

# Equality Impact Assessment

## Introductory Information

**Budget/Project name**

Cost of Living

**Proposal type**

- Budget
- Project

**Decision Type**

- Committee
- Executive Director/Director
- Officer Decisions (Non-Key)
- Council (e.g. Budget and Housing Revenue Account)
- Regulatory Committees (e.g. Licensing Committee)

**Entered on Q Tier**

- Yes
- No

**Year(s)**

- 21/22
- 23/23
- 23/24
- 24/25
- other

**EIA date: 28/11/2024**

**EIA Lead**

- Adele Robinson
- Annemarie Johnston
- Bashir Khan
- Beverley Law
- Ed Sexton
- Louise Nunn
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**Person filling in this EIA form**

Keith Leyland

**Lead Director for Project**

Tom Smith

**Lead Equality Objective**

- Understanding Communities
- Workforce Diversity
- Leading the city in celebrating & promoting inclusion
- Break the cycle and improve life chances

**Cross-Portfolio** Yes       No**Portfolio**

Neighbourhoods

Is the EIA joint with another organisation (eg NHS)?

 Yes       No**Brief aim(s) of the proposal and the outcome(s) you want to achieve**

The aim of the proposal is to address inequality of income, by delivering income maximisation support alongside crisis support delivered through the Household Support Fund, to support vulnerable people who are experiencing hardship. We want to ensure that those most in need are provided with support when in crisis, but are also supported through early intervention and prevention, by targeting households using community networks, data and hybrid communication structures. The distribution of support will help to alleviate the impact of poverty and the cost-of-living crisis for those who are affected by inequalities. This EIA has been completed in considering the Cost-of-living cohort analysis which looked at which groups and communities are disproportionately impacted by the cost of living crisis, where support is already being received and which groups are not receiving enough support, it has also taken account of local and national research and policy implications to inform the direction of travel for delivering hardship support in a way that reflects the national agenda and opportunities for maximising income.

**Impact**

Under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) we have to pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

More information is available on the [Council website](#) including the [Community Knowledge Profiles](#).

Note the EIA should describe impact before any action/mitigation. If there are both negatives and positives, please outline these – positives will be part of any mitigation. The action plan should detail any mitigation.

**Overview****Briefly describe how the proposal helps to meet the Public Sector Duty outlined above**

The objective of income maximisation is to provide support to vulnerable households who most need it through the cost-of-living crisis, and to provide opportunities to households to alleviate the impacts of rising costs. It aims to assist households via small grants to meet daily needs such as food, clothing, and utilities, but also to provide support to residents to understand their entitlement to other support mechanisms such as Council Tax Support, DWP delivered benefits, water rates reduction, social tariffs, debt support and access to employment and skills opportunities.

The nature of the Covid-19 virus and latterly the cost-of-living crisis has not been felt evenly across all communities and what we have seen is there is a strong relationship between socio-economic disadvantage and health inequality which will be further compounded by the economic outfall as the cost-of-living crisis impacts.

During the delivery of income maximisation, the HSF and the cost-of-living crisis generally so far, we have collected data, used data from a variety of sources and consulted with community leaders to understand the scale of the impact of the crisis on different groups, and to target support to groups that are disproportionately

impacted, for example the recent campaign to help pension aged households understand their entitlement to pension credits and the winter fuel payment. Our understanding from the response phase supporting communities in Sheffield is that the people who were already classed as disadvantaged before this crisis are growing more disadvantaged, and that more people will be falling into vulnerability due to stagnant wages, lower employment levels, then compounded by rising costs for energy, food and essentials.

Supporting people financially when they experience a crisis is a key component to preventing further hardship that they may be unable to recover from if help is not provided. We recognise that groups in our communities who are already more affected by inequalities are more likely to need financial support, we are using the data that we collect and the insight gained from consultation to ensure that our support is directed towards those who need it most. We are also using census data, national research and analysis, DWP data and data from other Council services such as Council Tax and Benefits to assess which groups are disproportionately impacted and which groups are in most need of support through the HSF and connected processes. Using that data, we are able to identify opportunities at a resident level where households may be entitled, but are not in receipt of benefits, savings and additional income, and by targeting those households directly, and offering the opportunity for households and community support networks to access our services through hybrid communication channels, we are able to both offer preventative services and support residents when they are at crisis point.

