

## Equality Impact Analysis

This equality impact analysis establishes the likely effects both positive and negative and potential unintended consequences that decisions, policies, projects and practices can have on people at risk of discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The analysis considers documentary evidence, data and information from stakeholder engagement/consultation to manage risk and to understand the actual or potential effect of activity, including both positive and adverse impacts, on those affected by the activity being considered.

To support completion of this analysis tool, please refer to the equality impact analysis guidance.

### Section 1 – Analysis Details (Page 5 of the guidance document)

<b>Name of Policy/Project/Decision</b>	Council Budget for 2025/2026
<b>Lead Officer (SRO or Assistant Director/Director)</b>	Neil Kissock
<b>Department/Team</b>	Finance
<b>Proposed Implementation Date</b>	April 2025
<b>Author of the EqIA</b>	Lee Cawley (EDI Manager)
<b>Date of the EqIA</b>	17/01/2025

<p><b>1.1 What is the main purpose of the proposed policy/project/decision and intended outcomes?</b></p> <p>Council is seeking to set a budget for the 2025/26 financial year in a continuing period of economic uncertainty. In order to set a balanced budget, savings proposals totalling £8.260m for 2025/26 and additional Council Tax and Business Rates income of £10.629m have been brought forward for consideration.</p> <p>The LET'S Do It! Strategy for 2030 provides the strategic framework for the Council's use of resources through the vision to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on the strengths that already exist in our communities, breaking down barriers for people and between agencies and services to give people the ability to be independent.</li> <li>• Deliver in partnership, locally whenever possible and through a digitally inclusive approach</li> <li>• Drive economic growth to improve outcomes for local people; reduce the demand on public services and increase income to the Council.</li> </ul> <p>From a budget planning perspective, the application of the LET'S Do It! strategy is an opportunity to:</p>
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- Empower local people and organisations to seek self-help and community-based support rather than immediately engaging with statutory services. The scale of community potential is now evident through the anti-poverty response, for example, with over 80 organisations active in providing cost of living support and the emergence of the Bury Community Support Network
- Tackle health inequalities through a comprehensive local Wellness offer.
- Take a stronger focus on prevention and harnessing community capacity, which has been at the heart of the adult social care transformation since 2019 and continues within this budget.
- Drive innovation such as through the internal transformation strategy which is now enabling digital-first, more efficient processes, user self service
- Deliver inclusive growth through regeneration in order to reduce deprivation and therefore demand on expensive reactive Council and other public services. Growth also creates the potential for increased income from council tax and business rates receipts, through delivery of a pipeline of brownfield-first housing and new locations for business.

As far as possible budget savings options have been developed which are consistent with the LET'S principles. However, given the sheer scale of savings required, this is not universally the case, and, in some instances, proposals simply relate to reduced controllable spend through a reduction in non-statutory service provision.

However, in the delivery of all budget proposals the Council will be cognisant of its statutory obligations in relation to inclusion, as per the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, and its local commitment as set out in the LET'S Do It! Strategy and Bury Council EDI Strategy and Objectives 2024-28

This overarching EIA sets out the Council's approach to considering and addressing any potential equality implications of the budget and defines where more detailed proposal-specific EIAs will be undertaken

A number of individual efficiency and savings proposals have been put forward as part of the overall 2025/2026 budget setting. These proposals cover a number of areas affecting residents including health and social care, children's services, district car parking and internal council operating functions. EIAs will be undertaken where these could have an effect on residents, council colleagues or partner organisations. These proposals include:

- Edge of Care review
- Foster Care service review
- Family Safeguarding Model

- Reconnect – step-down from residential care
- Therapeutic support team for Children in Care
- Single Handed Care Trial
- Adults Commissioning Review
- Personal Budget Review
- Direct Payment Reassessment Review
- Deferred Payments
- Persona Supported Living Remodel
- Stores Function Re-design
- Dimming Street Lighting
- District Car Parking Strategy
- Car Parking Tariff Review
- Highway Enforcement
- Residents Permits Pricing
- Frontline Service Integration – Housing
- Contact Centre Review
- Revenues and Benefits Review
- Unit 4 Review

No proposal put forward as part of the 2025/206 budget will affect the delivery of statutory services.

