

<b>Name of proposal/policy</b>	Draft budget and council plan consultation process 2017/18	<b>Budget number (if applicable)</b>	n/a
<b>Service area responsible</b>	NCC Group/Chief Executive Services	<b>Cabinet meeting date</b>	13 December 2016
<b>Name of completing officer</b>	Jamie Goodchild	<b>Date EqIA created</b>	12 December 2016
<b>Approved by Director / Assistant Director</b>	Simon Deacon	<b>Date of approval</b>	12 December 2016

The Equality Act 2010 places a 'General Duty' on all public bodies to have 'Due regard' to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering good relations

We do this by undertaking equality impact assessments (EqIAs) to help us understand the implications of policies and decisions on people with protected characteristics – EqIAs are our way of evidencing this.

All assessments must be published on the NCC equalities web pages. All Cabinet papers where an EqIA is relevant **MUST** include a link to the web page where this assessment will be published. If you require assistance in getting your EqIA published, please contact [equalities@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@northamptonshire.gov.uk)

## PART 1

### Description of current provision/policy and main beneficiaries/stakeholders

Each year, Northamptonshire County Council consults on its draft budget and council plan. The description below sets out the process for the 2017/18 budget consultation, to be carried out between December 2016 and January 2017. This six-week consultation period is tied into existing organisational processes and is carried out after Cabinet have approved the Draft Budget Proposals, and in line with statutory and corporate requirements for consultation. The description below sets out the process for the 2017/18 budget consultation.

### Description of proposal under consideration/development

To carry out the six week draft budget and council plan and fulfil the requirements of Part 4 (C) Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules (NCC Constitution).

The plan to undertake the draft budget and council plan consultation has been developed to ensure that all groups with protected characteristics have the opportunity to have their say on proposals which will inform the council's final decision in February 2017. The consultation process encompasses opportunities for direct interaction, as well as the completion of consultation responses through online survey, email, post etc.

To ensure the widest possible reach, a variety of consultation methods will be used to maximise the range of accessible channels for consultees:

- Interactive and accessible website – available free at libraries for those without internet access
- Online survey – available free at libraries for those without internet access
- A bespoke email address
- Social media - including Facebook, twitter and LinkedIn
- Postal address
- E-petitions/petitions
- Formal correspondence from the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive will be sent to the following key stakeholders, inviting them to comment through the above consultation channels and asking them to promote the consultation to their members/community: Partner organisations, MPs, MEPs, Town and Parish Councils, Residents Associations, Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Organisations, Voluntary sector organisations representing groups with protected characteristics, Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses.
- A 'Draft Budget Toolkit' developed to enable user groups/forums (e.g. users of adults social care services) to hold their own discussions. This will allow debates to be tailored to individual group needs, whilst still feeding into key issues which form the basis of the consultation.

A scrutiny process runs simultaneously with the consultation process outlined here. Members of the public and representatives of community groups can also contribute to budget scrutiny by giving councillors their views about which proposals they should scrutinise, and about how particular budget proposals may affect services.

There will be an opportunity for members of the public to give their views about which budget proposals councillors should select for further scrutiny (examination) at a meeting of the Council's Budget Scrutiny Working Group on Monday 19th December at 12.15pm in the Council Chamber at County Hall. The Budget Scrutiny Working

Group will then hold further meetings during January 2016 to scrutinise selected budget proposals relating to different Council service areas, all in The Blue Room, County Hall:

- 12.00pm on Tuesday 3rd January - this meeting will focus on environment, planning and transport matters
- 4.00pm on Wednesday 4th January - this meeting will focus on children, families and education services.
- 12.00pm on Thursday 5th January - this meeting will focus on adult social care services
- 12.00pm on Friday 6th January - this meeting will focus on adults' and children's health and wellbeing matters.

The consultation will also be promoted via:

- Local media
- Northamptonshire County Council website
- Social media
- Consultation register and automatic alerts
- Councillors
- Consultation and engagement/Customer and user groups
- Key stakeholders

In collaboration with the Northamptonshire Learning Disabilities Partnership Board (NLDPB), an 'easy read' summary and survey has been prepared for consultees with learning disabilities (LD) and/or special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

Demographic monitoring information will be included in consultation response documents to monitor participation rates, assess any gaps in the process and add new methods if necessary.

**Data used in this Equality Impact Assessment (general population data where appropriate but each EqIA should contain information on people who use the service under consideration – if this is not applicable to your proposal then you probably do not need to do an EqIA)**

<b>Data Source (include link where published)</b>	<b>Please summarise what the data tells us – for example “X number of people use this service, X are male, Y are female etc.”</b>
Northamptonshire Analysis	Provides a demographic breakdown of the population of the county by Protected Characteristic, which has helped to inform the budget consultation plan.
Northamptonshire County Council’s Consultation and Engagement Policy, Consultation and Engagement SORP and Toolkit (which can be accessed via <a href="#">this link</a> ).	The council’s consultation guidance, with minimum expected standards for conducting consultations.
Northamptonshire County Council’s <a href="#">website accessibility statement</a>	The council’s website accessibility statement.

