

Subject / Title	Budget Consultation 2016/17
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Service Unit	Service Area	Directorate
Policy and Communications	Governance	Governance

Start Date	Completion Date
July 2015	January 2016

Lead Officer	Lorraine Kitching Research and Customer Insight Manager
Service Unit Manager	Sarah Dobson Head of Policy and Communications
Assistant Executive Director	N/A

EIA Group (lead contact first)	Job title	Service
Lorraine Kitching	Research and Customer Insight Manager	Policy and Communications
Sarah Dobson	Head of Policy and Communications	Policy and Communications
Simon Brunet	Policy, Data, and Improvement Lead	Policy and Communications
Jody Stewart	Policy, Research, and Improvement Manager	Policy and Communications

PART 1 – INITIAL SCREENING

1a.	What is the project, policy or proposal?	Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council's Budget Consultation project which takes place from 29 September 2015 until the 22 December 2015. The EIA concentrates on the consultation process itself, not the outcomes of the consultation.
1b.	What are the main aims of the project, policy or proposal?	To consult with people who are residents of, work in, or pay business rates in, the metropolitan borough of Tameside. To use the consultation to establish what respondents think is the best way to balance Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council's budget over the next two years, with consideration to the fact that there will be funding cuts from central government of £29,455,000 over the next two years.

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1c. Will the project, policy or proposal have either a direct or indirect impact on any groups of people with protected equality characteristics?				
Where a direct or indirect impact will occur as a result of the policy, project or proposal, please explain why and how that group of people will be affected.				
Protected Characteristic	Direct Impact	Indirect Impact	Little / No Impact	Explanation
Age	X			The Budget Consultation may impact directly on elderly people. This is because a person requires the internet to access the Budget Consultation simulator. Statistics show that for 2015 (the most current data available), the percentage of men in the UK aged 75+ who had never used the internet was 52.8%, and the percentage of women aged 75+ who had never used the internet was 66.4%. These statistics are at a UK level.
Disability	X			The Budget Consultation may impact directly on disabled people. This is because a person requires the internet to access the Budget Consultation simulator. Statistics show that for 2015 (the most current data available), the percentage of people classed as Equality Act Disabled, who had never used the internet was 27.4%. This was higher than the percentage of Not Equality Act Disabled people who had never used the internet, which was 6.6%. These statistics are at a UK level.
Ethnicity		X		There is no anticipation that the Budget Consultation will impact directly on people because of their ethnicity in relation to internet use, statistics show that for 2015 (the most current data available), the percentages of people who had never used the internet across the ethnicity classifications were similar. White: 11.7%; Mixed/multiple ethnic background: 2.2%; Indian: 10.4%; Pakistani: 11.8%; Bangladeshi: 14.1%; Chinese: 5.9%; Other Asian Background: 7.1%; Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: 9.6%; Other ethnic group: 6.9%. These statistics are at a UK level. Consideration must also be given to people in Tameside who cannot speak English or cannot speak English well,

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				although according to Census 2011 information (table QS205EW) this is only 1.34% of Tameside residents, it may have an indirect effect on the ethnicity protected characteristic group.
Sex / Gender			X	There is no anticipation that the Budget Consultation will impact directly or indirectly on Sex/Gender in any significant sense.
Religion or Belief			X	There is no anticipation that the Budget Consultation will impact directly or indirectly on Religion/Belief in any significant sense.
Sexual Orientation			X	There is no anticipation that the Budget Consultation will impact directly or indirectly on Sexual Orientation in any significant sense.
Gender Reassignment			X	There is no anticipation that the Budget Consultation will impact directly or indirectly on Gender Reassignment in any significant sense.
Pregnancy & Maternity			X	There is no anticipation that the Budget Consultation will impact directly or indirectly on Pregnancy/Maternity in any significant sense.
Marriage & Civil Partnership			X	There is no anticipation that the Budget Consultation will impact directly or indirectly on Marriage and Civil Partnership in any significant sense.
Are there any other groups who you feel may be impacted, directly or indirectly, by this project, policy or proposal? (e.g. carers, vulnerable residents, isolated residents)				
Group (please state)	Direct Impact	Indirect Impact	Little / No Impact	Explanation
Lower income	X			People of lower income may not have the financial ability to access the internet, in terms of both subscription costs to internet providers and cost of devices such as PCs, laptops, tablets, or smartphones, with which to access the internet. However, they can access these devices and the internet at Tameside libraries for free, or a nominal charge per hour, whether a Budget Consultation drop-in session is taking place or not.

