

2025/26 Budget Equality Impact Assessment

1. The Project

Directorate:	Corporate Services
Theme or area:	People Services
Lead Officer:	Su Turner
Date:	3 December 2024

Budget Reference	Budget Proposal	2025/26 Budget reduction (£)	2026/27 Budget reduction (£)	2027/28 Budget reduction (£)
CSD08	<p>Reduce the net cost of services within the People Services structure initially focusing on those services which are either discretionary in nature or which have lower levels of impact on the delivery of internal support to the wider organisation.</p> <p>This could be achieved through reducing costs, increasing the scope of activity and / or looking at ways in which the service could be funded differently going forwards. The proposal does include reducing the recruitment team and asking managers to undertake these functions again.</p>	£304,000	£25,000	£58,000

Description of the project:

This project looks at reducing the net cost of the People Services Team. Specifically in 2025/26 it is proposed that savings will be generated through:

- Deletion of Inclusion and Corporate Development Team Apprentice. which is currently a vacant post.
- The deletion of the Recruitment Team which will result in the cessation of all work carried out by the Recruitment Team. The Recruitment Team is made up of 4 permanent FTE. HR Manager, HR Adviser, HR Admin x2.
- An increase in annual leave buy back, traded income in health and safety and the introduction of an additional voluntary contributions scheme for pensions. Which will not have an impact on any protected group.

Summary of changes:

Inclusion and Corporate Development Team Apprenticeship – the permanent loss of this post will result in slower progress in the implementation of the council's new Learning Management System and less resources in the team to support equality consultation groups and the promotion and sharing of best practice on equality issues and at key times such as Black History Month, Pride month etc.

Deletion of the Recruitment Team – this proposal will result in the cessation of all recruitment activities completed by the team which includes:

- Re-development of the council's Recruitment Policy and accompanying training
- Supporting of positive action scheme for guaranteed interviews such as Armed Forces Covenant Gold Award, Care Experienced, Disability Confident Leader as the team will not be in place to ensure appropriate adverts and applicants etc are targeted correctly and support on any re-accreditations.
- Posting of job vacancies on additional job boards (Armed Forces) and recruitment development associated with the guaranteed interview schemes which formed part of the criteria for the accreditations.
- Work to improve representation of equality groups of our job applicants, including work with refugees and asylum seekers, Opening Doors to Refugees initiative, Women's Work Lab, Low Socio economic Community initiative, Employer Disability forum and Job Centre plus.
- Support to deliver on the recruitment elements of the 'Deep Dive' action plan for the Equality Framework for Local Government.
- All centralised activity such as social media, job fairs, careers events for school and college leavers, managing micro-sites for recruitment etc.

Recruitment activity such as advert compilation and managing and advising on recruitment campaigns/processes, no support would be available for creating and posting adverts and recruitment content on social media there would be no attendance and guidance at interviews, there would be basic reporting on recruitment activity with no further capacity for development (affecting ability to support the Equality Framework for Local Government), developments to, and support for, the iTrent recruitment module would cease, attendance at regional recruitment groups would cease (i.e. the regional recruitment group for Children's).

Work will be passed back to recruiting managers across the directorates (reverting to arrangements that existed prior to the introduction of the recruitment team that were ineffective).

Are any of the proposals within this theme a continuation of a previous medium-term financial plan saving?

Yes No

If yes, please insert reference number and year of assessment?

Budget Proposal	Year of assessment	Budget Reference

If yes, please describe what steps you have taken to review the equality impacts from previous years?

2. Customer equality impact summary

Will the changes proposed in this project have a disproportionate impact (or bias) for any of these groups?

Insert X into one box per row, for impact level and type.

