Equalities in the budgeting process

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

In setting the budgets for 2012-13, each Service had a requirement to come forward with a number of proposed budget saving measures, given the reduced allocation of funding from central government. Each proposed budget saving measure or action was subject to consideration on whether it required an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA). Any proposed budget saving which materially affected staffing levels or the nature of jobs, or affected service delivery, or ceased a service provision, was the subject of an EqIA which was presented along with the reports to Elected members so they had a full up to date assessment of any equalities issues when making decisions in terms of the budget setting process. An overall EqIA was carried out of the cumulative effects of the budget and can be found as Annex One of the report at the following link:


The following narrative was included in the budget report:

EQUALITIES IMPACT

Where required, Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) have been completed individually on each of the savings options proposed for 2012-13 and are attached as Annex 7. The following criteria were applied to determine whether or not an EqIA was required:

- the savings proposal would result in a change to the service experienced by service users, and was effectively a change in policy;
- the savings proposal could potentially result in a change noticeable by service users, and was assessed as a precautionary measure; and/or
- the savings proposal could potentially affect staff belonging to one of the "protected characteristics" groups identified by the Equality Act 2010.

Where a savings proposal has arisen as a result of minor internal restructuring and is not expected to impact upon the service experienced by service users, for example by deleting a vacant post and redistributing workload among other staff, an EqIA was not considered to be required.

All of the EqIAs completed have identified any potential negative impacts upon service users belonging to any of the "protected characteristics" groups and have included proposals to mitigate these effects.

Members will be aware of their statutory duty to consider the cumulative effects of budget savings proposed by different Services upon individuals belonging to any of the "protected characteristics" groups.
The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) can ask to see evidence of impact assessments at any time. If it finds that an authority has not complied with its public sector duty it can issue a legally binding compliance notice through the Sheriff Courts. Failure to comply with the notice is a criminal offence. Ultimately, through the courts, it can force an authority to reverse a decision and to pay the legal costs incurred in the process. The Commission also has power to institute judicial review proceedings where a public authority has breached the general equality duty. Judicial review cases in respect of equality duties concern whether or not a public authority has paid / had due regard to the general equality duty when: making a decision, acting or failing to act.

- 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)

EqIAs were also undertaken and provided in 2011-12

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

There was a focus on efficiencies rather than service reductions in the Orkney Health and Care proposals

**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 £m</th>
<th>2012/13 £m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Care</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>53.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>53.4</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) The impact (positive or negative) that this service has on equality groups

Impacts are positive for all three services listed above.

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

Please see individual EqIAs attached as annexes to the report referenced above at http://www.orkney.gov.uk/Files/Committees-and-Agendas/Policy-and-Resources/2012/Item01_Budget_CouncilTax2012-13
Service provision for equalities groups

- For up to THREE services with a specific focus or provision for equalities groups, please provide details of—

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

  *All Age Disability Service*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>£m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

  b) The impact that this service has on equality groups

  The All Age Disabilities Service provides services in supported accommodation, respite, day care and outreach work with children and adults with learning and physical disabilities. The Service assists service users to achieve greater independence, learn life skills and provides support and respite for families. The provision of an all age service breaks down the artificial barriers which can be created through transitions from one service to another e.g. children’s services to adult services.

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

  As stated above the budget reductions have focused on efficiencies rather than service reductions in social care, and the net budget has increased slightly.

Mainstreaming equalities

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

  N/A

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

  N/A

  Further information will be available following the publication of our first annual equalities report in 2013, which will address mainstreaming and equalities outcomes.

Gillian Morrison
Executive Director
Corporate Services
Orkney Islands Council
6 September 2012