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Wherever a direct or indirect impact has been identified you should consider undertaking a full EIA or be able to adequately explain your reasoning for not doing so. Where little / no impact is anticipated, this can be explored in more detail when undertaking a full EIA.

1d.	Does the project, policy or proposal require a full EIA?	Yes	No
		Yes	
1e.	What are your reasons for the decision made at 1d?	<p>It seems prudent to conduct a full EIA as the protected characteristics of age, disability, and ethnicity may be impacted by the Budget Consultation.</p>	

If a full EIA is required please progress to Part 2.

PART 2 – FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2a. Summary
<p>The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149) of the Equality Act 2010 requires that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to-</p> <p>a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimization and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;</p> <p>b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;</p> <p>c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.</p> <p>Having due regard to these involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing or minimizing disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; • Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of the persons who do not share it; • Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low; • Tackle prejudice, and • Promote understanding. <p>TMBC provides a wide range of services and functions across a number of areas for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors. These services cover a number of important strategic and priority areas, for example services for children, young people, and families; services for adults and older people; the provision of educational, cultural, and leisure facilities; support for healthier living;</p>

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developing stronger and safer communities; as well as maintaining the physical and natural environment of the borough. The full range of our services can be found online at our website - <http://www.tameside.gov.uk/>

Given the range and variety of these services, and the likelihood of them impacting upon some or all of our residents and businesses at any given time, it is important that the council seeks to make as many people as possible aware of the opportunity to have their say on the future of the council as shaped by any expected and anticipated budget reduction.

As home to a diverse population – some 220,600 people – Tameside Council seeks to ensure that it provides its services in a fair, accessible, and equitable manner whilst being mindful of both the requirement to set a lawfully balanced budget and satisfy the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty (section 149) contained therein.

The Budget Consultation and Simulator forms part of 'The Big Conversation'. Through utilising this tool, the council is able to consult in detail on the entirety of its budget across the full range of services and functions, bringing further transparency.

In order to provide the public with a greater understanding of the difficulties the council faces in meeting a balanced budget the Council made use of the free Local Government Association (LGA) budget simulator tool. The budget simulator is an online tool that encourages members of the public to consider where council budget cuts should fall, where efficiencies might be made, and where additional resources might be generated. The tool also allowed us to show the 'full picture' and illustrate to the public that if provision were increased in one area, cuts would need to be made in another.

Originally developed by the London Borough of Redbridge to engage its citizens in the difficult decisions that arise from budget reductions, in partnership with the LGA the tool has since been made available free of charge to councils in England and Wales. It has been used by upwards of 60 councils and was used in TMBC's Budget Consultation last year.

To complement the launch of the simulator, the council commissioned a series of promotional activities across a number of different media, as well as a full programme of engagement events to highlight the launch and assist residents, businesses, and staff, to complete it. 215 events were undertaken in total.

The subject of this EIA is Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council's Budget Consultation, which took place from September 29 2015 until 22 December 2015. The Budget Consultation was internet based, accessible from Tameside Council's website homepage. It included several webpages which provided information about the financial situation and the budget, a video which provided similar information in a different format, and the budget simulator tool. A separate budget consultation email inbox was set up, and any reference to the budget made through CRM, letters, or social media were recorded as part of the consultation.

This EIA concentrates on the process of developing an appropriate framework for the promotion of the Budget Consultation in order to ensure that all protected characteristic groups were considered in terms of the accessibility of the tool and their ability to inform the Budget Consultation process overall.

It addresses equality issues relating to usability of the simulator itself (it being an online tool) which touches upon protected characteristic groups such as disability (it being a visual interactive tool); age (issues relating to elderly having access to the internet); ethnicity (it being in English, and the need to ensure the full range of participation from all Tameside's communities); and the need to access the full range of views and opinions from Tameside's communities to reflect the impact that

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spending cuts will have across a range the services that impact on protected characteristic groups.

It does not concern itself with the outcomes of the simulator exercise itself, and how responses from different groups have been categorised, analysed, or presented. Whilst these have been taken into consideration, and the full report to Executive Cabinet provides a detailed such breakdown by group, this EIA has as its focus the process of engagement, as opposed to the outcome.

Intended beneficiaries of the budget simulator are therefore all nine protected characteristic groups – age, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy & maternity, gender reassignment, and marriage & civil partnership – both in terms of engagement with the process itself, and in terms of the subsequent decisions made post consultation, based on their views being taken into account.

This EIA concludes that although the consultation was internet based and that this may have impacted upon the protected characteristic groups of age (elderly) and disability, as higher numbers of these groups are shown to have never used the internet, significant efforts were made to mitigate these potential impacts. Additionally the fact that the consultation was internet based may also have impacted on the non-protected characteristic group of people on low income as people in this financial bracket are less likely to be able to afford internet subscription or devices that can access the internet. Again, significant efforts were made to mitigate these potential impacts.

