



Transformation, Income, and Saving Proposal No 88

Somerset Equality Impact Assessment

NS-2324-TSIGP-173 - Trading Standards - managed service levels and staffing reduction

Organisation prepared for	SCC/Somerset Council		
Version	1.0	Date Completed	8 January 2023

Description of what is being impact assessed

Proposed revenue saving as part of the MTFP process for the new Somerset Council of £50,000 pa from 2023/24 in Somerset provision for costs of joint trading standards service with Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Councils (Heart of the South West trading standards joint service). This savings option involves implementing a managed reduction in staffing levels equivalent to 1 FTE in Somerset. It is envisaged that the savings option will be delivered by natural turnover of staff in the service and the implementation of succession planning, including an apprenticeship post in lieu of a senior post to provide savings in the staffing budget.

While the impact on service delivery will be managed and minimised it is envisaged that this will necessitate the reduction/removal of discretionary trading standards activity in Somerset and a lower level of service delivery compared to the other areas served by the partnership. This is likely to include reduced enforcement activity specifically in areas such as scams, age restricted sales and doorstep crime but also business advice and consumer education.

While trading standards is a universal service impact through protecting consumers and facilitating fair trading practices is of particular value and importance to lower income and vulnerable groups, including older people and people with disabilities. These impacts have been considered in respect of any impact on discretionary service delivery as a result of this savings proposal.

Evidence

What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups? Sources such as the [Office of National Statistics](#), [Somerset Intelligence Partnership](#), [Somerset's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis \(JSNA\)](#), Staff and/ or [area profiles](#), should be detailed here

No published data sets have been used – conclusions drawn from service specific insight

Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups? If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?

Impact assessed jointly with lead officers from Heart of the South West Trading Standards service given specialist knowledge of service and its impacts on individuals.

Analysis of impact on protected groups

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. Consider how this policy/service will achieve these aims. In the table below, using the evidence outlined above and your own understanding, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Based on this information, make an assessment of the likely outcome, before you have implemented any mitigation.

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
Age	With the increase of complexities of scams, students and young people are at a higher risk of being scammed and the phenonium of secondary age school’s children now vaping (and smoking Shisha) is a great cause for concern. Individuals in older age groups are typically more vulnerable to unfair trading practises, scams and rogue trading. Older individuals also typically have greater levels of concern about these potential incidences. The reduction in service capacity associated with this savings proposal is likely to mean that the level of preventative work and scope to engage in proactive responses with other Somerset services and agencies (eg anti scams work and multi agency campaigns and responses) is likely to reduce.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Disability	Trading Standards services in particular support residents with disabilities and mental health needs, including intervening on their behalf but also undertaking talks for the deaf and blind and installing call blockers and camera doorbells to protect those who suffer from dementia. Trading Standards has also supported the farming community with mental health during and post Covid 19. The reduction in service capacity associated with this savings proposal, while not effecting individual casework, is likely to mean that the level of preventative work and scope to engage in proactive responses with other Somerset services and agencies in these instances may need to be reduced.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and civil partnership	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race and ethnicity	Trading standards consumer protection services and work to promote a fair trading environment are relevant to supporting refugees who have settled in Somerset as a result of the refugee resettlement programme	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Religion or belief	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, e.g. carers, veterans, homeless, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.	Individuals in lower age groups are typically more vulnerable to scams and rogue trading, with a small minority of unscrupulous traders looking to exploit their need for less expensive goods and services. This is particularly relevant in the context of the current cost of living crisis and for some low-income individuals this may be compounded by other protected characteristics including older age and disability. The reduction in service capacity associated with this savings proposal is likely to mean that the level of preventative work and scope to engage in proactive responses with other Somerset services and agencies (eg response in general to scams and in particular to financial scams such as "loan sharking" plus multi agency campaigns and responses) is likely to reduce.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Negative outcomes action plan

Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
Ensure service activity within available resources targeted at benefitting individuals in most vulnerable groups and least advantaged local communities	Ongoing	Fakir Osman Paul Hickson	Quarterly performance monitoring of trading standards service delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>

If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.

There will unavoidably be some negative impact associated with this change but the above action is designed to minimise and mitigate this.

Completed by:	Paul Hickson/Fakir Osman
Date	5 January 2023
Signed off by:	Paul Hickson
Date	5 January 2023
Equality Lead/Manager sign off date:	20.01.2023
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	

Review date: