

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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| <p>STRATEGY/ACTION:</p> <p>2012/13 MTFP budget proposals on Highway Services :- (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>Person responsible for strategy where different from above:</p> | <p>Date of assessment: January 2012</p> |

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| <p>Brief description of strategy, partners and those who will be affected by its delivery:</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 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 injury 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 consists 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. |
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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 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 the 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, illuminated refuges and rural road lighting.

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

There are 2 proposals:-

(1) Reduce Traffic Management regulation budget:-

The proposal is to 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.

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

The proposal is to 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 strategy and the actions it proposes accessible to everyone within the community? 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? |
|--|--|----|---|---|
| Equality Act 2010 Protected characteristics: | | | | |
| Age | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | | (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. The council offers a range of communication channels to enable these issues to be reported. | Not applicable |
| Disability | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) 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 safety intervention levels. The Council will also investigate any concerns received regarding highway condition. (44) The Council will develop a reduced cost solution | Not applicable |

| 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? |
|---|--|----|--|---|
| Gender reassignment (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) | Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes | | 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. (45) The Council will continue to operate systems that identify the priorities for undertaking traffic management, highway regulation and signing and lining maintenance. | Not applicable |
| Pregnancy and Maternity (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) | Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes | | 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. (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. | Not applicable |
| Race (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) | Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes 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. | Not applicable |
| Religion or belief (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) | Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes | | | Not applicable |

| 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? |
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| Sex (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) | Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes | | | Not applicable |
| Sexual orientation (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) | Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes | | | Not applicable |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) | Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes | | | Not applicable |
| Local Priorities: | | | | |
| Geographical impacts (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) | Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes | | See Above | Not applicable |
| Carers (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) | Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes | | | Not applicable |

| 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? |
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| Young People leaving care (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) | Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes | | | Not applicable |
| Gypsies & Travellers (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) | Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes | | | Not applicable |
| Refugees & Asylum Seekers (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) | Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes | | | Not applicable |
| Unemployed or low income (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) | Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes | | | Not applicable |
| People with spent criminal convictions (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) | Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes | | | Not applicable |

Q.2 (a) For whatever reason, does your strategy and the actions it proposes treat any group differently from others?

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.

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| Yes | (42) (43) (45) (52) |
| No | (44) (46) (52) |

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

(42) There may be a very slight impact to be considered on people in the AGE, PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY and DISABILITY groups. If any of the people in these groups are living in areas where verges are subject to damage and they had been prioritised for verge hardening treatment then they will have to manage with ongoing repair or prevention measures. The damage to verges may increase the difficulty for these people to cross the verge, potentially resulting in having to park a greater distance away from their destination or tripping on the damaged verge.

There is a GEOGRAPHICAL impact as this action is only relevant to areas of the Borough that have grass verges within the street.

(43) There may be a very slight impact to be considered on people in the AGE, PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY and DISABILITY groups. If any of the people in these groups are living in areas or using areas where footways are subject to ongoing reactive repairs.

(45) There may be an impact on some people within the DISABILITY group if the modifications to regulations are primarily aimed at improving situations that disadvantage that group.

(52) There may be an impact on some people within the DISABILITY group 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) Areas that are identified as being damaged will be repaired to a safe condition and verge parking prevention measures may be considered to prevent further damage. Where any persons from one of the above groups are identified as being affected by the proposed solution the remedial action will be considered to try and meet the needs of those persons.

(43) Continue to inspect on recommended frequency and repair to agreed intervention levels.

(45) Council highway officers need to maintain their awareness of issues raised by Disabled groups and prioritise proposals to mitigate against any adverse impact, within the resources available to the officer.

(52) Design undertaken to minimise impact and details of revised street lighting configurations to be communicated with

Q.3 (a) Does your strategy promote equality? (e.g. does it contain actions that demonstrate a consideration of community cohesion and the needs of the members of Darlington’s diverse communities)

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(42) Cease Verge Hardening Programme.

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

(46) Decommission Real Time Variable Message Parking Guidance.

(52) Street Lighting Replacement Programme.

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| Yes | (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (52) |
| No | |

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

The Council will continue to meet the equality act responsibilities and requirements.

Develop community cohesion and encourage self sufficiency / support in relation to reporting faults and issues.

Encourage ownership and pride in area to prevent damage to areas.

Q.4 In the past three years, have you consulted with any of the following groups regarding the development of your strategy?

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- (46) Decommission Real Time Variable Message Parking Guidance.
- (52) Street Lighting Replacement Programme.

| Group | Yes | No | If yes, please summarise evidence (Who? When? What were the outcomes?) | If no, are you satisfied that the strategy has no impact on this group? |
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| Age | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | | <p>Consultation events have taken place as part of the 2011/2012 MTFP budget consultation events, these include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public consultation events specifically targeted for disabled, young people and older people • Town Crier publications • Online forums • Talking Together Events • Staffing road shows and internal communications to employees • Attendance at local community groups and action groups (i.e. DAD) | |
| Disability | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | | <p>Specific Scheme Consultation with Partners, Stakeholders, Public and DAD to identify issues on improvement schemes.</p> <p>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.</p> | |
| Gender reassignment | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | | <p>Disability Impact and Equality Impact assessments were undertaken during the development of the third Local Transport Plan.</p> | |

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| Pregnancy and Maternity | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | |
| Race | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | |
| Religion or belief | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | |
| Sex | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | |

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| Sexual orientation | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | |
| Geographical impacts | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | |
| Carers | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | |

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| Young people leaving care | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | |
| Gypsies & Travellers | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | |
| Refugees & asylum seekers | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | |
| Unemployed or low waged | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | |

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| People with spent criminal convictions | (42) Yes (43) Yes (44) Yes (45) Yes (46) Yes (52) Yes | | | |
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Appendix 1

Guidance and Definitions

The Equality Act 2010 combined over 100 pieces of legislation into one Act and introduces nine protected characteristics for which due regard is required in ensuring discrimination is prevented. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership. The Public Sector Equality Duty came into force on April 5th, 2011.

The following definitions and information will be useful in determining impacts of strategies, actions or services on specific groups.

Age:

Having a particular age (e.g. 32 year-olds) or being within an age group (e.g. 18-30 year olds). Discrimination on the grounds of age under the Equality Act 2010 applies from the age of 18 years.

Disability:

Physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender Reassignment:

A process which is undertaken under medical supervision for the purposes of reassigning a person's sex by changing physiological or other characteristics of sex, and includes any part of such a process.

The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999 outlaw direct discrimination against transsexuals on the grounds of "gender reassignment".

Transgender: An individual, who appears as, wishes to be considered as or has undergone surgery to become a member of the opposite sex.

Transsexual: An individual who believes that their apparent gender is not their actual gender and may seek gender reassignment surgery to alter their body to meet their belief. Transsexuals may appear similar to transvestites, but have a different intent.

Transvestite: An individual who wears the clothing of the opposite gender to express their feminine/masculine side, or for relaxation. Also known as cross-dressing.

For the purposes of completing the impact assessment, consideration ought to be given, in the first instance for example, to the arrangements made (or which could be made/agreed upon), regarding the use of toilets and any other gender specific facilities.

Pregnancy and Maternity:

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant. Maternity is the period after giving birth. It is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, including as a result of breastfeeding.

Race: includes colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic origin or national origins.

Religion or Belief:

Religion means any religion including a reference to a lack of religion. Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live it for it to be included.

This area presents, perhaps, the greatest difficulty in terms of providing a definition, not least because of the close links/overlaps in some instances with culture and race/ethnicity.

The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 ban discrimination in employment and vocational training on grounds of religion or belief. Under the regulations, religion is defined as being 'any religion, religious belief, or similar philosophical belief'. This does not include any philosophical or political belief unless that belief is similar to a religious belief. Courts and tribunals may consider a number of factors when deciding what is a 'religion or belief' (e.g. collective worship, clear belief system, profound belief affecting way of life or view of the world)'.

For the purposes of completing the impact assessment, consideration ought to be given to a range of factors, examples of which are set out below. It is recognised, however, that whilst knowledge of the central tenets of those religions most likely to be encountered would help ensure that appropriate provision is made with regard to the delivery of and access to services, such knowledge might not necessarily be held.

- Is provision made, when dealing with customers, for them to be dealt with, if requested, by persons of the same sex?
- Does the way in which your service is delivered restrict access to certain religious groups that have days of religious observance restricting or preventing them accessing services on those days?

- Is your service delivered in locations or environments that might preclude or restrict access to certain religious groups?

Sex: Man or woman.

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 ensured that no person is treated less favourably because of his or her gender or because he or she is married.

Sexual Orientation: Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards

- Persons of the same sex (lesbians and gay men)
- Persons of the opposite sex (heterosexuals)
- Persons of the same sex and opposite sex (Bisexuals).

It does not cover sexual practices such as sado-masochism and paedophilia.

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 ban discrimination in employment and vocational training on grounds of sexual orientation. Sexual orientation is defined as an orientation towards:

Marriage or Civil Partnership: Discrimination on grounds a persons marital status or civil partnership is illegal under the Equality Act 2010.