

INVERCLYDE COUNCIL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

Budget Saving Proposal

Essential Information
Name of Officer(s) completing this Template: Kenny Lang
Designation(s): Grounds Manager
Directorate/Service: Environment and regeneration/regeneration, planning and public protection
Date of Impact Assessment: 13 October 2023
Name of Budget Saving Proposal (BSP) ¹ : Grounds – reduction of 23% of the core grounds staff

1. Does the BSP impact on:		
	Yes	No
a. Protected Characteristics under The Equality Act 2010: Age; Care experienced; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion and Belief; Sex; Sexual Orientation (see Section 3)	x	
b. Reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage – Fairer Scotland Duty ² (see Section 6)	x	
c. Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33 ³ (see Section 7)	x	
d. Council Plan 2023/28 ⁴ (see Section 8)	x	

¹ Please attach the BSP to this Template

² [Fairer Scotland Duty: guidance for public bodies](#)

³ [Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33](#)

⁴ [Council Plan 2023/28](#)

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2. If 'yes' is selected for any part of Section 1, please populate the other relevant Sections of this Template.

3. Impact – Protected Characteristics			
Which of the Protected Characteristics will the BSP have an impact upon?			
Equality Target Group	Positive impact +	Neutral impact =	Negative impact -
Age			x
Care experienced		x	
Disability			x
Gender Reassignment		x	
Marriage and Civil Partnership		x	
Pregnancy and Maternity		x	
Race		x	
Religion and Belief		x	

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Sex			x
Sexual Orientation		x	
Other groups to consider			x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers • The Armed Forces Covenant Duty 		x	

4. Which parts of the Equality Duty will the BSP impact on?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by The Equality Act 2010
x	Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster good relations between from different groups

5. Impact - Groups

From the information you have highlighted above, describe the positive and negative impacts and the groups affected under The Equality Act 2010.

<p>Positive impact + <i>(Describe groups affected.)</i></p>	<p>Negative impact - <i>(Describe groups affected.)</i></p> <p><u>Age; Sex:</u> The grounds operational workforce is predominantly male and the service has an ageing demographic. Young people possibly cannot access parks and play areas because they are not maintained and/or dangerous.</p>
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	<p><u>Disability:</u> The removal of the service would affect those who are disabled because the streets and public areas would be less well maintained and cause potential barriers to access.</p> <p><u>Age; Disability:</u> This saving would affect Winter maintenance and thus make it less viable for the elderly and those with a disability to go out in Winter. Wheelchairs and motorised scooters can be more difficult to manoeuvre around less well-maintained streets.</p> <p><u>Sex; Carers:</u> Prams, pushchairs and wheelchairs can be more difficult to push around less well-maintained streets. Most care providers are female.</p>
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6. Impact – Fairer Scotland Duty

What impact will this BSP have on reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage? *Please tick.*

Positive impact +	Neutral impact =	Negative impact -
+	=	-
		x

Briefly describe how the BSP will impact on reducing inequalities of outcome.

Residents who reside in lower rated Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation areas may not have the opportunity to experience high quality destinations. Less access to local open space can mean people have to travel further and those with less money will be less able to do so.

Affected staff are among the lower pay grades and predominantly reside in lower rated Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation areas.

A number of the Recovery actions relate to play parks and improvements in park areas due to the recognition of the importance of these areas, particularly in areas of deprivation. It is likely that the importance of these areas will remain high whilst communities experience the impact of the cost of living crisis.

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7. Impact – Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33	
Which Themes from the Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33 will this BSP impact on?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Theme 1: Empowered people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities can have their voices heard, and influence the places and services that affect them • Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Theme 2: Working people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More people will be in sustained employment, with fair pay and conditions • Poverty related gaps are addressed, so young people can have the skills for learning, life and work • Businesses are supported and encouraged to reduce their carbon footprint and develop green jobs
x	<p>Theme 3: Healthy people and places</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People live longer and healthier lives • Supportive systems are in place to prevent alcohol and drug misuse • Our natural capital is looked after, and we are effectively adapting and mitigating the effects of climate change
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Theme 4: A supportive place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable adults and children are protected and supported, ensuring they can live safely and independently • We recognise where people are affected by trauma, and respond in ways that prevent further harm and support recovery • Public protection and community safety are improved through targeting our resources to reduce the risk of offending and harm
x	<p>Theme 5: A thriving place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth in our working age population by encouraging people to stay here, and attracting new people to settle here • Development of strong community-based services that respond to local need • Homes are energy efficient and fuel poverty is reduced • Increased use of active travel and sustainable transport options • Easy access to attractive and safe public spaces, and high-quality arts and cultural opportunities
<p>Briefly describe how the BSP will impact on the Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33 Themes.</p>	

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Themes 3 and 5: A reduction in the grass cutting may improve biodiversity and contribute to the climate action plans. However, this has to be offset with a lack of maintenance. Winter safety may have an adverse impact on active travel.