**Section 2 – Impact Assessment** (Pages 6 to 10 of the guidance document)

**2.1 Who could the proposed policy/project/decision likely have an impact on?**

**Employees: Yes**

It is possible some proposals set out in this budget will have an impact on the council’s workforce through council workforce structures, changes to services and the nature of work and services delivered by employees and how residents, businesses and partner organisation interact with employees during their work.

**Community/Residents: Yes**

It is possible that our communities and residents could be impacted by some proposals set out in this budget. Communities and residents may see increased, changed, reduced or removed provisions which could impact their day to day life as residents in the borough.

**Third parties such as suppliers, providers and voluntary organisations: Yes**

It is possible that third parties operating in the borough and/or partnering with the council could be impacted by some proposals set out in this budget, this could affect the operations of these third parties

**2.2 Evidence to support the analysis. Include documentary evidence, data and stakeholder information/consultation**

**Documentary Evidence:**

**Specific Proposals which could have an equalities impact**

Given the complexity and scale of the budget changes required it is challenging to provide an overall analysis of potential impact. As outlined above, inclusion is a central theme of the Council's LET'S Do It! strategy and, in providing a budget which, to a significant extent, aligns with this vision. Officers have sought to mitigate the impact on protected groups in the borough.

Whilst there is the *potential* for disproportionate negative impacts on protected groups in the above areas, the proposal specific EQIAs will need to explore these in more detail and, wherever possible, seek to mitigate this in accordance with the Council's obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Overall, the scale of budget reductions required across the Council represents a risk of negative impact on protected groups which will need to be closely managed and monitored throughout the implementation process.

It is recognised that the proposed council tax increase is required for the council to meet its statutory duties and requirements. There is a risk of this having a negative impact on the socio-economically vulnerable and, by extension, other characteristics where there is an accepted link to socio-economic vulnerability specifically, younger and older people, disabled people, people who are from ethnic minorities, care leavers and veterans. The same is also true in relation to the proposed rent increases for tenants of the council's housing stock which are required for the council to meet its statutory duties and requirements as landlord.

The Council's cost of living support (LET'S Manage Tough Times Together) and wider work to support the most vulnerable residents through our Neighbourhood Teams and overarching delivery of the LET'S Do It! Strategy will provide support to mitigate this impact insofar as is reasonably possible. Individuals and families may need further individually tailored support

with paying rent and council tax which will be considered on a case-by-case basis through relevant support mechanisms.

As a council, we proactively identify and help residents with any support available to them including Pension Credits through our Welfare Support surgeries which are held at different locations throughout the borough, along with support identification taking place for struggling residents through the Supportive Collection Pathway. These activities will be solidified and increased with a full relaunch of the borough's Welfare Support offer in 2025/26.

The council has begun to change its approach to the collection of Council Tax, introducing a Supportive Collection Pathway, whereby residents struggling to pay are engaged with in a different manner and with officers actively seeking to maximise their income and reduce their Council Tax bill prior to a discussion around payment.

The council will also continue to help and support our most vulnerable residents through the allocation of Household Support Fund, which the government has confirmed will continue for 12 months from April 2024. The council's offer has expanded over recent months, whereby residents can now also access support towards replacing white goods and clothing.

The council website brings together information for residents on a variety of support available.

<https://www.bury.gov.uk/benefits/lets-manage-tough-times>

#### **Data:**

##### **Demographics**

The council's [Employment Equality Report 2024](#) details an analysis of demographics data of the council workforce and the borough's population, taken from the Census 2021. Headline data from the 2021 census told us:

- Bury's population increased by around 8,800 between the last two censuses (about 5%), to just under 195,000 in 2021.
- 33% of Bury's population are over 50
- 19% of people in Bury are disabled
- 0.47% of the population are transgender\* (this question was optional therefore is estimated to be higher)
- 45.3% of the population are married or civilly partnered
- 20.9% of the population listed their ethnic group as a minoritised group with the 'Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh category the highest at 11%.
- 94% of people in Bury speak English as their main language (compared to 82% in Manchester).