H = High, M = Medium, L = Low, N = None

+ = Positive, - = Negative

Protected or significant group	Impact Level				Impact type	
	H	M	L	N	+	-
Disabled people (Including the consideration of neurodiversity)		X				X
People from different ethnic groups		X				X
Men or women (including those who are pregnant or on maternity leave)		X				X
People who are LGBTQ+			X			X
People on a low income		X				X
People in particular age groups		X				X
People in particular faith groups			X			X
People who are married or in a civil partnership			X			X
People who are undergoing gender reassignment			X			X
Other significant groups, for example: Armed Forces Community, care experienced young people, carers, parents.						
Please specify: Armed Forces, those who are Care Experienced, young people (schools)		X				X

3. Explanation of customer impact

Inclusion and Corporate Development Team Apprentice – the overall loss of this post is anticipated to be low as the key roles and responsibilities of the post holder will be picked up by other members of the team, albeit at a reduced pace.

Deletion of the Recruitment Team – the impact is in relation to potential and future job applicants. The service and all associated work would cease or transfer back to managers. The support for individuals/managers regarding the guaranteed interview schemes for disabled people, armed forces and care experienced would no longer exist.

Work with organisations, such as the Women’s Work Lab and Job Centre Plus would cease. Planned work such as the development of internships and support for Refugees and Asylum Seekers would also cease.

The work on international recruitment and sponsorship licence would cease.

Any recruitment activity would be passed back to recruiting managers, thereby the loss of any centralised activity (i.e. job fairs/social media/managing micro-sites). This proposal will result in an increase in workload for Recruiting Managers.

Further development of our application process to include the proposed introduction of “Blind Recruitment” to enhance our inclusive recruitment practices would cease.

Overall, it is anticipated that the council’s aspiration to be an inclusive employer will be reduced and the risk of discrimination through the recruitment process will increase.

So the negative impact on protected groups such as disabled people, those from a wide range of ethnic groups etc is assessed as being a medium, negative impact to reflect the loss of opportunities in relation to strengthening the diversity of our workforce. A diverse workforce that reflects the demographics of the local area is important to ensure we consider the needs and perspectives of the whole community of North Somerset. Diversity helps us to build connection and trust ensuring we are delivering relevant and appropriate services. A lack of focus on building a diverse workforce could result in us losing out on valuable skills and insights as well ultimately leading us to deliver less innovative, equitable services.

Please describe how you will communicate these changes to those impacted.

Communication regarding a change in recruitment procedures will be shared with Leadership Delivery Team (internal), externally communication regarding future council job opportunities will be reduced.

4. Staff equality impact summary

Are there any staffing implications for this proposal? **Yes** **No**

Explanation of staff impact

If yes, please describe the nature of the impact, including how many posts could be affected, please state whether they are vacant, or filled permanently or temporarily.

Inclusion and Corporate Development Apprentice – deletion of vacant post. Some of the work carried out by this post holder will be incorporated into the work of the team but overall will result in less capacity within the team.

Deletion of the Recruitment Team – HR Manager (Permanent), HR Adviser (Permanent), 2 x HR Admin Assistants (1 permanent, 1 FTC).

As a result of the deletion of this team a number of recruitment related tasks would cease, several will need to be completed by the recruiting managers and some would need to be picked up within the wider People Services Team.

5. Cumulative equality impacts

Is this project linked to or likely to have an impact on any other service areas?

For example are you moving the location of a service that may also be impacted upon by a change to public transport provision.

A cessation of the work completed by the Recruitment Team may be linked to a proposed reduction in the Economic Development Team, however the full impact of this work is yet to be determined.

6. Action Plan

Are there any further actions that should be taken because of this Equality Impact Assessment?

Issue Identified	Planned Action	Lead Officer	Time for review
Recruitment activity would be unsupported and all activity placed with recruiting managers	Communication to recruiting managers to advise them of a change in procedures will be needed.	Su Turner	April 25

7. Review and Sign Off

Service Manager Review

Is a further detailed equality impact assessment needed?	Yes No
If 'yes', when will the further assessment be completed?	December 2024
Service Manager:	Su Turner
Date:	25 November 2024