

Equality Impact Assessment

Amendments

12/12/2012

1. Amendments under the name of the Liberal Democrat Group

The amendment proposes changes to the scheme on:

- The capital restriction and how it is used in the scheme
- The maximum reduction

The cumulative effect of these changes is to reduce the amount of income and the creation of a financial pressure.

The increase in the support cap from 80% to 91.5% is a broad provision which affects all those who qualify for maximum support. This provision will potentially safeguard some people from severe hardship and will include people with a disability, lone parents and carer.

As the situation is complicated, it is hard to quantify exactly how much this extra 11.5% of support will mean to the weekly expenditure of different households, but it is likely to be substantial as it reduces the burden by more than half for the 'worst off' households.

However this support is provided at the risk of loss of services elsewhere. The forecast loss to MKC provides the possibility that further proposals developed at this stage would affect service provision. In the context of savings made in previous budget and proposed for future council budgets it is likely that these budget changes would affect service pressures, most of which are linked to work with older people, adult social care and transport. These changes would likely have a more direct effect on the most vulnerable than the present scheme.

The equality question posed by this amendment is: to what extent would providing more support across qualifying households result in services to vulnerable people being affected?

2. Amendments under the name of the Labour Group

The amendment increases the amount in the Discretionary Fund from £250,000 to £500,000. The extra funds would be found from amendments in the proposed budget for 2013/4.

The cumulative effect of these changes is to potentially provide extra support to those in the severest hardship and offsetting this by service changes. As has been discussed above, it is likely that these budget changes would affect service pressures. However this is less likely if the discretionary fund was not fully subscribed.

These changes allow for the needs of most vulnerable to be more fully considered without the risk of the fund being depleted.