<p>Draft Budget and Council Plan Consultation 2016-17 – previous years’ consultation feedback</p>	<p>Summary of consultation feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The draft budget web page on the NCC site received 3,948 unique views.</li> <li>• 101 local people, partner agencies and local organisations made formal representations by email, letter or social media, through the Consult mailbox.</li> <li>• 376 consultees completed the online survey, hosted at Surveymonkey.com</li> <li>• 2 group discussions were organised, using the Draft Budget Toolkit.</li> <li>• Via social media, 19 draft budget specific tweets were recorded (individuals voicing opinion or asking for further information) and 3 direct messages were logged on Facebook.</li> <li>• 3 petitions were received during the consultation.</li> </ul> <p>Excluding the web page views (which may, or may not have led to a consultation response), and social media comments, using the various means listed above, during the consultation period, some 4,033 people contributed to the 2016/17 consultation.</p>
<p>Equality monitoring responses to Draft Budget 2016-17 survey</p>	<p>Consultation feedback left via online survey provides the best and most complete dataset for examining the demographic characteristics of consultees to the previous years’ draft budget consultation. Of the 376 people who left consultation feedback, 169 consultees (44% of respondents) also completed some, or all, of the eleven equalities/demographic monitoring questions included in NCC online surveys (gender, age, sexuality, gender identity/reassignment, marital status, pregnancy/maternity, disability (two questions), religion, ethnicity/ethnic origin).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gender:</b> 164 people answered this question - 50% male, 48% female, 2% prefer not to say.</li> <li>• <b>Age:</b> 164 people answered this question 10-19 (1%), 20-29 (6%), 30-49 (35%), 50-64 (38%), 65-74 (14%), 75+ (2%), prefer not to say 1%</li> </ul>

- **Sexuality:** 160 people answered this question, answering as follows: bisexual (2%), gay man (4%), gay woman/lesbian (2%), heterosexual (79%), prefer not to say (13%).
- **Gender identity/reassignment:** 161 people answered this question. Of these, 93% had the same gender identity assigned at birth 1% had a gender identity that was not the same as that assigned at birth (1%), and the remaining 6% selected 'prefer not to say'.
- **Marital status:** 164 people answered this question. Of these, 60% were married, 17% single, 10% cohabiting, 2% were in a civil partnership, 2% were divorced, 1% were widowed and 8% preferred not to say.
- **Pregnancy/maternity:** 155 people answered this question. Of these, 92% of respondents were not currently pregnant or had a baby in the past six months, 2% of respondents were either currently pregnant, or had a baby in the past six months, and 6% preferred not to say.
- **Disability:** 163 people answered this question. 77% of consultees (126) did not have a disability, whilst 20% (33 people) did and 3% (4 people) preferred not to say.
- **Disability (2):** The 33 consultees who answered this question (the 20% mentioned above), self-classified their disability as follows: 11 people reported a physical disability, 7 people reported a mental health disability, 6 people reported hearing impairment, 4 people reported a sight impairment, 3 reported a learning disability and 2 people reported other (these were nerve damage from chemotherapy and COPD).
- **Religion:** Of the 162 consultees answering this question, 79 people were Christian, 2 were Buddhist, 2 were Jewish, 1 Muslim and 1 other. 57 consultees classified their religion/faith as 'none' and 20 people preferred not to say.
- **Ethnicity/ethnic origin:** Of the 162 consultees who answered this question, 89% were White – English, Welsh, Scottish or Northern Irish, 3% were White – other white background, 1% were White – Irish, 1% were Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi, 1% were Black

	or Black British – other black background, 1% were ‘Other ethnic group’ (not specified. 4% of consultees answering this question preferred not to say.
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Tick the relevant box for each line by using a capital ‘P’ to make a <input type="checkbox"/>	Based on the above information, what impact will this proposal have on the following groups?			
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
<b>Sex</b>			✓	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>			✓	
<b>Age</b>			✓	
<b>Disability</b>			✓	
<b>Race &amp; Ethnicity</b>			✓	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			✓	
<b>Religion or Belief (or No Belief)</b>			✓	
<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>			✓	
<b>Human Rights (Please see articles in toolkit)</b>			✓	
<b>Other Groups (rural isolation, socio-economic exclusion etc.)</b>			✓	

Initial impact	
Explain your findings above	Actions identified to mitigate, advance equality or fill gaps in information
Overall, we believe the impact of the proposed draft budget consultation plan to be ‘neutral’ as we have sought to ensure that there are a number of ways in which people find out about the budget proposals and express their views on the plans and proposals therein. This includes a specific focus on	We will seek to collect data for both questions as part of our survey to assess how far we are engaging with individuals with protected characteristics.

people with learning or physical disabilities, and using a wide range of different channels (postal, web based, email, survey, discussion groups) to facilitate the process of actual consultation.	
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**Do you need to undertake further work (e.g. consultation, further equality analysis) based on the impact and actions identified above? If yes, set this out below and then carry out the work and complete Part 2**

No further work, beyond the consultation itself will be carried out in relation to the 2017/18 Draft Budget Consultation. We will continue to use data collected during this, and previous draft budget consultation periods to help us plan future budget consultations, and examine if it is possible to create a consultation methodology which is more inclusive and accessible, and may encourage a broader cross-section of county residents to engage with the consultation process.

**PART 2 – if required**

**Consultation, follow up data and information gathered from actions identified above**

	What does this information tell us?
N/A	

**Final impact analysis (taking the findings from Part 2 into account) – including review date if required**

N/A