Furthermore, the consultation may have impacted on the protected characteristic of ethnicity, due to the fact that people of a different ethnicity may not be able to read or speak English. However, once more, significant efforts were made to mitigate this potential impact.

These mitigations are detailed fully in the 'Mitigations' section of this EIA.

2b. Issues to Consider

The decision to undertake such a comprehensive budget simulator exercise was driven by the scale and size of the required cuts to the council's budget imposed by central government. It follows on from a similar budget consultation exercise last financial year, which ran from the September 16 2014 until the 9 December 2014.

Given the likely impact on all users of council services and facilities, together with the indirect impact as a result of what will require a radical reshaping of both how council services are delivered but also what services are delivered, all members of our community must be considered in terms of how they are best able to engage with the process. This is in addition to ensuring that specific views in relation to the impact on any of the protected characteristic group are recorded.

In rolling out a comprehensive programme of engagement to ensure maximum rates of participation, the council is therefore mindful of the requirement to satisfy its obligations under the PSED of the Equality Act 2010, and ensure that all groups are able to participate should they wish.

Being an online tool allows it to be much more accessible in particular ways as people do not have to physically attend a consultation, and can access the exercise in their own time and at their own leisure. Similarly, the volume of information contained within the simulator in order to allow for full consideration of the issues is far better presented and contained online than in any paper

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consultation exercise.

One caveat is that research suggests less elderly people and people classified as Equality Act disabled use the internet compared to other age demographics and people who aren't disabled. Consider the below comparison tables extracted from ONS on the percentage of people who have never used the internet. The data is from Quarter One, 2015, which is the most current data, and is on a UK level.

Never Used Internet 2015 Q1		
All	Men	9.7
All	Women	12.9
16-24	Men	0.6
16-24	Women	0.3
25-34	Men	0.6
25-34	Women	0.9
35-44	Men	1.8
35-44	Women	1.5
45-54	Men	4.1
45-54	Women	4.7
55-64	Men	10.1
55-64	Women	10.5
65-74	Men	22.6
65-74	Women	25.6
75+	Men	52.8
75+	Women	66.4

Never Used Internet 2015 Q1		
All	Equality Act Disabled¹	27.4
	Not Equality Act Disabled²	6.6
16-24	Equality Act Disabled	2.8
16-24	Not Equality Act Disabled	0.1
25-34	Equality Act Disabled	2.8
25-34	Not Equality Act Disabled	0.5
35-44	Equality Act Disabled	5.1
35-44	Not Equality Act Disabled	1.1
45-54	Equality Act Disabled	10.9
45-54	Not Equality Act Disabled	2.8
55-64	Equality Act Disabled	18.9
55-64	Not Equality Act Disabled	6.8
65-74	Equality Act Disabled	33.2
65-74	Not Equality Act Disabled	19.3
75+	Equality Act Disabled	66.0
75+	Not Equality Act Disabled	53.9

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In order to ensure that a wide range of individuals from different backgrounds and protected groups were made aware of the consultation and simulator exercise, the council targeted specific locations and themes for presentations/meetings. For those who did not have access to the internet from home or work, drop-in sessions were arranged at a variety of locations at a variety of times, where officers were present with a computer or tablet, and who proactively attempted to encourage members of the public to complete the budget simulator exercise. These drop-in sessions were advertised on the TMBC website. The meetings/presentations and drop-in sessions are listed below as well as the protected characteristics that were targeted at each drop-in, and the number of times the specific location was visited.

Town Teams (Meetings/Presentations): All groups.

Ashton Town Team: 1
Denton Town Team: 1
Droylsden Town Team: 1
Hyde Town Team: 1
Mossley Town Team: 1
Stalybridge Town Team: 1

Summits (Engaged with sector):

Economy Summit: 1
Health Summit: 1
Housing Summit: 1
Post-16 Summit: 1
Public Protection Summit: 1
Voluntary Sector Summit: 1
Youth Council Summit: 1

District Assemblies (Meetings/Presentations):

Ashton District Assembly: 2
Denton District Assembly: 2
Droylsden and Audenshaw District Assembly: 2
Dukinfield District Assembly: 2
Hyde and Longdendale District Assembly: 2
Stalybridge and Mossley District Assembly: 2

Libraries (Drop-Ins): All groups, but covers age, pregnancy and maternity, and disability in particular.

