



Uttlesford District Council Equality & Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA)

Document control

Title of activity:	<i>General Fund Budget and Council Tax Setting 2026/27 Housing Revenue Account Budget and Rent & Service Charge Setting 2026/27</i>
Lead officer:	<i>Lance Porteous, Director of Finance, Revenues and Benefits</i>
Approved by:	<i>Adrian Webb, Strategic Director of Finance, Commercialisation and Corporate Services</i>
Date completed:	<i>05/02/2026</i>
Scheduled date for review:	<i>NIA - This budget covers a 1 year period and a new EqHIA will be carried out for next year's budget</i>

Does the EqHIA contain any confidential or exempt information that would prevent you publishing it on the Council's website?	No
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Please note that EqHIAs are **public** documents and must be made available on the Council's [EqHIA webpage](#).

When completed, a copy of this form should be saved with the activity a policy, strategy, procedure, project, new or change in service, initiative or other's file for audit purposes and in case it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

When the EqHIA is completed send a copy to the following email address - EqHIA@Uttlesford.gov.uk

1. Equality & Health Impact Assessment Checklist

Please complete the following checklist to determine whether or not you will need to complete an EqHIA and ensure you keep this section for your audit trail. If you have any questions, please contact your Divisional Equality Lead. Please refer to the Guidance in Appendix 1 on how to complete this form. **When EqHIA is completed send a copy to the following email address EqHIA@Uttlesford.gov.uk**

About your activity

1	Title of activity	<p><i>General Fund Budget and Council Tax Setting 2026/27</i></p> <p><i>Housing Revenue Account Budget and Rent & Service Charge Setting 2026/27</i></p>
2	Type of activity	<p><i>To set the income and expenditure for the financial year for the General Fund and HRA to enable the delivery of quality services to residents.</i></p> <p><i>To set the council tax precepts for 2026/27.</i></p> <p><i>To set the social rent and service charge levels for 2026/27.</i></p>
3	Scope of activity	<p><i>To identify the costs and income associated with delivering council services during 2026/27.</i></p> <p><i>To set the council tax precept in line with member priorities and government limits.</i></p> <p><i>To identify the changes in dwelling rents, garage rents, housing related support (HRS) charges and service charges required for the new financial year</i></p>

4a	Are you changing, introducing a new, or removing a service, policy, strategy or function?	Yes	If the answer to <u>any</u> of these questions is 'YES', please continue to question 5.	If the answer to fill of the questions (4a, 4b & 4c) is 'NO', please go to question 6.
4b	Does this activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon people (9 protected characteristics)?	Yes		
4c	Does the activity have the potential to impact (either positively or negatively) upon any factors which determine people's health and wellbeing?	Yes		
5	If you answered YES:	Please complete the EqHIA in Section 2 of this document. Please see Appendix 1 for Guidance.		
6	If you answered NO:	<i>Please provide a clear and robust explanation on why your activity does not require an EqHIA. This is essential in case the activity is challenged under the Equality Act 2010.</i>		
		<i>Please keep this checklist for your audit trail.</i>		

Completed by:	<i>Lance Porteous, Director of Finance, Revenues & Benefits</i>
Date:	<i>05/02/2026</i>

2. The EqHIA- How will the strategy, policy, plan, procedure and/or service impact on people?

■ Background/context:

- The General Fund budget is set annually, and this is based on the delivery of both statutory and discretionary services. The budget incorporates the Council's priorities, and this is supported by the budget consultation with residents and other stakeholders and the responses received.
- The council tax increase is set in accordance with the allowable increase set by government as part of the annual financial settlement - for 2024/25 district councils are permitted to increase their council tax precept by the higher of 2.99% or £5 per band D property.
- Rent and service charge setting is carried out annually. Rents are set in line with Government policy and to that end the council's social and affordable rents have been modelled at the 4.8% cap for 2026/27. All other Housing related support charges and service charges are increased at the same rate of 4.8%.

**Expand box as required*

■ Who will be affected by the activity?

- This affects all residents in the districts. The budget sets the finances available for the delivery of all services to residents and businesses.
- The council tax is a charge levied on all residential properties, an increase in council tax affects all residents including those on benefits and low incomes.
- An increase in rents and service charges will affect all tenants in council owned properties. Rents are kept within the housing allowances for the areas and will therefore be covered for those on benefits. An increase in service charges will impact on people's finances, although this is mitigated in part by various government grants. An increase in service charges will also affect owners of ex-Council owned properties, purchased through right-to-buy, which benefit from any continuing services provided by the Council, as stipulated in the lease or transfer deed.

Protected Characteristic - Age: Consider the full range of age groups	
Please tick (V) the relevant box:	
Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	
<p>Overall impact:</p> <p><i>Increasing council tax will enable the Council to continue to provide quality services to all its residents.</i></p> <p><i>The predicted impact of the increase in council tax for 2025/26 for people of all ages is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	
<p>Evidence:</p> <p>The budget consultation provides the opportunity for residents to express their views on the proposed services' importance and whether the council provides value for money. This was available to all residents.</p> <p>An earlier consultation was carried out on the Local Council Tax Support scheme, providing residents with the opportunity to express their views on the level of contribution for residents who are on a low income.</p> <p>Sheltered tenants have regular tenant meetings where they make comments and raise concerns about housing costs. They can also receive daily support from sheltered housing officers.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	
<p>Sources used:</p> <p>Budget consultation</p> <p>Local Council Tax Support scheme consultation</p> <p>Tenant and Leaseholder Panel</p> <p>Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data</p> <p>Office for National Statistics (ONS) data</p> <p>CORE data</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	

Protected Characteristic - Disability: Consider the full range of disabilities; including physical mental, sensory and progressive conditions

<i>Please tick (VJ) the relevant box:</i>		Overall impact: <i>Increasing council tax will enable the Council to continue to provide quality services to all its residents.</i> <i>The predicted impact of the increase in council tax for 2024/25 for people with disabilities is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination.</i>
Positive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

The budget consultation provides the opportunity for residents to express their views on the proposed services' importance and whether the council provides value for money. This was available to all residents.

An earlier consultation was carried out on the Local Council Tax Support scheme, providing residents with the opportunity to express their views on the level of contribution for residents who are on a low income.

The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that their needs are being met. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

Budget consultation
 Local Council Tax Support scheme consultation
 Tenant and Leaseholder Panel
 Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data
 Office for National Statistics (ONS) data
 CORE data

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Sex/gender: Consider both men and women							
<p><i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Positive</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neutral</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Negative</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Positive		Neutral	✓	Negative	
Positive							
Neutral	✓						
Negative							
<p>Overall impact:</p> <p><i>Increasing council tax will enable the Council to continue to provide quality services to all its residents.</i></p> <p><i>The predicted impact of the increase in council tax for 2024/25 on all genders is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>							
<p>Evidence:</p> <p>The budget consultation provides the opportunity for residents to express their views on the proposed services' importance and whether the council provides value for money. This was available to all residents.</p> <p>The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that their needs are being met. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey.</p> <p>An earlier consultation was carried out on the Local Council Tax Support scheme, providing residents with the opportunity to express their views on the level of contribution for residents who are on a low income.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>							
<p>Sources used:</p> <p>Budget consultation Local Council Tax Support scheme consultation Tenant and Leaseholder Panel Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data Office for National Statistics (ONS) data CORE data</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>							

Protected Characteristic - Ethnicity/race: Consider the impact on different ethnic groups and nationalities

Please tick () the relevant box:

Positive	
Neutral	✓
Negative	

Overall impact:

Increasing council tax will enable the Council to continue to provide quality services to all its residents.

The predicted impact of the increase in council tax for 2024/25 on ethnicity and race is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination.

**Expand box as required*

Evidence:

The budget consultation provides the opportunity for residents to express their views on the proposed services' importance and whether the council provides value for money. This was available to all residents.

An earlier consultation was carried out on the Local Council Tax Support scheme, providing residents with the opportunity to express their views on the level of contribution for residents who are on a low income.

The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that their needs are being met. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey.

Sources used:

- Budget consultation
- Local Council Tax Support scheme consultation
- Tenant and Leaseholder Panel
- Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data
- Office for National Statistics (ONS) data
- CORE data

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Religion/faith: Consider people from different religions or beliefs including those with no religion or belief	
<i>Please tick (v) the relevant box:</i>	Overall impact:
Positive	<p><i>Increasing council tax will enable the Council to continue to provide quality services to all its residents.</i></p> <p><i>The predicted impact of the increase in council tax for 2024/25 on religion and faith is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>
Neutral	
Negative	
Evidence:	
<p>The budget consultation provides the opportunity for residents to express their views on the proposed services' importance and whether the council provides value for money. This was available to all residents.</p> <p>An earlier consultation was carried out on the Local Council Tax Support scheme, providing residents with the opportunity to express their views on the level of contribution for residents who are on a low income.</p> <p>The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that their needs are being met. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	
Sources used:	
<p>Budget consultation</p> <p>Local Council Tax Support scheme consultation</p> <p>Tenant and Leaseholder Panel</p> <p>Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data</p> <p>Office for National Statistics (ONS) data</p> <p>CORE data</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	

Protected Characteristic - Sexual orientation: Consider people who are heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual

<i>Please tick (<input type="checkbox"/>) the relevant box:</i>		<p>Overall impact:</p> <p><i>Increasing council tax will enable the Council to continue to provide quality services to all its residents.</i></p> <p><i>The predicted impact of the increase in council tax for 2024/25 on sexual orientation is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>
Positive		
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Evidence:

The budget consultation provides the opportunity for residents to express their views on the proposed services' importance and whether the council provides value for money. This was available to all residents.

