 11 - CASH 2
- 12 - Loans Fund Repayment Review
- 13 - Capital Programme Efficiency
- 14 - Business Efficiency Processes
- 15 - Review of memberships/ Subscriptions
- 16 - ODZBB – Phase 2 (Service Reviews)/ Staff Slippage

4.3 The following are existing EIAs that were previously developed in relation to projects with savings included in the Change Programme, and have now been updated since the project has evolved and continues to be included in the Change Programme. These **updated EIA assessments** listed below are available by following the hyperlink:

- 17 - Angus Schools for the Future
- 18 - Agile/ Estates Review

4.4 New EIAs have been developed in relation to each of the savings measures (out-with the Change Programme) that are supporting services to self-finance identified budget pressures. These **new self-finance EIA assessments** listed below are available by following the hyperlink:

- 19 - Inflation Local Bus Service Provision
- 20 - Inflation Winter Maintenance

4.5 New EIAs have also been developed in relation to each of the updates to fees and charges which apply to a number of service areas. These **new fees and charges EIA assessments** listed below are available by following the hyperlink:

- 21 - New Charges for Parks Outdoor Lets
- 22 - Review of Charges within Communities Services
- 23 - Review of Charges within Infrastructure Services
- 24 - Review of Charges within Legal & Democratic Services
- 25 - Review of Angus Council Charges for Support and Care Services and Residential Fees
- 26 - Review of ANGUSalve Charges

4.6 The Fairer Scotland Duty assessment has been prepared to inform what are considered to be strategic level decisions anticipated to have a social-economic impact while setting a balanced budget for the forthcoming financial year. The [Fairer Scotland Duty assessment](#) listed below is available by following the hyperlink:

- 27 - Setting the 2020/21 Budget and Council Tax

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 This report provides a coherent package of all the assessments relating to equalities legislation which have been undertaken while considering the various changes required to support the Council setting a balanced budget for Financial Year 2020/21.

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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