- 48.8% of Bury residents described themselves as Christian, 29% reported having "No religion", while 10% described themselves as Muslim and 6% noted their religion as Judaism.
- Bury's population is made up of 51% women and 49% men
- 3% of people in Bury identified as a sexual orientation other than heterosexual\* (this question was optional therefore is estimated to be higher)
- 9.4% of people in Bury stated they had unpaid caring responsibilities for an adult or child who could not manage day to day without their care
- Based on responses 3% of the borough's populations are armed forces veterans, circa 5,000 people (highest areas had over 10%).
- 52.5% of households in Bury fall under the "Household Deprivation" category in the census.

### Care Experienced Children and Care Leavers

The census does not capture this information however Bury Council recognises care experienced children and care leavers as an additional protected characteristic. As of January 2025, there were 262 children in care and 174 care leavers in the borough being supported by the council.

### Incomes and Inflation

The following statistics reflect the expected comparable inflation rates and uplifts in benefits, pensions and pay growth

- The inflation rate as of December 2024 stood at 2.5% CPI and 3.5% RPI ([ONS, 2025](#))
- The inflation rate is expected to rise to 2.6% CPI by June 2025 before falling back to 2% over the remainder of the year ([OBR, 2025](#))
- The government has implemented an uplift of 6.7% to the national living wage as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 ([GOV.UK, 2025](#))
- The state pension uplift for April 2025 will be 4.1% ([Benefit and pension rates 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#))
- Average weekly earning growth, September to November 2024 is 5.6% [Average weekly earnings in Great Britain - Office for National Statistics](#)

### Stakeholder information/consultation:

[Budget Consultation 25/26 – Analysis of responses](#)

[Background](#)

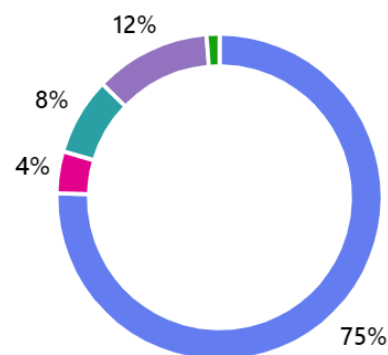
The consultation for the budget proposals for 2025/26 was launched on 11 November 2024 and closed on the 23 December 2024. The consultation focused on gathering opinions on general budget setting principles, strategies that may be employed to continue to deliver savings through the next year and also specific questions around key proposals for changes to car park charging strategies and street light dimming. The survey received 282 responses compared to 90 responses for the 2021/22 consultation. **(No analysis in between these time dates has been found).**

**Demographics and Characteristics**

Please note that the demographics questions were not mandatory and therefore each question may not add up to the 282 total respondents.

- Respondent type

● Resident of Bury	236
● Business of Bury	13
● Part of a public sector organisation	24
● Staff member of Bury Council	36
● Other	4



- Demographics and Characteristics compared to Census 2021

<b>2025/26 Budget Consultation Demographics and Characteristics Analysis</b>		
	<b>Consultation Responses</b>	<b>2021 Census</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Asian or Asian British	4%	11%
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	1%	2%
Mixed of Multiple Ethnic Groups	2%	3%
White	91%	83%
Other Ethnic Group	2%	2%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	48%	49%
Female	43%	51%
Prefer not to say	8%	
Other Ethnic Group	1%	
<b>Age</b>		
Under 18	0.4%	23%
18-24	1.1%	7%
25-34	13.7%	13%
35-44	23.7%	13%
45-54	20.6%	13%
55-64	22.9%	13%
65+	17.6%	18%
<b>Religion</b>		
Buddhist	0%	0.3%
Christian	48%	48.8%
Hindu	0%	0.5%
Jewish	3%	5.5%
Muslim	2%	9.9%
Sikh	0%	0.3%
Other Religion	1%	0.3%
No Religion	45%	29.4%
Other	2%	0.3%



Comparing the profile of responses to our census analysis, the outliers are:

- an over representation of White respondents and an under representation of Asian / Asian British.
- Over representation of 35-64 year old age ranges and under representation of 18-24 year old age range (omitting under 18s due to less likelihood of engaging in budget consultations).
- In terms of religion, those with no religion over represented and our Jewish and Muslim communities under represented.