8. Impact – Council Plan 2023/28

Which Themes from the Council Plan 2023/28 will the BSP impact on?

x	<p>Theme 1: People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our young people have the best start in life through high quality support and education • Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced • People are supported to improve their health and wellbeing • More people will be in employment, with fair pay and conditions • Our most vulnerable families and residents are safeguarded and supported
x	<p>Theme 2: Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities are thriving, growing and sustainable • Our strategic housing function is robust • Our economy and skills base are developed • We have a sufficient supply of business premises • Our natural environment is protected
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Theme 3: Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality and innovative services are provided, giving value for money • Our employees are supported and developed

Briefly describe how the BSP will impact on the Council Plan 2023/28 Themes.

Themes 1 and 2: The loss of job opportunities will have a direct bearing on staff and will affect our open space environment. People may become less proud of their local area.

9. Evidence

What evidence do you have to help identify any potential impacts of the BSP?

Note: Evidence could include consultations, surveys, focus groups, interviews, projects, user feedback, complaints, Officers’ knowledge and experience, equalities monitoring data, publications, research, reports, local, national groups.

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Evidence	Details
<p>Consultation/engagement</p>	<p>Engagement with external agencies through the Environment Working Group and community sector identifies the potential to move to a more natural management of parks and open spaces.</p> <p>Budget Consultation 2024/26 Phase 1: This BSP was one of 5 included in the <i>Environment</i> section of the survey⁵. It was ranked number 3 by respondents.</p> <p>Budget Consultation 2024/26 Phase 2: This BSP was one of 16 included in the Budget Consultation 2024/26 Phase 2⁶. It was ranked number 7 by respondents.</p> <p>According to Clyde Conversations respondents, 95% did not agree with reducing the grounds maintenance service.</p> <p>A focus group of Pupil Council members were consulted and felt that communities could help with planting and clearing up litter.</p>
<p>Research</p>	
<p>Officers’ knowledge and experience (including feedback from frontline staff)</p>	<p>Increased complaints in respect of place image.</p> <p>Information from various associations such as the Association of Public Service Excellence, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and The Institute of Leisure Management shows a move towards more natural planting and a less rigid ‘municipal’ approach to grassed areas, wild flowering and wilding of areas which allow</p>

⁵ Respondents were asked to rank the BSPs in order of importance: 1 = Most important and 5 = Least important

⁶ Respondents were asked to rank the BSPs in the order they most agreed with. 1 = BSP respondents supported most. 16 = BSP respondents supported the least

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	members of the public access in a more natural setting are becoming more popular and acceptable to the public.
Equalities monitoring data	Links to mental health and access to open greenspaces. In the period of the Covid-19 pandemic, open spaces and parks were valuable for communities to support mental health, particularly for those without their own outdoor space; this will continue to be important through the cost of living challenges.
User feedback (including complaints)	It is anticipated that there will be concern raised by the public within the local authority area. The risk to the Council is therefore high from a reputational perspective. Response times to attend to complaints or unplanned maintenance would increase.
Stakeholders Other	
Are there information gaps and, if so, what are these?	

10. Please use the space below to detail any other matters arising from the Equality Impact Assessment process, including what action could be taken to mitigate the impact of the BSP.

A number of flower beds across the Council would be either grassed over or, where this was not possible, be planted with low maintenance shrubs. Additionally, grounds maintenance regimes would substantially reduce in lower amenity areas with a focus on more limited high footfall parks and recreational spaces.

The removal of flower beds and concrete structures would have an impact on the Trunk Road Authority.

A prioritisation exercise will be carried out to programme the grass cutting to prioritise areas of high amenity. Grass cutting in high amenity areas will be retained as weekly where possible. Open space areas will have a reduced frequency from fortnightly to monthly and in addition 20% will no longer be cut and will become biodiversity areas.

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A biodiversity action plan would be required to be developed to mitigate the impact of this BSP.

There would be an increase in biodiversity areas. The frequency for emptying waste bins and dog bins from parks and open spaces would be prioritised based on usage.

Engagement with community groups and localities can help areas to focus on priorities for their area. Community groups may start volunteer to help with the impact of the saving.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Equality Impact Assessment entitled *Grounds seasonal - delete the seasonal budget within the grounds service*.

Details of the Person(s) who completed the Assessment:	Name: Kenny Lang
	Position: Waste Manager
	Date: 21/02/24
Authorised by:	Name: Stuart Jamieson
	Position: Director – Environment and Regeneration
	Date: 21/02/24

Thank you for your assistance with the completion of this task.

Please send a copy of the completed Template to Karen Barclay, Corporate Policy and Performance Officer: karen.barclay@inverclyde.gov.uk.