Equality implications will be monitored against awards made and support provided through income maximisation, they will be considered as part of the ongoing delivery of the service and will be coordinated by the Cost-of-living strategy groups (Strategic, Tactical and Operational).

Communication with groups that are identified as disproportionately impacted, therefore needing or entitled to additional support to apply will be targeted, support to help those groups apply will be facilitated by the Trusted Assessor process, through the network of welcome places, and by delivering in person drop in sessions in areas of high deprivation, supported by the use of translation services and in person sessions in communities with the support of community volunteers who serve those communities, as well as comms campaigns and through engagement with community and voluntary sector partners.

Data and consultation insight will also help us decide where targeted support should be provided. It will be offered where we can determine that particular groups are impacted by changed to government policy, where we can determine that certain cohorts are not accessing the support available to them in the levels expected in comparison to population levels and deprivation levels.

Please see the [HSF Background paper.docx](#) to view information on the cohort analysis.

See supporting demographic information via the JSNA and Community Knowledge Profiles.

<http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/community-knowledge-profiles.html>

## Impacts

### Proposal has an impact on

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors
<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy/Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/> Cohesion
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partners

<input type="radio"/> Religion/Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poverty & Financial Inclusion
<input type="radio"/> Sex	<input type="radio"/> Armed Forces
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Care Experience	<input type="radio"/> Other

Give details in sections below.

## Health

**Does the Proposal have a significant impact on health and well-being (including effects on the wider determinants of health)?**

Yes *if Yes, complete section below*

### Staff

Yes

No

### Impact

Positive

Neutral

Negative

### Level

None

Low

Medium

High

### Details of impact

### Customers

Yes

### Impact

Positive

Neutral

Negative

### Level

None

Low

Medium

High

### Details of impact

People with disabilities are more vulnerable to rising costs of essentials than many other groups, because energy and food make up a greater share of their budgets, partly because of additional needs caused by their health problems. Those in work are also more likely to be in low-income roles. Disabled people are almost three times as likely to live in material deprivation than the rest of the population (Resolution Foundation). Around 41% of disabled adults said they couldn't afford to keep their homes warm, as opposed to 23% of the rest of the population (Resolution Foundation). In the last 2 years, Citizen's Advice supported a record number of disabled people with cost-of-living issues, with people who are permanently sick or disabled being the most common occupational group to be assisted with crisis support (Citizens Advice Cost of Living Dashboard). Disability Sheffield also report that they expect to see a delayed impact of cost-of-living on disabled people, potentially due to the reduction in the general cost-of-living support provided to households, as well as the cumulative effect of ongoing high food and energy costs.

The proposal that will be taken to S&R committee sets out changes to cost-of-living service provision that will increase access and awareness to available support for those suffering from long term health conditions who are registered disabled.

### Comprehensive Health Impact Assessment being completed

Yes

No

*Please attach health impact assessment as a supporting document below.*

### Public Health Leads has signed off the health impact(s) of this EIA

Yes  No

**Health Lead**

## Age

### Staff

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

### Details of impact

### Customers

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

### Details of impact

Overall, poverty rates for individuals aged 16-24 are higher than for those in some higher age brackets (20% for 16-24s, as opposed to 17% for 25-29s and 18% for 30-34s - JRF). However, again, within this, there are specific groups of concern – notably single people under 25 who are living independently. Young people tend to have lower levels of earning, fewer savings and be more likely to rent, rather than own their property, with those in private rented accommodation being particularly hard-hit by increased rents. Young people are also entitled to significantly less from benefits than older people. For example, the monthly standard allowance for Universal Credit for single people under 25 is £292.11, as opposed to £368.74 for single people aged 25 and upwards. Local Housing Allowance, the figure that governs the rent that can be covered by Housing Benefit/the housing element of Universal Credit for individuals in private-rented accommodation, is also lower for single people under 35 – as this is based around the costs of a renting a room in a shared property. Rates have also been frozen since April 2020, reducing the amount payable yet further. Private-rented property is also often the primary option for single people young people, who often have limited access to social housing.

We already provide enhanced awards through the HSF for people who fall into this category, awards are provided without the requirement to provide evidence of hardship if the applicant is in receipt of a means tested benefit. Future income maximisation campaigns will target this group by identifying households, raising awareness of the support available, offering help to claim and topical awareness campaigns such as access to child benefit, which is one of the most unclaimed benefits for low-income young parent families.

## Disability

### Staff

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

### Details of impact

#### Customers

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive       Neutral       Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

See health section.

## Pregnancy/Maternity

#### Staff

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive       Neutral       Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

#### Customers

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive       Neutral       Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

We know from our previous cohort analysis that families with children are disproportionately likely to be affected by the cost-of-living crisis. Individuals on maternity leave are also more likely to be impacted by cost of living, due to the relatively low levels of statutory payment and eligibility criteria applied to access maternity pay.

Cohort data will be used to identify those who may struggle to access the fund or who may be more impacted by socio-economic disadvantage. Awards, support and engagement will be targeted where disadvantage is identified.

## Race

#### Staff

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive       Neutral       Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

#### Customers

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive       Neutral       Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

Our cohort analysis indicates that individuals from diverse backgrounds are more likely to be in poverty and affected by the cost-of-living crisis.

Cohort data will be used to identify those who may struggle to access the fund or who may be more impacted by socio-economic disadvantage. Awards, support and engagement will be targeted where disadvantage is identified. This includes working in partnership with organisations supporting different communities, to facilitate promotion of and referral to available support.

### Religion/Belief

#### Staff

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive       Neutral       Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

#### Customers

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive       Neutral       Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

### Sex

#### Staff

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive       Neutral       Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

#### Customers

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive       Neutral       Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

Although the Cohort Analysis has not specifically focussed on sex as an area that creates inequalities in the sense of financial hardship and poverty, within other areas of the cohort analysis there were key findings that related to sex. For example single parent families are more likely to experience hardship and this can disproportionately affect women.

Also people living independently and people who are under 25 and live independently, these households are most likely to be male, meaning in this group, males are disproportionately impacted.

Cohort data will be used to identify those who may struggle to access the fund or who may be more impacted by socio-economic disadvantage. Awards, support and engagement will be targeted where disadvantage is identified.

### Sexual Orientation

#### Staff

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive       Neutral       Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

#### Customers

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive       Neutral       Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

### Transgender

#### Staff

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive       Neutral       Negative



**Level**  
 None     Low     Medium     High

**Details of impact**

  

**Customers**  
 Yes     No

**Impact**  
 Positive     Neutral     Negative

**Level**  
 None     Low     Medium     High

**Details of impact**

**Carers**

**Staff**  
 Yes     No

**Impact**  
 Positive     Neutral     Negative

**Level**  
 None     Low     Medium     High

**Details of impact**

  

**Customers**  
 Yes     No

**Impact**  
 Positive     Neutral     Negative

**Level**  
 None     Low     Medium     High

**Details of impact**

Carers have been identified in our cohort analysis as a group who are significantly disproportionately affected by cost-of-living.

Cohort data will be used to identify those who may struggle to access the fund or who may be more impacted by socio-economic disadvantage. Awards, support and engagement will be targeted where disadvantage is identified. Targeted campaigns will be considered through the use of data to raise awareness of carers allowance.

**Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors**

**Staff**  
 Yes     No

**Impact**  
 Positive     Neutral     Negative

**Level**  
 None     Low     Medium     High

### Details of impact

#### Customers

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive     Neutral     Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

Through working closely with Welcome Places and Trusted Assessors to promote and refer to support, customers in the VCFS will have improved access to hardship and income maximisation support.

## Cohesion

#### Staff

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive     Neutral     Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

#### Customers

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive     Neutral     Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

## Partners

#### Staff

Yes       No

#### Impact

Positive     Neutral     Negative

#### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

**Customers** Yes  No**Impact** Positive  Neutral  Negative**Level** None  Low  Medium  High**Details of impact**

Through working closely with partner organisations to promote and refer to support, customers will have improved access to hardship and income maximisation support.

**Poverty & Financial Inclusion****Staff** Yes  No**Impact** Positive  Neutral  Negative**Level** None  Low  Medium  High**Details of impact**

Staff will be targeted with internal comms around the support available if they are impacted by the cost of living and with communications and toolkits to assist customers who may need to be provided with support to tackle poverty and improve financial inclusion.

**Customers** Yes  No**Impact** Positive  Neutral  Negative**Level** None  Low  Medium  High**Details of impact**

Cohort data will be used to identify those who may struggle to access support or who may be more impacted by socio-economic disadvantage. Awards, support and engagement will be targeted where disadvantage is identified.

**Armed Forces****Staff** Yes  No**Impact** Positive  Neutral  Negative**Level** None  Low  Medium  High**Details of impact****Customers** Yes  No**Impact** Positive  Neutral  Negative**Level** None  Low  Medium  High

**Details of impact**

**Care Experience**

**Staff**

Yes  No

*Please specify*

**Impact**

Positive  Neutral  Negative

**Level**

None  Low  Medium  High

**Details of impact**

**Customers**

Yes  No

*Please specify*

**Impact**

Positive  Neutral  Negative

**Level**

None  Low  Medium  High

**Details of impact**

Care leavers are likely to be disproportionately affected by the cost-of-living crisis, as we know that young people under the age of 25 living independently are more likely than others to be affected and care leavers are more likely than others to fall into this category and have fewer support networks to rely upon.

Cohort data will be used to identify those who may struggle to access the fund or who may be more impacted by socio-economic disadvantage. Awards, support and engagement will be targeted where disadvantage is identified.

Community groups that support those who have experienced care will be approached to become trusted assessors, through those groups we will explore how best to reach this cohort and how best to provide support, as well as improving access more generally.

## Cumulative Impact

### Proposal has a cumulative impact

Yes       No

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Year on Year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Across a Community of Identity/Interest
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geographical Area	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

#### *If yes, details of impact*

Some communities will be more impacted by multiple factors affecting socio-economic disadvantage. Data showing multiple indices of deprivation will be used to target awards, support and engagement where disadvantage is identified. Income maximisation support is also likely to have a cumulative impact over time, as the impact of support (eg help to claim certain benefits or social tariffs) is ongoing.

### Proposal has geographical impact across Sheffield

Yes       No

#### *If Yes, details of geographical impact across Sheffield*

Certain geographical areas will be more impacted by multiple factors affecting socio-economic disadvantage. Data showing multiple indices of deprivation will be used to target awards, support and engagement where disadvantage is identified. In person support will be provided in the most impacted geographical areas.

### Local Area Committee Area(s) impacted

All       Specific

#### *If Specific, name of Local Partnership Area(s) impacted*

To be confirmed as part of ongoing work.

## Action Plan and Supporting Evidence

### Action Plan

Targeted awards, engagement and communications campaigns to be carried out as an ongoing piece of work, to be taken forward by the Cost-of-living Support Hub.

### Supporting Evidence (Please detail all your evidence used to support the EIA)

Please see Cost-of-Living dashboard and [HSF Background paper.docx](#) for further information on the cohort analysis

## Consultation

### Consultation required

Yes       No

#### **If consultation is not required please state why**

### Are Staff who may be affected by these proposals aware of them

Yes       No

### Are Customers who may be affected by these proposals aware of them

Yes       No

**If you have said no to either please say why**

Part of the work to raise awareness of the support available to residents facing hardship has identified that not everyone who is eligible for support is aware that they are eligible. National research showing which benefits go most unclaimed and cohort data will be used to identify those who may struggle to access support or who may be more impacted by socio-economic disadvantage. Engagement and communications campaigns will be targeted where disadvantage is identified, with feedback being obtained from partner organisations around routes and communication mechanisms where appropriate.

## Summary of overall impact

### Summary of overall impact

Medium impact

### Summary of evidence

Cos-of-living dashboard and community helpline dashboard data. Multiple indices of deprivation data from office for national statistics. Local insight data. National research from Policy in Practice and other policy organisations, via the cohort analysis.

### Changes made as a result of the EIA

Targeted comms and engagement by cohort and geographical location.

## Escalation plan

### Is there a high impact in any area?

Yes  No

### Overall risk rating after any mitigations have been put in place

High  Medium  Low  None

## Sign Off

**EIAs must be agreed and signed off by the equality lead in your Portfolio or corporately. Has this been signed off?**

Yes  No

DD/MM/YYYY

**Review Date**

DD/MM/YYYY