By analysing the responses against our census profile it can indicate the impact of our engagement work around the budget consultation and also provide an indication as to how representative the final outcomes of the consultation are across the whole population.

Individual responses and comments gave no indication of any protected characteristics being particularly affected by the proposed budget

**2.3 Consider the following questions in terms of who the policy/project/decision could potentially have an impact on. Detail these in the impact assessment table (2.4) and the potential impact this could have.**

- Could the proposal prevent the promotion of equality of opportunity or good relations between different equality groups?
- Could the proposal create barriers to accessing a service or obtaining employment because of a protected characteristic?
- Could the proposal affect the usage or experience of a service because of a protected characteristic?
- Could a protected characteristic be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by the proposal?
- Could the proposal make it more or less likely that a protected characteristic will be at risk of harassment or victimisation?
- Could the proposal affect public attitudes towards a protected characteristic (e.g. by increasing or reducing their presence in the community)?
- Could the proposal prevent or limit a protected characteristic contributing to the democratic running of the council?

2.4 Characteristic	Potential Impacts	Evidence (from 2.2) to demonstrate this impact	Mitigations to reduce negative impact	Impact level with mitigations Positive, Neutral, Negative
Age	Disproportionate financial disadvantage due to fixed income –		Residents of Pension Age on a low income will receive Council Tax Support. Unlike Working Age recipients, Pension Age recipients can be awarded up to 100% of their Council Tax liability. The council has provided significant support to older	Negative

	pensioners or younger people		<p>residents over the winter, providing £230k in direct payments to residents in lieu of the winter Fuel Allowance removed by government this year. A large scale support campaign was also undertaken between October and December, helping residents to claim Pension Credits.</p> <p>For people on minimum wage the increase is currently 6.7%, this is higher than the increase being applied to Council Tax.</p> <p>Council teams will continue to review and evolve the council's welfare support offer, ensuring this is up to date, accessible and inclusive</p> <p>Council's welfare support offer to be communicated to all staff and members so they can refer residents to support as and when this is needed</p>	
<b>Disability</b>	Disproportionate financial disadvantage due to fixed income		<p>Working Age residents on a low income can claim up to 80% of their Council Tax liability through Council Tax Support along with support towards rent payments for those in rented accommodation.</p> <p>Council teams will continue to review and evolve the council's welfare support offer, ensuring this is up to date, accessible and inclusive</p> <p>Council's welfare support offer to be communicated to all staff and members so they can refer residents to support as and when this is needed</p>	Negative
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>				
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>				

<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>				
<b>Race</b>				
<b>Religion and Belief</b>				
<b>Sex</b>				
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>				
<b>Carers</b>	Disproportionate financial disadvantage due to low income		Working Age residents on a low income can claim up to 80% of their Council Tax liability through Council Tax Support along with support towards rent payments for those in rented accommodation. Council teams will continue to review and evolve the council's welfare support offer, ensuring this is up to date, accessible and inclusive Council's welfare support offer to be communicated to all staff and members so they can refer residents to support as and when this is needed	Negative
<b>Looked After Children and Care Leavers</b>	Disproportionate financial disadvantage due to low income		Working Age residents on a low income can claim up to 80% of their Council Tax liability through Council Tax Support along with support towards rent payments for those in rented accommodation. Care leavers receive a full exemption from Council Tax until the age of 25. Council teams will continue to review and evolve the council's welfare support offer, ensuring this is up to date, accessible and inclusive Council's welfare support offer to be communicated to all staff and members so they can refer residents to support as and when this is needed	Negative

<b>Socio-economically vulnerable</b>	Disproportionate financial disadvantage due to low income		Working Age residents on a low income can claim up to 80% of their Council Tax liability through Council Tax Support along with support towards rent payments for those in rented accommodation. Council teams will continue to review and evolve the council's welfare support offer, ensuring this is up to date, accessible and inclusive Council's welfare support offer to be communicated to all staff and members so they can refer residents to support as and when this is needed	Negative
<b>Veterans</b>	Disproportionate financial hardship due to low income		Working Age residents on a low income can claim up to 80% of their Council Tax liability through Council Tax Support along with support towards rent payments for those in rented accommodation. The Council has a commitment to not include armed Forces compensation payments or benefit in calculations for Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payments and Discretionary Council Tax payments. Council teams will continue to review and evolve the council's welfare support offer, ensuring this is up to date, accessible and inclusive Council's welfare support offer to be communicated to all staff and members so they can refer residents to support as and when this is needed	Negative

