

BUDGET SAVINGS (2021/22): ASSESSING EQUALITY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 As a public authority, the Council has duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, the Fairer Scotland Duty (Part one of the Equality Act), and the Island (Scotland) Act 2018 to give due regard to their aims when making strategic financial decisions.
- 1.2 This report outlines the work undertaken to ensure that due regard is given to equalities, islands and the Fairer Scotland Duty in the decision-making process relating to budget savings. We have used the council's Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (EQSEIA) process to assess the potential impact of the budget savings. This report presents a strategic EQSEIA for the savings programme to advise on overall impact.
- 1.3 There are no impacts identified through the EqSEIA process that show actual or potential unlawful discrimination.
- 1.4 Because of the timing of the budget setting process, we have not been able to follow in full the guidance relating to the Island Communities Impact Assessments (relating to legislation enacted by Scottish Government on 23 December, 2020). We have, however, been mindful of islands impacts in the preparation of this report.
- 1.5 This report has no direct financial implications but it provides information to inform the Council's decision on the 2021/2022 budget.

BUDGET SAVINGS (2021/22): ASSESSING EQUALITY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 As a public authority, the Council has duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, the Fairer Scotland Duty (Part one of the Equality Act), and the Island (Scotland) Act 2018 to give due regard to their aims when making strategic financial decisions.
- 2.2 This report outlines the work undertaken to ensure that due regard is given to equalities, islands and the Fairer Scotland Duty in the decision-making process relating to budget savings. We have used to council's Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (EQSEIA) process to assess the potential impact of the budget savings. This report presents a strategic EQSEIA for the savings programme to advise on overall impact.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 As a public authority, the council must consider equality issues when making strategic decisions. In addition to considering the impact the council's activities might have on people with one or more of the nine protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act (2010) and complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, there are now requirements for the council to take into account socio-economic disadvantage (Fairer Scotland Duty, as set out in Part One of the Equality Act) and impacts of proposals on islands (Island (Scotland) Act 2018).
- 3.2 We have been mindful of islands impacts in the preparation of this report. It should be noted, however, that new legislation relating to Island Community Impact Assessments came into force on 23 December, 2020. Owing to the timelines involved, changes to our EqSEIA process have not yet been made to reflect this. It should be noted that this will have implications for the budget (and other proposal) processes in the future.
- 3.3 The protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act (2010) are:
- Age.
 - Disability.
 - Gender reassignment.
 - Marriage and civil partnership.

- Race.
- Religion or belief.
- Sex.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Sexual orientation.

The areas to be considered as a result of the Fairer Scotland Duty and the Islands Act are as follows:

- Mainland rural population.
- Island populations.
- Low income.
- Low wealth.
- Material deprivation.
- Area deprivation.
- Socio-economic background.
- Communities of place.
- Communities of interest.

- 3.4 The council discharges its duties through its use of Equality and Socio-economic Impact Assessments (EqSEIAs). EqSEIAs have been carried out for those individual budget savings proposals that relate to policy decisions and/or affect people. Where EqSEIAs have been required, these have been developed by relevant managers and Heads of Service in parallel with the budget savings templates. Where EqSEIAs are deemed not to be required, the rationale for this has been recorded.
- 3.5 EqSEIAs for the individual savings proposals were carried out by Services in as part of the budget preparation process, with EqSEIAs being updated as the development of the proposals has progressed to take into account information gathered through consultation and engagement, as appropriate.
- 3.6 EqSEIAs consider the impact on service users as well as on the workforce and other service deliverers.
- 3.7 Informed by the individual EqSEIAs and savings proposals, this report presents a combined EqSEIA, designed to assess the overall, strategic impact of the savings options on equality and socio-economic groups as well as on the workforce. For members' information and consideration when reaching a final decision around the savings options, this assessment is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.8 The strategic EqSEIA sets out the overall purpose of the budget savings process and provides assurance that, if the council decides to take the savings options, mitigating actions have been identified and will be put in place where possible.

