

Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment - Process

STEP 1 - Screening

As early as possible as the policy is being developed, screen it!

- Describe the policy
- Is an EFSIA needed?



STEP 2 – Scoping - Determine what is needed for the EFSIA

- What do you already know?
- What further information do you need?

STEP 3 – As the policy is being developed

- Review the information already available
- Gather any additional information needed
- Consult with stakeholders

STEP 4 – Decision

- Review findings
- Revisit the policy and make a decision/recommendation:
 - Option 1: No major change
 - Option 2: Adjust the policy
 - Option 3: Continue the policy
 - Option 4: Stop and remove the policy
- Record the reasons for the decision/recommendation

Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment - Screening

Title of Policy:	Clackmannanshire Council Budget 2023/24
Service:	Clackmannanshire Council
Team:	N/a

Will the policy have to go to Council or committee for approval	Yes
Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?	Yes
Does it relate to functions that previous involvement activities have identified as being important to particular protected groups?	Yes
Does it relate to an area where the Council has set equality outcomes?	No
Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities?	Potentially
Does it relate to a policy where there is significant potential for reducing inequalities or improving outcomes?	Potentially

IF YES - Move on to an Equality & Fairer Scotland Assessment

IF NO - Explain why an Equality & Fairer Scotland Assessment is not required

APPROVAL

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE
Cherie Jarvie	Senior Manager Partnership and Transformation	25/01/23

NB This screening exercise is not to be treated as an assessment of impact and therefore does not need to be published. However, if you decide not to assess the impact of any policy, you will have to be able to explain your decision. To do this, you should keep a full record of how you reached your decision.

Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment - Scoping

Purpose of the proposed policy or changes to established policy

The purpose of the change is to ensure that Clackmannanshire Council is able to set a balanced budget, as required by statute, for the year 2023/24 and to meet a funding gap of £10m.

Clackmannanshire Council is consulting on proposals which require a policy change and this Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment scoping document sets out the Council's initial assessment on any impacts arising from proposals. Feedback from our consultation process will inform the final Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment which will be published on the Council's webpages and will be included as part of the final decision making process on the 23/24 budget by Council.

Transforming our local economy and tackling poverty and inequality lies at the heart of the Council's transformation journey and whilst our ambitions are firmly focused on a strong future for Clackmannanshire, local government is not immune from the realities of dealing with rapidly increasing costs and demands for services and we continue to face tough choices within tight financial constraints.

We are consulting on a range of policy proposals which seek to contribute to an £10m funding gap for 23/24. The proposals are summarised below:

- a) An increase in fees and charges at 5%.
- b) An increase in Council Tax at either 3, 5 or 7%
- c) Reduce grant funding to the third and voluntary sector by up to 20%.
- d) Review of Banchory early learning centre provision.
- e) Review of home to school transport provision.
- f) Extending Primary school lunch.
- g) Review of delivery of Secondary education.
- h) Review of community access points and libraries.
- i) Increase the cost of brown bin Waste permits.
- j) Increase the cost of bulky uplifts.
- k) Implement new charges to developers for communal bins.
- l) Reduce opening hours of Forthbank Recycling Centre.
- m) Transition to net zero/introducing on-street electric vehicle charging.

Through the budget engagement exercise we are seeking to consult with protected groups to identify specific equality and Fairer Scotland impacts and any mitigations that we need to consider. Details on the proposals are set out in the Budget Engagement Booklet 23/24.

The current rate of Council Tax can be found here <https://www.clacks.gov.uk/council/counciltax/>

The current register of charges can be accessed here <https://www.clacks.gov.uk/document/6472.pdf>

Which aspects of the policy are particularly relevant to each element of the Council's responsibilities in relation to the General Equality Duty and the Fairer Scotland Duty?

General Equality Duty -

<p>➤ Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct</p>
<p>Impacts are assessed as low, however data and evidence on impacts is invited as part of the consultation process.</p>
<p>➤ Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not</p>
<p>The proposed changes may have an impact on those with protected characteristics and further information is required to better understand any direct impacts on protected groups and how these could be mitigated. Clackmannanshire Council is seeking to consult with protected groups to gather information on likely or possible impacts arising from the proposals.</p>
<p>➤ Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.</p>
<p>Impacts are assessed as low, however data and evidence on impacts is invited as part of the consultation process.</p>
<p>Fairer Scotland Duty -</p>
<p>➤ Reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage</p>
<p>The proposed changes will increase the amount of Council Tax residents would pay and some residents would also be impacted by increases in fees and charges. Whilst these are universal charges the change may impact residents who are vulnerable or experiencing socio-economic disadvantage particularly those on lower incomes. A range of support schemes are already in place to ensure that the most vulnerable residents are protected from financial crisis including Council Tax Reduction, crisis and financial welfare and concessionary schemes. However we are mindful of the current cost of living pressures and as such further information is sought from protected groups on impacts and any additional mitigation that the Council should consider.</p> <p>The proposed changes include a review of third and voluntary sector grants, including some organisations which are likely to be predominantly utilised by residents experiencing socio economic disadvantage including health and wellbeing, economic and social inequalities. Further information is sought from protected groups on specific impacts and any mitigation that the Council should consider.</p> <p>Proposals on a review of Community Access Points, and home to school transport provision could potentially have a disproportionate impact on residents experiencing socio economic disadvantage, however further information is sought from protected groups on impacts and any mitigation that the Council should consider. There may also be socio-economic impacts on already deprived communities and places; evidence is sought on the extent of these impacts.</p>

