

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

FROM: Head of Community
Development

REPORT NUMBER **K194**

TO: **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE (COMMUNITY
SERVICES)**

DATE OF MEETING 1 February 2011

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS AND THE DRAFT 2011/12 BUDGET

Equality Impact Assessments on the savings proposals set out in Appendix A of Paper K158 (as updated in Paper K166) have been completed.

The assessment exercise found that two of the savings proposals will have a much greater negative impact on a number of the equality groups than they will have on the general population. The two proposals concerned are the public convenience closures and any changes to discretionary rate relief.

If Members agree to implement these savings proposals further work will need to be completed on ways to mitigate the effects on the equality groups in question. An outline of the impact of these two proposals is provided below:

Public convenience closures

The equality impact assessment identified that there would be a particular negative impact on older persons, carers and those with medical conditions that require access to conveniences when away from their home. Parents/guardians (especially those with babies and young children) and people with physical disabilities would be potentially the worst affected as alternative provision at nearby restaurants or public houses may not be fully adapted for use by people with disabilities or have baby-changing facilities.

Mitigation measures include the development of Community Toilet Schemes, securing alternative provision, for example, toilets at nearby public houses (although this may not fully address the issue highlighted above) and/or the possible transfer of management arrangements to Town and Parish Councils. Further detailed EIA will be necessary.

Changes to discretionary rate relief

Discretionary rate relief is aimed at charities, community groups, amateur sports clubs, non-profit making organisations and other businesses in rural areas of Babergh. A reduction in the level of discretionary rate relief for such organisations will mean that they will need to find ways of meeting the increase in their Business Rates bill.

The Business Rate Relief savings proposal has, however, been categorised as a 'last resort option' and, as such, is unlikely to be implemented in 2011/12. However, should this option be revisited in future, Members will be given details of the impacts that would result.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (COMMUNITY SERVICES) COMMITTEE 1 FEBRUARY 2011

ADDITIONAL DETAILS BELOW RELATING TO EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND COMMUNITY GRANTS FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on the effects of the proposed funding reduction for Babergh's Community Grants Scheme. Members are advised that the impact of the proposed grant reductions in 2011/12 for the equality groups has been assessed as negative but low. No organisations face closure or a substantial reduction in service as a result of the reduction in grant aid from Babergh.

The savings target has been achieved by making small reductions across a large number of organisations. This has meant that no single group face a withdrawal of grant next year. All the grant recipients concerned have been given the opportunity to explain what they see would be the impact of the proposed change in their funding from Babergh.

Members' attention is drawn to three particular groups (these reflect the Equality and Human Rights Commission strategic objectives):

- Violence against women and girls
- Funding to organisations providing information/advice to ethnic minority groups
- Transport services used by disabled people

Members have already had this information as part of the bigger package of information about Community Grants but the details are repeated here in order for Members to be absolutely clear what the proposed reductions are going to be in the above areas. The impact of these small reductions on the organisations concerned will be negative but low.

Hadleigh Community Transport Group - grant in 2010/11 was £500. Proposed Grant in 2011/12 is £450.

Sudbury Town Area Rural Transport (Go START) - grant in 2010/11 was £1500. Proposed Grant in 2011/12 is £1250.

Suffolk Hate Crime - grant in 2010/11 was £3500. Proposed Grant in 2011/12 is £3000.

Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality (ISCRE)- grant in 2010/11 was £1500. Proposed Grant in 2011/12 is £1250.

Ipswich Women's Aid - grant in 2010/11 was £1500. Proposed Grant in 2011/12 is £1250.