



AGENDA FOR THE EXECUTIVE

Members of the Executive are summoned to attend a meeting to be held via Zoom on **10 September 2020 at 7.00 pm.**

Link to the meeting: <https://weareislington.zoom.us/j/98181896106>

Enquiries to : Jonathan Moore
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Despatched : 2 September 2020

Membership

Councillor Richard Watts
Councillor Janet Burgess MBE
Councillor Rowena Champion
Councillor Kaya Comer-Schwartz

Councillor Satnam Gill OBE
Councillor Una O'Halloran
Councillor Asima Shaikh
Councillor Diarmaid Ward

Portfolio

Leader of the Council
Executive Member Health and Social Care
Executive Member for Environment and Transport
Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families
Executive Member for Finance and Performance
Executive Member for Community Development
Executive Member for Inclusive Economy and Jobs
Executive Member for Housing and Development

Quorum is 4 Councillors

Please note

It is likely that part of this meeting may need to be held in private as some agenda items may involve the disclosure of exempt or confidential information within the terms of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Members of the press and public may need to be excluded for that part of the meeting if necessary.

Details of any representations received about why the meeting should be open to the public - none



Declarations of interest:

If a member of the Executive has a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest*** in an item of business and it is not yet on the council's register, the Councillor **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent. Councillors may also **choose** to declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest that is already in the register in the interests of openness and transparency. In both the above cases, the Councillor **must** leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If a member of the Executive has a **personal** interest in an item of business they **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent but may remain in the room, participate in the discussion and/or vote on the item if they have a dispensation from the Chief Executive.

- *(a) **Employment, etc** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- (b) **Sponsorship** - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of election; including from a trade union.
- (c) **Contracts** - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between the Councillors or their partner (or a body in which one has a beneficial interest) and the council.
- (d) **Land** - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.
- (e) **Licences**- Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.
- (f) **Corporate tenancies** - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which the Councillor or their partner have a beneficial interest.
- (g) **Securities** - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

NOTE: Public questions may be asked on condition that the Chair agrees and that the questions relate to items on the agenda. No prior notice is required. Questions will be taken with the relevant item.

Requests for deputations must be made in writing at least two clear days before the meeting and are subject to the Leader's agreement. The matter on which the deputation wants to address the Executive must be on the agenda for that meeting.

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F.	Urgent non-exempt matters	
	Any non-exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.	
G.	Exclusion of the press and public	
	To consider whether to exclude the press and public during discussion of the remaining items on the agenda, in view of their confidential nature, in accordance with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.	
H.	Confidential / exempt items for information	
9.	Leisure Mobilisation and Recovery Plan - exempt appendices	171 - 270
I.	Urgent exempt Matters	
	Any exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.	

The next meeting of the Executive will be on 15 October 2020

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London Borough of Islington

Executive - 16 July 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held via Zoom on 16 July 2020 at 7.00 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Watts, Burgess, Champion, Comer-Schwartz,
Gill, O'Halloran, Shaikh and Ward

Councillor Richard Watts in the Chair

737 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

738 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

739 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 June 2020 be agreed as a correct record and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

740 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT AND FUNDING ALLOCATION

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the breakdown of the forecast General Fund outturn by individual variance at Appendix 1 of the report and by service area at Appendix 2 of the report be noted.
- (ii) That it be noted that, after the application of COVID-19 government grant funding, there is a forecast net General Fund overspend of (+£24.496m) in 2020/21, (Section 3 and Table 1 of the report).
- (iii) That the council is facing total COVID-19 related budget pressures of around £62m, and after government grants received to date, a net gap of around £47m (including HRA and potential council tax and business rates income losses), be noted (Paragraph 3.2 of the report).
- (iv) That departments undertake a detailed review of their budgets to assess further scope to reduce COVID-19 budget pressures and/or

deliver underspends in other areas be agreed (Paragraph 3.5 of the report).

- (v) That the Public Health and homelessness grants prior year balances in earmarked reserves be allocated against the forecast General Fund overspend, where permissible within the terms of the original grants, be agreed (Paragraphs 4.10 and 4.23 of the report).
- (vi) That departmental cash limits be adjusted to reflect the latest re-profiling of savings, and to regularise any ongoing directorate underspends declared in this report, be agreed (Paragraph 4.32, Table 2 and Appendix 3 of the report).
- (vii) That the forecast in-year HRA deficit of (+£5.490m) be noted (Section 5 and Appendix 2).
- (viii) That the decision for Partners to repay the senior debt on the first housing PFI contract (PFI1) be delegated to the Corporate Director of Housing in consultation with the Corporate Director of Resources and the Executive Member for Housing and Development (Paragraph 5.4 of the report).
- (ix) That the latest 2020/21 to 2022/23 capital programme be noted, and pending more detailed review on an individual scheme basis, that it be noted that the COVID-19 crisis is expected to lead to slippage of at least 20% of the 2020/21 capital programme to future financial years (Section 6, Table 3 and Appendix 4 of the report).

Reason for decision – in order to improve the financial resilience of the council.

Other options considered - none.

Conflicts of interest/dispensations granted – none.

741 **STREET PROPERTIES MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the outcome of the consultation on the service delivery options following the expiry of the PFI 2 contract with Partners be noted;
- (i) That, having considered the outcome of the residents' consultation and after taking into account the other considerations set out in the report, it be agreed that services currently provided by Partners under the PFI2 contract should be provided directly by the council on expiry of the contract.

Reason for decision – To ensure a quality service is provided to residents and to deliver value for money through economies of scale.

Other options considered – as specified in the report, the council also considered a competitive tender process, and a combination of in-house service provision and procurement of a new service provider for the remaining services.

Conflicts of interest/dispensations granted – none.

742 PAVEMENT LICENSING

RESOLVED:

- (i) To introduce the new Pavement Licenses once the Business and Planning Bill 2020 receives Royal Assent.
- (ii) That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Environment and Regeneration, following consultation with Executive Member for Environment & Transport, to set the license fee within the range allowed by the legislation.
- (iii) That the Corporate Director of Environment & Regeneration be authorised, following consultation with the Executive Member for Environment & Transport, to take any further decisions in connection with implementation of Pavement Licensing following Royal Assent to the Bill.

Reason for decision – to allow the council to effectively administer the provisions for pavement licensing set out in the Business and Planning Bill 2020.

Other options considered – none.

Conflicts of interest/dispensations granted – none.

MEETING CLOSED AT 7.25 pm

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Report of: Executive Member for Finance and Performance

Meeting of	Date	Ward(s)
Executive	10 September 2020	All

Delete as appropriate	Exempt	Non-exempt
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2020/21 BUDGET MONITORING – MONTH 4

1. SYNOPSIS

- 1.1 This report presents the forecast outturn position for the 2020/21 financial year as at the end of month 4 (31 July 2020). The in-year budget position remains very uncertain due to the COVID-19 crisis, as the situation is continually changing based on government guidance and emerging actual cost data. The COVID-19 related budget pressures in this report will form the basis for the next COVID-19 financial return to MHCLG (with a deadline of 4 September 2020).
- 1.2 Overall, the council is currently estimating total COVID-19 related budget pressures of approximately £64m (comprising £19m additional costs and £45m income losses), including Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and potential council tax and business rates income losses that would impact future year budgets. This is an increase of approximately £2.5m since the month 3 forecast. The main reason for this increase is a presentational change whereby the net parking related income pressure has now been disaggregated between gross COVID-19 parking income losses and additional projected income from the Low Traffic Neighbourhood and School Streets programmes.
- 1.3 The council has received non-specific government grant funding of £18.5m as a contribution towards our extra costs as we deliver the local response to this crisis, which leaves a total funding gap of approximately £45m. Any residual shortfall not funded by central government would significantly weaken the council's balance sheet and reserves, which would then need to be replenished in future financial years.
- 1.4 The government has announced an income loss scheme whereby local authorities can claim back funding for 75% of income losses from sales, fees and charges, where these losses are greater than 5% of the council's planned income receivable. To qualify, income losses must be directly linked to the delivery of local services, and commercial and rental income are excluded. Whilst

awaiting more detailed guidance from MHCLG, any additional funding that the council could potentially receive from this scheme is not yet reflected in the budget monitoring forecast.

- 1.5 Within the overall position outlined above, there is a forecast General Fund overspend of (+£40.310m), comprising COVID-19 related budget pressures of (+£45.558m) and other net forecast underspends of (-£5.248m). After the application of COVID-19 government grant funding of £17.277m (£18.542m non-specific government grant received to date less £1.265m applied in 2019/20), this leaves a forecast net General Fund overspend of (+£23.033m) in 2020/21. This is a net improvement of (-£0.560m) since the month 3 forecast, comprising (+£3.978m) increase in COVID-19 related pressures and (-£4.538m) increase in other net forecast underspends.
- 1.6 The forecast in-year position for the ring-fenced HRA is a deficit of (+£3.990m, a decrease of -£1.500m since month 3), which relates in full to COVID-19 pressures.
- 1.7 Further management actions and efficiencies are required in order to reduce the in-year overspend where possible. Departments are asked to continue to review their budgets to assess further scope to reduce COVID-19 pressures and/or deliver underspends in other areas.
- 1.8 The forecast position includes £13.1m potential council tax and business rates income losses (unchanged since month 3) that would impact future year budgets. This is an initial prudent assessment of the potential in-year losses and subject to change significantly as more reliable collection data emerges. The actual budgetary impact will depend on the wider economic outlook, including the extent to which arrears can be recovered and any ongoing decrease in the tax base (e.g. increased council tax support caseload, empty business premises).
- 1.9 The COVID-19 crisis (and particularly the lockdown period) is also expected to lead to significant slippage of the 2020/21 capital programme into future financial years.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. To note the breakdown of the forecast General Fund outturn by individual variance at **Appendix 1** and by service area at **Appendix 2**.
- 2.2. To note that, after the application of COVID-19 government grant funding, there is a forecast net General Fund overspend of (+£23.033m) in 2020/21. (**Section 3** and **Table 1**)
- 2.3. To note that the council is facing total COVID-19 related budget pressures of approximately £64m and, after government grant received to date, a net gap of approximately £45m (including HRA and potential council tax and business rates income losses). (**Paragraphs 3.2-3.3**)
- 2.4. To note the latest existing saving tracker, unchanged since month 3. (**Paragraph 4.36, Table 2** and **Appendix 3**)
- 2.5. To agree that departmental cash limits be adjusted with effect from 1 July 2020 to reflect the council-wide vacancy factor. (**Paragraph 4.38** and **Table 3**)
- 2.6. To note the forecast in-year HRA deficit of (+£3.990m). (**Section 5** and **Appendix 2**)
- 2.7. To note the latest 2020/21 to 2022/23 capital programme and that the COVID-19 crisis is expected to lead to significant slippage of the 2020/21 capital programme to future financial years. (**Section 6, Table 4** and **Appendix 4**)

3. **REVENUE POSITION: SUMMARY**

- 3.1. A summary position of the General Fund and HRA is shown in **Table 1**, a breakdown by individual General Fund variance in **Appendix 1** and a breakdown by General Fund and HRA service area in **Appendix 2**.

Table 1 – 2020/21 General Fund and HRA Forecast Over/(Under)Spend

	CV-19 Related £m	Non CV-19 Related £m	Month 4 Total £m	Month 3 Total £m	Monthly Movement £m
<u>GENERAL FUND</u>					
Chief Executive's Directorate	0.000	(0.021)	(0.021)	0.000	(0.021)
Environment and Regeneration	19.792	(2.190)	17.602	16.163	1.439
Housing	1.109	0.000	1.109	1.267	(0.158)
People	16.644	(0.583)	16.061	16.173	(0.112)
Public Health	0.387	(1.391)	(1.004)	(0.942)	(0.062)
Resources Directorate	5.824	(0.032)	5.792	5.803	(0.011)
DIRECTORATE	43.756	(4.217)	39.539	38.464	1.075
Corporate Items	1.802	(1.031)	0.771	2.406	(1.635)
OVERALL (before CV-19 grant)	45.558	(5.248)	40.310	40.870	(0.560)
CV-19 grant			(17.277)	(17.277)	0.000
OVERALL (after CV-19 grant)			23.033	23.593	(0.560)
<u>HRA</u>					
In-year (Surplus)/Deficit	3.990	0.000	3.990	5.490	(1.500)

- 3.2. Overall, the council is currently estimating total COVID-19 related budget pressures of approximately £64m (comprising £19m additional costs and £45m income losses). This includes COVID-19 related budget pressures of £1.3m at the end of the previous financial year (2019/20), forecast General Fund pressures of £45.6m in 2020/21, £13.1m potential council tax and business rates income losses that would impact future year budgets and £4.0m HRA budget pressures. This is an increase of approximately £2.5m since the month 3 forecast. The main reason for this increase is a presentational change whereby the net parking related income pressure has now been disaggregated between gross COVID-19 parking income losses and additional projected income from the Low Traffic Neighbourhood and School Streets programmes. The budget position remains very uncertain, as the situation is continually changing based on government guidance and emerging actual cost data.
- 3.3. The council has received non-specific government grant funding of £18.5m as a contribution towards our extra costs as we deliver the local response to this crisis, which leaves a total funding gap of approximately £45m. Any residual shortfall not funded by central government would significantly weaken the council's balance sheet and reserves, which would then need to be replenished in future financial years.
- 3.4. The government has also announced an income loss scheme whereby local authorities can claim back funding for 75% of income losses from sales, fees and charges, where these losses are greater than 5% of the council's planned income receivable. To qualify, income losses must be directly linked to the delivery of local services, and commercial and rental income are excluded. The scheme

will be in place for the 2020/21 financial year only, so the council will need to fully budget for any income losses expected to continue in future financial years. Whilst awaiting more detailed guidance from MHCLG, any additional funding that the council could receive from this scheme is not yet reflected in the budget monitoring forecast.

- 3.5. Whilst non COVID-19 related net underspends totalling (-£5.248m) are now being forecast, further management actions and efficiencies are required in order to reduce the in-year overspend where possible.
- 3.6. Beyond 2020/21, there is currently an estimated net budget gap of approximately £58m over the 3-year financial planning cycle to 2023/24. The medium-term financial outlook for local government is the most uncertain it has ever been and there is unlikely to be any degree of certainty for some time. Even when there is some stability with regards COVID-19, the economic ramifications of the pandemic are going to take some years to play out, with an inevitable impact on public sector spending settlements going forward. The estimated budget gap will be kept under review and is subject to change significantly as further information emerges on key budget variables, including the following:
- The extent to which the council's reserves are depleted by 2020/21 COVID-19 related budget pressures and therefore need to be replenished in future financial years;
 - Ongoing COVID-19 expenditure pressures (including impact on demographic growth) and recovery of income (including council tax/business rates), and the risk of a second spike of the virus;
 - Delivery of existing agreed savings; and
 - The 2020 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and future local government finance settlements, including the overall quantum of local government funding, additional social care funding and/or precept and funding distribution reforms such as the reset of business rates retention growth and the fair funding review.

4. GENERAL FUND

Chief Executive's Directorate (-£0.021m, broadly unchanged since month 3)

- 4.1. The Chief Executive's directorate is forecasting a non COVID-19 related underspend of (-£0.021m).

Environment and Regeneration (+£17.602m, an increase of +£1.439m since month 3)

- 4.2. The Environment and Regeneration directorate is currently forecasting a net overspend of (+£17.602m), comprised of (+£19.792m) COVID-19 related budget pressures and a (-£2.190m) non COVID-19 related net underspend. This is detailed by key variance in **Appendix 1** and summarised by division in **Appendix 2**.

- 4.3. The department relies heavily on fees and charges income to subsidise its services and the COVID-19 crisis has severely impacted on revenue generating activities across all service areas.

- Parking related income – there has been a substantial decrease in projected income across Pay & Display, Penalty Charge Notices and Permit & Vouchers. It is estimated that the full year impact will be a decline in parking related income of £11.302m. This is partially offset by (-£3.368m) additional projected income from the acceleration of the Low Traffic Neighbourhood and School Streets programmes to aid social distancing measures on the streets. Taking into

account both of these elements, the net change in the parking income pressure since month 3 is a decrease of (-£0.616m).

- Leisure related income – the council receives income from operating the leisure centres and from activities and events within our parks and open spaces. The current best estimate of the full year impact of this income loss is £4.805m (an increase of +£0.077m since month 3).
- Other areas such as Commercial Waste, Licensing, Energy Services, Highways, Street Markets, Local Land Charges and Pest Control services are also experiencing reduced levels of service and it is estimated that the income loss across these areas will be £3.069m (an increase of +£0.534m since month 3).

- 4.4. The directorate is also incurring additional costs in terms of agency cover for COVID-19 related sickness/self-isolation, overtime and additional contract costs to cover additional enforcement of social distancing and Personal Protective Equipment. It is estimated that these additional costs will amount to £0.566m (an increase of +£0.276m since month 3) over the course of the financial year.
- 4.5. The directorate has also provided a grant to the Angel Business Improvement District (BID) of £0.050m to support operational spend due to COVID-19 related budget shortfalls.
- 4.6. There are a number of other non COVID-19 related variances detailed in Appendix 1, including staffing pressures and risks related to the agreed vacancy factor and additional income such as the Housing Street Properties Fire Safety Inspections by Building Control and one-off income from Trading Standards penalties.

Housing General Fund (+£1.109m, a decrease of -£0.158m since month 3)

- 4.7. The Housing directorate is currently forecasting a (+£1.109m) General Fund overspend, fully attributable to the COVID-19 crisis. This is detailed by key variance in **Appendix 1** and summarised by division in **Appendix 2**. The Housing directorate includes Voluntary and Community Services (VCS) and the council's statutory, yet unfunded by central government, duty to provide a safety net to vulnerable migrants with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) – including European Economic Area Nationals, under social services legislation (including the Care Act 2014 and Children's Act 1989).
- 4.8. COVID-19 is causing budget pressures across homelessness and NRPF services. This is showing through rising client numbers, increased provider costs, additional legal challenges, extra landlord incentive payments, higher rent arrears and lost income sources. The impact of this is likely to continue for many months. The homelessness service in particular has had to alter its service provision following a number of central government instructions.
- 4.9. COVID-19 will also place pressures on key VCS partner organisations in the borough, including a loss of fundraising/earning potential, higher demand, and delays in applications from partner groups. To meet these pressures, the service estimates that it will need to draw down £0.081m of VCS contingency funding in earmarked reserves in the current financial year.
- 4.10. Underlying the above COVID-19 pressures are the continued effects of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. This Act is increasing the number of new homeless cases for the council and resulting in increased legal challenges.
- 4.11. Islington Lettings remains a cost pressure with long and short-term issues resulting in a high level (over 50%) of 'write offs' of uncollected rent. New management and investigations into long standing issues are expected to result in an improved financial position. These non COVID-19 budget pressures are offset by underspends elsewhere in the directorate.

4.12. In addition, the directorate has a £1.666m balance from prior years in earmarked reserves relating to prior year homelessness grants. The Executive agreed previously for this balance to be allocated against the in-year forecast overspend on homelessness services, where permissible within the terms of the original grants.

People (+£16.061m, a decrease of -£0.112m since month 3)

4.13. The People directorate (comprising Children's, Employment and Skills and Adult Social Services) is currently forecasting a (+£16.061m) overspend.

Children's, Employment and Skills - General Fund (+£7.226m, an increase of +£0.009m since month 3), Schools (Break-even, unchanged)

4.14. Children's, Employment and Skills is currently forecasting a net overspend of (+£7.226m), comprised of (+£7.809m) COVID-19 related budget pressures and risks and a (-£0.583m) non COVID-19 related net underspend. This is detailed by key variance in **Appendix 1** and summarised by division in **Appendix 2**.

4.15. The COVID-19 related budget pressures in the department include:

- (+£2.778m) forecast loss of parental fee income in Children's Centres;
- (+£0.150m) legal costs in relation to an increase in emergency child protection orders, an increase of (+£0.100m) since month 3;
- (+£0.125m) cost of providing IT hardware to enable home learning for children without access to IT hardware at home;
- (+£0.241m) increase in allowances for carers in recognition of the increased costs of caring for young people while they are at home and the provision of financial support to care leavers through the summer, an increase of (+£0.074m) since month 3;
- (+£0.130m) forecast increase in demand for crisis payments as more disabled children have remained at home due to COVID-19, an increase of (+£0.030m) since month 3;
- (+£1.052m) forecast loss of income in relation to Cardfields, the Laycock Centre, the Arts Service and the Education Library Service. We are now unlikely to see much recovery in income at Cardfields and the Laycock Centre this year due to the nature of the provision;
- (+£0.414m) forecast loss in curriculum income in relation to school trips that subsidises the cost of providing SEN transport in the borough; and
- (+£0.205m) other COVID-19 cost pressures, a decrease of (-£0.047m) since month 3.

4.16. The forecast position includes an additional (+£2.714m) of COVID-19 budget risks in relation to the cost of packages for looked after children, staffing pressures in children's social care, the continued provision of universal youth services and potential further losses in income for traded services.

4.17. The forecast non COVID-19 related net underspend of (-£0.583m), an increase of (-£0.085m) since the month 3 forecast, mainly relates to: the secure remand budget, as the council expects the recent experience of low numbers of young people being remanded to custody by the courts to continue; and the council's Universal Free School Meals programme due to the number of children being educated at home. The council continues to provide free school meals/food vouchers to those pupils who are eligible for statutory free school meals and those attending school. This is net of

base budget pressures in relation to the Post-16 bursary (+£0.070m) and Holloway Pool (£0.060m) that were funded from one-off balances/underspends in prior years.

- 4.18. A break-even position is currently forecast on the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), pending more detailed review as part of budget monitoring in future months.
- 4.19. The Children's, Employment and Skills forecast is net of assumed (-£1.901) funding from earmarked reserves for non COVID-19 related one-off costs (relating to funding transferred to reserves at the end of 2019/20).

Adult Social Services (+£8.835m, a decrease of -£0.121m since month 3)

- 4.20. Adult Social Services is currently forecasting an (+£8.835m) overspend, fully attributable to the COVID-19 crisis. This is detailed by key variance in **Appendix 1** and summarised by division in **Appendix 2**.
- 4.21. The department is forecasting net COVID-19 related budget pressures of (+£2.881m, a decrease of -£0.121m since month 3) in relation to supporting the adult social care market and additional demand (including the risk of increased demand due to the COVID-19 Hospital Discharge Service). Other COVID-19 related budget pressures totalling (+£5.954m, unchanged since month 3) consist primarily of:
- PPE costs (+£4.099m)
 - Workforce pressures (+£0.747m)
 - Loss of client contributions (+£1.080m)
- 4.22. Adult Social Services continues to be impacted by wider demographic pressures, including increased demand for services and need of acute care. This is funded through a corporate demographic budget growth allocation.

Public Health (-£1.004m, an increase of -£0.062m since month 3)

- 4.23. Public Health is funded via a ring-fenced grant of £26.563m for 2020/21. The directorate is currently forecasting a net underspend of (-£1.004m), comprised of (+£0.387m) COVID-19 related budget pressures and (-£1.391m) underspends. This is detailed by key variance in **Appendix 1** and summarised by division in **Appendix 2**. The net underspend will be allocated to wider Public Health expenditure being incurred across the council.
- 4.24. The main COVID-19 budget pressures are in the Sexual Health division (increased online access to STI testing and treatment and online contraception) and in the Substance Misuse division (methadone dispensing and delivery and the management of the COVID-19 situation in partnership with pharmacies, controlled medicine risk management strategy and community drug treatment services).
- 4.25. The underspends in the directorate are in the main owing to additional procurement savings in the Substance Misuse division (-£0.211m), delay in re-commissioning an oral health contract due to the inability to safely deliver this service under the current COVID-19 circumstances (-£0.138m), and changes to the tariffs and efficient procurement within the Sexual Health division (-£0.386m). The work with NHS providers on the NHS pay awards following the Public Health grant uplift has been completed resulting in an additional underspend of (-£0.656m). The position of the PrEP service rollout is currently unknown but could act to increase the Public Health underspend in the coming months.

- 4.26. In addition to the in-year forecast underspend, the directorate has a £2.123m balance from prior years in the ring-fenced Public Health reserve. The Executive agreed previously for this balance, net of any existing commitments, to be allocated to wider Public Health expenditure being incurred by the council in this current public health crisis.

Resources (+£5.792m, a decrease of -£0.011m since month 3)

- 4.27. The Resources directorate is currently forecasting a net overspend of (+£5.792m), comprised of (+£5.824m) COVID-19 related budget pressures and a (-£0.032m) non COVID-19 related net underspend. This is detailed by key variance in **Appendix 1** and summarised by division in **Appendix 2**. The Resources cash limit is still to be adjusted to reflect the transfer of areas to the newly created Community Wealth Building division under the Chief Executive's directorate.
- 4.28. The most significant COVID-19 budget pressure in the directorate is an estimated (+£1.745m) loss of income from Assembly Hall events and registrars services (e.g. weddings) relating to cancellation of previously booked events and a lack of new bookings. In addition, there are estimated potential costs of (+£0.161k, a new pressure in month 3) related to the re-opening of the Assembly Hall, including cleaning costs.
- 4.29. The directorate is also forecasting cost pressures of: (+£0.324m) on overtime/salary related expenditure to provide extra support and assistance provided to vulnerable and self-isolating people and communities at large; (+£0.720m, less -£0.325m specific government grant funding) on crisis payments to local residents to support people who are struggling to buy the basics; and (+£0.015m) on PPE.
- 4.30. The council's planned commercial property income is also expected to be (+£0.576m, a decrease of -£0.123m since month 3) less than expected. This is due to rent waives and deferral arrangements to support local business, and the uncertain rental market causing delay to properties being let. There could also be an impact on the council's commercial property income beyond the current financial year.
- 4.31. Further COVID-19 related income losses are estimated in relation to court costs (+£0.500m, an increase of +£0.130m since month 3) and legal income from planning and property matters (+£0.075m).
- 4.32. Additional costs of (+£2.156m, an increase of +£0.003m since month 3) are estimated in relation to IT infrastructure projects due to increased home working and additional support and maintenance costs.
- 4.33. The Resources month 4 forecast is net of assumed transformation funding from earmarked reserves for non COVID-19 related IT project costs (-£2.250m) and legal case management system (-£0.180m).

Corporate (+£0.771m, a decrease of -£1.635m since month 3)

- 4.34. The latest corporate items forecast is a (+£0.771m) underspend, of which (+£1.802m) is COVID-19 related, with key variances set out in **Appendix 1** and summarised by area of the corporate budget in **Appendix 2**. This position assumes that the 2020/21 corporate contingency budget of £5.455 is required in full for in-year contingency pressures (e.g. the potential shortfall between provision for pay inflation and the pending annual pay award).
- 4.35. The (+£1.802m) COVID-19 related pressures include (+£0.378m) estimated additional costs of running the 'We are Islington' support service that are not reflected in directorate forecasts,

(+£1.384m) estimated pressure in relation to mortality management costs allocated across London councils and (+£0.040m) re-phased savings.

- 4.36. The forecast corporate budget variance includes non COVID-19 related re-phasing of savings (+£4.915m) and undeliverable savings (+£0.967m) following review at the end of the previous financial year. The movement since the savings agreed in the 2020/21 budget report, unchanged since month 3, is summarised in **Table 2** and the latest existing saving tracker is detailed at **Appendix 3**. Directorate cash limits have now been adjusted to reflect the re-profiled/undeliverable savings.

Table 2 – Reconciliation of 2020/21 to 2022/23 Savings

	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	Total £m
Savings agreed in 2020/21 Budget Report	9.663	11.234	2.695	23.592
Savings brought forward from prior years	4.992			4.992
Re-phased savings (COVID-19 related)	(0.040)	0.040		0.000
Re-phased savings (non COVID-19 related)	(4.915)	3.353	1.562	0.000
Undeliverable savings (non COVID-19 related)	(0.967)	(1.133)	(1.277)	(3.377)
Revised Existing Agreed Savings	8.733	13.494	2.980	25.207

- 4.37. Of the revised 2020/21 savings of £8.733m, £4.002m (46%) are currently rated Amber and the remaining £4.731m (54%) are rated Green or already achieved.

- 4.38. There are forecast corporate underspends in the following areas:

- (-£2.385m) relating to an agreed vacancy factor management action across the council with effect from 1 July 2020 (9 months part-year effect), excluding services where vacancies have to be covered for safeguarding or service performance reasons. Due to a degree of risk around the delivery of this management action, only 75% (£2.385m) of the estimated £3.180m saving is currently factored into the forecast net budget position. However, budgets will be adjusted for the full amount (**Table 3**) and directorates are required to operate within their revised cash limited budgets.

Table 3 – 2020/21 Part-Year Vacancy Factor Budget Adjustment

	£m
Chief Executive's Directorate	0.054
Environment and Regeneration	1.163
Housing	0.104
People – Adult Social Services	0.172
People – Children's, Employment and Skills	0.688
Resources Directorate	0.999
Total	3.180

- (-£1.000m) one-off underspend on the corporate financing budget, in part due to COVID-19 related slippage in the capital programme;
- (-£0.500m) underspend on assumed contract inflation (ongoing); and

- (-£3.028m) one-off underspend on demographic growth budget provision in 2019/20 (fully committed in future years) due to additional government funding for social care provided late in the 2019/20 budget setting process.
- 4.39. Proposed current year commitments against earmarked reserves (e.g. transformation spend related to the delivery of agreed savings, and other one-off commitments) are currently being reviewed and will be included as part of the month 5 budget monitoring report.
- 4.40. The council is currently forecasting potential council tax losses (+£5.7m) and business rates losses (+£7.4m) in 2020/21, (+£13.1m, unchanged since month 3) in total, that would impact future year budgets. It should be emphasised that this is an initial prudent assessment of the potential in-year losses and subject to change significantly as more reliable collection data emerges. The actual budgetary impact will depend on the wider economic outlook, including the extent to which arrears can be recovered and any ongoing decrease in the tax base (e.g. increased council tax support caseload, empty business premises).
- 4.41. Any deficits from council tax and business rates arising in 2020/21 would normally be transferred from the collection fund in the following year (2021/22). However, the government has recently proposed that these deficits will now be spread equally over 3 years (2021/22 to 2023/24). The full terms of the arrangements are still not entirely clear (MHCLG is working with CIPFA, and there will be secondary legislation later in the year). This three-year phasing will help in the short term (other things being equal) and will be factored into budget setting assumption for 2021/22. However, this will not reduce the medium-term budget gap and there is likely to be a continued adverse impact on council tax and business rates income over the medium term.

5. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

- 5.1. A COVID-19 related in-year deficit of (+£3.990m) is currently forecast for the HRA, a decrease of (-£1.500m) since month 3 and summarised in **Appendix 2**. As the HRA is a ring-fenced account, any overspend at the end of the financial year would be funded from HRA reserves.
- 5.2. The decrease of (-£1.500m) since month 3 relates to a re-assessment of the rate at which tenant rent/service charge arrears are likely to increase over the course of this financial year and as such the increased level of required bad debt provision decreasing from £4m to £2.5m. However, the potential level of arrears at the end of the financial year and the extent to which the council will be able to recover arrears is very difficult to predict and will depend on the wider economic outlook and particularly tenants' security of employment. The service is actively engaging with tenants in order to both secure the recovery of arrears and prevent the further escalation of arrears.
- 5.3. Additional HRA COVID-19 related cost pressures are forecast in the following areas:
- PPE (+£0.390m) – primarily for caretaking/concierge & repairs staff;
 - Use of voids for Temporary Accommodation (+£0.225m) – refurbishment costs and furnishings/white goods; and
 - Catch up of housing repairs backlog (+£0.350m)
- 5.4. The following non COVID-19 related HRA budget variances are also forecast:
- (-£0.500m) additional rental income due compared to the original budget assumption; offset by

- (+£0.500m) ongoing repairs (voids) pressure due to both the level of refurbishment required and the increased frequency of re-letting 1 bed HRA properties assigned for use by temporary accommodation clients.

6. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

- 6.1. The latest capital programme, which totals £499m over the 3 years 2020/21 to 2022/23 and includes outturn slippage from 2019/20, is detailed at **Appendix 4**. As at the end of month 4, £21.904m (11.7%) of expenditure had been incurred against the 2020/21 capital budget of £187.953m
- 6.2. It is expected that the delivery of the capital programme will be significantly delayed by the COVID-19 pause in construction activity and ongoing social distancing measures. Initial 2020/21 capital forecasts are summarised by directorate in **Table 4** below and by scheme at **Appendix 4**. Pending more detailed review on an individual scheme basis, the Environment and Regeneration and Resources forecasts assume that the COVID-19 crisis will lead to slippage of at least 20% of the 2020/21 capital programme to future financial years.

Table 4 – 2020/21 Capital Programme

Directorate	2020/21 Budget £m	Month 4 Spend to Date £m	2020/21 Forecast Outturn £m	Assumed Slippage £m
Environment and Regeneration	25.389	2.974	20.311	5.078
Housing	150.846	18.400	113.300	37.546
People	8.926	0.473	7.336	1.590
Resources	2.792	0.057	2.234	0.558
Total	187.953	21.904	143.181	44.772

- 6.3. With regards to the Environment and Regeneration programme, Transport for London (TfL) has suspended Local Implementation Plan (LIP) funding for 2020/21. Pending any further announcement, the £1.7m previously assumed grant funding has been removed from the 2020/21 capital programme. However, related capital bids have been submitted for sunk costs (TfL, £0.208m), London Streetscape Plan funding (TfL - LSP, £2.105m), Emergency Active Travel funding (£0.100m), and High Streets Safely Fund (MHCLG, £0.216m). The first two bids form part of a competitive bidding process, therefore funding is not guaranteed.
- 6.4. There is also a risk that COVID-19 pushes up the overall costs of some capital projects such as the Bunhill Energy Centre Phase 2 scheme.

7. **IMPLICATIONS**

Financial Implications

- 7.1. These are included in the main body of the report.

Legal Implications

- 7.2. The law requires that the council must plan to balance its spending plans against resources to avoid a deficit occurring in any year. Members need to be reasonably satisfied that expenditure is being contained within budget and that the savings for the financial year will be achieved, to ensure that

income and expenditure balance (Section 28 Local Government Act 2003; the council's Financial Regulations 3.7 to 3.10 (Revenue Monitoring and Control)).

Environmental Implications

7.3. This report does not have any direct environmental implications.

Resident Impact Assessment

7.4. The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

7.5. A resident impact assessment (RIA) was carried out for the 2020/21 Budget Report agreed by Full Council. This report notes the financial performance to date but does not have direct policy implications, so a separate RIA is not required for this report.

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – General Fund Revenue Monitoring by Key Variance
- Appendix 2 – Revenue Monitoring by Service Area
- Appendix 3 – Existing Savings Tracker
- Appendix 4 – Capital Programme 2020/21 to 2022/23

Background papers: None

Final report clearance:

Signed by:



25 August 2020

Executive Member for Finance and Performance

Date

Report Author: Martin Houston, Strategic Financial Advisor

Legal Implications Author: Peter Fehler, Acting Director of Law and Governance

Appendix 1: 2020/21 General Fund Key Variances - Month 4

Division	Type of Variance	Description	Over/(Under) Spend Month 4 £m
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DIRECTORATE			
Communications	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Net overspend on salaries and agency costs	0.052
Communications	Underspend	Net underspend on running expenses	(0.026)
Communications	Underspend	Net underspend within Print Services on printing, hardware, software expenses	(0.038)
Communications	Underspend	Additional income forecast within Print Services	(0.009)
Total Chief Executive's			(0.021)
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>			<i>0.000</i>
ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION (E&R)			
Planning & Development	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Angel Business Improvement District (BID) grant	0.050
Public Realm	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	0.033
Public Realm	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Additional costs relating to front-line service delivery with increased agency cover required for sickness/self-isolation at over 20%. Also additional park guard costs for enforcing social distancing (£0.018m per month) and overtime in BECC.	0.533
Public Protection	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Licensing and enforcement activity - tables and chairs FPNs etc.	0.479
Public Protection	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Land Charges	0.210
Public Protection	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Pest Control	0.020
Public Protection	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Fines and CPNs within the HMO Licensing service area	0.064
Public Protection	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Market rents waived	0.279
Public Realm	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Loss of management fee rental income from GLL plus additional support to fund deficit position on open book accounting basis	4.268
Public Realm	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Parks related income - sports income, park concessions and event income	0.537
Public Realm	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Parking related income around PCNs, P&D, Permits & Vouchers and Suspensions	11.302
Public Realm	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Commercial waste income	1.875
Public Realm	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Loss of Angel BID and textiles income	0.110
Public Realm	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Loss of Energy Services Income	0.032
Planning & Development	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Net overspend within Development Control on employee costs mainly as a result of agency costs and the vacancy factor	0.304
Planning & Development	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Additional costs on licences, advertising and printing costs	0.066
Planning & Development	Underspend	Net additional income mainly as a result of Housing Street Properties Fire Safety Inspections by Building Control	(0.230)
Public Protection	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Net overspend on employee costs as a result of the vacancy factor	0.055
Public Protection	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Net overspend on running costs and legal costs within the division	0.054
Public Protection	Underspend	Net additional income mainly as a result of income from trading standards monetary penalties and licensing income.	(0.049)
Public Realm	Underspend	Net underspend on employee costs within Greenspace & Leisure	(0.051)
Public Realm	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Additional running costs expenditure throughout Greenspace & Leisure as a result of overspends on software, purchases and the commissioning of the Garden Classroom to run the Urban Forest School program	0.064
Public Realm	Non COVID-19 Income Pressure	Slight shortfall in income within Greenspace & Leisure	0.009
Public Realm	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Additional costs mainly due to the vacancy factor and toilet maintenance	0.068
Public Realm	Non COVID-19 Income Pressure	Loss of rental income on The Exchange	0.021
Public Realm	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Net overspend on running costs within Highways & Energy Services	0.201
Public Realm	Non COVID-19 Income Pressure	Historic shortfall in income within Highways & Energy Services	0.111
Public Realm	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Net overspend on salaries and vacancy factor within Parking	0.331
Public Realm	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Overspend on NSL/PCN registration and other running costs within Parking	0.119
Public Realm	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Management action required to reduce spend following Zero Based Budgeting exercise to include true cost of out of hours working	0.713
Public Realm	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Net overspend on employee costs as a result of agency costs and the vacancy factor within Street Environmental Services offset by slight underspend in running costs	0.250
Public Realm	Underspend	Additional income within Street Environmental Services	(0.397)
Public Realm	Underspend	Net employee underspend and running cost underspend within Traffic & Engineering	(0.461)
Public Realm	Underspend	Acceleration of Low Traffic Neighbourhood and School Streets programmes	(3.368)
Total E&R			17.602
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>			<i>19.792</i>
HOUSING			
Housing Needs	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Legal Costs	0.323
Housing Needs	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Islington Lettings	0.378
Housing Needs	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Bad Debt	0.041
Housing Needs	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	SHPS (Single Persons Homelessness Prevention Scheme)	0.367
Housing Needs	Underspend	Temporary Accommodation: Nightly Booked/PSL	(0.714)
Housing Needs	Underspend	Specialist Support Team	(0.206)
Housing Needs	Underspend	Staffing/Other	(0.039)
NRPF	Underspend	NRPF Services (Statutory and Commercial)	(0.150)
Housing Needs	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Homelessness services	0.428
Housing Needs	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Rough sleeping - accommodating and supporting those brought into alternative accommodation	0.127
Housing Needs	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Housing - other excluding HRA	0.576
Housing Needs	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Other income losses	0.260
NRPF	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Commercial Income losses	0.050
Housing Needs	COVID-19 External Funding	Additional CV-19 Grant Income	(0.332)
Total Housing			1.109
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>			<i>1.109</i>
CHILDREN, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS (CES)			
Youth and Communities	Underspend	Uncommitted growth funding in relation to Violence Against Woman and Girls (VAWG). This has programme has been commissioned for the year and does not require the full allocation of funding.	(0.050)
Youth and Communities	Underspend	Forecast underspend against the remand budget on the assumption that the reduced numbers on remand continues from last year. However, this is a demand led budget, and a small increase in activity can have a large impact on the budget.	(0.200)
Youth and Communities	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Ongoing repairs and maintenance pressure in relation to youth and play provision across the borough	0.100
Safeguarding and Family Support	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Legal costs from increased care proceedings (pre-COVID 19)	0.169
Safeguarding and Family Support	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Increase in non-staffing costs in relation to supporting CLA	0.070
Safeguarding and Family Support	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Staffing pressure in the Children in Need provider service due to increased costs of funding staff provided through health	0.040
Safeguarding and Family Support	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Forecast overspend against the placements budget	0.570
Safeguarding and Family Support	Underspend	Application of placements contingency budget	(0.500)
Learning and Schools	Non COVID-19 Income Pressure	Reduction in purchase of annual service packages from schools (pre COVID-19)	0.042
Learning and Schools	Underspend	Potential underspend against the Universal Free School Meal budget as a result of pupils being at home	(0.781)
Learning and Schools	Underspend	Paused implementation of growth for Bright Start outreach workers	(0.120)
Learning and Schools	Underspend	Forecast underspend against the Holiday Hunger budget	(0.053)
Learning and Schools	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Base budget shortfall for the Post-16 bursary, which has been funded from a balance of one-off funding in prior years	0.070
Learning and Schools	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Based budget shortfall for Holloway Pool funded from underspends in prior years	0.060

Appendix 1: 2020/21 General Fund Key Variances - Month 4

Division	Type of Variance	Description	Over/(Under) Spend Month 4 £m
Learning and Schools	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Legal costs in relation to SEND appeals	0.020
Employment, Skills and Culture	Underspend	Early delivery of saving from flexible retirements	(0.020)
Youth and Communities	COVID-19 Additional Cost Risk	Additional COVID-19 cost risks in the division	0.450
Safeguarding and Family Support	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Legal costs in relation to an increase in emergency applications for child protection orders	0.150
Safeguarding and Family Support	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Agency staff recruited to provide additional support to the Emergency Duty Service	0.008
Safeguarding and Family Support	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Additional independent reviewing officer for 6 months	0.050
Safeguarding and Family Support	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Increase in allowance for carers by £20 per week until 31 August due to increased costs of catering for young people while they are at home	0.148
Safeguarding and Family Support	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Additional financial support is being provided to care leavers through the summer. There is the potential to meet £0.054m of this cost through S106 funding.	0.093
Safeguarding and Family Support	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Nursing costs in relation to children discharged from hospital during COVID-19 lockdown	0.027
Safeguarding and Family Support	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Increase in demand for crisis payments as more disabled children are remaining at home due to COVID-19 and potential additional care support to clients. This is a high level estimate at this stage	0.130
Safeguarding and Family Support	COVID-19 Additional Cost Risk	Additional COVID-19 cost risks in the division	0.593
Learning and Schools	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Provision of home learning packs for children and young people at home who do not have access to IT	0.018
Learning and Schools	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Estimated loss of parental income in Children's Centres due to a significant reduction in children accessing provision	2.778
Learning and Schools	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Estimated cost of the provision of food vouchers to children who are eligible for the early years Pupil Premium	0.026
Learning and Schools	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Children's Centres	0.007
Learning and Schools	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Loss of curriculum income in the SEN transport service	0.414
Learning and Schools	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Additional support to Mother Tongue Supplementary Schools over the summer	0.030
Learning and Schools	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Loss of income in relation to school absences	0.018
Learning and Schools	COVID-19 Additional Cost Risk	Additional COVID-19 cost risks in the division	1.238
Learning and Schools	COVID-19 Loss of Income Risk	Additional COVID-19 income risks in the division	0.433
Partnerships and Service Support	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Estimated loss of income at Cardfields and the Laycock Centre	0.797
Partnerships and Service Support	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Purchase of 400 laptops/Chromebooks for home learning for children without access to IT kit at home and for Children in Need to enable them to stay in contact with social workers	0.125
Employment, Skills and Culture	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Estimated loss of income in the Arts Service	0.084
Employment, Skills and Culture	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Estimated loss of income in Libraries, including the Education Library Service	0.171
Employment, Skills and Culture	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Provision of reading support to children who are at home	0.006
Employment, Skills and Culture	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Estimated cost of 50 Chromebooks for vulnerable adults	0.015
Total CES			7.226
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>			<i>7.809</i>
ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES			
Integrated Community Services / Learning Disabilities	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Adult Social Care – additional demand	2.265
Integrated Community Services	COVID-19 Additional Cost	COVID-19 Hospital Discharge Service Placements: Net cost post management actions	5.902
Integrated Community Services	COVID-19 External Funding	COVID-19 Hospital Discharge Service Placements Costs: Assumed income from NHS to the end of August 2020	(2.376)
Integrated Community Services	Underspend	Block Homecare	(2.323)
Integrated Community Services	Underspend	Memory Cognition, Physical Support Placements and Mental Health	(1.203)
Integrated Community Services	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Adult Social Care – supporting the market	1.461
	COVID-19 External Funding	Infection Control Grant	(0.845)
Integrated Community Services	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Adult Social Care – workforce pressures	0.747
Integrated Community Services	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Adult Social Care - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	4.099
Integrated Community Services	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Adult Social Care - other	0.028
Integrated Community Services	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Reduction in service user contributions to packages of care	1.080
Total Adult Social Services			8.835
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>			<i>8.835</i>
Total People			16.061
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>			<i>16.644</i>
PUBLIC HEALTH			
Other Public Health	Underspend	Delay in oral health contract re-procurement as the service cannot safely be delivered in CV-19 circumstances. Of this, £0.034m relates to the recurrent Public Health grant uplift efficiency for 2020/21.	(0.138)
Other Public Health	Underspend	Efficiencies in the Public Health grant uplift	(0.656)
Substance Misuse	Underspend	Procurement efficiencies delivered additional savings. Of this, £0.078m relates to the recurrent Public Health grant uplift efficiency for 2020/21.	(0.211)
Sexual Health	Underspend	Procurement efficiencies and a change in tariffs delivered additional savings. Of this, £0.232m relates to the recurrent Public Health grant uplift efficiency for 2020/21.	(0.386)
Public Health	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Mainly due to an increase in online access to STI testing and treatment and online contraception	0.387
Total Public Health			(1.004)
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>			<i>0.387</i>
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE			
Financial Operations	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Loss of income from Assembly Hall events and registrars services (e.g. weddings) relating to cancellation of previously booked events and lack of new bookings	1.745
Financial Operations	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Potential Assembly Hall re-opening costs: Air Handling System/Power Upgrade/technological/IT modification	0.161
Financial Operations	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Additional overtime/salary related expenditure incurred due to extra support and assistance provided to vulnerable and self-isolating people and communities at large	0.324
Financial Operations	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Crisis payments are being made to local residents to support people who are struggling to buy the basics (net of specific government grant funding)	0.395
Financial Management and Property	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Commercial property income losses due to rent waivers and deferral arrangements to support local business, and the uncertain rental market causing delay to properties being let	0.453
Digital Services	COVID-19 Additional Cost Risk	Upgrading of IT infrastructure due to increased home working and additional support and maintenance costs. This is net of assumed funding from earmarked reserves for non COVID-19 related IT project costs.	2.156
Health & Safety	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	0.015
Financial Operations	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Loss of court costs income due to court activities being closed and no hearings taking place	0.500
Law and Governance	COVID-19 Loss of Income	Loss of legal income from planning and property services	0.075
Various	Underspend	Forecast non COVID-19 related net underspend	(0.032)