To which of the equality groups is the policy relevant?		
Protected Characteristic	Yes/No*	Explanation
Age	Yes	There may be disproportionate impacts on certain age groups. Proposals relating to Education provision and home to school transport are likely to impact on children and young people. Proposals relating to Community Access Points may disproportionately impact older residents.
Disability	Yes	There may be disproportionate impacts on people with disabilities arising from all proposals particularly where unemployment and low incomes are prevalent. Further information is sought to understand impacts and to identify mitigation.
Gender Reassignment	No	There is no indication at this stage that this protected characteristic would be impacted.
Pregnancy and Maternity	No	There is no indication at this stage that this protected characteristic would be impacted.
Race	No	There is no indication at this stage that this protected characteristic would be impacted.
Religion and Belief	No	There is no indication at this stage that this protected characteristic would be impacted.
Sex	Yes	There may be disproportionate impacts on sex. Our poverty and economic baseline assessment indicates that weekly incomes for women are relatively low. Women also represent the majority of lone parent families in Clackmannanshire and teenage pregnancies remain comparatively high. Domestic abuse rates also remain comparatively high (disproportionately affecting women). Proposals relating to a review of third and voluntary sector organisations may disproportionately impact women however further information is sought to understand impacts and any additional mitigations the Council should consider.
Sexual Orientation	No	There is no indication at this stage that this protected characteristic would be impacted.

* Delete as required

What evidence is already available about the needs of relevant groups, and where are the gaps in evidence?

Our analysis indicates that low incomes and poverty and inequality and health inequality are significant issues for Clackmannanshire possibly worsened by cost of living pressures. A deep-dive data analysis across a range of measures has been carried out to help inform our understanding of Clackmannanshire. We also completed a poverty and inequality impact assessment in 2020 to understand the potential impacts on protected groups resulting from the Covid pandemic. In addition data and evidence from previous budget engagement activity, as well as other consultation, is retained on record.

Whilst we have data and evidence from previous budget engagement which has indicated that similar proposals had no significant impact on residents, there are evidence gaps which relate to the full proposals set out in this document. We seek, through the budget engagement exercise, to gather, additional information on the needs of relevant groups, impacts relating to the proposals and any mitigation.

Which equality groups and communities might it be helpful to involve in the development of the policy?

The Council is seeking views from protected groups, and in particular from: young and older residents, those with a disability; sex and economically disadvantaged or low income families and/ or communities and from organisations supporting residents with protected characteristics or who have social economic disadvantage. We are seeking information on any impacts arising from the proposals and any additional mitigation that we should consider.

We will update and publish this impact assessment following completion of the budget consultation exercise and analysis of feedback. The final impact assessment will be considered by Council as part of its budget setting process for 2023/24.

Next steps

We are seeking views through our online survey which can be accessed here:
<https://www.clacks.gov.uk/>

Alternatively views on impacts can be sent in writing to:
customerservice@clacks.gov.uk

or

Customer Services
Kilncraigs
Greenside Street
Alloa
FK10 1EB

If you require this document in an alternative language or format please contact Clackmannanshire Council on 01259 450000, email customerservice@clacks.gov.uk or write to us at the above address.

Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment - Decision

(this section is deliberately blank and will be completed following the period of engagement and consultation).

Evidence findings		
This section will be completed following review of information and feedback received on the proposal.		
Details of engagement undertaken and feedback received		
Decision/recommendation		
Having considered the potential or actual impacts of this policy, the following decision/ recommendation is made:		
Tick	Option 1: No major change The assessment demonstrates that the policy is robust. The evidence shows no potential for unlawful discrimination and that all opportunities have been taken to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review.	
	Option 2: Adjust the policy – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality or to foster good relations. It may be possible to remove or change the aspect of the policy that creates any negative or unwanted impact, or to introduce additional measures to reduce or mitigate any potential negative impact.	
	Option 3: Continue the policy – this means adopting or continuing with the policy, despite the potential for adverse impact. The justification should clearly set out how this decision is compatible with the Council’s obligations under the duty.	
	Option 4: Stop and remove the policy – if there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, consideration should be given to stopping the policy altogether. If a policy leads to unlawful discrimination it should be removed or changed.	
Justification for decision		
APPROVAL		
NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE