

Disability Equality Impact Assessment Questionnaire

<p>Policy/Service/Change being assessed:</p> <p>2012/13 MTFP BUDGET PROPOSALS:- (42) Cease Verge Hardening Programme. (43) Reduce Highway and footway maintenance budgets, replacement and carriageway works. (44) Reduction in night scouting on street lighting. (45) Reduce Traffic Management, Regulation and Maintenance budgets. (46) Decommission Real Time Variable Message Parking Guidance. (52) Street Lighting Replacement Programme.</p>	<p>Department: Services for Place</p>
<p>Person Responsible for Assessment: Dave Winstanley</p>	<p>Date of assessment: January 2012</p>

<p>Brief description of service and to whom provided/available:</p> <p><u>(42) Cease Verge Hardening Programme.</u></p> <p>The proposal is to remove the budget identified to undertake verge hardening programmes. There are numerous locations identified throughout the Borough that are on a prioritised list awaiting verge hardening. The value of works on this list is in excess of £600k. A single scheme or several small areas are delivered each year with the £25k budget. Resources are targeted at the most damaged areas based on a priority system developed through Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee a number of years ago.</p> <p>Verge hardening is the most expensive type of solution and is targeted where there is significant risk of personal from tripping and insurance claims against the Council. The treatment reduces the need to continually repair the same areas. The Council will continue to monitor and tackle these issues but with lower cost solutions. The solution would be location specific and could be filling rutted verges with 'hard' material to make safe or installing measures to prevent parking e.g bollards or low-level fencing. The latter two options are cost effective but are not aesthetically pleasing and can have disadvantages to residents, which would be considered as part of the specific solution designed for the location.</p> <p><u>(43) Reduce Highway and footway maintenance budgets, replacement and carriageway works.</u></p> <p>The proposal consist of two elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduction of the footway replacement and scheme revenue budget of £254k by 5% - i.e a £13k reduction. 2. Reduction of the carriageway works revenue budget of £130k by 5% - i.e a £7k reduction. <p>These revenue budgets form part of the total budget available for highway maintenance with a significant proportion coming from Capital funding (LTP). The Council's</p>

footway network is around 750km and Highway Network around 552km. A series of inspections and testing regimes prioritise the maintenance programme. These budgets are generally used on schemes where localised repairs on a reactive basis are becoming inefficient to continue with that approach. Highway schemes are generally low cost solutions aimed at extending the life of surfaces. The reduction of these budgets will not impact on the level of inspection assessment used to instigate safety repairs. However, it will reduce the overall amount of money available for highway repairs, requiring localised repairs to continue to be delivered to manage risk and safety issues.

(44) Reduction in night scouting on street lighting.

Programmes of inspections are undertaken at night to identify faults on street lighting. The proposal is to develop a reduced cost solution that would rely on a Darlington Together approach to ensure business and residents report street lighting faults and development of the role of street champion. There would still be a need to cover unpopulated roads and check assets where failure could pose road safety hazards. For example, illuminated signs warning of hazards, illuminated pedestrian refuges and rural road lighting.

(45) Reduce Traffic Management, Regulation and Maintenance budgets.

Reduce Traffic Management regulation budget:-

Reduce the budget available to deal with traffic management and highway regulation matters by 5% - a reduction of £3k. This will result in a reduced ability to deal with prioritised traffic management issues. The Council has a budget of £53k for regulation changes and other minor changes to the management of the highway network that are generated from officer investigations, businesses, stakeholders, public and/or Members.

Budgets and resources are not sufficient to address all issues, resulting in prioritisation and waiting lists for consideration. There have been significant increases in requests for modifications and amendments since CPE was introduced as a result of improved enforcement and the ability to tackle issues. A percentage reduction in the budget will further reduce the ability to deal with prioritised issues.

Reduced budget to undertake maintenance of traffic signs and road marking:-

Reduce the budget available to deal with maintenance of traffic signs and road marking by 5% - a reduction of £2K

This will result in a reduced ability to deal with the maintenance of regulatory and informative signs and lines. The Council has a budget of £35k for maintenance of all road markings and traffic signs on the highway network. The maintenance of regulatory lines and signs is a key priority since CPE was introduced and enabled the council to effectively enforce parking regulations. The priority would remain for maintenance of signs and lines on traffic regulation orders and key locations on the highway network for safety reasons. However, maintenance of informative lines and signs on less strategic routes/locations would be reduced.

(46) Decommission Real Time Variable Message Parking Guidance.

A series of signs advising drivers of the space available in car parks was installed a number of years ago on the approaches into the town centre. The proposal is to decommission the real time variable message parking guidance system and revert to static parking information signs to avoid ongoing maintenance and operating costs. This will impact on motorists by not providing real time information on spaces in car parks giving them indications of whether there spaces are available or not. This will reduce the ability to better manage traffic searching for spaces around the town centre and data will not be available on car park usage.

(52) Street Lighting Replacement Programme.

The Local Transport Plan has allocated an element of capital to commence a replacement programme on street lighting columns that are reaching the end of their useful life. The savings forecast are from the redesign and incorporation of new technology that will save revenue funding on the electricity account and reduce the street lighting carbon footprint and associated financial implications. The programme is based on the fact that the highest risk locations are being prioritised for early replacement in the programme. The street lighting has been redesigned to consume less electricity. The spacing and standards have been reviewed to slightly reduce the number of columns needing replacement. The technology specified can be modified for future efficiency and carbon management options presently being considered.

Introduction

Q.1 Is your service/policy/change accessible to all disabled people? Bear in mind any economic, social, environmental, physical, intellectual, cultural, linguistic, technological or other barriers.

KEY

(42) Cease Verge Hardening Programme.

(43) Reduce Highway and footway maintenance budgets, replacement and carriageway works.

(44) Reduction in night scouting on street lighting.

(45) Reduce Traffic Management, Regulation and Maintenance budgets.

(46) Decommission Real Time Variable Message Parking Guidance.

(52) Street Lighting Replacement Programme.

Issue	Yes	No	If yes, what evidence do you have to demonstrate this?	If no, what do you plan to do to remove barriers to access?
Physical or mobility impairment (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes			The council offers a range of communication channels to all to enable these services to be accessible to all disabled people. (42)The Council will continue to inspect areas to ensure they are safe and undertake necessary safety repairs or preventative measures to prevent damage. The Council will also investigate any concerns received regarding verge condition. There may be a very slight impact to be considered on people with physical, mobility impairment or sensory impairment. If any of the people are living in areas where verges are subject to damage and they had been prioritised for verge hardening treatment. The verges will be subject to ongoing repair or prevention measures rather than a hardening improvement. Damage to verges could result in people having to cross the damaged verge or having to park a greater distance away from their destination.	
Sensory impairment (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes				
Learning disability or mental impairment (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes			(43) The Council will continue to operate systems that identify the priorities for undertaking maintenance and continue the regime of safety inspections to identify and repair issues that trigger	

(52)	Yes		safety intervention levels. The Council will also investigate any concerns received regarding highway condition. There may be a very slight impact to be considered on people with Physical, mobility impairment or sensory impairment if people with these disabilities regularly use areas where footways are subject to ongoing reactive repairs.	
Other disabilities and health conditions covered by the Equality Act 2010 (eg. diabetes, HIV, multiple sclerosis, depression and cancer)				
(42)	Yes		(44) The Council will develop a reduced cost solution that would rely on a Darlington Together encouraging all businesses and residents to report street lighting faults. The Council will maintain a system of checking unpopulated roads and assets where failure could pose road safety hazards e.g illuminated bollards on traffic islands.	
(43)	Yes			
(44)	Yes			
(45)	Yes			
(46)	Yes			
(52)	Yes			
Any other disability issue (e.g. frail/vulnerable people, people with mild impairments who do not perceive themselves as disabled, people with multiple impairment)				
(42)	Yes		(45) The Council will continue to operate systems that identify the priorities for undertaking traffic management, highway regulation and signing and lining maintenance. The Council will also investigate any concerns received and prioritise them. Outcomes from these systems influence the development of future capital programmes around the Borough.	
(43)	Yes			
(44)	Yes			
(45)	Yes		(46) A series of signs advising drivers of the car park locations will still be available to motorists on the approaches into the town centre. However, the proposal will remove the real time information identifying how many spaces will be available.	
(46)	Yes			
(52)	Yes		(52) The programme will replace the existing street lighting system with an improved quality system that may have different spacing of columns and/or reduced number of columns. There may be an impact on some people within sensory impairment if they rely on the existing street lighting configuration to navigate along routes.	

Q.2 (a) For whatever reason, does your service treat any group of disabled people differently from its other service users?

Yes
No

✓

If you have answered 'yes', please specify those individuals or groups affected and whether the impact has the potential to be adverse.

Disabled people are treated more favourably in terms of consultation. Individual groups are consulted on a regular basis on highway schemes or proposals that may impact on them. Examples of groups attended include D.I.A. Sub-Group and specific consultations on scheme proposals with Darlington Association on Disability.

(42) The Council will continue to inspect areas to ensure they are safe and undertake necessary safety repairs or preventative measures to prevent damage. The Council will also investigate any concerns received regarding verge condition. There may be a very slight impact to be considered on people with physical, mobility impairment or sensory impairment. If any of the people are living in areas where verges are subject to damage and they had been prioritised for verge hardening treatment. The verges will be subject to ongoing repair or prevention measures rather than a hardening improvement. Damage to verges could result in people having to cross the damaged verge or having to park a greater distance away from their destination.

(43) The Council will continue to operate systems that identify the priorities for undertaking maintenance and continue the regime of safety inspections to identify and repair issues that trigger safety intervention levels. The Council will also investigate any concerns received regarding highway condition. There may be a very slight impact to be considered on people with Physical, mobility impairment or sensory impairment if people with these disabilities regularly use areas where footways are subject to ongoing reactive repairs.

(45) There may be a very slight impact to be considered on people with Physical, mobility impairment or sensory impairment if people with these disabilities if the modifications to regulations are primarily aimed at improving situations that disadvantage that group.

(52) The programme will replace the existing street lighting system with an improved quality system that may have different spacing of columns and/or reduced number of columns. There may be an impact on some people within sensory impairment if they rely on the existing street lighting configuration to navigate along routes.

(b) What needs to be done to prevent any potentially adverse impact?

(42) Where verge damage is identified the Council needs to undertake specific consultation with adjacent residents or business to identify whether the proposed solution has an impact on people with physical, mobility impairment or sensory impairment.

(43) Council highway officers need to maintain their awareness of issues raised by people with physical, mobility impairment or sensory impairment and where possible incorporate improvements or adjust programmes into schemes or programmes to make accessibility improvements wherever possible, within the resources available to the officer.

(45) Council highway officers need to maintain their awareness of issues raised by people with physical, mobility impairment or sensory impairment and prioritise proposals to mitigate against any adverse impact, within the resources available to the officer.

(52) The street lighting programme needs to be communicated to Darlington Association on Disability to assess the proposals and formulate a way of communicating the changes to people with people within sensory impairment. An article in the Talking Newspaper may be an appropriate way of alerting people with sensory impairment to assess the impact.

Q.3 (a) Do you promote disability equality within your service? (e.g. through departmental equalities group, innovative marketing or community engagement techniques)

Yes
No

√

If you have answered 'yes', please give examples of how equality is promoted.

In addition to the Council commitment to promote equality of opportunity in all services and policies, this is a key function of the team.

Highway systems and procedures are developed to ensure Darlington Association on Disability are consulted during scheme development to consider any additional benefits that could be provided and any potential issues identified to enable consideration of design solutions to mitigate the issues.

Darlington Association on Disability is also involved at an early stage in the Planning process as part of the 'One Stop Shop'. They are consulted in this process to identify any additional benefits that could be provided and any potential issues identified to enable consideration of design solutions to mitigate the issues.

Disability Impact and Equality Impact assessments were undertaken during the development of the third Local Transport Plan.

(b) Do you promote positive attitudes towards disabled people? (e.g. through customer care training, cultural issues awareness training, the use of images of disabled people in your publicity material)

Yes
No

√

If you have answered 'yes', please give examples.

The Council as a whole promotes a positive attitude to disabled people in the recruitment, employment and providing services to disabled members of the community.

Employees are made aware of disability issues including access to services, buildings and information. The Council is committed to ensuring that information available to the public is in an easy read format and accessible in various methods and in multiple locations. Specific consultation packs are also made available in easy read, large font format.

Q.4 Are there any plans in place within your Service to promote disability equality more effectively?

Yes

√

No

If yes, please outline what you intend to do (including details, if known, of timescales and areas to be covered, etc.)

November 2011 – meeting with D.I.A. Sub-Group to discuss the development of protocols for Highway operational functions and design matters. Agreed to develop a series of protocols in consultation with the group over the forthcoming year.