Appendix 1: 2020/21 General Fund Key Variances - Month 4

Division	Type of Variance	Description	Over/(Under) Spend Month 4 £m
Total Resources			5.792
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>			<i>5.824</i>
Directorates Total			39.539
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>			<i>43.756</i>
CORPORATE			
We are Islington	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Estimated additional costs of running the 'We are Islington' support service that not reflected in directorate forecasts	0.378
London Mortality Management	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Estimated pressure in relation to mortality management costs allocated across London councils	1.384
Re-profiled savings (COVID-19 related)	COVID-19 Additional Cost	Further re-profiling of the 3-year savings plan to reflect the impact of COVID-19	0.040
Re-profiled savings (non COVID-19 related)	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Re-profiling of the 3-year saving plan to reflect revised milestones pre COVID-19	4.915
Undeliverable savings	Non COVID-19 Cost Pressure	Historical savings target that is no longer considered deliverable	0.967
Corporate Financing Account	Underspend	One-off underspend on the corporate financing budget, in part due to COVID-19 related slippage in the capital programme. This is pending more detailed review of the capital programme on an individual scheme basis.	(1.000)
Contract inflation	Underspend	Underspend on assumed contract inflation (ongoing)	(0.500)
Demographic growth	Underspend	One-off underspend on demographic growth budget provision in 2019/20 (fully committed in future years) due to additional Government funding for social care provided late in the 2019/20 budget setting process	(3.028)
Vacancy factor	Underspend	Agreed vacancy factor management action across the council with effect from 1 July 2020 (9 months part-year effect), excluding services where vacancies have to be covered for safeguarding or service performance reasons	(2.385)
Total Corporate Items			0.771
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>			<i>1.802</i>
OVERALL TOTAL (before COVID-19 grant)			40.310
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>			<i>45.558</i>
COVID-19 Grant (net of amount applied in 2019/20)			(17.277)
OVERALL TOTAL (after COVID-19 grant)			23.033

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Appendix 2: 2020/21 Budget Monitoring by Service Area - Month 4

GENERAL FUND						Forecast	Month to
	Expenditure Budget	Income Budget	Net Budget	Forecast Outturn	Over/(Under) Spend Month 4	Over/(Under) Spend Previous Month	Month Change
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DIRECTORATE							
Chief Executive's Office	0.421	(0.342)	0.080	0.080	0.000	0.000	0.000
Communications and Change	2.065	(1.016)	1.050	1.029	(0.021)	0.000	(0.021)
Less assumed funding from earmarked reserves					0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Chief Executive's	2.487	(1.357)	1.130	1.109	(0.021)	0.000	(0.021)
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>					0.000	0.000	0.000
ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION (E&R)							
Directorate	1.373	(1.848)	(0.475)	(0.475)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Planning and Development	6.055	(4.386)	1.669	1.859	0.190	0.300	(0.110)
Public Protection	13.653	(8.941)	4.712	5.852	1.140	0.845	0.295
Public Realm	87.455	(76.120)	11.335	27.606	16.271	15.018	1.253
Less assumed funding from earmarked reserves					0.000	0.000	0.000
Total E&R	108.536	(91.295)	17.241	34.843	17.602	16.163	1.439
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>					19.792	16.163	3.629
HOUSING							
Temporary Accommodation (Homelessness Direct)	12.329	(9.248)	3.081	3.444	0.363	0.504	(0.141)
Housing Needs (Homelessness Indirect)	4.142	(2.417)	1.725	2.205	0.480	0.346	0.134
Housing Strategy and Development	0.073	0.000	0.073	0.067	(0.006)	(0.006)	0.000
Housing Administration	1.137	(0.217)	0.920	0.918	(0.002)	(0.002)	0.000
No Recourse to Public Funds	1.446	(0.260)	1.186	1.461	0.275	0.425	(0.150)
Voluntary and Community Services (VCS)	3.732	(0.925)	2.807	2.888	0.081	0.000	0.081
Less assumed funding from earmarked reserves				(0.081)	(0.081)	0.000	(0.081)
Total Housing	22.859	(13.067)	9.792	10.901	1.109	1.267	(0.158)
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>					1.109	1.267	(0.158)
CHILDREN, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS (CES)							
Youth and Communities	7.135	(1.259)	5.726	6.150	0.424	0.445	(0.021)
Safeguarding and Family Support	50.189	(7.296)	42.902	45.723	2.821	3.191	(0.370)
Learning and Schools (non DSG element)	194.291	(168.164)	26.894	31.189	4.295	4.599	(0.304)
Partnership and Service Support	4.028	(0.583)	2.719	3.641	0.922	0.922	0.000
Strategy and Planning	1.275	(1.229)	0.102	0.102	0.000	0.000	(0.000)
Employment, Skills and Culture	7.865	(2.204)	5.661	6.119	0.458	0.647	(0.189)
Health Commissioning	1.415	(0.367)	1.048	1.255	0.207	0.223	(0.016)
Less assumed funding from earmarked reserves				(1.901)	(1.901)	(2.810)	0.909
Total CES	266.198	(181.102)	85.052	92.278	7.226	7.217	0.009
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>					7.809	7.715	0.094
ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES							
Adult Social Care	4.245	(21.656)	(17.411)	(14.450)	2.961	2.961	0.000
Integrated Community Services	53.341	(21.403)	31.938	37.748	5.810	5.931	(0.121)
Learning Disabilities	38.369	(7.585)	30.784	30.848	0.064	0.064	0.000
Strategy and Commissioning	42.557	(22.045)	20.512	20.512	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Adult Social Services	138.512	(72.689)	65.823	74.658	8.835	8.956	(0.121)
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>					8.835	8.956	(0.121)
Total People	404.710	(253.791)	150.875	166.936	16.061	16.173	(0.112)
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>					16.644	16.671	(0.027)
PUBLIC HEALTH							
Children 0-5 Public Health	3.689	0.000	3.689	3.689	0.000	0.000	0.000
Children and Young People	1.794	(0.160)	1.634	1.634	0.000	0.000	0.000
NHS Health Checks	0.295	0.000	0.295	0.295	0.000	0.000	0.000
Obesity and Physical Activity	0.779	(0.236)	0.543	0.543	0.000	0.000	0.000
Other Public Health	8.983	(29.030)	(20.047)	(20.725)	(0.678)	(0.666)	(0.012)
Sexual Health	7.040	(0.775)	6.265	6.200	(0.065)	(0.065)	0.000
Smoking and Tobacco	0.455	0.000	0.455	0.472	0.017	0.017	0.000
Substance Misuse	7.166	0.000	7.166	6.888	(0.278)	(0.228)	(0.050)
Total Public Health	30.201	(30.201)	0.000	(1.004)	(1.004)	(0.942)	(0.062)
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>					0.387	0.449	(0.062)
RESOURCES							
Directorate	0.544	0.000	0.544	1.168	0.624	0.632	(0.008)
Digital Services and Transformation	18.473	(5.013)	13.460	17.866	4.406	4.403	0.003
Financial Management and Property	7.674	(7.393)	0.281	0.832	0.551	0.444	0.107
Financial Operations	238.181	(218.876)	19.305	21.579	2.274	2.279	(0.005)
Health and Safety	1.098	(0.380)	0.718	0.733	0.015	0.015	0.000
Internal Audit	0.702	0.000	0.702	0.574	(0.128)	(0.021)	(0.107)
Law and Governance	7.648	(3.558)	4.090	4.452	0.362	0.075	0.287
Human Resources	3.211	(1.685)	1.526	1.522	(0.004)	0.049	(0.053)
Strategy and Change	0.867	(0.119)	0.748	0.870	0.122	0.177	(0.055)
Less assumed funding from earmarked reserves				(2.430)	(2.430)	(2.250)	(0.180)
Total Resources	278.398	(237.024)	41.374	47.166	5.792	5.803	(0.011)
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>					5.824	5.978	(0.154)
Directorates Total (excluding CV-19)	847.191	(626.735)	220.412	259.951	39.539	38.464	1.075
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>					43.756	40.528	3.228

Appendix 2: 2020/21 Budget Monitoring by Service Area - Month 4

	Expenditure Budget	Income Budget	Net Budget	Forecast Outturn	Over/(Under) Spend Month 4	Forecast Over/(Under) Spend Previous Month	Month to Month Change
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
CORPORATE							
Council Tax	0.018	(99.201)	(99.183)	(99.183)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Retained Business Rates	0.000	(104.642)	(104.642)	(104.642)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Revenue Support Grant	0.000	(24.459)	(24.459)	(24.459)	0.000	0.000	0.000
New Homes Bonus	0.000	(5.269)	(5.269)	(5.269)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Other Specific Grant	0.000	(0.570)	(0.570)	(0.570)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Corporate Financing Account	7.987	(9.897)	(1.910)	(2.910)	(1.000)	(1.000)	0.000
Levies	20.072	0.000	20.072	20.072	0.000	0.000	0.000
Pensions	13.465	(4.117)	9.348	9.348	0.000	0.000	0.000
Other Corporate Items	(3.235)	0.000	(3.235)	(1.464)	1.771	3.406	(1.635)
Transfer to/(from) Reserves	9.941	0.000	9.941	9.941	0.000	0.000	0.000
Transformation Projects	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Appropriations and Technical Accounting Entries	0.000	(25.960)	(25.960)	(25.960)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Contingency	5.455	0.000	5.455	5.455	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Corporate Items	53.703	(274.115)	(220.412)	(219.641)	0.771	2.406	(1.635)
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>					<i>1.802</i>	<i>1.052</i>	<i>0.750</i>
OVERALL TOTAL (before COVID-19 grant)	900.894	(900.850)	(0.000)	40.310	40.310	40.870	(0.560)
<i>Of which CV-19 pressures</i>					<i>45.558</i>	<i>41.580</i>	<i>3.978</i>
COVID-19 Grant (net of amount applied in 2019/20)	0.000	0.000	0.000	(17.277)	(17.277)	(17.277)	0.000
OVERALL TOTAL (after COVID-19 grant)	900.894	(900.850)	(0.000)	23.033	23.033	23.593	(0.560)

Appendix 2: 2020/21 Budget Monitoring by Service Area - Month 4

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT(HRA)					
Service Area	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn	Over/(Under) Spend Month 4	Forecast Over/(Under) Spend Previous Month	Month to Month Change
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Dwelling Rents	(156.846)	(157.346)	(0.500)	0.000	(0.500)
Tenant Service Charges	(18.421)	(18.421)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Non Dwelling Rents	(1.600)	(1.600)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Heating Charges	(2.578)	(2.578)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Leaseholder Charges	(15.173)	(14.898)	0.275	0.275	0.000
Parking Income	(2.350)	(2.350)	0.000	0.000	0.000
PFI Credits	(22.855)	(22.855)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Interest Receivable	(0.750)	(0.750)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Contribution from the General Fund	(0.816)	(0.816)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Other Income	(1.500)	(1.500)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Income	(222.889)	(223.114)	(0.225)	0.275	(0.500)
Repairs and Maintenance	34.060	35.330	1.270	0.770	0.500
General Management	52.314	52.364	0.050	0.050	0.000
PFI Payments	44.233	44.233	0.000	0.000	0.000
Special Services	25.345	25.740	0.395	0.395	0.000
Rents, Rates, Taxes & Other Changes	0.990	0.990	0.000	0.000	0.000
Capital Financing Costs	17.926	17.926	0.000	0.000	0.000
Depreciation (mandatory transfer to Major Repairs	36.009	36.009	0.000	0.000	0.000
Additional transfer to Major Repairs Reserve	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Bad Debt Provisions	1.250	3.750	2.500	4.000	(1.500)
Contingency	2.320	2.320	0.000	0.000	0.000
Transfer to HRA Reserves	8.442	8.442	0.000	0.000	0.000
Expenditure	222.889	227.104	4.215	5.215	(1.000)
(Surplus)/Deficit	0.000	3.990	3.990	5.490	(1.500)

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Appendix 3: Existing Savings Tracker - Month 4

Ref	Directorate	Description	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	Total £m
ASC01	People - Adult Social Services	Conduct annual reviews of Adult Social Care packages in line with relevant legislation, applying a strengths-based approach to create better outcomes for residents in the care system	0.660	0.680			1.340
ASC03	People - Adult Social Services	Package of savings through recommissioning of services	0.600	0.550	0.350		1.500
ASC02	People - Adult Social Services	Targeted work in Adult Social Care around single point of contact and improved information to reduce demand	0.500	1.500			2.000
ASC01A	People - Adult Social Services	Improve processes around Direct Payments and financial contributions to reduce surpluses and maximise income	0.250				0.250
ASCb	People - Adult Social Services	Independent living for people with disabilities - including transformation of in-house services		1.130	0.750		1.880
ASCa	People - Adult Social Services	Independent living for older people - including transformaton of in-house services		0.180	0.040		0.220
CES01	People - CES	Demand management for children's social care and new commissioning strategy for children looked after including asylum seekers	1.447	1.447			2.894
CES03	People - CES	Review of the Early Help 0 to 19 service	0.100	0.328			0.428
9j	People - CES	Increase use of pre-payment cards for Direct Payments	0.050	0.050			0.100
11	People - CES	Rental income from letting surplus space at Central Library		0.055			0.055
CES10	People - CES	Maintain the availability and scope of play and youth provision by reducing its costs through new commissioning arrangements and more efficient back-office support		0.035			0.035
9f	People - CES	Staff savings through flexible retirements		0.020			0.020
PH1	Public Health	Change the way we deliver public health behaviour-change programmes, including health checks and exercise on referral, through our universal services and other more cost-effective methods	0.208	0.180			0.388
18	Public Health	Public Health workforce - efficiencies	0.016	0.179			0.195
W&A02	Environment and Regeneration	Income generation from package of zero carbon policies including lorry ban & parking charges (including diesel surcharge), and efficiencies from shift to e-parking solution	1.175	0.875			2.050
W&A16	Environment and Regeneration	Efficiencies in SES following investment in new technology	0.150	0.467			0.617
16	Environment and Regeneration	Income generation from roll out of School Streets phase 2	0.250	0.375	0.375		1.000
12c	Environment and Regeneration	Depot rationalisation	0.120				0.120
W&A13	Environment and Regeneration	SES - Integration of Services with Housing	0.115	0.225			0.340
W&A09	Environment and Regeneration	A more efficient operation at the Waste and Recycling Centre, using technology to automate access to the facility	0.055	0.145			0.200
W&A11b	Environment and Regeneration	SES - Annual charge for waste containers		0.237			0.237
12d	Environment and Regeneration	Improved use of technology and resource to focus more capacity on income generation		0.050			0.050
W&A06	Environment and Regeneration	Reduce the brightness of LED street lighting in suitable areas to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions and to remove illuminated street furniture (bollards etc.) and replace with non-illuminated reflective furniture following a change in the highways regulations	0.176				0.176
12b	Environment and Regeneration	Integrate Greenspace and Street Environmental Services cleansing	0.090				0.090
W&A03	Environment and Regeneration	Highways inspections	0.094				0.094
DAHGF01 & 3	Housing	Improve the quality and reduce the cost of temporary accommodation through purchasing homes to be owned by the council and used by it for temporary accommodation		0.375			0.375
4	Housing	Offer more permanent housing to families in temporary accommodation		0.175			0.175
RES03/3B	Cross-cutting	Corporate review of contracting and procurement arrangements, including category management	0.362	0.900			1.262

Appendix 3: Existing Savings Tracker - Month 4

Ref	Directorate	Description	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	Total £m
20201	Cross-cutting	Redesigning our customer service offer, including additional channel shift	0.300	0.300			0.600
20203	Cross-cutting	Consolidating and streamlining business administration functions	0.250	0.500			0.750
ASC02A	Cross-cutting	Implementation of the new "Localities" model in partnership with the voluntary and community sector, health organisations and our other local partners to align preventative services and reduce long-term demand		0.375	1.125		1.500
CE01	Chief Executive's	Additional commercial income for print services	0.075	0.075			0.150
22a	Resources	Reduce number of national graduate trainees	0.070	0.070			0.140
20202	Resources	Centralise stationery and control	0.050				0.050
RES02	Resources	Savings resulting from a new property strategy, increasing income, more co-locating with partners and reducing the council's office footprint		1.658	0.340		1.998
RES24-26	Resources	Legal - Efficiencies from case management system		0.185			0.185
22b	Resources	Review of HR structure due to increased automation		0.157			0.157
22f	Resources	Reduction in facilities costs as Vorley Road is vacated		0.016			0.016
		Total Open Savings	7.163	13.494	2.980	0.000	23.637
		Closed/Achieved Savings	1.570	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.570
		Total Savings (including Closed/Achieved)	8.733	13.494	2.980	0.000	25.207
		RAG Rating Summary	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	Total £m
		Red	0.000	2.075	1.465	0.000	3.540
		Amber	4.002	7.635	1.165	0.000	12.802
		Green	3.161	3.784	0.350	0.000	7.295
		Closed/Achieved	1.570	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.570
		Total	8.733	13.494	2.980	0.000	25.207

Appendix 3: Capital Programme 2020/21 to 2022/23 - Month 4

Directorate/Scheme	2020/21							2021/22	2022/23	2020/21 to 2022/23
	Original Budget	Budget Changes	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	Expenditure to Date	2020/21 Budget Spent to Date	Budget	Budget	Budget
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	%	£m	£m	£m
ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION										
Cemeteries	0.000	0.016	0.016	0.013	(0.003)	(0.021)	(131.3%)	0.000	0.000	0.016
Bunhill Energy Centre Phase 2	1.026	1.990	3.016	2.413	(0.603)	0.471	15.6%	0.000	0.000	3.016
Greenspace	0.000	1.236	1.236	0.989	(0.247)	0.108	8.7%	0.000	0.000	1.236
Highways	1.400	0.784	2.184	1.747	(0.437)	0.110	5.0%	1.400	1.400	4.984
Leisure	0.288	0.092	0.380	0.304	(0.076)	0.001	0.3%	0.375	0.375	1.130
Section 106/CIL Funded Schemes	5.000	(2.750)	2.250	1.800	(0.450)	0.003	0.1%	5.000	5.000	12.250
Special Projects	0.000	0.413	0.413	0.330	(0.083)	0.001	0.2%	0.000	0.000	0.413
Traffic and Engineering	2.500	(0.483)	2.017	1.614	(0.403)	0.085	4.2%	2.500	2.500	7.017
Traffic Enforcement	2.000	1.986	3.986	3.189	(0.797)	1.986	49.8%	0.000	0.000	3.986
Vehicle Replacement	2.000	1.178	3.178	2.542	(0.636)	0.173	5.4%	1.000	2.000	6.178
Sobell Leisure Centre	0.445	0.000	0.445	0.356	(0.089)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.445
Cally Pool	0.250	0.000	0.250	0.200	(0.050)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.250
New River Walk	0.450	0.000	0.450	0.360	(0.090)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.450
Playground water features	0.450	0.000	0.450	0.360	(0.090)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.450
Highbury Bandstand/Highbury Fields	0.250	0.000	0.250	0.200	(0.050)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.250
Bingfield Park (including Crumbles Castle legacy)	0.250	0.000	0.250	0.200	(0.050)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.250
Wray Crescent Cricket Pavilion	0.130	0.000	0.130	0.104	(0.026)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.130
Tufnell Park all-weather pitch	0.300	0.000	0.300	0.240	(0.060)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.300
Vehicle fleet electrification	1.500	0.000	1.500	1.200	(0.300)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	1.500
Liveable Neighbourhoods	1.000	0.000	1.000	0.800	(0.200)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	1.000
CCTV upgrade	0.490	0.000	0.490	0.392	(0.098)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.490
Finsbury Leisure Centre	0.400	0.000	0.400	0.320	(0.080)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.400
Economic Development	0.000	0.739	0.739	0.591	(0.148)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.739
Transport Planning	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.010	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.000
CCTV other	0.000	0.059	0.059	0.047	(0.012)	0.047	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.059
Total Environment and Regeneration	20.129	5.260	25.389	20.311	(5.078)	2.974	11.7%	10.275	11.275	46.939
HOUSING										
<i>Housing Revenue Account</i>										
Major Works and Improvements	38.438	0.000	38.438	30.900	(7.538)	5.000	13.0%	54.698	56.908	150.044
New Build Programme	59.639	4.600	64.239	41.401	(22.838)	4.871	7.6%	72.267	65.773	202.279
Jean Stokes community hub	0.250	0.000	0.250	0.250	0.000	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.250
Temporary Accommodation	23.850	3.900	27.750	27.750	0.000	7.000	25.2%	0.000	0.000	27.750
<i>Housing General Fund</i>										
New Build Open Market Sales	20.169	0.000	20.169	12.999	(7.170)	1.529	7.6%	21.135	12.728	54.032
Total Housing	142.346	8.500	150.846	113.300	(37.546)	18.400	53.4%	148.100	135.409	434.355
PEOPLE										
Central Foundation School Expansion	0.120	0.331	0.451	0.451	0.000	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.451
Central Library Renovation	0.000	0.252	0.252	0.282	0.030	0.237	94.0%	0.000	0.000	0.252
Dowery Street/Primary PRU	0.000	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.000	0.006	22.2%	0.000	0.000	0.027
Early Years Capital	0.550	0.256	0.806	0.760	(0.046)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.806
Primary Schools Condition Schemes	0.227	2.321	2.548	2.726	0.178	0.130	5.1%	0.000	0.000	2.548
Highbury Grove School Expansion	0.000	0.167	0.167	0.167	0.000	0.034	20.4%	0.000	0.000	0.167
New River College Refurbishment	0.000	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.000	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.160
Other Schools/Contingency	0.000	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.000	0.010	11.6%	2.988	0.000	3.074
Schools Matching Capital Programme	0.200	0.000	0.200	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.200
Special Provision Capital Fund	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.0%	2.251	0.000	2.251
School Condition Works	0.000	0.455	0.455	0.454	(0.001)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.455
Tufnell Park School Expansion	0.750	(0.044)	0.706	0.706	0.000	0.025	3.5%	0.250	0.000	0.956
Adult social care commissioned services (18 Highbury Grove, 76-80 Isledon Road, 35 Ashley Road, 48 Despard Road)	0.265	0.000	0.265	0.000	(0.265)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.265
St Anne's residential care home, 60 Durham Road	0.200	0.000	0.200	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.200
Wray Court and Orchard Close residential care homes for people with learning difficulties	0.200	0.000	0.200	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.200
Schools modernisation (now merged with Primary Schools above)	1.000	(1.000)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.028	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.000
Early Years and Children's Centres	0.833	0.000	0.833	0.247	(0.586)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.833
Libraries	0.500	0.020	0.520	0.020	(0.500)	0.003	0.6%	0.000	0.000	0.520
Martin Luther King Adventure Playground	0.350	0.000	0.350	0.300	(0.050)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.350
Cornwallis Adventure Playground	0.350	0.000	0.350	0.300	(0.050)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.350
Hayward Adventure Playground	0.050	0.000	0.050	0.050	0.000	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.050
South Library	0.300	0.000	0.300	0.000	(0.300)	0.000	0.0%	0.000	0.000	0.300
Total People	5.895	3.031	8.926	7.336	(1.590)	0.473	5.3%	5.489	0.000	14.415
Resources/Corporate										
Bridge School-Cladding Replacement	0.000	2.792	2.792	2.234	(0.558)	0.057	0.0%	0.000	0.000	2.792
Total Resources/Corporate	0.000	2.792	2.792	2.234	(0.558)	0.057	2.0%	0.000	0.000	2.792
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	168.370	19.583	187.953	143.182	(44.771)	21.904	11.7%	163.864	146.684	498.501

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Report of: Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families

Meeting of:	Date:	Ward(s):
Executive	10 September 2020	All

Delete as appropriate:	Exempt	Non-exempt

SUBJECT: Arrangements for youth work delivered from Lift, Platform and Rose Bowl between April and October 2021

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 Islington currently secures parts of its offer of youth work for young people aged 13 and upwards through services which are delivered from Lift (Barnsbury ward: 45 White Lion Street), Platform (Finsbury Park ward: Tiltman Place, off Hornsey Road) and Rose Bowl (Canonbury ward: St Paul's Park, off St Paul's Road).

There are currently two contracts in place, one for Lift and Platform, one for Rose Bowl. Both contracts expire on 31 March 2021. Both contracts are currently held by one provider.

Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the council has not been able to complete the engagement and scoping work required to ensure that it can procure new contracts which are financially sustainable and viable. It is also important that any new contract is able to deliver youth work which effectively engages and supports local and vulnerable young people.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree the proposed continuation of arrangements with the current service provider of youth work services at Lift, Platform and Rose Bowl until 31 October 2021.

- 2.2 To agree to the proposal for the council to undertake a process of engagement with young people, local ward members, children's services professionals and other stakeholders in order to agree and test different approaches to the youth work delivery in the borough.