Ashton Library: 14
Denton Library: 11
Droylsden Library: 10
Dukinfield Library: 13
Hattersley Library: 7
Hyde Library: 12

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Mossley Library: 14
Stalybridge Library: 11

Tameside's public libraries are accessible by public transport, are manned by trained library staff (who received specific budget simulator awareness training), and are disability access friendly. Library members can use the internet free of charge for up to one hour per day. Charges apply for additional use of the internet by members, internet use by non-members, and printing. It is free to join one of Tameside's libraries.

Children's Centres (Drop-Ins): All groups, but covers gender, age, carers, pregnancy and maternity in particular.

Denton (Linden Road) Children's Centre: 1
Denton South Children's Centre: 1
Greenside Children's Centre: 2
Hattersley Children's Centre: 2
Haughton Green Children's Centre: 1
Hyde Children's Centre: 3
Mossley Children's Centre: 2
Ridge Hill Children's Centre: 2
St Peter's Children's Centre: 3

Active Tameside (Drop-Ins): All groups.

Active Ashton: 6
Active Copley: 9
Active Denton: 6
Active Dukinfield: 6
Active Hyde: 4
Active Ken Ward: 6
Active Medlock: 4

Markets (Drop-Ins): All groups.

Ashton Indoor Market: 2
Hyde Indoor Market: 3

Housing Provider Offices (Drop Ins): All groups, but covers ethnicity and low income in particular.

Ashton New Charter Hub: 1
Denton New Charter Hub: 1
Hyde New Charter Hub: 1
Stalybridge New Charter Hub: 1

Carers Support Groups (Meetings/Presentations): Elderly people, disability, and ethnicity.

Ashton Asian Carer's Support Group: 1
Denton Carers Support Group: 1

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Droylsden Carers Support Group: 1
Dukinfield Carers Support Group: 1
Hyde Asian Carer's Support Group: 1
Stalybridge Carers Support Group: 2

Age UK Events (Meetings/Presentations and Drop Ins): Age and disability.

Age UK IT and Cake Event: 1
Age UK Support Group (People who've had dementia and/or strokes): 1
Grafton Centre: 2

Other Housing (Meetings/presentations): Covers low income, vulnerable and ethnicity in particular.

Adullam Homes: 1
Emmaus Mossley: 2
Enville Place Consultation with Tenants: 1
Foundation Housing: 1
Ogden Court Sheltered Housing: 1
Pioneer Homes: 1

Other Groups (Meetings/presentations and drop-ins): Covers age, ethnicity, vulnerable, isolated, low income in particular.

Cranberries: 1
Community Led Initiatives (recovering addicts): 1
Countryside Rangers Wharf Cabin: 1
Employee Engagement Session: 1
Farley's Estate Residents Association, Home Watch: 1
Hyde Bangladeshi Welfare Association: 1
Khush Amdid (BME women's group): 1
Over 50s Computer Group: 1
Poverty Action Group: 1
Preventing homelessness forum 1
Student Event: 1
Student drop-in events at Clarendon College (1) and Tameside College (1)

A short video was also produced by the council to promote the Budget Consultation and inform the public of the reasons for conducting it, including the financial cuts imposed by central government.

The budget challenge video sets out, in a public friendly format, the financial pressures that the council is facing and how the council, partners and the public can work together to tackle them. The video detailed the current financial situation and future cuts that need to be made, how the council can make savings and what the public themselves can do to contribute. The video was also available as a subtitled version.

There was a full social media presence through extensive Twitter and Facebook promotion. In addition to promoting the Budget Consultation through traditional media channels such as the Tameside Citizen, posters, leaflets, and cards were distributed at council service locations.

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Additionally, cards/bookmarks advertising Budget Consultation, with a link to the website address of the simulator, were provided for Ashton and Stalybridge train stations. Cards/bookmarks were left in GP surgeries. Cards/bookmarks were also handed out in Ashton, Hyde, Mossley, and Stalybridge Town Centres. An officer of the council was interviewed by Talking News, which provides audio-news for blind people in the local area, about the Budget Consultation. Furthermore a scheme was arranged with the blind person's charity Tameside Sight, where blind or partially sighted people were informed of the consultation by the charity, and anybody who wished to complete it could do so via a proxy.

Greater Manchester Police, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, and the Department of Work and Pensions were emailed about the Budget Consultation. These organisations then emailed their own staff to inform them about the Budget Consultation, although only people who work, live, or pay business rates in Tameside are able to fill in the Budget Consultation. Tameside College was also emailed, who then emailed all of their students and staff asking them to participate in the Budget Consultation. Tameside Hospital provided information on the consultation in their staff bulletin and via the staff portal and Active Tameside emailed their staff and trustees.