- 3.9 The Strategic EqSEIA has been developed by analysing all the EqSEIAs prepared as part of the budget saving process and then assessing the overall cumulative impact.
- 3.10 The strategic EqSEIA includes a table that illustrates how the proposals impact on the council's Business Outcomes (Appendix 1, Table 1). Tables 2 and 3 of the EqSEIA show impacts on service users and services deliverers, respectively. Table 4 records for all proposals whether an EqSEIA is required.
- 3.11 Some proposals have not had EqSEIAs completed. However, we recognise that as the thematic savings, for example around Digital By Default, are developed, EqSEIAs will require completion. These will take place outwith the current budget process.
- 3.12 The strategic EqSEIA identifies that there are no cumulative impacts of the savings proposals that impact disproportionately on any specific group.
- 3.13 There are no impacts identified through the EqSEIA process that show actual or potential unlawful discrimination.
- 3.14 Members are advised that the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, the Fairer Scotland Duty (Part one of the Equality Act) and the Island (Scotland) Act 2018 requires the Council to pay due regard to the legislation and use the impact assessments to inform their decision making. The duties enable the council to demonstrate that it is making financial decisions in a fair, transparent and accountable way, considering the needs and rights of different members of the community. These duties have been discharged by the Council for the budget setting process through the EqSEIA.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Council as a public authority has a duty under the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, the Fairer Scotland Duty, and the Islands Act to have due regard to the aims of those duties when making financial decisions. This is done through assessing the potential impact of the decision on equality using the council's Equality and Socio-economic Impact Assessment (EqSEIA) process, and identifying any mitigating measures.
- 4.2 This report and the accompanying combined EqSEIA, which has been informed by the impact assessments carried out for individual savings proposals, demonstrate compliance with those duties.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Policy:** This report complies with the council's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- 5.2 **Financial:** None arising directly from this paper.
- 5.3 **Legal:** This report helps the council to meet its obligations with regard to: Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, the Fairer Scotland Duty (Part one of the Equality Act) and the Island (Scotland) Act 2018.

- 5.4 **HR:** None directly from this paper, but there will be HR implications from the savings proposals that affect employees.
- 5.5 **Fairer Scotland Duty:**
- 5.5.1 **Equalities - protected characteristics:** protected characteristics, as identified in the attached EqSEIA.
- 5.5.2 **Socio-economic Duty:** as identified in the attached EqSEIA.
- 5.5.3 **Islands:** As identified in the attached EqSEIA.
- 5.6. **Risk:** risk has been mitigated by carrying out the EqSEIAs and a strategic EqSEIA on the savings proposals. There may be risk arising from new legislation that came into force on 23 December 2020, which has implications for the manner in which we conduct Islands Communities Impact Assessments.
- 5.7 **Customer Service:** None arising from this paper.

Executive Director with responsibility for Customer Support Services: Kirsty Flanagan

Policy Lead: Mary-Jean Devon

8 February 2021

For further information contact:

Jane Fowler, Head of Customer Support Services: (01546 60) 4466

Chris Carr, OD Officer: Performance and Improvement: (01546 60) 4260

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Budget savings proposals 2020/21: combined EqSEIA

Argyll and Bute Council: Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment

Section 1: About the proposal

Title of Proposal

Budget savings proposals 2021/22: combined EqSEIA

Intended outcome of proposal

To contribute to the delivery of the council's budget savings.

Description of proposal

The overall budget proposal contains a series of savings that have been developed under three broad headings:

- 2% efficiency targets
- Themed savings
- Non-controllable savings

Screening of the policy-related budget savings proposals enabled the identification of those proposals where individual EqSEIAs were required. This detailed information is available from equality@argyll-bute.gov.uk.

Following the completion of the individual EqSEIAs, this combined impact assessment brings together their conclusions so that the cumulative impact of the budget savings proposals can be seen.

The majority of the EqSEIAs relate to 2% efficiency target savings, although it should be noted that impact assessments will be required at a later date for themed savings, and will be submitted as these proposals progress.

In total, the proposals covered by this EqSEIA contribute £614.3K to overall revenue budget savings in year 1, rising to £708.5K over three years.