3. Background

- 3.1 Islington currently secures an extensive offer of universal, or 'open for all' youth work for young people aged 13 and up (8 and upwards for Rose Bowl). This is delivered borough wide, across the year and includes:
- two integrated youth service hubs, Lift and Platform. These are borough wide provisions which provide a range of services and opportunities in high quality, aspirational spaces, including a 30-station gym, a commercial kitchen, an 80 seat theatre, 2 dance studios, recording and production spaces, a cafe and a roof terrace. A range of services are available to young people including careers guidance, sexual health and counselling. In 2019-20, 1,997 young people accessed Lift and 963 accessed Platform.
 - three youth centres, the Zone, Rose Bowl and Soapbox. These centres offer different opportunities depending on their facilities. The Zone is managed by the council's Targeted Youth Support Service (TYS) and is outside the scope of this report, as is Soapbox where a new contract has been procured which commenced in April 2020. In 2019-20, 128 children (aged up to 12) and 217 young people (aged 13+) accessed Rose Bowl and 706 accessed Soapbox.
 - a range of community based youth work and leisure opportunities delivered at Mary's Youth Club (St Mary's ward), Copenhagen Youth Project (Caledonian ward), Whittington Park Community Association (Junction ward) and Highbury Roundhouse (Highbury East ward).
 - Islington also supports a large range of other community provision working with young people through particular programmes and some small grants, including Islington Sports Academy, Islington & Finsbury Boxing Club, Access to Sports, Freightliners Farm, All Change Arts Inspire programme for young parents and pregnant young women and Prospex.
 - a comprehensive summer offer of engaging and exciting opportunities for those aged 13 and upwards ('Summerversity') and those aged 16 and upwards ('Launchpad'), which are delivered over the school summer holiday period.
- 3.2 This paper sets out a proposal to continue the current contractual arrangements with the current provider of Lift, Platform and Rose Bowl between April and October 2021. This is in order to allow the council to
- complete significant engagement work with young people and stakeholders to ensure that the youth offer/s procured for the borough meets the needs of local and vulnerable young people and is financially sustainable and viable.
- 3.3 Planned stakeholder work had to be postponed in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The intention is to ensure that services for young people at these three venues are delivered without a break. Other arrangements will be made with regard to the other services set out in paragraph 3.1. The contract to operate and manage services from Soapbox was retendered in 2019. This contract was awarded to Dragon Hall Covent Garden Trust for a period of up to 15 years from 1 April 2020.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, youth spaces in Islington are currently only available to smaller groups of young people within current government guidance. Lift, Platform and Rose Bowl buildings were maintained effectively during the lockdown and safe re-mobilisation of in-person services took place gradually after 4 July 2020. A virtual offer for young people has been established which is engaging with new young people as well as those who previously attended in person at one of the services.

3.4 Estimated value

The core council investment for the elements of the youth offer in the scope of this proposal is up to £791,000 per annum for 2021-22. This equates to £461,500 for the period of the 7 month contract. This total includes resource applied to specific elements beyond youth work from the three spaces, namely, the delivery of the council's summer youth work offers, Summerversity and Launchpad and the employment, management and support of 3 Emotional Wellbeing Workers which are part of the Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) pathway, funded by the CCG.

This core council investment in the Rose Bowl contract of £50k is supplemented by a further £50k which is raised by a group of local fundraisers in the Canonbury area, Friends of the Rose Bowl.

It is proposed to continue arrangements with the current provider of these two contracts in order to provide the time to complete stakeholder engagement which has been delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The specifics of the continued arrangements are set out in the legal implications section of this report.

The proposed continuation will be from 1 April 2021 to 31 October 2021.

The intention is that stakeholder engagement will focus on the offer for young people across the borough and the results of this work will inform procurement arrangements for (a) contract/s to commence on 1 November 2021.

The further intention is for the council to procure (a) contract/s for youth work and other services to be delivered from Lift and/or Rose Bowl from 1 November 2021 in due course.

An appraisal has been completed in consultation with key stakeholders, including Friends of the Rose Bowl, on the options for securing the services at these three venues given the impacts of COVID-19 on the stakeholder engagement which was previously planned.

The options to procure (a) new contract/s to commence on 1 April 2021 have been considered, however additional work is required in order to be able to agree a service

specification. Stakeholder engagement suggests that there is an appetite to ensure that relevant insights from this work are gathered ahead of any future procurement.

3.5 Key Considerations

The council intends to undertake a process of engagement with young people, local ward members, children's services professionals, Local youth providing VCS organisations and other stakeholders in order to identify, agree and test different approaches and models for the youth work delivery. For example, a number of very vulnerable young people who live in the neighbourhood do not engage with the current offer at Platform and this needs to be addressed and resolved via the new model. Additionally, 150 young people who live in the Finsbury Park ward attended Platform in 2019-20 which does not match the level of need.

Feedback from members indicates that they would like a stronger employment offer in Finsbury Park and for there to be a stronger, deeper and more consistent offer of neighbourhood based, detached youthwork in key areas of need, including on the Andover, Elthorne & New Orleans, Bemerton and Mayville estates, which would complement and enhance the existing TYS offer.

There is wider thinking emerging as to the longer-term future of Platform specifically. Whilst it is acknowledged that the significant capacity of Lift is likely to be able to be re-mobilised relatively quickly following COVID-19, there is concern that this may not be the case for Platform. The assessment is that the operating model for meeting the needs of young people in Finsbury Park may need to be different in the future.

The intention is that stakeholder engagement work is undertaken in two main streams:

1. The offer of youth work and opportunities for young people – what should this look like across the borough and specifically in the hotspot areas?
2. Platform - how can its value be maximised for the benefit of young people, including the most vulnerable, in the post-COVID-19 world?

4. Implications

4.1 Financial implications:

The current budget for this provision is £791k per annum which will allow the financing of the proposals set out in this report for April to October 2021.

4.2 Legal Implications:

The council's existing contracts for provision of youth services at Rosebowl and Lift / Platform expires on 31 March 2021. There is no provision in either contract for any further extension and such extension is outside the modifications permitted by regulation 72 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Accordingly, any extension would amount in law to a new contract for which a fresh procurement exercise would need to be undertaken

The value of the proposed 7 month extension falls below the financial threshold for 'light touch' services and therefore is out with the provisions of the 2015 regulations. However, in order to comply with EU principles of transparency and non discrimination competitive

tendering would normally be required. The council's Procurement Rules would require four competitive tenders to be sought. This requirement may be waived for good operational reasons. The reasons set out in the report would reasonably justify waiving the requirement for competitive tenders to enable a further 7 month extension.

There would a risk of challenge to the further extensions. However , that risk mitigated to a certain extent by;

- 1 relatively short length of the extension
- 2 the value falling below the financials threshold for light touch services
- 3 the impact of COVID 19 delaying preparation for re-tendering
- 4 limited market for provision of these services

4.3 Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030:

The main environmental impact of the youth offer is the use of energy, water, and waste generation on the sites. Organisations running youth centres have a vested interest in ecologically sound practice, with council commissioners ensuring this is adhered to through robust contract monitoring and quality assurance processes in place which will continue during the proposed extension period.

4.4 Resident Impact Assessment:

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

A Resident Impact Assessment was completed on 01/07/2020 and the summary is included below. The complete Resident Impact Assessment is appended.

Through the extension of the current contracted provision the council will ensure that there is no gap in provision for young people.

The services under the current contacts are likely to have positive impacts on residents of all ages as young people are supported through high quality youth work relationships to make the most of their teenage years and contribute positively to their communities. The service specifications require providers to have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure that the services provided eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity.

5. Reason for recommendations

5.1 It is recommended to continue the current arrangements for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 October 2021 as this is the best interim arrangement in order to ensure:

- No break in youth work services for young people from these three venues
- Sufficient time is allocated to stakeholder engagement about the youth offer
- Work is undertaken to better understand how the value of the council's youth buildings can be implemented for the benefit of young people, including those who are vulnerable.

Appendices

- Resident Impact Assessment

Background papers

- None

Final report clearance:

Signed by:



26 August 2020

Executive Member for Children,
Young People and Families

Date

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Financial Implications Author: Tim Partington
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Resident Impact Assessment

Title of policy, procedure, function, service activity or financial decision: Arrangements for youth work delivered from Lift, Platform and Rose Bowl between April and October 2021

Service Area: Play and Youth Commissioning

1. What are the intended outcomes of this policy, function etc?

Islington currently secures parts of its offer of youth work for young people aged 13 and up through services which are delivered from Lift (45 White Lion Street), Platform (Tiltman Place, off Hornsey Road) and Rose Bowl (St Paul's Park, off St Paul's Road).

There are currently two contracts in place, one for Lift and Platform and one for Rose Bowl. Both contracts will expire on 31st March 2021.

Engagement and enquiry work had been planned to identify the most suitable arrangements for securing youth provision services at Platform, Lift and Rose Bowl from April 2021. This included a project steering group, with membership including key council officers and elected members from Finsbury Park, Barnsbury and Canonbury. The steering group was chaired by Cllr Comer-Schwartz.

Covid-19 has impacted engagement and activity work, affecting the development of the procurement strategy to secure suitable provisions at the three venues. Procure arrangements from April 2021 are now not achievable within the time scale and other arrangements need to be considered to ensure that quality youth work can continue in the three spaces.

The council wishes to extend both contracts for a period of six months, securing service delivery at all three venues with the current provider from April 2021. This will enable time to conduct a robust enquiry work into the future youth work provision at Platform, Lift and Rose Bowl. The intention is for the council to be ready to procure new contract/s for services to be delivered from November 2021.

This robust enquiry will deliver significant engagement work with young people and key adult stakeholders in order to better understand the needs, aspirations, goals and concerns of young people. Building on this, it will generate a range of options for youth offers which will respond

appropriately, in particular in geographical areas of the borough in which there are more challenges for young people and to young people who have a range of vulnerabilities.

2. Resident Profile

Who is going to be impacted by this change i.e. residents/service users/tenants? Please complete data for your service users. If your data does not fit into the categories in this table, please copy and paste your own table in the space below. Please refer to **section 3.3** of the guidance for more information.

		Borough profile of 13 to 19 year olds	Service User profile (whole youth offer)
		Total: 14054	Total: 4578
Gender	Female	46%	46.2% using youth who are female
	Male	54%	53.3% using youth who are male
Disability	Disabled	4% 13-19 yo's with disability	Unknown%
	Non-disabled	96% 13-19 yo's without	Unknown%
Sexual orientation	LGBT	No data	Unknown
	Heterosexual/straight	No data	Unknown
Race	White	47.3%	44.9%
	Mixed/dual	11.8%	11.5%
	Asian/ Asian British	8.4%	3.1%
	Black/Black British	23.9%	21.3%
	Chinese	0.6%	0.8%
	Any other ethnic group	6.4%	4.9%
	Info not obtained	%	13.5%

3. Equality impacts

With reference to the [guidance](#), please describe what are the equality and socio-economic impacts for residents and what are the opportunities to challenge prejudice or promote understanding?

Through the extension of the current contracted provision the council will be able to ensure that there is no gap in provision for young people.

The services under the current contacts are likely to have positive impacts on residents of all ages as young people are supported through high quality youth work relationships to make the most of their teenage years and contribute positively to their communities. The service specifications require providers to have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure that the services provided eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity.

The intention through the review work set out above is to create a range of youth offers across the borough moving forward which engage with, and are more able to respond to, young people who are vulnerable. Detailed data analysis work will take place within the review that will identify specific groups which may not be accessing the current offers at Lift, Platform or Rose Bowl. Aligning this to feedback from a range of young people, including those who are not currently assessing, will enable offers to be proposed and shaped which better engage and deliver earliest help to those who are vulnerable.

4. Safeguarding and Human Rights impacts

a) Safeguarding risks and Human Rights breaches

Please describe any safeguarding risks for children or vulnerable adults AND any potential human rights breaches that may occur as a result of the proposal? Please refer to **section 4.8** of the [guidance](#) for more information.

If potential safeguarding and human rights risks are identified then **please contact equalities@islington.gov.uk to discuss further:**

5. Action

How will you respond to the impacts that you have identified in sections 3 and 4, or address any gaps in data or information?

For more information on identifying actions that will limit the negative impact of the policy for protected groups see the [guidance](#).

Action	Responsible person or team	Deadline
n/a		

Please send the completed RIA to equalities@islington.gov.uk and also make it publicly available online along with the relevant policy or service change.

This Resident Impact Assessment has been completed in accordance with the guidance and using appropriate evidence.

Staff member completing this form:

Signed: _____ *Sinead Hayden* _____

Date: 01/07/2020

Head of Service or higher:

Signed: _____ Holly Toft _____

Date: 26/08/2020



**Resources Department
Town Hall, Upper Street
London, N1 2UD**

Report of: Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Meeting of	Date	Ward(s)
Executive	10 September 2020	All

Delete as appropriate:	Exempt	Non-exempt
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Subject: Equalities in Educational Outcomes – Findings of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 This report requests that the Executive receive the report of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee following the completion of its review of Equalities in Educational Outcomes. A response to the recommendations set out in the report will be considered at a future meeting of the Executive.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the report of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee be received.
- 2.2 That the Executive Member's response be reported to a future meeting of the Executive, including having due regard to any relevant implications of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee's recommendations.

3. Background

- 3.1 The review was held between July 2019 and February 2020. The overall aim of the review was to assess equalities in educational outcomes for Black Caribbean pupils and disadvantaged White British pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. The Committee has monitored the attainment gap between these groups and the overall cohort for several years and wished to review the reasons for this gap and how these issues are being addressed.

3.2 The Committee also agreed to the following objectives:

- To analyse and clarify underperformance intersectionally in these key groups over the past 5 years both locally and nationally;
- To use existing national research and literature to identify the barriers to improving educational attainment for these key groups in Islington schools;
- To explore the ways in which school leaders drive up the progress and attainment of identified groups informed by best practice from schools that buck the trend;
- To secure agreement and commitment on the strategies that will improve outcomes for these groups at each key stage and on into further education, employment and training;
- To identify the causes of underperformance including the impact of factors such as attendance and exclusion;
- Engage parents, pupils, communities and stakeholders in dialogue to find productive ways forward and guide future action;
- To better understand the views of children and young people, parents and community groups on how performance for key groups can be improved;
- To produce workable recommendations for the Council and schools to deliver sustainable improvements in educational outcomes across schools and beyond in Islington;
- To call to action all the Council's services and functions to improve outcomes for identified groups;
- To evaluate the work already underway to reduce the attainment gap and to identify how this could be developed further.

3.3 In carrying out the review the Committee met with young people, Headteachers and school staff, council officers, independent experts and others to gain a balanced view. The Committee also considered local and national data and a variety of documentary evidence.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

The proposals in the report need to be costed before a response is made by the Executive.

4.2 Legal Implications

Relevant legal implications will be considered as part of the response to the review.

4.3 Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030:

There are no environmental implications or contributions to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030 at this stage. Any environmental implications and contributions to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030 will be identified as part of the Executive Member response.

4.4 Resident Impact Assessment

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

The Committee has had regard to any equalities implications and resident impacts identified by witnesses during the course of the review. Details of any such implications are set out in the appended report. A Resident Impact Assessment has not been completed as the Executive is only asked to receive the report at this stage. The impact on residents will need to be fully considered as part of the Executive response to the review, at which point a Resident Impact Assessment will be completed if required.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 3.1 Fourteen recommendations have been made in response to the evidence received. These are related to values, aspirations and relationships; supporting children and young people's wellbeing through the curriculum; developing school processes to offer the best support to children and young people; and developing council services. The Committee would like to thank all the witnesses that gave evidence in relation to the review. The Executive is asked to endorse the Committee's recommendations.

Appendices:

- Equalities in Educational Outcomes – Report of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Background papers:

- None.

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ISLINGTON

Equalities in Educational Outcomes

FINAL REPORT OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**London Borough of Islington
June 2020**

Foreword:

As the Fair Futures Programme Strategy states, Islington Council is committed to making Islington a fairer place for all. At the heart of this mission is ensuring that everyone has the best start in life and is supported to achieve their dreams, regardless of their background.

Both nationally and locally, Black Caribbean and White British pupils eligible for pupil premium funding lag behind their peers in educational outcomes at every key stage, from Early Years to GCSE and beyond to participation in Higher Education.

The Committee formed the view that, despite the fact that this has been a seemingly intractable country-wide as well as local problem over many decades, Islington Council has a moral imperative to try to redress this imbalance in pursuit of its commitment to equality and fairness.

Building on the existing Equalities developments led by officers, the Committee undertook a wide-ranging scrutiny review of the educational outcomes of Black Caribbean and White British pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and the possible causes of underachievement.

In addition to interrogating extensive performance data and a number of research papers, we heard from officers, academics and other experts; talked to headteachers, staff and pupils in schools and a children's centre and visited the Upward Bound project at London Metropolitan University for discussions with groups of school and college students, tutors and some parents.

The evidence gathered in the review pointed to the adverse effects of many Central Government policies on pupils' enjoyment of school life; the impact of austerity more generally, and of racism.

We have made a total of fourteen recommendations, grouped into four themes that cover areas such as values, aspirations and relationships; underpinning children's and young people's wellbeing through the curriculum and developing school processes and council services to offer the best support to pupils. These reflect current research findings as well as some welcome changes of direction in the most recent Ofsted Framework.

To conclude, this has been an intensive review and the Committee would like to express its thanks to all the institutions, officers and other witnesses who have given evidence to us for their time and the quality of reflection on what are such challenging and complex issues.

Cllr Vivien Cutler
Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Equalities in Educational Outcomes

Aim:

To assess equalities in educational outcomes for Black Caribbean and White British pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, and to make recommendations to:

- Improve pupils' engagement in school and the wider community
- Improve pupils' progress and attainment across the key stages and into the world of work
- Raise awareness and commitment to action in educational settings and across service providers in Islington

Evidence:

The Committee commenced the review in July 2019. Evidence was received from a variety of sources:

Visits to schools and other settings

- Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School (6 November 2019)
- Upward Bound Project (9 November 2019)
- Ambler School (13 November 2019)
- St Mark's CE School (20 November 2019)
- Willow Children's Centre (21 November 2019)
- St Aloysius' College (5 December 2019)

Evidence from Headteachers

- Martha Braithwaite (St Mark's CE Primary School)
- Juliet Benis (Ambler Primary School)
- Damian Parrott (Drayton Park & Montem Primary Schools)
- Sarah Beagley (Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Secondary School)
- Mita Pandya (Archway and Willow Children's Centres)
- Jane Heffernan (St Aloysius' College Secondary School)

Evidence from council officers:

- Mark Taylor, Director of Learning and Schools
- Anthony Doudle, Head of School Improvement (Primary)
- Jeff Cole, Head of School Improvement (Secondary)
- Harry Donnison, QPMU Service Manager
- Emma Simpson, Secondary English Consultant
- Penny Kenway, Head of Early Years and Childcare
- Tracy Smith, EY Lead for Teaching and Learning
- Helen Cameron, Health and Wellbeing Manager
- Hamish Mackay, Head of iWork

Academic and other evidence:

- Dr Antonina Tereshchenko, UCL Institute of Education
- Maxine Bunting-Thomas, London Metropolitan University, Upward Bound project
- Katrina Ffrench, CEO, StopWatch

Documentary evidence:

- Outcomes data
- Islington Council: Equalities Plan on a Page 2019
- Department for Education: Multiple disadvantage and KS4 attainment: evidence from LSYPE2 (2019)
- Extract from Children's Services Performance Report: Q3 2018/19
- RSA: The social class gap for educational achievement: a review of the literature (2010)
- 'You can't say that! Stories have to be about white people' by Darren Chetty (extract from 'The Good Immigrant' ed: Nikesh Shukla)
- Best Practice Charter for engaging parents/carers, children and communities

Recommendations:

Values, Aspirations and Relationships

1. Islington Council should continue to support schools in developing their relationships with parents/carers to ensure school staff understand the communities they serve. School leaders may wish to explore the make-up of their communities and raise awareness of unconscious bias through cultural competency training in staff induction materials and staff and governor training sessions.
2. Islington schools should revisit the aspirational values embedded in their work. Schools should be encouraged to reflect on whether their values and aspirations are meaningful for all of their communities, particularly those from underachieving groups.
3. Islington schools should consider the identification of suitable role models and mentors to work with children and young people. It is important that role models and mentors are relatable to the borough's different communities.

Supporting children and young people's wellbeing through the curriculum

4. The Committee considers that the wellbeing of children and young people should be supported through the school curriculum. From September 2020 the new statutory health education curriculum will provide an opportunity for schools to reflect on how well they address pupil wellbeing through personal, social and health education (PSHE), including strategies for dealing with stress, sleeping and eating well. They should also aim to provide age-appropriate life skills lessons to support their personal development journey to adulthood. If possible, and within school budgets, schools could consider appointing dedicated and specialist staff to support children and young people who would benefit most from such approaches.
5. Islington Council should encourage schools to offer a broad, inclusive curriculum for all pupils up to Year 11, including the arts and digital and other technologies, to ensure that everyone can enjoy their learning and optimise their skills in order to progress to a successful adult life. A broad curriculum would reflect the new Ofsted Framework for inspection and support Islington Council initiatives such as 11 by 11 and the 100 hours of the World of Work.
6. As teachers are increasingly aware, and research studies confirm, setting pupils can contribute to feelings of segregation and lower aspirations for young people. We encourage Islington schools to further explore flexibility in groupings and consider minimising or removing setting where appropriate. Issues for consideration should include opportunities for movement between sets and/or how teachers are allocated to sets and year groups to ensure the most effective use of teaching experience and expertise. Islington Council should help to raise awareness of the impact of setting through the Community of Schools and governor briefings.

Developing school processes to offer the best support to children and young people

7. Islington Council should support schools in developing clear strategies for raising the achievements of any underachieving group within their school, taking into account approaches identified as best practice within the Islington Community of Schools. Islington Council should also support governing bodies in their oversight of underachievement and equality issues. The Committee welcomes the work already underway to achieve this.
8. Islington Council should continue to encourage schools to make best use of iTIPs and adopt other supportive approaches to understanding the behaviour of children and young people. As far as possible, all school staff are encouraged to be trained on how to recognise and respond to symptoms of trauma in children, young people and their parents/carers.
9. Islington Council should encourage schools to adopt behaviour policies that are underpinned by fairness, kindness, consistency and positivity. Behaviour policies should provide clear and succinct guidance to pupils, parents/carers and staff on what is and is not acceptable.
10. Islington schools should review their staff appointments to ensure that, wherever possible and in all kinds of posts, these reflect local communities. Schools and the local authority should also review appointments to governing bodies to ensure that they reflect the borough's communities.
11. Best practice in supporting young people and their parents/carers across transitions should be shared throughout Islington's Community of Schools. This should focus on all transitions from early years to post-16. This could include enabling staff to liaise with other education settings about the needs of pupils prior to transition, developing pupil resilience prior to transition and providing support for lower achieving and vulnerable pupils throughout and beyond the process.

Developing Council services

12. Islington Council should continue to raise awareness of equalities issues among all staff through historical and local contextual information regarding specific communities and should provide unconscious bias and other relevant training to encourage fairness.
13. Islington Council should review how it supports schools to use data related to Black Dual/Mixed Heritage groups of children and young people. This may include using the data to plan a series of assemblies and school topics/educational experiences that reflect differences in self-definition and personal identity among this group; e.g. post-Windrush 'Black Londoner' or 'Black British' as opposed to the diaspora-related 'Black Caribbean'.

14. To improve outcomes to children and their families, Islington Council's social care and early help services should further develop their interactions and work with schools. This could include engaging with schools to review systems and processes jointly with the aim of ensuring that they are as effective as possible for all parties. Islington Council should also consider if it can help to enhance the relationships between schools and key partner organisations, such as the Police and voluntary sector.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP – 2019/20

Councillors:

Councillor Vivien Cutler (Chair)
Councillor John Woolf (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Santiago Bell-Bradford
Councillor Phil Graham
Councillor Clare Jeapes
Councillor Michelline Safi Ngongo
Councillor Flora Williamson
Councillor Alice Clarke-Perry (to December 2019)
Councillor Gulcin Ozdemir (from February 2020)

Co-opted Members:

Claire Ballak, Parent Governor Representative (Primary)
Mary Clement, Roman Catholic Diocese Representative
Zaleera Wallace, Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)

Acknowledgements:

The Committee would like to thank all the witnesses who gave evidence to the review.

