Equalities in the budgeting process

- How were equalities issues taken into consideration in allocating budgets in 2012-13? (Please describe the process undertaken)

All proposals for budget savings are initially screened by departments and ranked as having nil, low, medium or high impact on equalities groups. Any proposals which elected members are minded to accept but which have medium or high rankings are then subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment by departments in order to eliminate or minimise this impact before a final decision on implementation is taken.

- Was the approach taken for the 2012-13 budget any different from that taken in 2011-12? (If YES, please describe what changed in your approach)

The approach taken in 2012/13 was the same as in previous years.

- Can you provide any examples of how equalities considerations influenced agreed budgets? (Please provide up to THREE examples)

CHCP

For the 2012/13 Budget proposals, the CHCP proposed a £309k reduction in purchasing budgets for various vulnerable groups. Relevance to equalities for part of this saving was assessed as high. The actual reduction agreed by Members was amended to £111k to avoid the detrimental equality impact.

Education

For the 2012/13 Budget proposals, the Education department proposed a £77k (25%) reduction in the budget for Support for Learning Teachers. Relevance to equalities was assessed as medium. The proposal was rejected by Members.

CHCP

For the 2012/13 Budget proposals, the CHCP proposed cancelling the £30k funding of BAND F, a local group for disabled communities. Relevance to equalities was assessed as medium. The proposal was rejected by Members.
Equalities in mainstream services

- For your three most significant mainstream services (in terms of cost), please provide details of—

a) The total budget for this service in 2011-12 and 2012-13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>2011/12</th>
<th>2012/13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>£112,117k</td>
<td>£113,374k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHCP</td>
<td>£43,073k</td>
<td>£43,874k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>£23,438k</td>
<td>£25,434k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) The impact that this service has on equality groups

We provide services which allow 160, mostly older, residents to remain in their homes longer, under the Mr Diggit scheme, and 1000 older customers to access garden assistance services.

c) The impact (if any) that any budget changes have had on equality groups

Budgets have not changed from 11/12 to 12/13, therefore no impact.

Environment (Parks & Protective Services)

b) The impact that this service has on equality groups

Positive impacts include improved access to public facilities, and improved training and employment opportunities.

c) The impact (if any) that any budget changes have had on equality groups

Nil, insofar as our budgets have to date been protected for these services.

Environment (Planning, Property and Regeneration)

b) The impact that this service has on equality groups

Positive impacts include improved access to public facilities, and improved training and employment opportunities.

c) The impact (if any) that any budget changes have had on equality groups

Nil, insofar as our budgets have to date been protected for these services.

Environment (Housing Services): Provision of disabled adaptations for council tenants, provision of services for homeless people, the provision of sheltered accommodation and the provision of accommodation for young people.

b) The impact that this service has on equality groups

Positive impact have been felt, among others, by 244 sheltered residents to whom we provide sheltered accommodation. Handling of 250 homeless presentations per year (248 in 11/12) have a positive impact on homelessness.

c) The impact (if any) that any budget changes have had on equality groups

Our budgetary provision has not changed in recent years.
Education

b) The impact that this service has on equality groups
Please note our specific focus here is the amalgamation of Springhill and Auchenback Primaries

With reference to the amalgamation of Springhill and Auchenback Primaries, considerable work has been made to the physical environment of around £500k for the benefit of disabled and other learners, staff, parents and the wider community. This work includes redecoration, new suspended ceilings and lighting, and carpet/vinyl to classrooms. Installations of new electronic interactive whiteboards to ensure all teaching rooms are equipped with such technology. The toilets and staffroom areas have been refurbished; and assembly/gym/dining areas have been redecorated and have new ceilings and lighting. In addition to internal improvements, external painting and fabric improvements have been made to certain areas of the combined school; and there have been major traffic management improvements.

c) The impact (if any) that any budget changes have had on equality groups
To date, the Council has sought to protect front line services from the impact of budget savings required under the reduced levels of government expenditure as a consequence of the current difficult economic climate. Almost the entire education budget is directed to support front line service delivery. In undertaking budget savings options, the Education Department is mindful to avoid, as far as possible, any options that would adversely affect any specific groups; and where ultimately found necessary, would ensure an EIA is undertaken and take any measures to minimise any potential such

The consultation exercise leading to the amalgamation of Springhill and Auchenback Primaries was managed within existing resources. The Council was able to address the surplus places for the resident population in the area and a local authority’s duty to secure best value. By making more effective use of school places, efficiency savings were made for the Council whilst still ensuring that the quality of service is at least maintained. Making such savings enables the Council to minimise the impact of the need to make savings in other areas of the Education budget and in doing so benefits the school population. In approving this school consultation the Council agreed to undertake improvements to traffic management, walking routes and transport; and refurbish educational spaces as required within available resources.
Service provision for equalities groups

Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP)

a) The total budget for this service in 2011-12 and 2012-13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Area</th>
<th>2011/12</th>
<th>2012/13</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Disability</td>
<td>7,660</td>
<td>7,292</td>
<td>-368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical / Sensory Disability</td>
<td>2,334</td>
<td>2,591</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>1,685</td>
<td>1,649</td>
<td>-36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) The impact that this service has on equality groups

The services above provide support to people with different disabilities broadly

- learning disability
- physical disability
- mental health

c) The impact (if any) that any budget changes have had on equality groups

For learning disability the majority of the budget reduction reflects efficiency savings agreed with provider organisations these are predominantly in the areas of rent, staff and management costs. The intention is that impact on the provision of direct service to the equality group – adults with a learning disability is minimised.

For physical disability the uplift in budget reflects that the Council has chosen to give additional funding to support a number of young people through transition into adult services the additional money funds support packages that enables young people to live independently in local community.

For mental health a small reduction in budget is to be achieved by moving to providers on a care and support framework. This relates to a more cost effective price for support rather than reduction in support.

Mainstreaming equalities

- What specialist services or programmes have been, or are being altered, in the interests of mainstreaming?

No specialist services are currently being altered in that respect

- What monitoring is in place to ensure that the relevant equality groups continue to access an appropriate service?

Departments monitor and report on their outcome delivery plans on a six monthly basis.

Jim Sneddon
Head of Democratic & Partnership Services
East Renfrewshire Council
9 August 2012