An earlier consultation was carried out on the Local Council Tax Support scheme, providing residents with the opportunity to express their views on the level of contribution for residents who are on a low income.

The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that their needs are being met. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

- Budget consultation
- Local Council Tax Support scheme consultation
- Tenant and Leaseholder Panel
- Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data
- Office for National Statistics (ONS) data
- CORE data

**Expand box as required*

Protected Characteristic - Gender reassignment: Consider people who are seeking, undergoing or have received gender reassignment surgery, as well as people whose gender identity is different from their gender at birth	
<i>Please tick (<input type="checkbox"/>) the relevant box:</i>	Overall impact:
Positive	<i>Increasing council tax will enable the Council to continue to provide quality services to all its residents.</i>
Neutral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>The predicted impact of the increase in council tax for 2024/25 on gender reassignment is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination.</i>
Negative	
<i>*Expand box as required</i>	
Evidence:	
<p>The budget consultation provides the opportunity for residents to express their views on the proposed services' importance and whether the council provides value for money. This was available to all residents.</p> <p>An earlier consultation was carried out on the Local Council Tax Support scheme, providing residents with the opportunity to express their views on the level of contribution for residents who are on a low income.</p> <p>The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that their needs are being met. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey.</p>	
<i>*Expand box as required</i>	
Sources used:	
<p>Budget consultation</p> <p>Local Council Tax Support scheme consultation</p> <p>Tenant and Leaseholder Panel</p> <p>Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data</p> <p>Office for National Statistics (ONS) data</p> <p>CORE data</p>	
<i>*Expand box as required</i>	

Protected Characteristic - Marriage/civil partnership: Consider people in a marriage or civil partnership

<i>Please tick (v) the relevant box:</i>		<p>Overall impact:</p> <p><i>Increasing council tax will enable the Council to continue to provide quality services to all its residents.</i></p> <p><i>The predicted impact of the increase in council tax for 2024/25 for marriage and civil partnership is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination.</i></p> <p><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>
Positive		
Neutral	✓	
Negative		

Evidence:

The budget consultation provides the opportunity for residents to express their views on the proposed services' importance and whether the council provides value for money. This was available to all residents.

An earlier consultation was carried out on the Local Council Tax Support scheme, providing residents with the opportunity to express their views on the level of contribution for residents who are on a low income.

The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that their needs are being met. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey.

**Expand box as required*

Sources used:

- Budget consultation
- Local Council Tax Support scheme consultation
- Tenant and Leaseholder Panel
- Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data
- Office for National Statistics (ONS) data
- CORE data

Protected Characteristic - Pregnancy, maternity and paternity: Consider those who are pregnant and those who are undertaking maternity or paternity leave	
<i>Please tick (v) the relevant box:</i>	Overall impact:
Positive	<p><i>Increasing council tax will enable the Council to continue to provide quality services to all its residents.</i></p> <p><i>The predicted impact of the increase in council tax for 2024/25 for pregnancy, maternity and paternity is neutral as there is no identified direct, positive or indirect discrimination.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>
Neutral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Negative	
Evidence:	
<p>The budget consultation provides the opportunity for residents to express their views on the proposed services' importance and whether the council provides value for money. This was available to all residents.</p> <p>An earlier consultation was carried out on the Local Council Tax Support scheme, providing residents with the opportunity to express their views on the level of contribution for residents who are on a low income.</p> <p>The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that their needs are being met. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	
Sources used:	
<p>Budget consultation</p> <p>Local Council Tax Support scheme consultation</p> <p>Tenant and Leaseholder Panel</p> <p>Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data</p> <p>Office for National Statistics (ONS) data</p> <p>CORE data</p>	