Officer Support:

Anthony Doudle – Head of School Improvement (Primary)
Jonathan Moore – Deputy Manager Committee Services

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The review was held between July 2019 and February 2020. The overall aim of the review was to assess equalities in educational outcomes for Black Caribbean pupils and disadvantaged White British pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. The Committee has monitored the attainment gap between these groups and the overall cohort for several years and wished to review the reasons for this gap and how these issues are being addressed.
- 1.2 The Committee also agreed to the following objectives:
- To analyse and clarify underperformance intersectionally in these key groups over the past 5 years both locally and nationally;
 - To use existing national research and literature to identify the barriers to improving educational attainment for these key groups in Islington schools;
 - To explore the ways in which school leaders drive up the progress and attainment of identified groups informed by best practice from schools that buck the trend;
 - To secure agreement and commitment on the strategies that will improve outcomes for these groups at each key stage and on into further education, employment and training;
 - To identify the causes of underperformance including the impact of factors such as attendance and exclusion;
 - Engage parents, pupils, communities and stakeholders in dialogue to find productive ways forward and guide future action;
 - To better understand the views of children and young people, parents and community groups on how performance for key groups can be improved;
 - To produce workable recommendations for the Council and schools to deliver sustainable improvements in educational outcomes across schools and beyond in Islington;
 - To call to action all the Council's services and functions to improve outcomes for identified groups;
 - To evaluate the work already underway to reduce the attainment gap and to identify how this could be developed further.
- 1.3 In carrying out the review the Committee met with young people, Headteachers and school staff, council officers, independent experts and others to gain a balanced view. The Committee also considered local and national data and a variety of documentary evidence.

2. Summary of Main Findings

Local and National Context

- 2.1 Throughout the review the Committee considered a range of local and national data on the attainment gaps and educational inequalities between Black Caribbean pupils, White British pupils eligible for free school meals and the overall cohort.

- 2.2 Nationally, 15% of White UK early years pupils are eligible for free school meals. In Islington the figure is double the national average at around 30%. This gap widens at Key Stage 4, with around 35% White UK pupils eligible for free school meals, slightly more than double the national average. Nationally, 28% of Black Caribbean early years pupils are eligible for free school meals. In Islington, this figure is 45%. Islington has an above average proportion of Black Caribbean pupils eligible for free school meals at every key stage.
- 2.3 National data indicates that, on average, pupils from Black Caribbean and White British groups eligible for free school meals do not make the same level of progress as their peers. This is also the case in Islington.
- 2.4 The Committee reviewed data on the particular academic challenges faced by different demographic groups in Islington. There were gaps in attainment at every key stage. At Key Stage 1 White UK pupils eligible for free school meals were more likely to struggle with reading and writing, whereas Black Caribbean pupils were more likely to struggle with mathematics.
- 2.5 The number of Black Caribbean pupils achieving the Good Level of Development at Early Years Foundation Stage has increased in recent years and the gap between Black Caribbean pupils and the Islington average is closing; however, White British pupils eligible for free school meals still experience an attainment gap in Early Years.
- 2.6 Performance data for Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 1 indicates that the attainment gap for Black Caribbean pupils and White British pupils eligible for pupil premium begins to widen from a young age. This attainment gap is more pronounced in Islington than at national level.
- 2.7 The attainment gap widens further at Key Stage 4. Progress 8 data indicates that, on average, White British pupils eligible for pupil premium achieve half a grade lower at GCSE than their peers. The gap is particularly wide in the key subjects of English and maths.
- 2.8 At Key Stage 4, both Black Caribbean and White UK pupils eligible for free school meals tend to underperform across all subjects. However, for English and maths, the attainment gap between these groups and the borough average decreased between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. It was thought that this was due to schools prioritising English and maths GCSEs.
- 2.9 Officers advised that there was a correlation between low attainment and high levels of absence, caused by either attendance issues or exclusion. The Committee considered how exclusion from school disproportionately affects certain groups in the previous year's scrutiny review.
- 2.10 The Committee asked if one or two schools had particular issues with attainment and progress that would impact on the overall figures. In response, it was noted that Islington's schools did have differing levels of attainment, however pupils at lower-attaining schools tended to attain lower grades overall. Attainment issues at those schools were not limited to specific groups.

Evidence from Panel of Headteachers

- 2.11 The Committee received evidence from a panel of Headteachers and discussed equalities issues and their approaches to supporting pupils.
- 2.12 Headteachers commented that comparing the academic attainment of different demographic groups had to be handled in a sensitive way. In general, schools focused on pupils as individuals and targeted interventions to their particular needs, rather than seeing them as part of a wider demographic trend. For example, some schools have fewer than five Black Caribbean pupils across all age groups. As a result it is not always possible, or appropriate, to target school-level interventions at particular groups.
- 2.13 The Committee asked whether Headteachers believed that it was helpful to analyse pupil attainment and progress alongside demographic factors such as ethnicity. Although Headteachers recognised the attainment gap, they thought that the personal circumstances of pupils had a greater impact on the targeting of interventions than wider demographic factors. Resources for support services are scarce and schools are more likely to target specific interventions at children with known issues, rather than at demographic groups. However, it was recognised that having honest and straightforward conversations about the attainment of different groups was important. It was suggested that passing on pupil and demographic data to parents could be useful in highlighting these issues and addressing the attainment gap. Although this may be helpful, the Committee considers that developing strategies for raising the achievement of underachieving groups would help schools to target support at those who need it.
- 2.14 Headteachers highlighted the importance of young people having positive role models. Some schools made use of mentors to work closely with underachieving groups, however such interventions were often reserved for those most in need of support. The Committee suggests that a broader approach to mentoring may help to support young people and to raise aspirations, particularly if the mentors reflect the borough's diverse communities and young people can relate to their experiences.
- 2.15 Headteachers emphasised the importance of building effective working relationships with families, although it was recognised that this could be challenging if parents did not have a positive experience of school. The Committee was encouraged by the holistic approaches to engaging parents used by some Early Years settings, such as hosting family activities including gardening and healthy eating projects. Such activities were beneficial both to children and their families and provided an opportunity for settings to develop positive relationships with parents in a structured way.
- 2.16 Headteachers spoke of the importance of regularly inviting parents into school to meet with teaching staff to discuss the progress of their children. The Committee queried if families with working parents, particularly those in challenging financial circumstances and working multiple jobs, were missing out on such opportunities because they did not have the time to attend school meetings. In response, it was advised that best practice was to plan events and activities at different times of day

to ensure parents were able to attend. Headteachers commented that they maintained records of which parents attended such events to assist with targeting future events.

- 2.17 The Committee queried the demographic make-up of teachers in the borough and whether the backgrounds of teachers reflected the young people they teach. It was advised that teachers came from a range of backgrounds but these did not necessarily reflect the demography of the borough. Teachers were also university educated and therefore had experiences and backgrounds that some young people found difficult to relate to. The Committee considers that it is important for school staff to reflect the make-up of their local community. It is suggested that schools may wish to consider this in their approach to recruitment.

Evidence from visits to schools and other settings

- 2.18 The evidence gathering was undertaken by five members of the Committee through visits to two secondary and two primary schools and a children's centre, all of whose Headteachers had participated in the evidence session at the 17th September Committee meeting.
- 2.19 Committee members also visited the Upward Bound project, an education project aimed at raising attainment and aspirations for young people attending Islington secondary schools. The project is a partnership between Islington Council and London Metropolitan University. Sessions take place every Saturday throughout most of the academic year.
- 2.20 There were many common features among the settings. For example, all were totally committed to giving their children and young people the widest possible range of experiences. They recognised the importance of knowing their communities well and prioritising good relationships with parents and carers. All had high attendance rates, a function of the trust that they had built up with harder to reach groups, particularly White British families with free school meals eligibility. They all recognised the challenges of raising attainment with the target groups, although only one school, St Aloysius College, had a statistically significant number of Black Caribbean students and a strategic approach to them as a group as well as individuals.
- 2.21 The Upward Bound project had a large majority of BAME students and staff. The Programme Director commented that it had been challenging to recruit White British students, despite considerable efforts to establish good relations with families.

Values

- 2.22 All the schools have values that are clearly expressed in strap lines and mottoes displayed throughout the buildings and in school documentation. The values could be grouped by those related to achieving social justice; the importance of high quality teaching and learning; having high aspirations and positivity; the centrality of community and mutual respect. Ambler has the strap line 'Achieve more' that is realised by six core values expressed through the acronym DREAMS: determination,

resilience, enthusiasm, ambition, motivation and self-belief. The Willow Children's Centre was noted by Ofsted inspectors in their 2019 inspection report as having '...a highly focused ethos, which is reflected in the positive attitudes of staff, parents and children. Meeting children's care, well-being and learning needs is central to all that they do'.

- 2.23 For the Upward Bound students, the majority of whom are BAME, the values of social justice and equal opportunities are paramount: understanding, kindness and nurture by teaching staff are identified as equally crucial for students to thrive. The students commented on the importance of reducing stress and felt it was important for teachers to support rather than segregate, and to celebrate unique identities rather than to stigmatise. Students commented that relationships should be based on equality with staff; they should be inclusive and joyful.
- 2.24 The Committee considers that it is very important for schools to have aspirational values embedded in their work. It is essential that those values and aspirations are meaningful for all of the school's communities, particularly those from underachieving groups.

Curriculum and achievement

- 2.25 Both secondary schools have ambitious approaches to meeting the needs of their students through the curriculum. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson opts for a very wide choice of options from Year 9 onwards to optimise achievement, whatever level the student starts from, and provides enrichment beyond the cohort's experiences. A group of Year 10 students expressed their pride in the range of experiences they had been given by the school, including careers lessons from Year 7 and visits to universities. The school attempts to meet everyone's needs and, in line with the latest Ofsted Framework, the key focus is on the quality of teaching and learning. Staff commented that they were aware of the negative impacts of setting and were working implement mixed ability classes.
- 2.26 The route that St Aloysius College is taking is slightly different; that of an aspirational journey with a bespoke curriculum; for example, some programmes leading to more vocational college courses or apprenticeships where appropriate. There is a strong focus on the tracking of progress to identify target groups with support from dedicated Raising Achievement Groups of staff. Mentoring, often using community role models, and work experience opportunities from Year 10 all help students on the transition to adult life. As with Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School, there is a relentless focus on teaching and learning and a move towards reducing setting, with most classes now mixed ability.
- 2.27 The primary schools celebrate the diversity of their communities in their curriculum and, in the case of Ambler, emphasise the promotion of self-belief and positivity, especially in Early Years, to try to close possible attainment gaps as early as is feasible. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities for children and parents. At St Mark's, there is an ambition to make the curriculum less teacher-led. There is considerable additional support for literacy and a focus on the arts and a wraparound curriculum of after-school clubs run by teaching staff.

- 2.28 The Willow curriculum is largely child-led. There is encouragement for the children to socialise and explore the outdoor environment through play. There is also extensive exposure to the arts through gallery visits, including by some of the youngest children.
- 2.29 The Upward Bound students had clear ideas about the need for breadth in the curriculum. They wanted to see every student able to take arts and practical courses to maintain their interests and develop their talents, and the retention of a full complement of PE lessons to enable them – especially boys - to use exercise to de-stress. They felt strongly that wellbeing and life skills lessons should be compulsory (both are offered at the project) and encouragement for the development of leadership skills, as per the Peer Mentor group in the project. One student commented that too many schools had become “marketised”, only focusing on the best outcomes for a small group of students.
- 2.30 Some students wanted to ensure that bottom sets had as wide and enjoyable an experience of the curriculum as others, not just given an even greater focus on English and maths. They commented that schools should also include more opportunities for discussion and debate, especially on global issues such as the climate crisis. There was an almost unanimous dislike of setting among students; this was felt to depress aspiration and separate off already-underachieving students, leaving them to fall even further behind.
- 2.31 The Committee considers that schools should offer a broad and inclusive curriculum for all pupils up to Year 11 as this will ensure that all young people can enjoy their learning and optimise their skills. A broad curriculum would also reflect the new Ofsted Framework for inspection and support Islington Council fairness initiatives such as 11 by 11 and the 100 hours of the World of Work.

Factors determining achievement

- 2.32 All of those interviewed on the scrutiny visits recognised a range of external factors as playing a significant role in the attainment of young people; including poor and overcrowded housing, domestic violence, mental health issues, substance abuse, poverty and the impact of austerity, low educational achievement of some families and lack of aspiration.
- 2.33 Upward Bound students commented on unequal access to the widest curriculum and the overly excessive enforcement of rules as factors impacting on achievement. Some also cited more overt discrimination and a lack of interest in and knowledge of their backgrounds by school staff. They felt that there should be greater staff diversity in their schools.
- 2.34 Both schools and students recognised the negative impacts of setting. Upward Bound students also appealed for a less formal atmosphere and improved relationships with their teachers, with more optimism and less perceived hostility towards them. They expressed the view that students should be allowed to work more at their own pace and set their own goals. Some felt that teachers failed to

understand the psychology that underpinned support to raise achievement, and that they should recognise and celebrate improvement in progress from whatever stage.

Pastoral support

- 2.35 All of the schools visited offered a wide range of support services but wished that they could offer even more given the diversity of needs and levels of complexity presented.
- 2.36 The secondary schools have developed teams to bridge the gaps between the home and school environment. Staff are made aware of problems that have arisen with students and/or their families the previous day. At Elizabeth Garrett Anderson (EGA), there is a daily circular giving staff the names of those vulnerable students needing the most support at the time. EGA also carries out a fortnightly review of the most challenging students and case studies are used extensively.
- 2.37 Primary schools have a focus on kindness and empathy, rewarding instances of both in the children. Some spoke of the need to be pro-active in interventions, and had created specialist intervention rooms. They commented that the adoption of trauma informed practices has led to increased consistency in dealing with behaviour issues. The primary schools visited had also employed additional therapists and other workers to supplement local authority provision.
- 2.38 Both secondary schools made extensive use of mentors and role models and tried to match these to the different groups in the school communities, though there was some debate about what constitutes an appropriate role model.
- 2.39 St Aloysius has an inclusion unit that focuses on enabling students to return to class or to undertake bespoke programmes for students at risk of permanent exclusion. The Head of Unit is a long-serving member of staff and is well-known to parents across the generations. There is also a trained teacher who operates as a mentor and fulfils some of the roles undertaken by the pastoral staff at Upward Bound.
- 2.40 All the schools state that they hesitate to resort to exclusion unless there are the most compelling reasons. The schools visited favoured a more nuanced, inclusive approach to isolation units, a feature of school life particularly disliked by Upward Bound students.
- 2.41 For Willow, the support is as much for the parents and carers as for the children. The Centre works very closely with social workers and health visitors. High quality staff training enables Willow staff to intervene effectively both with children and their parents.
- 2.42 Although Upward Bound operates for only half a day per week, there is pastoral support provided for students. Two members of Islington's CAMHS team are employed and the fact that they are BAME is welcomed by students who feel their needs are better understood than their counterparts at school. The project also provides life skills sessions that are well received by the students; committee members observed one session on dealing with stress.

Transitions

- 2.43 The importance of support during transitions was emphasised. The most vulnerable children and young people find the transition from one phase or setting to another the most challenging and there is far less resource available to schools to devote to this than used to be the case. Both primary schools are fortunate in being able to provide internal transition for children who attend their early years provision so that consistency of approach is maintained. Good parental engagement and the use of a home-school liaison officer were factors that could help to support transitions, however it was accepted that this was less straightforward for children residing out of borough.
- 2.44 Both the secondary schools have well-established processes for transition. St Aloysius starts the aspirational journey through engagement with Year 6 children. EGA offers very detailed primary-secondary transition arrangements including visits to feeder primaries and days to introduce students to the school. This incorporates events held in the summer holidays to make friends and build alliances.
- 2.45 Even the most modest moves for children in Willow, from one age group to another, are accompanied by processes to give confidence and security to the children. These include visits to the new room and opportunities to meet their older peers. There is also significant support from social workers and health visitors, working in partnership with Willow staff, when children and their parents/carers join Willow.
- 2.46 Upward Bound students commented on the difficulty of moving from KS3 mixed ability groups to extensive setting in KS4. They also commented on the need to prepare better for adult, independent life when they left school or college.
- 2.47 The Committee welcomes the work of the schools in supporting transitions and considers that best practice for transitions should be shared throughout the Community of Schools. Following the feedback from young people, it is suggested that a renewed focus on preparing young people for adult life and independence would also be beneficial.

Support for staff

- 2.48 There is clear recognition amongst all the settings that staff wellbeing and support are crucial. These can be manifested in a number of ways ranging from extensive CPD opportunities to more direct rewards and recognition such as in Ambler's peer rewards scheme that enables staff to express thanks and appreciation of colleagues.
- 2.49 St Aloysius, which has the largest proportion of Black Caribbean students, has a proactive approach to creating and supporting a more diverse staff cohort, including members of the senior leadership team, and in identifying role models for students.

Council services

- 2.50 There was a consistent response from the schools in relation to the support currently available from Islington Council. All were positive about the quality of CAMHS and the SEND team, though they commented that they would like to access additional support for the most challenging pupils, subject to the funding being available. Those who have adopted iTIPs spoke warmly of its impact and others were considering doing so.
- 2.51 Another area that was mentioned was the need to see better relationships and joined up working between services that care for children and young people, including the police, and better sharing of information. It was noted that it is possible to predict the trajectory of a child's actions, but sometimes interventions are not able to be implemented early enough. It was thought that further joint working would help to address this.
- 2.52 While there were examples of effective partnership working between schools and social services, it was also felt that interactions between social workers and schools could be developed further. Systems and processes could be jointly reviewed to ensure that they are as effective as possible for all parties. Of all the providers, Willow staff spoke most positively about partnership working. As a result of the policy of co-visiting new parents/carers in order to register each new child, they worked closely with social workers.

Evidence on the impact of setting on social inequality

- 2.53 The Committee received evidence from Dr Antonina Tereshchenko, UCL Institute of Education, on the impact of setting and attainment grouping on social inequality.
- 2.54 Research indicates that attainment grouping in schools entrenches social inequalities. There is a spectrum of different attainment grouping methods used across primary and secondary schools and these result in differing levels of segregation between higher and lower attaining pupils. Although not all schools use setting for all subjects, all secondary schools in England use setting for mathematics and half of all primary schools have introduced setting for Year 5 and 6 pupils.
- 2.55 Dr Tereshchenko highlighted that the socio-economic background of pupils is closely linked to levels of attainment. Research had found that pupils were mis-allocated to sets, with working-class and BAME pupils disproportionately allocated to lower sets, and White students most likely to be allocated to top sets, regardless of their academic ability. This exacerbates social inequalities and contributes to social segregation within schools.
- 2.56 Lower sets are more likely to be placed with less qualified teachers, which can result in a poorer quality education. Schools have lower expectations for pupils in lower sets; pupils are not challenged to attain higher grades and may be entered for foundation tier qualifications where it is not possible to attain the highest grades. Pupils in the lowest sets also report lower levels of self-confidence than their peers

in higher sets. Dr Tereshchenko suggested that placement in a lower set could be a self-fulfilling prophecy, rather than an accurate reflection of academic ability.

- 2.57 Dr Tereshchenko explained how pupils could be mis-allocated to sets. Classroom sizes were limited and therefore when pupils of a similar ability were not able to be contained within a single class, or when pupil attainment was borderline between a higher and lower set, schools had to make a decision on which pupils should be in each set. This process could lead to the mis-allocation of pupils to sets. Dr Tereshchenko's study had evaluated the setting of pupils in KS3 against their Year 6 SATs scores. This found that Black students were 2.5 times more likely to be mis-allocated to a lower set, and girls were more likely than boys to be mis-allocated to a lower set in mathematics.
- 2.58 UCL researchers had asked pupils about their experiences of setting and their views on their teachers. Young people perceived differences between the teaching styles of different sets, commenting that higher sets had higher behavioural standards and there was respect between pupils and teachers, whereas lower sets were taught at a slower pace, rules were relaxed, and there was an element of "spoon feeding" pupils information. Some pupils also expressed frustration with the lack of flexibility in setting. Some had been promised that they could move up a set if they achieved high levels of attainment, however, in reality this did not happen often.
- 2.59 Researchers had evaluated the reported self-confidence of pupils at the start of Year 7 and how this developed over time. It was found that pupils in higher sets increased in self-confidence by the end of Year 8, whereas the self-confidence of pupils in lower sets decreased. Pupils in lower sets were more likely to be nervous, anxious and disengaged from education. There was evidence that the attainment of pupils decreases after they are placed in a lower set.
- 2.60 It was suggested that some teachers were resistant to ending or minimising setting, commenting that it would result in additional work at a time when they are already significantly overworked. There was also a concern at the reaction of parents, who were thought to strongly support setting, seeing it as a "common sense" approach, and something they would recognise from their own school days.
- 2.61 UCL did not advocate ending setting and moving to entirely mixed-attainment grouping as there was a lack of evidence on the impact of this. However, it was important for teachers to be aware of the impact of setting, and work to minimise or mitigate this. Flexibility in setting practices partially helped to address these concerns.
- 2.62 The Committee would welcome the introduction of further flexibility in setting, and for this to be minimised or even removed where appropriate. It is also suggested that Islington Council could help to raise awareness of the impact of setting on social inequalities through the Community of Schools and governor briefings.

Evidence from council services

- 2.63 The Committee received a range of evidence on projects and approaches being used in the local authority and across schools and other settings to promote equality and fairness.
- 2.64 The Council has established an Equalities Reference Group with representation from the local community. The group developed a Charter for Best Practice in engaging with parents/carers, pupils and communities, launched in January 2020. Best practice has been established by visiting several schools that buck the trend on outcomes, and the document is accompanied by a self-evaluation tool for school leaders. The Charter emphasises the importance of listening to feedback from parents/carers and children; providing a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum; and championing the diversity of staff. The Committee welcomes and supports this important work.
- 2.65 School leaders have been provided with unconscious bias training that was very well received. The Committee suggests that this could be rolled out to council staff, alongside contextual information about the boroughs communities.
- 2.66 The Committee considered the importance of Early Years education. Evidence indicates that attending an Early Years setting can help to minimise the impact of economic disadvantage, increase social mobility, and prevent risks to young people. The Council's Bright Start early years services focus on prevention as well as early intervention. However, there was a concern that only 61% of children who have access to early education take up the offer, rising to 84% take up of early learning for those aged 3 and 4. This means that some children go into reception with no pre-school experience. Officers advised that these children, or those that entered reception at an unusual time of year, were more likely to struggle with attainment. The Committee considered that communicating the benefits of early learning was the best way to persuade parents to access these services.
- 2.67 The 11 by 11 programme was an important aspect of the council's fairness agenda. This was a commitment to make 11 cultural experiences available to all children by Year 11. Partners included theatres, museums, music venues and sports clubs. Since March 2019 over 7,500 pupil experiences had been brokered through the programme and positive feedback had been received.
- 2.68 The Council had also committed to ensuring that all young people in Islington benefited from 100 hours' experience of the world of work by age 16. This programme of activity began in March 2019 and the Committee noted several positive examples of the activities for young people.
- 2.69 The Committee considered the progress of iTIPS (Islington Trauma Informed Practices in School). iTIPS recognised that young people could experience many different forms of trauma; more overt forms of trauma included violence, abuse and neglect, however the impacts of poverty, austerity and racism could also be traumatic for young people. Trauma could have an impact on young people's cognition and learning, however the iTIPS programme sought to equip teachers with

the skills to identify and support trauma-experienced young people. As a result, children should see their school as being a sensitive and caring environment and schools should experience improvements in behaviour and attendance in return. Over time, this should have a positive impact on educational outcomes. The Committee considers that schools should be encouraged to make best use of iTIPS and training on trauma informed practices should be available to all school staff, as far as possible.

- 2.70 Officers suggested that the changes to the national curriculum in recent years has disproportionately affected certain demographic groups. The new curriculum has more content than in the past and therefore absence from school has an even more significant impact. The new curriculum is also considered to be less diverse and less inclusive than the previous curriculum. For example, all texts not written by British authors have been removed from the GCSE English curriculum. This strong focus on an historic White British literary canon is not engaging for all pupils. Furthermore, GCSEs are now carried out entirely through terminal assessment and there was no coursework element. This requires pupils to have strong organisational and revision skills; pupils with appropriate study space and few disruptions at home are more likely to embed effective study habits. This is more challenging for pupils in adverse socio-economic circumstances.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 This review has focused on the inequalities faced by young people from disadvantaged White British and Black Caribbean backgrounds throughout their education. This is a national issue, but we cannot wait for a national solution. As part of its commitment to fairness and equality, Islington Council must seek to address these inequalities at a local level.
- 3.2 The causes of these inequalities are complex. There is no simple solution and progress may be incremental. However, the Council must be proactive in promoting equality and the Committee must continue to monitor these issues and the impact on young people in the borough. The Committee notes the progress made over recent years on this issue; the work of the Equalities Reference Group is welcomed, and efforts have been made to close the attainment gap. It is hoped that the Committee's review will further support this agenda by highlighting the inequalities in educational outcomes and by proposing practical changes to address these.
- 3.3 Fourteen recommendations have been made in response to the evidence received. These are related to values, aspirations and relationships; supporting children and young people's wellbeing through the curriculum; developing school processes to offer the best support to children and young people; and developing council services. The Committee would like to thank all the witnesses that gave evidence in relation to the review. The Executive is asked to endorse the Committee's recommendations.

Afterword:

This Scrutiny Review was completed just before lockdown but has proved prescient in highlighting two of our school communities whose historic patterns of underachievement appear to be systemic. Over the past few months, the impact of Covid-19 on both these communities in the world beyond schools, and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement, have coincided all too uncomfortably with the evidence that underpins the recommendations.

But we have been aware of these inequalities for a very long time; in the publication of Bernard Coard's seminal pamphlet 'How the West Indian Child Is Made Educationally Sub-normal in the British School System' in 1971 and in David Hargreaves 'Improving Secondary Schools', a three-part report commissioned by the Inner London Education Authority and published in 1984, one of the first widely-read reports to link the issue of social class and educational underachievement.

The need to implement the Scrutiny Review's recommendations, and to develop them further in light of recent events, has never been more pressing.

Cllr Vivien Cutler
Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

SCRUTINY REVIEW INITIATION DOCUMENT (SID)
Review: Equalities in Educational Outcomes
Scrutiny Review Committee: Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee
Director leading the Review: Mark Taylor, Director of Schools and Learning
Lead Officers: Anthony Doudle, Head of School Improvement (Primary)
<p>Overall aims: To assess equalities in educational outcomes for Black Caribbean and White British pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, and to make recommendations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve pupils’ engagement in school and the wider community • Improve pupils’ progress and attainment across the key stages and into the world of work • Raise awareness and commitment to action in educational settings and across service providers in Islington
<p>Objectives of the Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To analyse and clarify underperformance intersectionally in these key groups over the past 5 years both locally and nationally. This will allow the Committee to consider performance across all variables as well as individually and over a reasonable time-period. • To use existing national research and literature to identify the barriers to improving educational attainment for these key groups in Islington schools • To explore the ways in which school leaders drive up the progress and attainment of identified groups informed by best practice from schools that buck the trend • To secure agreement and commitment on the strategies that will improve outcomes for these groups at each key stage and on into further education, employment and training • To identify the causes of underperformance including the impact of factors such as attendance and exclusion • Engage parents, pupils, communities and stakeholders in dialogue to find productive ways forward and guide future action • To better understand the views of children and young people, parents and community groups on how performance for key groups can be improved • To produce workable recommendations for the Council and schools to deliver sustainable improvements in educational outcomes across schools and beyond in Islington • To call to action all the Council’s services and functions to improve outcomes for identified groups • To evaluate the work already underway to reduce the attainment gap and to identify how this could be developed further.

How this Review will be carried out:

The Committee will receive written and oral evidence; evaluate local and national research and practice; visit providers including schools; listen to the views of school leaders and listen to the views of children, young people, parents and the wider community.

Scope of the Review:

The progress and attainment of identified groups; the interrelationship of different factors which have an impact on progress and attainment in these groups; the identification of best practice.

The Review will focus on:

- The extent to which;
 - a child's background - including ethnicity, gender, culture, and social class and;
 - negative stereotyping and/or cultural bias can have an impact on the progress and attainment of identified groups
- The positive impact that schools can have on the progress that children make
- What children, young people, parents and the wider community think needs to be done to improve progress and attainment for identified groups
- The impact of school leadership, management and governance on attainment and equality
- The impact of support, monitoring, challenge and intervention mechanisms from the Local Authority/Academy sponsors on schools' culture and attainment practices.

Type of evidence:

The Scrutiny Committee will:

- Hear the views of children and young people to see what they perceive as the factors that support their engagement, progress and attainment
- Hear what parents and the community think can be done to improve outcomes for identified groups
- Receive evidence of alternative interventions and approaches that have been effective in improving outcomes for identified groups e.g. the interventions delivered by the Upward Bound Project
- Receive evidence from local authority officers and leaders in schools
- Receive oral evidence from key witnesses and analyses of relevant local and national performance data, including links between aspiration and academic attainment
- Receive written evidence from other interested parties
- Visit schools and examine first hand interventions that are in place for identified groups
- Receive expert witness presentation from national advisers.

Witness evidence:

It is proposed that witness evidence is taken from:

- Children and young people at school and beyond
- Parents and carers
- The community and community leaders
- Representative headteachers and other school leaders
- Practitioners and researchers expert in the field both locally and nationally
- Local authority officers

Additional information:

In carrying out the review the Committee will consider equalities implications and resident impacts identified by witnesses. The Executive is required to have due regard to these, and any other relevant implications, when responding to the review recommendations.

Witness Evidence Plan

Committee Meeting – Tuesday 9 July 2019

Who / What	Area of focus – Introductory Information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Initiation Document 	For the Committee to agree the aim, objectives and scope of the review.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthony Doudle, Head of School Improvement (Primary) with other relevant officers 	Introductory presentation: data, context; local and national position; work undertaken to date in Islington – Equalities 'Plan on a Page' and related documentation.

August

Who / What	Area of focus – Background Information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Evidence 	<p>Written evidence was circulated to members over August, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islington Council: Equalities Plan on a Page 2019 • Department for Education: Multiple disadvantage and KS4 attainment: evidence from LSYPE2 (2019) • Extract from Children's Services Performance Report: Q3 2018/19 • The RSA: The social class gap for educational achievement: a review of the literature (2010) • 'You can't say that! Stories have to be about white people' by Darren Chetty

Committee Meeting – Tuesday 17 September 2019	
Who / What	Area of focus – Short update on progress and attainment; the views of headteachers and best practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthony Doudle, Head of School Improvement (Primary) with other relevant officers 	Update on data on progress and attainment for these key groups with national and local comparators where available.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A panel of Headteachers from Early Years, Primary and Secondary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Martha Braithwaite (St Marks CE Primary School), - Juliet Benis (Ambler Primary School), - Damian Parrott (Drayton Park & Montem Primary Schools), - Sarah Beagley (Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Secondary School), - Mita Pandya (Archway and Willow Children’s Centres) - Jane Heffernan (St Aloysius Secondary School) 	Best practice in schools, successes and challenges in implementing targeted approaches.

Committee Meeting – Tuesday 29 October 2019	
Who / What	Area of focus – The Local Context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives who can provide evidence on innovative approaches and projects being used across schools. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anthony Doudle, Head of School Improvement (Primary) - Emma Simpson, Secondary English Consultant, - Penny Kenway, Head of Early Years and Childcare, - Tracy Smith, EY Lead for Teaching and Learning, - Helen Cameron, Health and Wellbeing Manager - Hamish Mackay, Head of iWork. 	<p>Effective approaches currently in place that have a demonstrable impact on improving outcomes for these groups and lessons to be learnt.</p> <p>This included: the work of the Equalities Reference Group, early years services and Bright Start Islington, Whole Class Reading approaches, the Reading Road Map, 11 by 11, iTIPS in Islington, 100 Hours World of Work.</p>

Committee Meeting – Tuesday 26 November 2019	
Who / What	Area of focus – Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harry Donnison, QPMU Service Manager 	Data on educational outcomes, using four-year rolling averages.

Committee Meeting – Tuesday 21 January 2020	
Who / What	Area of focus – Any outstanding matters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff Cole, Head of School Improvement (Secondary) 	Update on data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Antonina Tereshchenko, UCL Institute of Education 	Research on the impact of setting and attainment grouping in school.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Practice Charter for engaging parents/carers, children and communities 	Charter developed in collaboration with the Equalities Reference Group to

Committee Meeting – Monday 10 February 2020	
Who / What	Area of focus – Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Recommendations 	To agree a set of draft recommendations that will form the basis of the Committee's report.

Scrutiny Visits	
Who / What	Area of focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School (6 November 2019) 	To observe practice and talk to school leaders and pupils about their experiences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upward Bound Project (9 November 2019) 	To observe sessions and talk to Peer Mentors, Year 9 students and parents about their experiences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambler School (13 November 2019) 	To observe practice and talk to school leaders and pupils about their experiences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Marks School (20 November 2019) 	To observe practice and talk to school leaders and pupils about their experiences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willow Children's Centre (21 November 2019) 	To observe practice and discuss the review with centre staff.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Aloysius College (5 December 2019) 	To observe practice and talk to school leaders and pupils about their experiences.

Executive Member for Environment and Transport

Meeting of:	Date:	Ward(s):
Executive	10 September 2020	All

Delete as appropriate:		Non-exempt
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SUBJECT: Adoption of new Biodiversity Action Plan 2020-2025

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 A new Biodiversity Action Plan 2020-2025 (BAP) has been drafted and went out to public consultation from 1 April to 31 July 2020. 175 responses were received.
- 1.2 The BAP consists of a strategic overview document and four action plans. As a strategic document, it provides background to why key actions are needed to protect wildlife and to enhance people's contact with nature.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the outcomes of the public consultation and resulting changes to the draft Biodiversity Action Plan 2020-2025 as outlined in the consultation report attached at appendix 3.
- 2.2 To agree to adopt the final Biodiversity Action Plan 2020-2025, attached at appendix 2.

3. Background

- 3.1 A Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is a strategic document which outlines how a local authority is committed to protecting and enhancing wildlife.
- 3.2 Whilst the council leads on the BAP, the process is intended to include partners, community groups and the wider public. Representatives of relevant groups have been consulted as part of the development of the latest BAP, the third iteration of such a council document

- 3.3 Traditionally, Local Authority BAPs have been based around Habitat Action Plans and Species Action Plans. However, reflecting the very urban nature of Islington, we have broken away from this approach and introduced the idea of four key themes:
1. The Built Environment
 2. Designated Sites
 3. Parks and Urban Green Spaces
 4. Access to Nature
- 3.4 A key focus of the Islington BAP (2020-2025) is how to improve quality of life for people by increasing opportunities for them to access high quality green space
- 3.5 The public consultation opened on 1 April 2020 and closed on 31st July 2020. Due to the Covid 19 lockdown, it was not possible to run any consultation meetings or to deliver any paper based materials and so it has had to be exclusively online. Formal adoption of the BAP is being recommended to the Executive on 10 September 2020.
- 3.6 A number of council services, partner organisations and gardening groups were consulted on production of the BAP. To ensure that the wider public have also had the opportunity to feed into the BAP (2020-2025) we have consulted in the following ways:
- The draft BAP was posted on the Council website along with an online survey in April. This was extensively promoted via social media and Islington Life.
 - Direct contact was made with all Friends of Parks and partner organisations that contributed to the production of the draft new BAP.
 - The draft BAP was shared with the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.

Consultation feedback:

- 3.7 The consultation report, including the consultation questions, is attached at Appendix 3. 175 people responded in total to the consultation, of which 164 completed the online survey. People responding to the consultation showed a high level of interest and commitment to biodiversity in the borough. Parks and community gardens were particularly important to people's enjoyment of wildlife. A high number of people responding already make a positive contribution to biodiversity, principally through wildlife gardening and participation in Friends of Parks Groups. In terms of offering people increased opportunities to engage with nature, respondents showed a lot of support for activities for children, nature trails and the creation of more wildlife habitats in parks. Some concern was expressed that people were prevented from accessing nature through a lack of knowledge of where to go and a feeling of not being safe.

There was overall support for the BAP priorities and actions, with 62% of respondents agreeing with the key priorities and only two people feeling that they went too far. 32% felt that the BAP priorities did not go far enough and between 11% and 33% felt that the actions in the Action Plans did not go far enough.

Some of the key reasons for this arose from dissatisfaction with the existing legislation and policy frameworks which protect biodiversity, for example through the planning system. It is the Council's intention to ensure that the BAP is implemented to maximise protection and enhancement for biodiversity as far as existing policies, both national and local allow. However the Council cannot commit to actions which are not currently possible within existing legislation.

It is also important to note that the BAP is a five year strategy, and the actions it outlines must be achievable within current levels of capacity and funding. However, it is hoped that the principles laid out in the BAP will help to bring in further funding and will lead to additional actions being undertaken to benefit wildlife, both by the Council and other organisations.

Some respondents felt concerned that wider sustainability issues were not included in the BAP. These issues are all closely linked to biodiversity and the overall state of the environment. However, the BAP is not intended to be an all encompassing sustainability strategy and its remit is limited specifically to biodiversity. The Council is following national guidance in this in terms of what is an accepted BAP template. The Council has set out its efforts to tackle a number of other environmental issues through other complementary action plans, e.g. Vision 2030: Creating a Net Zero Carbon Islington by 2030, the Islington Transport Strategy and the Islington Air Quality Strategy.

With regards to suggestions to strengthen involvement from schools and housing estates and to encourage more action from individuals; the Council accepts that these are positive ideas and the BAP does lay out a framework for action to be taken in these areas. However in order to do more, the Council would need access to resources (for example staff) that are not currently available.

Changes made to the BAP following consultation and prior to adoption by September Executive.

- 3.8 As a result of the consultation response as well as feedback from internal stakeholders, a number of additions have been made to the BAP:
- The links were strengthened between the Vision 2030 Carbon Zero Strategy and the BAP detailing the role the BAP will play in helping the borough achieve this vision. Actions in the BAP that support carbon reduction were clearly identified.
 - A reference has been added to the London National Park City initiative and Islington's desire to engage with it, for example in organising events during National Park City Week.
 - A reference has been added to the Community Food Growing Strategy that Octopus has been commissioned to produce.
 - A reference has been added to planning policy which encourages the temporary use of development sites for nature conservation, including the creation of pocket parks and the use of parking spaces as parklets.
 - More emphasis has been placed on the opportunities for enhancing biodiversity on housing estates.
 - An explanation of the successful action we are already taking and the resources that we currently put into this work (e.g. volunteer and staff resources) has been added.
 - More information has been included about the ecological value of the cemeteries we manage and the actions that we can take to enhance them.
- 3.9 These changes have been shared with the Corporate Director of Environment and Regeneration and the Executive Member for Environment and Transport for final approval.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial implications:

The BAP does not make any specific commitments in terms of extra spending and does not have a budget associated with its implementation. Actions outlined in the BAP can either be achieved within current budgets or by external fundraising efforts in liaison with partner organisations. The BAP itself will assist fund-raising efforts as funders are often happy to see that projects are set within a wider strategic framework

4.2 Legal Implications:

The BAP itself does not have any legal standing. However, it is capable of being a material consideration in the determination of planning applications through the Local Plan process. The Council has a legal duty to deliver section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) which imposes a general duty for an organisation to have regard to conserving biodiversity when exercising its functions. The BAP helps Islington to demonstrate its commitment to the NERC act. In summary, the BAP can help the Council to meet its legal obligations.

4.3 Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

Biodiversity plays an important role in climate control. Islington's green infrastructure is essential in reducing the impacts of climate change on the lives of our residents. Vegetation has been shown to reduce the effects of raised urban temperatures through evaporative cooling, shading surfaces, and allowing natural drainage. This can work in reverse in winter where greenery such as green roofs and walls can reduce the heat lost by buildings by providing better insulation and thus lowering energy use. Street trees and urban greening are also a major contribution to the capture and storage of CO₂ and improvement of air quality.

The BAP helps the Council to show its commitment to many of the objectives in the Mayor's London Environment Strategy, for example the protection of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and enhancing access to green spaces.

The actions within the BAP will not result in any increase in carbon emissions. The BAP encourages the enhancement of our existing green spaces which should support greater carbon absorption.

4.4 Resident Impact Assessment:

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

A Resident Impact Assessment was completed in October 2019 and is attached at Appendix 1. In summary, no negative impacts on people with protected characteristics were identified. The BAP is very much about people as well as wildlife. The document puts forward a clear evidence base for the many benefits that contact with nature has for

people, especially children and people suffering from poor physical and mental health. Areas of the borough which are "deficient in access to nature" are identified, and actions have been devised to try and address these deficiencies.

5. Reason for recommendations

- 5.1 The consultation results clearly demonstrate public support for the BAP and the actions outlined within it.
- 5.2 The BAP 2020-2025 is a positive move towards protecting and enhancing the green spaces and wildlife of Islington. It is a partnership document and will allow us to work towards the same goals with community-based organisations. The adoption of a new Biodiversity Action Plan will demonstrate the Council's readiness to comply with national standards of good practice in relation to biodiversity. Implementation of the BAP will benefit both our environment and our residents, including those most disadvantaged in society. Many of the actions outlined in the draft BAP link closely to the Council's key priorities of providing the best start in life for children and creating a healthy environment for all.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Resident Impact Assessment
- Appendix 2 - Biodiversity Action Plan 2020-2025
- Appendix 3 – BAP Consultation Report

Background papers: None

Final report clearance:

Signed by:



28 August 2020

Executive Member for Environment
and Transport

Date

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Resident Impact Assessment

Adoption of a new five year Biodiversity Action Plan (2020-2025 by the Council.

Service Area: Environment and Regeneration; Greenspace and Leisure

1. What are the intended outcomes of this policy function etc.?

A Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is a strategic document, which outlines how a local authority is committed to protecting and enhancing wildlife.

Whilst the council leads on the BAP, the process is intended to include partners, community groups and the wider public. Representatives of some groups have been consulted as part of the development of this BAP.

Traditionally BAPs have been based around Habitat Action Plans and Species Action Plans but, reflecting the very urban nature of Islington, we have broken away from this approach and introduced the idea of four key areas: The Built Environment, Designated Sites, Parks and Urban Green Spaces and Access to Nature.

A key focus of the Islington BAP is how to improve quality of life for people by increasing opportunities for them to access high quality green space.

2. Resident Profile

Who is going to be impacted by this change i.e. residents/service users/tenants? Please complete data for your service users. If your data does not fit into the categories in this table, please copy and paste your own table in the space below. Please refer to **section 3.3** of the guidance for more information.

		Borough profile	Service User profile
		Total: 206,285	Total: 206,285
Gender	Female	51%	51%
	Male	49%	49%
Age	Under 16	32,825	32,825
	16-24	29,418	29,418
	25-44	87,177	87,177
	45-64	38,669	38,669
	65+	18,036	18,036
Disability	Disabled	16%	16%
	Non-disabled	84%	84%
Sexual orientation	LGBT	No data	No data
	Heterosexual/straight	No data	No data
Race	BME	52%	52%
	White	48%	48%
Religion or belief	Christian	40%	40%
	Muslim	10%	10%
	Other	4.5%	4.5%
	No religion	30%	30%
	Religion not stated	17%	17%

3. Equality impacts

With reference to the [guidance](#), please describe what are the equality and socio-economic impacts for residents and what are the opportunities to challenge prejudice or promote understanding?

- **Is the change likely to be discriminatory in any way for people with any of the protected characteristics?**

No, one of the aims of the BAP is to improve the access to nature for all people, including those with protected characteristics.

- **Is the proposal likely to have a negative impact on equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics? Are there any opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics?**

No this will increase the opportunities for residents with protected characteristics.

- **Is the proposal likely to have a negative impact on good relations between communities with protected characteristics and the rest of the population in Islington? Are there any opportunities for fostering good relations?**

BAP is very much about people as well as wildlife. The document puts forward a clear evidence base for the many benefits that contact with nature has for people, especially children and people suffering from poor physical and mental health. Areas of the borough, which are “deficient in access to nature”, are identified, and actions have been devised to try to address these deficiencies.

4. Safeguarding and Human Rights impacts

a) Safeguarding risks and Human Rights breaches

Please describe any safeguarding risks for children or vulnerable adults AND any potential human rights breaches that may occur because of the proposal? Please refer to **section 4.8** of the [guidance](#) for more information.

Nil safeguarding risks

If potential safeguarding and human rights risks are identified then please contact equalities@islington.gov.uk to discuss further:

5. Action

How will you respond to the impacts that you have identified in sections 3 and 4, or address any gaps in data or information?

For more information on identifying actions that will limit the negative impact of the policy for protected groups, see the [guidance](#).

Action	Responsible person or team	Deadline

Please send the completed RIA to equalities@islington.gov.uk and also make it publicly available online along with the relevant policy or service change.

This Resident Impact Assessment has been completed in accordance with the guidance and using appropriate evidence.

Staff member completing this form:

Head of Service or higher:

Signed: _Barry Emmerson

Signed: Andrew Bedford

Date: 03/10/2019

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Islington Council Biodiversity Action Plan 2020 to 2025



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Foreword

In 2019 the UN launched the Global Assessment study of biodiversity, announcing that its findings put the world “on notice”. Highlighting the universal importance of biodiversity, the report brings to light the unprecedented loss of species over the past 50 years and warns that human activities “threaten more species now than ever before”.

Set in the context of this global crisis, Islington’s new Biodiversity Action Plan outlines how we in Islington will contribute to the national and world-wide effort to protect biodiversity for future generations. There is lots that we can achieve at a local level to safeguard our existing wildlife and to make the places where we live greener, cleaner and healthier.

At a time when concerns about climate change are growing stronger, we need to remember the important role that biodiversity plays in climate control. Environmental sustainability is fundamental to our work as a council, and the importance of protecting wildlife is a key part of that message.

Islington is one of the most densely populated London boroughs, and yet it supports an amazing range of wildlife. From house sparrows to rare orchids, there is a surprising diversity of animals and plants on our doorsteps. This Biodiversity Action Plan sets out the principles by which Islington will ensure that wildlife is protected and enhanced, and how everyone in the borough will have access to a high quality natural environment.

A Biodiversity Action Plan is not an end in itself, but a collaborative and ongoing piece of work, involving not only the Council but the wider community in working towards its goals. I believe that everyone in Islington should be able to make a contribution towards protecting and enhancing our natural environment.



**Councillor Rowena Champion
Executive Member for
Environment and Transport**



1. Why do we need a Biodiversity Action Plan?

1. Why do we need a Biodiversity Action Plan?

1.1 What is Biodiversity?

The word 'biodiversity' is used to describe the abundance and variety of life on earth. It covers the whole range of living things: animals and birds, trees and flowers, insects and fungi. It is concerned with the interactions within and between species and

the communities, habitats and ecosystems in which they occur. It is not just about the rare and the threatened. As important, is the wildlife we see and experience every day and which contributes to our quality of life and enhances the environment in which we live.

Figure 1. Family pond-dipping in a wildlife pond



1.2 What is a Biodiversity Action Plan?

This plan is the third Biodiversity Action Plan for Islington and covers the period 2020 to 2025. The Islington BAP draws on UK biodiversity strategies and the London BAP to produce a plan that is relevant on a local level. The purpose of a BAP is to identify actions needed to safeguard and enhance biodiversity, and to enable people to benefit from it.

Since Islington is a very urban borough, the habitats and species that are significant on a national scale, are often not present here. Following consultation with stakeholders, it was decided that this BAP would break away from the traditional BAP structure of Habitat and Species Action Plans and instead focus on the following key areas:

- The built environment
- Designated sites
- Parks, housing estates and urban green spaces
- Access to nature

This BAP is a partnership document, put together in consultation with interested parties from a wide range of groups such as Friends of Parks, third sector organisations and community groups. The success of any BAP depends upon the Council working in partnership with the wider community and we welcome continued support and involvement from people who wish to contribute to this important work.

1.3 Why is biodiversity important?

We rely on the natural environment for our health, well-being, economic stability and social development. Whether we are aware of it or not, our everyday needs are intrinsically linked to the important ‘ecological services’ biodiversity provides and which we cannot afford to lose. Extinctions and changes to biological systems have always occurred naturally, but it is the rate at which these losses and changes are now occurring that is of serious concern. The loss of biodiversity already occurring is staggering, and so are the future predictions. This decline is acutely experienced in urban areas such as London where the competition between development, people and wildlife is often at its greatest. It is vital that we protect and maintain the Earth’s biodiversity on a global scale, but equally important that we take action at a local level.

1.3.1 The links between biodiversity, health and social well-being

We depend greatly on biodiversity for our well-being and quality of life. Biodiversity plays an important role in enhancing and encouraging outdoor recreation, exercise and relaxation and can help tackle health issues such as obesity and mental health problems.

Islington is the 24th most deprived local authority in England (out of 326). The borough has the third highest level of child poverty in England (36%) and it ranks fourth nationally for income deprivation affecting older people. Every ward in Islington has at least one area that ranks among the 20% most deprived

Figure 2. Local residents volunteering at Gillespie Park nature reserve



areas of England. The gap in healthy life expectancy between the least and most deprived areas of Islington is 7.7 years for women and 10 years for men. It is estimated that 20% of Islington adults are obese and 36% of children in Year 6 (aged 10 to 11 years) are classified as overweight or obese, which is worse than the average for England.

There is a growing body of evidence that access to nature can help improve people's physical and mental health. In 2017, DEFRA produced an "Evidence statement on the links between natural environments and human

health"¹ which reported strong evidence for the link between contact with the natural environment and mental health and well-being.

A study by the Centre for Research on Environment, Society and Health (2012)² found that regular exercise in a natural environment can cut the risk of suffering from poor mental health by 50%. Exercising indoors was found to yield no significant benefits for mental health when compared with the outdoor environment.

Studies have shown that the likelihood of participating in physical activity at recommended levels was 22% lower in participants who perceived access to green space as difficult as opposed to very easy (NERC, 2011)³.

In both adults and children there is evidence that learning in natural environments is associated with the accumulation of social capital and fostering pride, belonging and involvement in the community (Links between natural environments and learning, Natural England. July 2016)⁴.

‘Areas of Deficiency in Access to Nature’ are defined as being more than one kilometre walking distance from a publicly accessible Borough or Metropolitan Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. **17% of Islington is deficient in access to nature**, meaning that there is inequality in opportunity for Islington residents in accessing natural green space. At the time of the last BAP (published in 2010) one third of the borough was deficient in access to nature. This figure has been successfully reduced through the designation of new Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) but more needs to be done through the improvement of other green spaces and also the targeting of individuals from Areas of Deficiency who could benefit from activities in the natural environment. Appendix C shows Islington’s Areas of Deficiency.

1.3.2 Biodiversity benefits for young people

Exposure to the natural environment has a beneficial impact on young people’s physical, mental and social development. Contact with nature has been shown to improve children’s concentration, confidence and behaviour. In 2016, Natural England published a report containing evidence that a greater amount of natural spaces in or around the learning environment (e.g. the school) is associated with better emotional, behavioural and learning processes and outcomes⁵. Research from the University of Derby has found that children who feel connected to nature achieve better results in their key stage 2 tests than those who do not⁶.

The value of maintaining high quality natural green space close to people’s homes is more important than ever in an inner city borough like Islington where many children grow up in homes without gardens, or where garden space is very limited. A study by Childwise (2013) found that by the age of seven, children will on average have spent a full year of their lives on screens⁷. This sedentary lifestyle increases the likelihood of obesity and related health problems. Access to green space can play a vital role in addressing these complex issues.



1.3.3 Ecosystem services

Ecosystem services are the benefits that people obtain from the natural environment. They are integral to the provision of clean water and air, the production of food, the regulation of climate and disease and the decomposition of waste. They also include cultural services such as the provision of spaces for recreation and education. Pollination is an ecosystem service that is under threat directly due to declining biodiversity. Around 80 percent of all flowering plant species world-wide are pollinated by animals, mainly insects. Through the pollination of commercial crops such as tomatoes, peas, apples and strawberries, insects are estimated to contribute over £600

million per annum to the UK economy (2015)⁸. The State of Nature 2013 report showed that in the UK more than half of the bee, butterfly and moth species studied have declined in the past 50 years⁹.

Locally, Islington's green infrastructure, including our parks and open spaces, gardens, allotments, railway corridors and street trees, provides a valuable function. It not only makes the borough a greener and more visually attractive place to live but reduces the risk of flooding, improves air quality, provides us with locally grown food, improves health and well-being, and helps to cool urban areas in summer. In all it plays an essential role in the everyday lives of every Islington resident.

Figure 4. Bees are essential pollinators



1.3.4 Biodiversity and economics

Ecosystem services have historically been viewed as public goods with no markets and no prices, so they have often been left out of economic calculations. Yet two-thirds of the world's ecosystem services are in decline as a result of loss of biodiversity from human induced pressures including population growth, changing diets, urbanisation and climate change. In 2017 a ground-breaking study published by the Mayor of London looked for the first time at the economic value of health benefits that Londoners get from the capital's public parks and green spaces. The Natural Capital Account for London¹⁰ concluded that:

- London's public green spaces have a gross asset value of more than £91 billion, providing services valued at £5 billion per year.
- For each £1 spent by local authorities and their partners on public green space, Londoners enjoy at least £27 in value.
- Londoners avoid £950 million per year in health costs due to public green space.

1.3.5 Our Biodiversity Duty

The "Biodiversity Duty" of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 requires that "every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity". This Biodiversity Action Plan is the mechanism by which Islington Council aims to fulfil its 'Biodiversity Duty' by highlighting priorities and opportunities for protecting and enhancing the borough's biodiversity.

Figure 5. A rare Green Winged Orchid found on the green roof of a council building in Islington



2. Vision 2030: Building a Net Zero Carbon Islington by 2030

2. Vision 2030: Building a Net Zero Carbon Islington by 2030

Climate change is arguably the greatest threat to biodiversity on a global level. The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported in October 2018 that the world has until 2030 to avoid an increase in global temperatures above 1.5°C, which would have devastating impacts on the planet and people's lives.

Islington Council has declared a climate and environment emergency and pledged to work towards making Islington net zero carbon by 2030. The Council has produced a new action plan: Vision 2030: Building a Net Zero Carbon Islington by 2030 which sets out how this will be achieved. This, along with other environmental policies such as the Islington Transport Strategy 2019-2041 and the Air Quality Strategy (2019- 2023) all work to complement the work of the BAP to improve the quality of Islington's environment.

At a time when concerns about climate change are growing stronger, we need to remember the important role that biodiversity and the natural environment plays in climate control. Islington's green infrastructure contributes to reducing the impacts of climate change in the following ways:

- Green spaces, trees and water bodies have a cooling effect in summer, reducing the effects of raised urban temperatures
- In winter, green roofs and walls can reduce the heat lost by buildings by providing better insulation and thus lowering energy use.
- Street trees and green spaces make a major contribution to the capture and storage of CO₂ and improvement of air quality. Since about 50% of wood by dry weight is comprised of carbon, tree stems and roots can store up to several tonnes of carbon for decades or even centuries. Research carried

out by UCL in 2018 suggests that the urban forest can store almost as much carbon as an equivalent area of tropical forest.

- Soils play a major role in storing carbon. The amount depends on the management as most carbon is stored in root systems. So management that leaves the roots undisturbed and allows a long growing period followed by cut and lift (i.e. meadow management) sequesters most carbon.
- Green spaces provide natural drainage which help prevent flooding incidents and filter pollutants before they reach water courses.

This BAP will play a key role in contributing to Islington's net zero carbon plan through the following actions:

- Protecting Islington's network of green spaces and SINCS.
- Increasing the number of street trees planted.
- Increasing the number of green roofs created on new developments.
- Converting some areas of amenity grass in parks and housing estates into meadows.
- Creating more areas of planting in parks, housing estates, and the built environment.
- Creating more sustainable urban drainage schemes (SUDS).
- Encouraging wildlife gardening and community action in greening the environment.
- Raising awareness through events and education of the importance of taking action against climate change.

3. The Ecology of Islington

The Ecology of Islington

3.1 Introduction to Islington's ecology

Urban areas are becoming increasingly important as refuges for wildlife. Many plants and animals have adapted to these environments and made them their home. From swifts which use cracks and crevices in buildings to nest, to the colonisation by many wildflowers, such as London rocket, wildlife has learned to flourish in the inner city.

Islington is the third smallest, but most built up of all London boroughs covering 14.86 km squared. It is the most densely populated local authority area in England and Wales, with 15, 517 people per square km, meaning that it has the smallest amount of green space per head of population. Only 13% of the borough's land is green space, the second lowest proportion of any local authority in the country. As explained in section 1.3.1, 17% of

Islington (249 hectares) is defined as being deficient in access to nature.

Despite the limited amount of green space in Islington, the borough supports a huge diversity of wildlife, from bee orchids and bats to great spotted woodpeckers. Our parks and green spaces are supported by a network of gardens, allotments and food growing areas, rail side lands, waterways and street trees.

Islington's biodiversity includes a number of rarities and nationally important species. Examples include the native black poplar, one of Britain's rarest native timber trees; the first recorded sighting in Britain of *Lasius emarginatus*, an ant species usually found in Europe and the red data book species *Nomada lathburiana*, a cuckoo bee which is a species of conservation concern.

Figure 7. Barnsbury Wood Local Nature Reserve

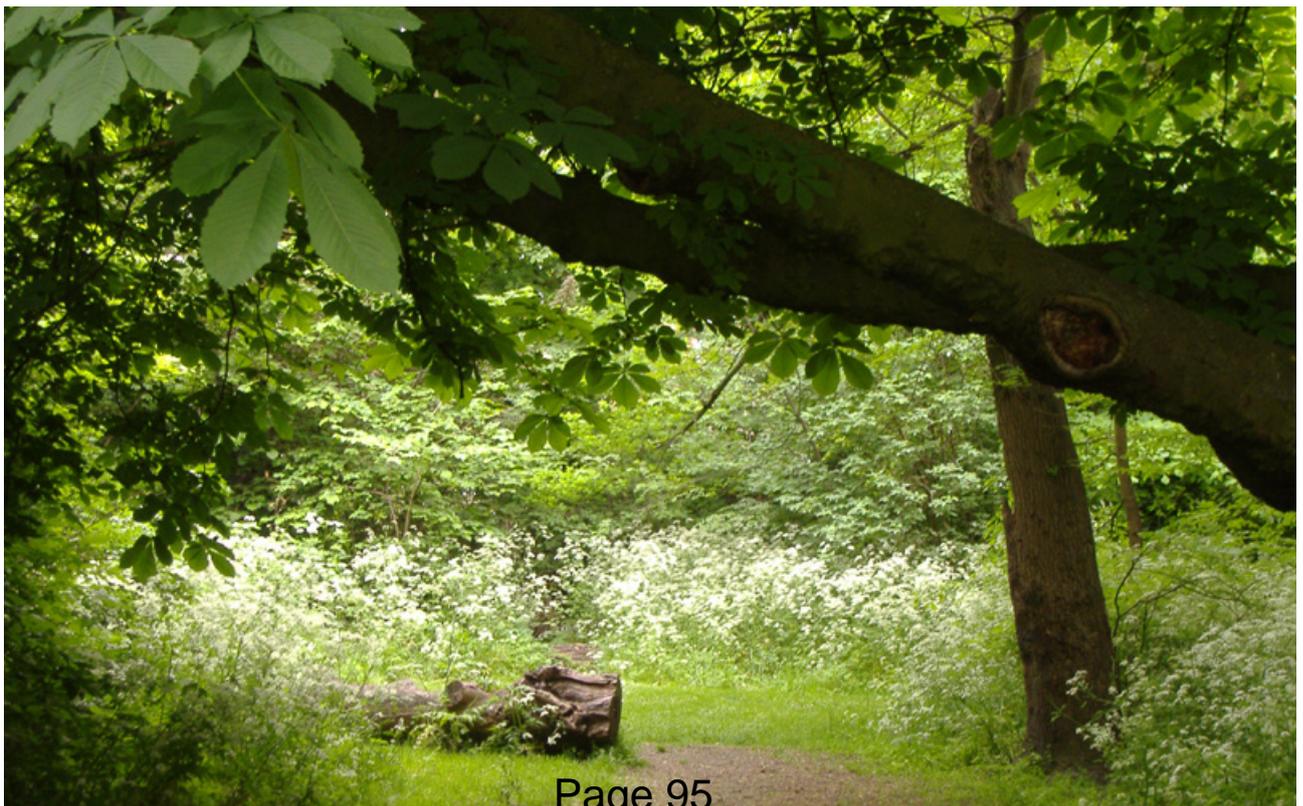


Figure 8. A wildflower meadow on a new housing development in Islington



3.2 Designated sites

Islington has two types of site designation that are relevant to nature conservation: Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).

The borough's three statutory Local Nature Reserves are Gillespie Park, Barnsbury Wood and Parkland Walk. Gillespie Park consists of a mosaic of habitats, including ponds, woodland and grassland. Several wildflower species occur here that are rare in central London, including narrow-leaved bird's foot-trefoil, grass vetchling, and bee orchid. There is also a breeding population of slow worm, which is a nationally protected species. The Parkland Walk is home to Islington's largest area of woodland and has several nationally important species and habitats, including five different species of bat and a diverse acid grassland. Barnsbury Wood is London's smallest Local Nature Reserve which, despite its size, is a good example of mixed deciduous woodland. In addition to their valuable biodiversity interest, these sites also provide a great community resource, allowing people

in Islington to experience contact with nature. Gillespie Park is home to the borough's Ecology Centre which provides a curriculum-linked environmental education programme for schools and a broad programme of community events including volunteering opportunities.

In total there are 64 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) in Islington. Many of these are public parks, but they also include cemeteries, churchyards, school grounds, the Regents Canal, housing estates, railside lands and reservoirs (see Appendix A for a full list of designated sites). These non-statutory designated sites are afforded additional protection through the planning process.

Among these, the borough has three Sites of Metropolitan Importance, meaning that not only are they important to Islington but also to London on a regional level because of the nature they support. These sites are Gillespie Park, the Parkland Walk and the Regent's Canal.

3.3 Monitoring

Islington's Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation are required under National Indicator 197 (Improved Local Biodiversity – the active management of local sites) to receive active conservation management. All Local Authorities are required to provide an annual assessment of SINC within their area, reporting on number of sites and whether they are in positive conservation management. The resources and effort required to maintain and enhance these sites as biodiverse habitats should not be underestimated and presents a real challenge. For example, not all the sites are owned by the Council. Engaging landowners, such as Network Rail, to consider the biodiversity value of their sites and actively manage them for biodiversity can present problems.

Monitoring the condition of Islington's SINC is vital to ensuring their future protection. Developers can challenge the designation of a site as a SINC and if they can show that it has degraded and lost the original value for which it was designated, then the site cannot be properly protected by the planning system. This type of occurrence can undermine the value of the SINC network and so it is important that SINC are monitored and accurate records maintained. However, this has significant cost implications and is difficult to achieve.

The last full ecological survey of Islington's SINC and green spaces was carried out in

2010. The survey was carried out by Land Use Consultants and included 560 green spaces across the borough. The survey did not result in a list of all plants or animals found at the various locations; rather it was a broad-brush attempt to capture the main habitat types present at each site. The results of this survey led to the designation of several new SINC as well as some other changes, for example alterations to some existing SINC boundaries. With the review of Islington's Local Plan in 2018, a smaller scale survey of around twenty sites was carried out, with the intention of identifying any changes in SINC status. This survey resulted in the proposal to designate three new SINC (Grenville Road Gardens, Wray Crescent and Bevin Court) which will be undertaken as part of the development of Islington's new Local Plan.

The role of monitoring is central in ensuring that Islington's habitats and species are not being lost and to understanding any environmental changes that may be occurring. The information we collect is fed into the London-wide picture to help make assessments about the state of biodiversity in the capital as a whole. London's biological records centre (Greenspace Information for Greater London – GiGL) plays a central role in holding and analysing this data, as well as making it accessible for developers and policy makers. Like most other London boroughs, Islington has a service level agreement with GiGL to enable us to work in partnership.

4. The Policy Context

The Policy Context

4.1 London policies

In 2017, the Mayor of London produced the London Environment Strategy, which covers a wide range of environmental issues, including biodiversity under the banner of Green Infrastructure. Conserving and enhancing wildlife and natural habitats is a key element of the strategy, which recognises that important social, health and economic benefits result from greening the city.

The London BAP contains targets to improve the condition and increase the extent of a selected number of habitats and species found in the capital. The plan identifies 214 priority species that are under particular threat in London.

Figure 9. Swift and swift boxes



4.2 Planning and development

There is significant pressure on biodiversity through the loss of green space and brownfield sites to development and also through the renovation or demolition of existing buildings which can support species such as bats and swifts. The protection and enhancement of biodiversity habitats is important given pressure from development, climate change and deficiencies in access to nature within the borough.

Planning policies exist to protect biodiversity and to provide opportunities for enhancement. Designated sites receive protection through the planning system and some species, e.g. bats and nesting birds are protected by law. All developments are assessed for their likely impact on biodiversity and planning conditions are issued to developers which require them to mitigate for any loss and incorporate wildlife-friendly enhancements such as green roofs and nest boxes.

The following is a summary of relevant policies currently detailed in the Local Plan:

- Developments must protect, contribute to and enhance the landscape, biodiversity value and growing conditions of the development site and surrounding area, including protecting connectivity between habitats.
- Developments are required to maximise the provision of soft landscaping, including trees, shrubs and other vegetation, and maximise biodiversity benefits, including through the incorporation of wildlife habitats that complement surrounding habitats and support the council's Biodiversity Action Plan.

- New-build developments and all major applications are required to maximise the provision of green roofs and the greening of vertical surfaces. The policy requires that all available roof space is used for green roofs, subject to other planning considerations and that the green roofs are designed to maximise biodiversity benefits.
- The design of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) must maximise biodiversity benefits, for example through soft landscaping.
- Large major developments and developments where a specific need has been identified by the council are required to provide on-site publicly accessible open space, and such spaces must also maximise biodiversity benefits. New or improved public open space shall incorporate areas of biodiversity habitat complementing surrounding habitats and supporting the council's Biodiversity Action Plan. Public open spaces within the functional vicinity of a Site of Importance

Figure 10. Bug house on a new housing development in Islington



for Nature Conservation (SINC) shall be planted with native species and local provenance species and complement the species composition in the SINC.

- Development will not be permitted where it would adversely affect designated SINC of Metropolitan or Borough Grade 1 Importance, and SINC of Borough Grade II and Local Importance, and any other site of significant biodiversity value, will also be strongly protected.
- Development of private open space is not permitted where there would be a significant impact on biodiversity and ecological connectivity.

Policies covering other areas of development can sometimes conflict with the need to protect wildlife and this can result in planning decisions being made which result in a net loss of biodiversity, for example in the building of new hospitals or schools.

Despite the threats caused by development, greening the built environment arguably presents the greatest opportunity to increase biodiversity in a densely urban borough such

as Islington. Forgotten spaces on housing estates and the public highway can be transformed into places which benefit both biodiversity and improve quality of life for residents. Through incorporating biodiversity within robust planning conditions, features such as green roofs, green walls and wildlife friendly landscaping will maximise the available habitat for biodiversity in new development.

The Draft New London Plan published in 2018 by The Mayor of London states that “The inclusion of urban greening measures in new development will result in an increase in green cover, and should be integral to planning the layout and design of new buildings and developments”. The Mayor has developed a generic Urban Greening Factor model to assist boroughs and developers in determining the appropriate provision of urban greening for new developments. This is based on a review of green space factors in other cities and enables a score to be assigned to different types of landscaping features created in a new development.



Figure 12. A child enjoying activities at a community event

In Islington, these policies will be reflected in our Local Plan. Major developments and large minor developments will be expected to contribute to urban greening by including green cover as a fundamental element of site and building design. An Urban Greening Factor (UGF) will be developed to identify the appropriate amount of urban greening required in new developments. The UGF will encourage developers to incorporate surface cover types such as high-quality landscaping (including trees), green roofs, green walls and nature-based sustainable drainage. Each surface cover type will have a factor rating and developments will be required to achieve the target score relevant to the development type.

4.3 Islington Council’s corporate priorities

Protecting and enhancing the environment goes hand in hand with improving the lives of local communities and reducing environmental inequality. The Council’s Spark initiative focuses on building resilience, prevention and early intervention in order to help residents improve their quality of life. Access to high quality natural green spaces has a role to play in building resilient communities and preventing poor health outcomes.

This BAP will contribute to the Council’s priority of a fairer Islington, helping to reduce the differences experienced between the poorest and wealthiest residents, promoting community cohesion and ensuring that every Islington resident is able to access and experience the benefits that Islington’s wildlife and wild spaces provide.

Figure 13. A member of a local gardening group enjoys her harvest



5. 2010 – 2013 Biodiversity Action Plan Review

2010 – 2013 Biodiversity Action Plan Review

To inform this new BAP, a review of the 2010 – 2013 BAP was carried out. The review looked at how many actions were completed against the various action plans. Whilst progress was made across the board, more was achieved in areas where Islington Council had a greater degree of control, such as parks and open spaces. In areas outside of Local Authority control, such as rail side land, it was far harder to achieve targets. In order to ensure that this new BAP is deliverable, this will be a key consideration in where we concentrate our efforts.

Figure 14. Planters displaying wildlife-friendly plants in Newington Green



6. The Action Plans

The Action Plans

Islington's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is the borough's contribution to achieving the targets identified in both the UK and London BAPs. Islington's original BAP was first adopted in 2005 and was put together by Islington Biodiversity Partnership led by the Council. This new Plan will run from 2020 – 2025, and follows a new, simpler structure, that aims to ensure the actions of the BAP are measurable, deliverable and realistic.

The BAP sets out a framework for protecting and enhancing Islington's biodiversity and decreasing environmental inequality by improving access to high quality green spaces. By doing this, Islington's BAP will help improve the quality of life for every resident, protecting the Borough's natural environment and green infrastructure and securing its benefits for generations to come.

The protection and care of our wildlife is something that everyone can contribute to and benefit from and this action plan will help to co-ordinate that approach. We already have much to be proud of Islington, with a huge range of wildlife-rich sites, such as New River Walk, The Regent's Canal, Olden Community Garden and Culpepper Community Garden, to name but a few. In addition to Council resources and those of partner organisations, a huge amount of volunteer effort goes into making our green spaces fantastic places for both people and wildlife. This new BAP hopes to build on our current success by setting how we can engage with more people and create more spaces in the borough where wildlife can flourish. By creating more wildflower meadows, planting more trees and creating more food growing areas, we can help make Islington an even greener borough.

OUR VISION

To protect and enhance Islington's biodiversity ensuring that everyone can have access to, and benefit from, the borough's natural environment near to where they live or work, now and in the future.

Our priorities

1. To conserve existing habitats, biodiversity features and species.
2. To enhance and improve the condition of existing areas of habitat.
3. To create new habitats or increase the extent of existing habitat or range of species through restoration or expansion.
4. To engage the whole community in reducing environmental inequality by increasing access to green spaces for people and wildlife, providing the opportunity to learn about, protect and promote Islington's biodiversity.

BAP themes

This new BAP takes a markedly different approach to the previous BAPs, with broader, thematic areas replacing the more specific Habitat and Species Action Plans. The four Actions Plans that form part of this BAP are:

1. The Built Environment (BE)
2. Parks, Housing Estates and Urban Green Spaces (GS)
3. Designated Sites (DS)
4. Access to Nature (AN)



Figure 15. Volunteers at Gillespie Park celebrating their Green Flag win

The Action Plans

Built Environment Action Plan (BE), 2020 to 2025

London’s wildlife depends not only on green spaces, but also on the artificial fabric of the city. Islington is one of the smallest and most built up of the London Borough’s and our built environment has a crucial role to play in supporting and enhancing biodiversity.

Buildings can provide roosting sites for bats and nesting opportunities for birds such as swifts, house sparrow, peregrine falcon and black redstart, species that have seen large population declines, and which are dependent on built areas for their survival. Walls can provide habitats for many species of plant, including ferns and mosses. They also provide spaces for invertebrates. Trees and roadside verges not only provide visual enhancement to the built environment but also help reduce pollution and provide habitats for birds and invertebrates.

It is important that the management of existing buildings and built landscape in

Islington takes account of wildlife and that new development is built with biodiversity in mind. New developments, large and small, for example can have a significant effect on Islington’s wildlife and on the ability of people to experience and enjoy nature.