2c. Impact

A total of 1,446 people attempted the Budget Consultation via the simulator. A total of 1,019 people completed the Budget Consultation via the simulator. There were 406 responses through the suggestion box of the Budget Consultation simulator, most of these people also completed the simulator, but some chose not to complete the simulator but just provide a text-based suggestion. There were 68 responses via social media (twitter/facebook/Instagram). There were 4 responses via email. There was 1 response via CRM. There were 2 responses via letters.

Demographic Group	Tameside Population (%)	Achieved sample (%)
Gender¹		
Male	49.1	49.4
Female	50.9	50.6
Age²		
16-17	3.0	2.8
18-24	10.3	7.0
25-34	16.3	17.9
35-44	15.9	19.9
45-54	18.7	24.0
55-64	14.5	15.9

¹ Figures based on the 2014 mid-year population estimates

² Figures based on the 2014 mid-year population estimates and those aged 16 and over.

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65 and over	21.3	12.5
Ethnicity³		
White	90.9	91.6
BME	9.1	8.4
Disability⁴		
Yes	20.9	11.4
No	79.1	88.6

³ Figures based on the 2011 Census

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2d. Mitigations (Where you have identified an impact, what can be done to reduce or mitigate the impact?)	
<p>Age. A higher percentage of older people have never used the internet compared to other age demographics.</p>	<p>Council officers undertook drop-in sessions at Tameside libraries on different days during the 12 week consultation period. Council officers undertook drop-in sessions at Active Tameside leisure centres, according to the schedule of specific classes that take place between 15:30-18:00 which children attend, and where grandparents are in the waiting area. Council officers undertook drop-in sessions at Age UK events; Age UK being a charity that hosts events for elderly people. Council officers undertook a presentation and drop-in session at the Cranberries social group, which is comprised exclusively of elderly people. These drop-in sessions provide elderly people who have never used the internet at home, or do not have access to the internet at home, the opportunity to take part in the computer based Budget Consultation with staff on hand to help them operate computers, or operate computers on their behalf. Some elderly people at library drop-ins mentioned to staff that they had never used a computer before, and so needed officers to operate the computer under the elderly people's direction. Additionally, all members of the public including elderly people are proactively approached and encouraged to take part in the Budget Consultation during these drop-in sessions.</p>
<p>Disability. A higher percentage of people classified as equality act disabled have never used the internet compared to people not classified as equality act disabled.</p>	<p>Council officers undertook drop-in sessions at Tameside libraries, which are disability access friendly. Council officers undertook drop-in sessions at Age UK events, where many of the attendees were suffering from the after-effects of strokes and/or dementia. The council arranged an interview with 'Talking News', which is an audio-news show for the local blind community, to promote the Budget Consultation. The council arranged with Tameside Sight a method for their blind clientele to undertake the Budget Consultation using the telephone, with someone operating the computer for them. The council also liaised with the Royal National Institute of Blind People in order to accommodate some of their members and supporters in giving their views. For some specific disabilities, for example physical disabilities that leave people housebound, an online platform could be more accessible than a paper one.</p>
<p>Ethnicity. Potential language barriers.</p>	<p>Council officers undertook meetings/presentations at Hyde Bangladeshi Welfare Association, Ashton Asian Carer's Support Group and Hyde Asian Carer's Support Group. At these groups an interpreter translated for members of the group who may not have been fluent in English. The Council also attended a women's only group called Khush Amdid at the request of its members. Having seen the presentation and video, this group was then able to promote the budget consultation to the wider BME community with the younger members assisting the older ones in completing the consultation.</p>
<p>Low Income. People on low income may not have the funds to access the internet, or devices with which to access the internet.</p>	<p>Council officers undertook drop-in sessions at libraries where people of low income, who do not have access to the internet at home, or do not have devices that can access the internet, usually go to access the internet. Council officers undertook drop-in sessions at New Charter Hubs in various towns, where the residents of New Charter social housing, typically people on lower incomes, go to talk with New Charter about housing issues such as repairs or rent arrears. Also meetings/presentations at Pioneer Homes, another social housing provider and additionally at Poverty Action group.</p>

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2e. Evidence Sources
Internet Use Data: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-395602
Census 2011
Mid-Year Population Estimates 2014: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-368259

2f. Monitoring progress		
Issue / Action	Lead officer	Timescale
N/A	N/A	N/A

Signature of Service Unit Manager	Date
Sarah Dobson	07/01/2016
Signature of Assistant Executive Director	Date
Sandra Stewart	07/01/2016