

2025/26 Budget Equality Impact Assessment

1. The Project

Directorate:	Place
Theme or area:	Community Response
Lead Officer:	Howard Pothecary
Date:	29 November 24

Budget Reference	Budget Proposal	2025/26 Budget reduction (£)	2026/27 Budget reduction (£)	2027/28 Budget reduction (£)
PD20	Community Response – Seek alternative funding to sustain the service	£84,000		

Description of the project:

This proposal will see NSC funding for Community Response Service cut, which will require alternative funding from Town & Parish Councils and other partners to continue the service.

Summary of changes:

The Community Response Service provides a highly visible frontline service that aims to prevent and respond to anti-social behaviour, environmental crime and other issues impacting residents' feelings of personal safety.

This proposal will see the removal of the entire budget for the Community Response Service from North Somerset Council.

Moving forward into 2025, this would leave just 1x Community Response Officer post confirmed who is fully funded and ring-fenced by Weston Town Council. There is currently no confirmed funding for Community Response officers to operate across the rest of North Somerset.

In order to continue this service outside of Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset Council will seek alternative funding from Town & Parish Council's and other partners.

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

No

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						

3. Explanation of customer impact

The council has statutory duties in relation to tackling crime and disorder, however this does not extend to providing a frontline service to tackle anti-social behaviour and other community safety issues which are typically dealt with by Police in other local authority areas.

The Community Response Team currently provides a service to all members of the community, regardless of protected characteristics. Therefore, this proposal does not have a disproportionate impact on residents who have protected characteristics, however this will have a low level impact on all residents as there is potentially less resources to support to tackle anti-social behaviour and other community safety issues.

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

4. Staff equality impact summary

Are there any staffing implications for this proposal? **Yes**

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.

Under this proposal, North Somerset Council will remove its budget for the Community Response Service, making 1 FTE post redundant.

Going forwards, the Community Response Service would rely on funding from Town & Parish Council's and other partners.

This would mean that Community Response Officers would only be able to be recruited on Fixed Term Contracts as future funding would not be guaranteed.

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.

Community Response is a highly visible, frontline service which support the council in a variety of ways including 'eyes & ears referrals' for teams such as Housing, Safeguarding, highway issues, licensing, trading standards, etc). Community Response also provide support at large events and major incidents/emergencies.

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
Priority 1 – Maintain existing Community Response	Meet with WSM Town Council around additional funding for a	Howard Pothecary	Jan 2025

Resource to work in highest demand locality of WSM	secondary Community Response Officer in their parish		
Priority 2 – Add additional Community Response Resource to locations that need it across North Somerset	Communication with Town and Parish Councils with regards a need for funding to receive Community Response support in their areas.	Howard Potheary	Sept 2025

7. Review and Sign Off

Service Manager Review

Is a further detailed equality impact assessment needed? Yes No

Please note that if this assessment indicates a potential ‘medium’ or ‘high’ impact on any protected or significant group a further, more detailed assessment will be required.

If ‘yes’, when will the further assessment be completed?

Service Manager: Howard Potheary

Date: 6 December 2024