**Actions required to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts or to complete the analysis**

2.5 Characteristics	Action	Action Owner	Completion Date
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Various	To provide communication to officers and members on the support available, including how residents can access help and officers and members can refer into the service where required.	Chris Brown	2025/26
Various	To continue developing the Council's Welfare offer, ensuring the offer is as inclusive as possible and maximises access to support for our most vulnerable residents.	Chris Brown	2025/26
All	<p>Carry Out EIAs for the following proposals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edge of Care review</li> <li>• Foster Care service review</li> <li>• Family Safeguarding Model</li> <li>• Reconnect – step-down from residential care</li> <li>• Therapeutic support team for Children in Care</li> <li>• Single Handed Care Trial</li> <li>• Adults Commissioning Review</li> <li>• Personal Budget Review</li> <li>• Direct Payment Reassessment Review</li> <li>• Deferred Payments</li> <li>• Persona Supported Living Remodel</li> <li>• Stores Function Re-design</li> <li>• Dimming Street Lighting</li> <li>• District Car Parking Strategy</li> <li>• Car Parking Tariff Review</li> <li>• Highway Enforcement</li> <li>• Residents Permits Pricing</li> <li>• Frontline Service Integration – Housing</li> <li>• Contact Centre Review</li> <li>• Revenues and Benefits Review</li> <li>• Unit 4 Review</li> </ul>	<p>Individual owners</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>Jan 2025</p> <p>Feb 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>Jan 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>Mar 2025</p> <p>Jan 2025</p> <p>Mar 2025</p> <p>Mar 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p>	

### Section 3 - Impact Risk

Establish the level of risk to people and organisations arising from identified impacts, with additional actions completed to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts.

#### 3.1 Identifying risk level (Pages 10 - 12 of the guidance document)

Impact x Likelihood = Score			Likelihood			
			1	2	3	4
			Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Very likely
Impact	4	Very High	4	8	12	16
	3	High	3	6	9	12
	2	Medium	2	4	6	8
	1	Low	1	2	3	4
	0	Positive / No impact	0	0	0	0

<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>No Risk = 0</b>	<b>Low Risk = 1 - 4</b>	<b>Medium Risk = 5 – 7</b>	<b>High Risk = 8 - 16</b>
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<b>3.2 Level of risk identified</b>	3 - Low Risk
<b>3.3 Reasons for risk level calculation</b>	Whilst it is possible that some individuals will be disproportionately disadvantaged financially by the decisions within the 2025/26 budget report, there are well established systems and processes in place in relation to offering support via various welfare offers, promotion of benefit uptake and relevant support mechanisms.

**Section 4 - Analysis Decision** (Page 11 of the guidance document)

4.1 Analysis Decision	X	Reasons for This Decision
There is no negative impact therefore the activity will proceed		
There are low impacts or risks identified which can be mitigated or managed to reduce the risks and activity will proceed	X	
There are medium to high risks identified which cannot be mitigated following careful and thorough consideration. The activity will proceed with caution and this risk recorded on the risk register, ensuring continual review		

**Section 5 – Sign Off and Revisions** (Page 11 of the guidance document)

5.1 Sign Off	Name	Date	Comments
<b>Lead Officer/SRO/Project Manager</b>	Dawn Burns	30/1/25	
<b>Responsible Asst. Director/Director</b>	Neil Kissock		
<b>EDI</b>	Lee Cawley	31/01/25	<p>QA complete. The analysis has highlighted likely negative impacts for residents with specific characteristics and circumstances. These impacts have been reduced through a number of factors including a favourable economic outlook in some circumstances, current and ongoing support, additional actions around communication, evolution of support systems and a commitment to protect the most vulnerable as much as possible. No statutory service provision will be affected by the proposals within the budget. EIA is to be kept under review as the budget proposals are progressed</p>

**EqIA Revision Log**

5.2 Revision Date	Revision By	Revision Details