In the year 2021/22, the staffing implications arising from the posts at risk of redundancy (either voluntary or compulsory) are as follows:

Grade	Net loss headcount	Net loss FTE
LGE4	Unable to confirm due to reallocation of some hours between establishments	6.8
LGE5	2	1.5
LGE6	1	1
LGE3-10*	8	8

*All employees currently in these posts are male. Where proposals are taken forward as savings, services will be redesigned and redundancy selection exercises carried out.

The following vacant posts will be removed:

Grade	FTE
Modern Apprenticeship	1
LGE3	1
LGE6	0.7
LGE11	2


The detailed savings are set out in the associated 2021/22 Budget papers.

Business Outcome(s) / Corporate Outcome(s) to which the proposal contributes

See table 1.

		We ensure information and support is available for everyone	We provide support, prevention and opportunities to help people make better lifestyle choices	We enable a choice of suitable housing options	Our communities are protected and supported	Our natural and built environment is protected and respected	Our looked after young people are supported by effective corporate parenting	The support and lifestyle needs of our children, young people, and their families are met	All our children and young people are supported to realise their potential	All our adults are supported to realise their potential	We support businesses, employment and development opportunities	We influence and engage with businesses and policy makers	Argyll and Bute is promoted to everyone	Our infrastructure is safe and fit for the future	Our communities are cleaner and greener	We are efficient and cost effective	We engage and work with our customers, staff and partners	We encourage creativity and innovation to ensure our workforce is fit for the future
	Proposal	BO101	BO102	BO103	BO104	BO105	BO106	BO107	BO108	BO109	BO110	BO111	BO112	BO113	BO114	BO115	BO116	BO117
ED5	Clerical Assistants – realignment of support provided (ED5)																	
FSS01; FSS02; FSS03; FSS04	Financial Services Proposed Savings Options for 2021/22 Budget																	
R&I01	Stop nursery growing service																	
R&I02	Stop provision of plant beds/ transfer to community...																	
R&I03	Rationalise Administration Support within Network and Standards, RIS																	
R&I09	Road Inspections Find and Fix...																	
R&I13	Reduce specification for grass cutting...																	
R&I16	Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy																	
R&I17	Public transport fare scale increase																	

Legend:

 Proposal contributes to this business outcome

Lead officer details:	
The lead officer of each savings proposal is usually the relevant Third Tier Manager. In some cases it may be the Head of Service. The lead officer for the strategic Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment is the Head of Customer Support Services.	
Name of lead officer	Jane Fowler
Job title	Head of Customer Support Services
Department	
Appropriate officer details:	
Name of appropriate officer	Jane Fowler, Head of Customer Support Services Ross McLaughlin, Head of Commercial Services Fergus Murray, Head of Development and Economic Growth Louise Connor, Head of Education - Learning and Teaching Jim Smith, Head of Roads and Infrastructure David Logan, Head of Legal and Regulatory Services Laurence Slavin, Acting Head of Financial Services
Sign off of EqSEIA	Jane Fowler, Head of Customer Support Services
Date of sign off	01.02.21

Who will deliver the proposal?
The proposals will be delivered by the Heads of Service as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Customer Support Services • Head of Commercial Services • Head of Development and Economic Growth • Head of Education: Learning and Teaching • Head of Roads and Infrastructure Services • Head of Legal and Regulatory Support • Acting Head of Financial Services

Section 2: Evidence used in the course of carrying out EqSEIA

Consultation / engagement
Heads of Service have consulted with staff groups affected.
In addition, a public consultation was carried out as part of the overall budget setting process. This impact assessment should be read in conjunction with the findings of that consultation.
A public consultation carried out regarding school and public transport (R&I17) attracted 1,496 responses (1,452 from members of the public and 44 from Elected Members/community councils/other organisations).

Data

Data has been gathered by Heads of Service from a range of sources that are specified in the Service EqSEIAs.

Other information

Other information is included, where relevant, in the individual EqSEIAs.

Gaps in evidence

See below.