Socio-economic status: Consider those who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds	
<i>Please tick (✓) the relevant box:</i>	
Positive	✓
Neutral	
Negative	
<p>Overall impact:</p> <p><i>For residents who are from low income or financially excluded backgrounds, the Council has a number of schemes in place to provide support.</i></p> <p><i>The Local Council Tax Support scheme is available to all residents and is means tested with the maximum benefit of 87.5% discount on their annual council tax bill. The scheme includes protection for pensioners and the vulnerable and their carers, with those on the lowest incomes receiving 100% discount.</i></p> <p><i>The Council has the most generous Council Tax Support Scheme in Essex.</i></p> <p><i>The Council also maintains an Extreme Hardship Fund which is available to all residents who find themselves in financial hardship. In addition to this there is a dedicated officer in post to provide support and advice on managing their finances and any arrears. The officer is also in contact with other support agencies who they can signpost to residents for additional help and support.</i></p> <p><i>All Council services are available to all residents and some of our fee charging services offer discounted rates for people on a low income.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	
<p>Evidence:</p> <p>Local Council Tax Support scheme sets out all the available support.</p> <p>The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that they get value for money. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey.</p> <p>Sources used: Local Council Tax Support scheme Tenant and Leaseholder Panel Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data Office for National Statistics (ONS) data CORE data</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p>	

Health & Wellbeing Impact: Consider both short and long-term impacts of the activity on a person's physical and mental health, particularly for disadvantaged, vulnerable or at-risk groups. Can health and wellbeing be positively promoted through this activity? Please use the Health and Wellbeing Impact Tool in Appendix 2 to help you answer this question.

<i>Please tick (✓) all the relevant boxes that apply:</i>		<p>Overall impact:</p> <p><i>Increasing council tax enables the Council to continue to provide a range of quality services, including a Health and Wellbeing service.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*Expand box as required</i></p> <p>Do you consider that a more in-depth HIA is required as a result of this brief assessment? Please tick (✓) the relevant box</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yes D No [g]</p>
Positive	✓	
Neutral		
Negative		

Evidence:

There will be a positive health and wellbeing impact due to continuing access to specific health and wellbeing services for residents.

The tenant satisfaction survey sent to all tenants gives the opportunity to express if tenants feel that they are looked after. People are free to make their comments and concerns known by returning the survey.

Sources used:

Budget consultation
 Tenant and Leaseholder Panel
 Tenant Satisfaction Survey Census 2021 data
 Office for National Statistics (ONS) data
 CORE data

**Expand box as required*

3. Outcome of the Assessment

The EqHIA assessment is intended to be used as an improvement tool to make sure the activity maximises the positive impacts and eliminates or minimises the negative impacts. The possible outcomes of the assessment are listed below and what the next steps to take are:

Please tick(✓) what the overall outcome of your assessment was:

	<p>1. The EqHIA identified <u>no significant concerns</u> OR the identified <u>negative concerns</u> have already been <u>addressed</u></p>		<p>Proceed with implementation of your activity</p>
	<p>2. The EqHIA identified some <u>negative impact</u> which still needs <u>to be addressed</u></p>		<p>COMPLETE SECTION 4: Complete action plan and finalise the EqHIA</p>
	<p>3. The EqHIA identified some <u>major concerns</u> and showed that it is <u>impossible to diminish negative impacts</u> from the activity to an acceptable or even lawful level</p>		<p>Stop and remove the activity or revise the activity thoroughly. Complete an EqHIA on the revised proposal.</p>

4. Action Plan

The real value of completing an EqHIA comes from the identifying the actions that can be taken to eliminate/minimise negative impacts and enhance/optimize positive impacts. In this section you should list the specific actions that set out how you will address any negative equality and health & wellbeing impacts you have identified in this assessment. Please ensure that your action plan is: more than just a list of proposals and good intentions; sets ambitious yet achievable outcomes and timescales; and is clear about resource implications.

Protected characteristic / health & wellbeing impact	Identified Negative or Positive impact	Recommended actions to mitigate Negative impact* or further promote Positive impact	Outcomes and monitoring**	Timescale	Lead officer

Add further rows as necessary

* You should include details of any future consultations and any actions to be undertaken to mitigate negative impacts

** Monitoring: You should state how the impact (positive or negative) will be monitored; what outcome measures will be used; the known

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(or likely) data source for outcome measurements; how regularly it will be monitored; and who will be monitoring it (if this is different from the lead officer).

5. Review

In this section you should identify how frequently the EqHIA will be reviewed; the date for next review; and who will be reviewing it.

Review:

This budget is for a one year period only and a new EqHIA will be carried out for next year's budget.

Scheduled date of review: January 2027 (as part of setting the 2026/27 budget, council tax and social rents).

Lead Officer conducting the review: Lance Porteous, Director of Finance, Revenues and Benefits

**Expand box as required*