Section 3: Impact of proposal

Impact on Service Users

See table 2

Table 2: Impact on Service Users

Impacts on service users		Protected characteristics										Socio-economic duty							
	Proposal	Age	Disability	Ethnicity	Sex	Gender reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy and Maternity	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Mainland rural population	Island populations	Low income	Low wealth	Material deprivation	Area deprivation	Socio-economic background	Communities of place	Communities of interest
CSS03	ICT Production Team - Print Services																		
DEG09	Reduce Regulatory Services environmental and food monitoring programmes																		
ED3	Removal of Primary Cluster Budgets																		
FSS07	Financial Services Proposed Savings Options for 2021/22 Budget																		
CSS04	ICT Production Team - Print Services																		
DEG02	Cancellation of Flights if they are weather delayed from Oban Airport.																		
DEG07	amendments under s64 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, and handling of non-ePlanning																		
DEG08	Bute which monitors background radionuclide levels at various locations																		
DEG10	Private water supplies income; charge for shellfish movement documents																		
ED5	Clerical Assistants – realignment of support provided (ED5)																		
FSS01; 02; 03; 04	Financial Services Proposed Savings Options for 2021/22 Budget																		
R&I01	Stop nursery growing service	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK
R&I02	Stop provision of plant beds/ transfer to community...	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK
R&I03	Rationalise Administration Support within Network and Standards, RIS																		
R&I09	Road Inspections Find and Fix...																		
R&I13	Reduce specification for grass cutting...	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK
R&I16	Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK
R&I17	Public transport fare scale increase	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK

Legend

DK	Unknown impact
	Negative impact
	No impact
+	Positive impact

If you have identified any impacts on service users, explain what these will be.

DEG10: Shellfish charge will have a financial impact of individual harvesters and business who will need to pay for a service which they currently get at no costs. This may have a **negative impact on rural and island communities** and this may be in addition to the costs associated with EU Exit

R&I01; R&I02; R&I13: Although the impact on service users belonging to groups covered by the EqSEIA is unknown at this time, concern has been raised that reductions in service will reduce the aesthetic appearance of Argyll & Bute for visitors and residents, and may have a detrimental effect on the Argyll & Bute economy.

R&I17: Impacts on service users are unknown at this time. However, these will be identified as the action plan for this saving is developed and delivered.

No impacts have been described for proposals:

ED3; ED5; DEG02; DEG07; DEG08; FSS01; FSS02; FSS03; FSS04; FSS07; CSS03; CSS04; R&I09; LRS11

If any “don’t know”s have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

If proposals are approved by council, work will be carried out during their planning and implementation phases to understand the impacts on groups where impacts are currently unknown. Mitigation to these impacts will be implemented as required.

Impact on service deliverers (including employees, volunteers etc)

See table 3

Table 3: Impact on Service Deliverers (employees)

Impacts on service deliverers		Protected characteristics									Socio-economic duty								
	Proposal	Age	Disability	Ethnicity	Sex	Gender reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy and Maternity	Religion	Sexual Orientation	Mainland rural population	Island populations	Low income	Low wealth	Material deprivation	Area deprivation	Socio-economic background	Communities of place	Communities of interest
CSS03	ICT Production Team - Print Services																		
DEG09	Reduce Regulatory Services environmental and food monitoring programmes																		
ED3	Removal of Primary Cluster Budgets																		
FSS07	Financial Services Proposed Savings Options for 2021/22 Budget																		
CSS04	ICT Production Team - Print Services																		
DEG02	Cancellation of Flights if they are weather delayed from Oban Airport.										+	+							
DEG07	amendments under s64 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, and handling of non-ePlanning																		
DEG08	Bute which monitors background radionuclide levels at various locations																		
DEG10	Private water supplies income; charge for shellfish movement documents																		
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R&I01	Stop nursery growing service	DK	DK	DK		DK	DK	DK	DK	DK				DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK
R&I02	Stop provision of plant beds/ transfer to community...	DK	DK	DK		DK	DK	DK	DK	DK				DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK
R&I03	Rationalise Administration Support within Network and Standards, RIS	DK	DK	DK		DK	DK	DK	DK	DK		DK		DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK
R&I09	Road Inspections Find and Fix...	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK
R&I13	Reduce specification for grass cutting...	DK	DK	DK		DK	DK	DK	DK	DK				DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK
R&I16	Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy																		
R&I17	Public transport fare scale increase	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK	DK

Legend

- DK Unknown impact
- Negative impact
- No impact
- + Positive impact

If you have identified any impacts on service deliverers, explain what these will be.

DEG02: has a **positive impact on islands**. New Council posts have been created on the islands of Coll and Colonsay. This has created new employment on the islands for 8 members of staff. By having a reasonable cut off time for weather delayed flights allow staff on the islands to undertake their other roles as many have dual jobs on the islands and means passengers are not left sitting at Oban to board their flights over an extensive period.

R&I01; R&I02; R&I13: Employees at risk of redundancy are male and on low incomes.

R&I09: It is hoped that savings will be achieved through being proactive and fixing faults earlier thereby requiring less materials and travel. However, if that is not the case then redundancy will need to be considered.

R&I17: Impacts on service deliverers are unknown at this time.

No impacts have been described for proposals:

ED3; ED5; DEG07; DEG08; DEG09; DEG10; FSS01; FSS02; FSS03; FSS04; FSS07; CSS03; CSS04; R&I09; R&I16; LRS11

If any 'don't know's have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

If proposals are approved by council, work will be carried out to during their planning and implementation phases to understand the impacts on groups where impacts are currently unknown. Mitigation to these impacts will be implemented as required.

How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?

CSS03; CSS04: Although the impact is on staff in a single location, the posts are currently vacant and have been so for some considerable time

ED3: As this will not directly affect any employees, the negative impact will be on school budgets when schools will have to fund any clerical supply internally.

ED5: Negative impacts will be identified in the savings template and through consultation with staff

R&I01; R&I02: Volunteers for redundancy will be sought in the first instance.

R&I09: If redundancies are required, volunteers for redundancy will be sought in the first instance.

R&I03: The Council is looking at its IT systems and business processes to see if these could help it to address some of the increases in work identified.

R&I13: The Council will seek alternative employment for those at risk of redundancy and voluntary redundancy will be considered before compulsory redundancy.

R&I17: Due regard has been given to the savings choice. The only potential negative impact would be upon low income families but this deemed to be minimal.

Section 4: Interdependencies

Is this proposal likely to have any knock-on effects for any other activities carried out by or on behalf of the council?	See below.
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Details of knock-on effects identified
<p>ED3: There will be a cost pressure to the schools if supply is not available to be funded centrally</p> <p>ED5: There will be a knock on effect to head teachers and teaching staff having to do without the full hours of support currently provided by clerical assistants. This may put additional pressure on remaining support staff in individual establishments.</p> <p>DEG09: May result in additional costs being incurred in responding to outbreaks and environmental health incidents, where the costs associated with analysis, are unbudgeted. Notwithstanding this, the Council would need to respond given its statutory role</p> <p>R&I01; R&I02; R&I09; R&I13: Knock on effects are similar for these proposals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As a result of reducing the number of posts the ability to manage and deliver the service would be significantly impacted and the front line service delivery programme may not be guaranteed.• There will be a loss of resilience generally and in particular for the staff who provide flexible duties and an on-call service to cover a 24 hour emergency responses. Reducing the numbers of staff who can provide the service would mean that staff are on-call more frequently and that would impact on their current work-life balance and ability to deliver 'on site' response if removed.• The proposal will require higher graded staff to be available assist in duties. <p>R&I17: Knock-on effects will be identified as the action plan for this proposal progresses.</p> <p>No knock-on effects have been identified for the following proposals: CCS03; CCS04 DEG07; DEG08; DEG10 FSS01; FSS02; FSS03; FSS04; FSS07 LRS11</p>

Section 5: Monitoring and review

How will you monitor and evaluate the equality impacts of your proposal?
<p>Progress with the implementation of the individual proposals will be monitored by the relevant Heads of Service. This will include the implementation and monitoring of any identified mitigating measures.</p> <p>HR and Organisational Development will monitor redundancies and other changes in staffing.</p>