The biggest opportunity we have for enhancing biodiversity and creating new habitat in the built environment is by ‘urban greening’. Through the use of green roofs, green walls, ecological landscaping and artificial nesting sites and the incorporation of some types of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), different types of habitats supporting a wide range of species can be created. This forms an important part of our green infrastructure. These features can also play a useful role in connecting existing areas of habitat and supporting rare and protected species, as well as provide a broad range of other benefits, including reducing rainwater run-off, increasing energy efficiency and providing local cooling.

No	Broad area	Action	Target date	Lead Partners	Delivery method
BE 1.1	Conserve and enhance the built environment	Update local policy and guidance to ensure consistency with best practice and London-wide policy	2020	LBI Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Environmental Design SPD to ensure it contains the most up to date advice for planners and developers. Ensure guidance is in line with other Local Authorities and The London Plan.

BE 1.2	Conserve and enhance the built environment	Maintain and enhance Islington's street tree resource	2025	LBI Tree Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase canopy cover in Islington from 25% (2019) to 30% by 2050. • Increase the net number of street trees in Islington. Aim to replace existing trees when they have to be removed where practical and appropriate and seek opportunities for new tree planting sites. • To ensure resilience in the Islington street tree stock. To plant tree species that are appropriate for their location but also resilient to climate change and with consideration to incoming tree pests and diseases. • To increase the cyclical inspection for Islington tree stock to a minimum of every three years and amend with incoming legislative or best practice changes to ensure the council fulfils its duty of care. • To ensure the trees planted are sourced sustainably and with appropriate biosecurity if imported. • To ensure adequate mitigation for trees lost to development and seek net gain and canopy cover increase where possible.
BE 1.3	New opportunities in built environment	Maximise biodiversity gains from new developments by requiring developments to incorporate biodiversity measures. This requirement is specified in detail in the new Local Plan	2025	LBI Planning LBI Greenspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance to developers on how to comply with planning policies that seek to maximise biodiversity gains. • Condition appropriate recommendations in ecological submissions from developers. • Formulate new planning conditions to require swift bricks on buildings over the specified height.

BE 1.4	New opportunities in built environment	Install green roofs on new Council buildings where feasible as standard	2025	LBI Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to condition green roofs in line with best practice.
BE 1.5	New opportunities in built environment	Require all major developments and new build minor developments to incorporate high quality green roofs as standard, including on new Council buildings	2025	LBI Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to require all developments to maximise the provision of green roofs and the greening of vertical surfaces as far as reasonably possible, through planning policies and planning conditions. New-build developments, and all major applications, are required to use all available roof space for green roofs, subject to other planning considerations. Green roofs must also be designed to maximise biodiversity benefits.
BE 1.6	New opportunities in built environment	Encourage biodiversity improvements to be delivered through sustainable urban drainage systems	2025	LBI Planning LBI Greenspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require the incorporation of SUDS that directly improve biodiversity as a primary function. Consider the incorporation of SUDS schemes into new landscape design projects in parks. Continue to require the design of SUDS measures that maximise biodiversity benefits, alongside water quality, amenity etc. As part of the new Local Plan, Green/'soft' SUDS measures including green roofs and open water features will be preferred over grey/engineered solutions as part of the drainage hierarchy.

BE 1.7	New opportunities in built environment	Review landscaping proposals submitted with planning applications, to ensure that biodiversity benefits are maximised	2025	LBI Planning LBI Greenspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planting schemes considered in terms of biodiversity value. Seeding schemes considered in terms of biodiversity value.
BE 1.8	New opportunities in built environment	Provide specialist arboricultural advice on planning applications	2025	LBI Planning LBI Tree Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that existing trees are protected where possible and appropriate numbers and species of new trees are planted in new developments.
BE 1.9	New opportunities in built environment	Identify opportunities to green the public realm through the creation of pocket parks and improvements of green infrastructure on our public roads and pavements including SUDs schemes	2025	LBI Highways and traffic engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that new schemes consider biodiversity value.
BE 2.0	New opportunities in built environment	Identify opportunities to provide schemes which benefit wildlife via the temporary use of sites awaiting development	2025	LBI Planning LBI Highways and traffic engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the policy in The Local Plan to strongly encourage site owners to make spaces available for temporary use by the local community. This includes very small sites such as pocket parks and the use of parking spaces as parklets.

The Action Plans

Parks, Housing Estates and Urban Green Spaces (GS), 2020 to 2025

Parks and urban green spaces are a vital asset in an inner city borough such as Islington, especially for the many residents who do not have gardens of their own. Our parks and urban green spaces offer opportunities for relaxation and recreation, and are beneficial to physical and mental well-being. They are of course also critically important for biodiversity.

The scope of this action plan covers publicly accessible green spaces, primarily:

- Parks
- Housing Estate Grounds
- Local Nature Reserves
- Publicly accessible churchyards

Key Islington facts

- Islington has the second lowest amount of open space of any Local Authority in the country.
- The borough has the second highest number of parks of any other London borough, reflecting the small but densely populated nature of Islington, which supports a large number of very small parks.
- Islington has the smallest amount of open space per head of population of any London borough.
- Islington has 64 sites that are designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). Although SINCS are covered by a separate action plan, it is worth remembering that the large majority are public parks and so there is some overlap.
- All Local Authorities are required to report to central government annually on how many SINCs they have and what proportion are in active management (this reporting system is known as the Single Data List 169)

- 17% of the borough is identified as deficient in access to nature (reduced from 33% of the borough in 2010 due to the designation of more SINCs).
- Islington Council manage approximately 160 parks and open spaces, 11.3% of the total area of which is actively managed for nature conservation. Islington Council's Greenspace Team carry out most of the work in parks and in green spaces on housing estates with our own in house Grounds Maintenance Service. However some parks are maintained by local residents. The Council employs Assistant Park Managers and Community Rangers to organise the management of the parks and help with community involvement, volunteering and events. A dedicated events team co-ordinate events run by external organisations in parks. Every year approximately 400 events take place in parks attracting 150,000 people. There are 35 Friends of Parks Groups in Islington dedicated to protecting and improving parks. Approximately 8,500 volunteer hours go into looking after Islington's parks every year.
- In addition to parks, there is approximately 57.3 hectares of open space on housing estates.
- There are three Local Nature Reserves in Islington: Barnsbury Wood, Gillespie Park, Parkland Walk (shared with Haringey Council)
- Approx 36% of the borough's trees are in the green spaces and 29% are on housing estates.
- Islington Council manage two cemeteries outside of the borough boundaries: Hampstead Cemetery (in Camden) and Islington and St Pancras Cemetery (in Barnet). Both sites support valuable habitats for wildlife, including wildflower meadows and areas of woodland.

No	Broad area	Action	Target date	Lead Partners	Delivery method
GS 1.1	Protect and enhance designated sites	Enhance where possible those parks and estates which are SINCs (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) and where specific recommendations were made in the ecological survey of the borough in 2010	2021	LBI Greenspace and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate recommendations made and assess their feasibility. • Where feasible, create new wildlife habitats or improve existing ones according to the recommendations.
GS 1.2	Protect and enhance designated sites	Ensure the effective management of parks and estate SINCs to protect their wildlife habitats	2021	LBI Greenspace, housing Friends of Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly review existing Management Plans. • Produce new Management Plans for priority SINC sites. • Include biodiversity in all SLAs (Service Level Agreements) with groups managing SINCs. • Assistant Park Managers to liaise with Friends Groups to raise awareness of the importance of the specific wildlife interest of each site. • Ensure staff have access to land-use maps of parks and SINCs, showing where different wildlife habitats are.

GS 1.3	Species monitoring	Collate species data to help to monitor changes taking place to quality of wildlife habitats	2025	LBI Greenspace GIGL Friends of Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out species monitoring on the borough's 3 Local Nature Reserves. • Supply all parks species records to GIGL. • Support and encourage Friends Groups and the wider public to carry out wildlife surveys and send data to GIGL.
GS 1.4	Priority Species	Protect and enhance features for London BAP priority species, e.g. house sparrows, bats, bees, swifts	2025	LBI Greenspace and housing RSPB, Octopus, St Luke's Community Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the 3 wildflower meadows created for house sparrows as part of the London House Sparrow Project. • Support and encourage projects around the protection of London BAP priority species, e.g. planting bee-friendly species on housing estates.

GS 1.5	Enhance sites for biodiversity	Protect, enhance or create new wildlife habitats in parks and urban green spaces, e.g. housing estates	2025	LBI Greenspace Housing, Friends of Groups, Octopus, St Luke's Community Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create 250m” of new wildlife habitat per year in parks. • Include biodiversity in all SLAs (Service Level Agreements) with groups managing parks and open spaces, and assess the impact of this. • Ensure that all new Park Improvement Projects take account of biodiversity. • Support and encourage Friends of Groups and residents who want to undertake wildlife projects on sites e.g. Islington in Bloom. • Share the BAP with allotment holders via the Islington Allotment Forum and support action for biodiversity on allotments where possible e.g. beekeeping. • Ensure biodiversity improvements are included in all new development schemes in parks. • Seek CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funding through the planning system to fund new biodiversity projects. • Map all biodiversity improvements on GIS (Geographical Information Systems). • Identify sites where new ponds or wetland habitats could be created, given their scarcity in the borough and their high biodiversity value.
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GS 1.6	Enhance sites for biodiversity	Take action on housing estates to protect and enhance biodiversity	2025	LBI Housing and LBI Greenspace Octopus Community Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek opportunities to enhance housing estates for biodiversity with wildlife-friendly planting, meadows, nest boxes and food growing areas. • Ensure biodiversity improvements are included in all new development schemes in housing estates. • Provide advice to housing staff on managing sites for wildlife. • On housing estates, ensure overall number of trees does not decrease.
GS 1.7	Enhance sites for biodiversity	Take action at Hampstead Cemetery and St Pancras and Islington Cemetery for biodiversity	2025	LBI Greenspace, LBI Cemeteries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage existing wildlife habitats in the cemeteries for the benefit of wildlife where possible. • Identify opportunities to extend existing wildlife habitats. • Install new features for wildlife such as bird boxes, bat boxes and log piles. • Support volunteer involvement e.g. TCV Green Gym and Friends Groups. • Produce a new Management Plan for Hampstead Cemetery.

GS 1.8	Enhance sites for biodiversity	Protect and enhance trees in parks and open spaces	2025	LBI tree service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase canopy cover in Islington from 25% (2019) to 27% by 2030 and to 30% by 2050. • To ensure resilience in the Islington street tree stock. To plant tree species that are appropriate for their location but also resilient to climate change and with consideration to incoming tree pests and diseases. • To increase the cyclical inspection for Islington public tree stock to a minimum of every three years and amend with incoming legislative or best practice changes to ensure the council fulfils its duty of care. • To ensure the trees planted are sourced sustainably and with appropriate biosecurity if imported. • To ensure adequate mitigation for trees lost to development and seek net gain and canopy cover increase where possible. • Implement tree veterinisation plans in the nature reserves to speed up the process of decay in specific trees to enhance their value for wildlife. Also identify future veteran trees and manage woodland for them.
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GS 1.9	Demonstrate best practice for biodiversity	Raise awareness of biodiversity issues by demonstrating best practice	2025	LBI Greenspace and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure planting plans adhere to Greenspace’s Sustainable Planting Policy and renew this policy within the 5 year period. • Where possible buy peat free plants and work with suppliers to reduce the use of peat. • Use 50 tonnes of recycled compost a year on Islington’s parks and green spaces. • Retain undisturbed dead wood on site wherever possible to benefit invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles. • Install “bug hotels” and bird and bat boxes. • Ensure the benefits to wildlife are considered when decisions are made to remove ivy from trees and walls. • Identify and remove invasive species e.g. Japanese knotweed using best practice techniques. • Continually review use of pesticides and herbicides in public realm and housing and look to reduce where possible. Carry out trials for alternative chemical free weed removal options. Adoption of integrated weed management document.
GS 2.0	Demonstrate best practice for biodiversity	Ensure existing wildlife habitats are managed effectively	2021	LBI Greenspace and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide on the ground training for grounds maintenance staff and possibly caretakers on wildlife habitats and their importance.

The Action Plans

Designated Sites Action Plan (DS), 2020 to 2025

Green spaces are designated for their importance for nature, according to nationally and locally recognised criteria. Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are sites that are important for wildlife but also for providing people with access to wildlife. They are selected and designated by local authorities, in consultation with Natural England. LNRs are statutory nature conservation sites. There are three LNRs in Islington: Gillespie Park, Parkland Walk (part of which is in Haringey) and Barnsbury Wood.

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) are areas which have been designated for their wildlife value by the local authority. They are non-statutory nature conservation sites. The London Wildlife Sites board oversees the procedures that local authorities need to follow in order to select and designate SINCs, however the board does not need

to approve the selection of individual sites. SINCs are given some protection through the planning process. SINCs have a hierarchy for their value to wildlife. This ranges from Sites of Metropolitan Importance (the most important sites, and those which have value on a London wide level), through Sites of Borough Importance (Grade I or Grade II) to Sites of Local Importance.

In Islington there are currently 64 SINCs with three additional SINCs proposed in the new Local Plan (2019). Most are owned by Islington Council, and many are parks, but some are owned by other landowners e.g. Network Rail and Thames Water. 58% of SINCs were in positive management for conservation in 2019. SINC designations are not statutory, so as a borough we are limited in what we can achieve on the sites outside of our direct control. This Action Plan reflects this, and lays out how as a borough we will aim to maintain and enhance our SINCs.

No	Broad area	Action	Target date	Lead Partners	Delivery method
DS 1.1	Monitor and maintain	Complete statutory requirements under the DEFRA Single Data List 160-00, reporting on percentage of SINCs in positive management	Annual requirement to report	LBI Greenspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual collation of data. Maintenance of data and contacts with private landowners to allow accurate reporting.

DS 1.2	Monitor and maintain	Review SINC data held by the Council to ensure that it is accurate and up to date	2025	LBI Greenspace LBI GIS GiGL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review of data held by local authority, including checking base maps for any changes. • Notifying the London Wildlife Sites Board of any changes that require their input. • Maintaining up to date data with GiGL.
DS 1.3	Monitor and maintain	Continue to enter into annual Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL), where budget allows, in order to access data and associated key benefits to aid biodiversity work	2025	LBI Greenspace GiGL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual renewal of SLA. • Regular filing of quarterly reporting data from GiGL. • Annual submission of species and habitat monitoring data from Greenspace to GiGL.
DS 1.4	Strategic improvements	Focus on spatial impacts when considering any future improvements of SINCs	2025	LBI Greenspace LBI SPAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with Spatial Planning and Transport if funding becomes available to make biodiversity improvements, for example under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or Section 106 agreements. • Communicate any changes.

DS 1.5	Strategic Improvements	Strengthen the SINC network through the adoption of new and upgraded SINC through the Local Plan	2020	LBI Greenspace LBI planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify those sites which may qualify for designation or an upgrade. Commission ecological surveys of these sites. Consider the recommendations of the surveys and designate where possible, in liaison with landowners and the London Wildlife Sites Board. Inform GIGL of any changes.
DS 1.6	Improving connectivity	Liaise with Network Rail on the protection of railside SINC	2025	LBI Greenspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request that Network Rail notifies local residents and Islington Council prior to any vegetation works taking place. Communicate with Network Rail re planned vegetation works in order to protect nesting birds and aim to ensure minimal vegetation removal takes place.
DS 1.7	Increasing access and reducing deficiencies	Action on planning policies for reviewing location of new areas to reduce Areas of Deficiency in Access to Nature	2025	LBI Greenspace LBI planning LBI housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have regard to reducing Areas of Deficiency for Access to Nature through targeted improvement works to designate new SINC or upgrade SINC.
DS 1.8	Increasing access and reducing deficiencies	Action on Core Strategy policies for ensuring designated sites are identified and protected	2025	LBI Planning LBI Greenspace LBI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take appropriate action through the planning process to protect SINC from damage from development.

The Action Plans

Access to Nature Action Plan (AN), 2020 to 2025

Islington is one of the smallest, most built up of all London Boroughs, with 87% of its total area being built on. It also has the smallest amount of open space per head of population. 17% of Islington is deficient in access to nature, meaning individuals living in areas of nature deficiency are further than 1km walking distance from a designated Site of Importance to Nature Conservation. Increasing people’s contact with nature has been shown to bring about benefits in physical and mental health as well as improvements in social and community well-being. Involving people in looking after our natural green spaces will also help to enhance them and protect them for the future.

This Action Plan aims to increase and enhance people’s contact with nature and promote community involvement in looking after green spaces. Activities to engage Islington's

residents with the natural environment range from volunteering opportunities and community gardening projects to events and environmental education sessions for schools. Islington Council plays a key role in running many of these activities. However, a wide range of other organisations are also working across the borough to deliver important conservation and education projects. These include the Islington Wildlife Gardeners, The Garden Classroom, Octopus Network's Wild Spaces Project, Froglife, London Wildlife Trust, Groundwork, Friends of Parks and tenant's groups. A number of these groups have contributed to drawing up this Action Plan, and their work is vital to delivering the actions that are detailed here.

The Action Plan has four key themes:

- Engagement
- Volunteering
- Education
- Health and wellbeing

No	Broad area	Action	Target date	Lead Partners	Delivery method
AN 1.1	Engagement	Engage Islington residents and raise awareness of biodiversity through public events in parks, nature reserves and housing estates	2025	LBI Greenspace, Friends Groups, Octopus, St Luke's Community Centre, The Garden Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 events a year to be organised by a range of different groups and organisations.

AN 1.2	Engagement	Enable people from groups under-represented in visits to green space (e.g. BME groups, disabled people, young people) to take part in biodiversity themed activities in local green spaces	2025	LBI Greenspace, Friends Groups, Octopus, St Luke's Community Centre, The Garden Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to support the delivery of these activities, involving at least 200 beneficiaries a year.
AN 1.3	Engagement	Encourage and support community action for wildlife projects such as groups who want to seek funding for projects which enhance biodiversity, e.g. planting for pollinators	2025	Community Groups, Friends Groups, LBI Greenspace, The Garden Classroom, Octopus, St Luke's Community Centre, Voluntary Action Islington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenspace staff to provide advice, practical help and in-kind match funding where appropriate. • Octopus to seek groups who might want to apply for grants.
AN 1.4	Engagement	Support and promote the take-up of unloved spaces by communities	2025	LBI Greenspace Islington Gardeners, Octopus, The Garden Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenspace to support and encourage individuals or groups wanting to improve unused spaces for wildlife. • Octopus to encourage projects on unloved spaces.

AN 1.5	Engagement	Promote wildlife gardening to residents, schools, estates, businesses and community groups through the annual Islington in Bloom competition	Every summer	LBI Greenspace Islington Gardeners, Octopus, The Garden Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure planting for biodiversity continues to be part of judging criteria. • Octopus to help promote Islington in Bloom using their milk float.
AN 1.6	Engagement	Maintain and develop Islington Ecology Centre as a community hub and a centre of excellence where third sector organisations, schools and Islington residents can get support and advice on biodiversity issues	2025	LBI Greenspace, The Garden Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise the Ecology Centre to ensure more people in the local area are aware of it. • Deliver programme of events, education and volunteering at Ecology Centre. • The Garden Classroom to promote the Ecology Centre to teachers through their LiNE (Learning in Natural Environments) workshops.
AN 1.7	Engagement	Engage with the London National Park City initiative	2025	LBI Greenspace The Garden Classroom Friends of Groups, Community Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver events as part of London National Park City Week. • Engage with London National Park City staff and volunteers to promote the greening of the urban environment.

AN 1.8	Volunteering	Provide volunteering opportunities for Islington residents, businesses and other stakeholders to help manage and enhance wildlife habitats in Islington's parks, nature reserves and housing estates	2025	LBI Greenspace Octopus Community Centres London Wildlife Trust, St Luke's Community Centre, The Garden Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islington Ecology Centre staff to continue to run weekly volunteer sessions encouraging a diverse range of people to get involved. • Greenspace to continue to run community work days in parks. • Greenspace to support corporate volunteering days. • London Wildlife Trust continue to run volunteer days by Regent's Canal. • St Luke's Community Centre to work with volunteers on various sites e.g. St Luke's Gardens, King Square Gardens and Northampton Square. • The Garden Classroom offers volunteering opportunities on their education sessions and at Newington Green.
AN 1.9	Volunteering	Support the maintenance of existing wildlife gardens e.g. at Gillespie Park, Barnsbury Wood, Culpeper, Sunnyside and King Henry's Walk Garden, as examples of best practice	2025	LBI Greenspace, The Garden Classroom, St Luke's Community Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the importance of these gardens and encourage their maintenance by providing assistance where required.

AN 2.0	Volunteering	Promote community gardening and food growing	2025	LBI Greenspace Octopus Community Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission Octopus Community Network to develop a Strategy and Action Plan for Community Gardening and Food Growing. • Identify suitable spaces for food growing. • Develop a plan to better promote food growing opportunities to the community. • Increase participation among residents in community gardening projects.
AN 2.1	Education	Aim to provide every child in Islington with the opportunity to experience high quality outdoor environmental education	2025	LBI Greenspace, The Garden Classroom, St Luke's Community Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,500 school children to take part in sessions run by Islington Ecology Centre staff every year. • 2,800 school children to take part in Garden Classroom education sessions every year. • St Luke's Community Centre to run gardening activities for children. • The Garden Classroom has established itself as the borough's LiNE (Learning in Natural Environments) service provider supporting Islington school staff to gain skills and training to become more confident to lead activities during school hours in Islington's greenspaces.
AN 2.2	Education	Educate and engage children with local wildlife through after-school clubs and holiday clubs	2025	LBI Greenspace, The Garden Classroom, Octopus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run 4 sessions a year for clubs (particularly for special needs children) at Islington Ecology Centre. • Octopus and The Garden Classroom delivering nature-themed holiday clubs reaching over 100 children a year.

AN 2.3	Education	Support and accommodate other forms of outdoor learning in Islington's green spaces	2025	LBI Greenspace, The Garden Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the use of the borough's 3 nature reserves for Forest Schools. • Facilitate the use of the borough's 3 nature reserves for adult learners e.g. through partnerships with the Adult Community Learning Team. • Encourage independently led school visits to parks. • Promote the Parkland Walk Education Park to schools. • The Garden Classroom to promote other forms of learning through LiNE Forum.
AN 2.4	Education	Educate people about the importance of bees and encourage action for bees, e.g. pollinator planting and bee keeping	2025	The Garden Classroom, Octopus and LBI Greenspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Garden Classroom to continue to run Wonderful World of Bees sessions using the apiary at Gillespie Park. • The Garden Classroom and Greenspace to organise a training session on bee keeping. • Octopus and The Garden Classroom to run bee events in green spaces. • Provide other training or educational resources where possible.
AN 2.5	Education	Encourage action for biodiversity on housing estates through education for housing staff and third sector organisations working on estates in the borough	2025	LBI Greenspace, Housing, Octopus, St Luke's Community Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Octopus Urban Wild Places Project will work with approx. 40 gardening groups on housing estates. • Education/training resources for housing staff to be delivered by Greenspace. • St Luke's Community Centre to work on improving 6 spaces a year.

AN 2.6	Education	Enable 500 children a year to take part in the RSPB's Big Schools Bird Watch Event	Every February	LBI Greenspace, RSPB The Garden Classroom,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Islington Greenspace staff to use RSPB resources to deliver free Big Schools Bird Watch sessions to schools. The Garden Classroom to provide follow-on sessions for schools to book.
AN 2.7	Education	Provide residents with guidance on wildlife gardening and how to protect some key species such as bats, house sparrows, bees and swifts	2025	LBI Greenspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information at the Ecology Centre. Islington Greenspace to run some targeted events.
AN 2.8	Health and wellbeing	Enable people to derive the health and well-being benefits of contact with nature	2025	LBI Greenspace Octopus, Friends Groups, St Luke's Community Centre, The Garden Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote volunteering activities. Work with organisations which support people with disabilities and mental illness to organise joint events. St Luke's Community Centre to promote health and well-being through gardening and trips to green spaces. The Garden Classroom to seek funding to run Green Steps guided walks.
AN 2.9	Education	Urban Forest School	2025	The Garden Classroom, LBI Greenspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the Urban Forest School programme developed by The Garden Classroom using 15 sites in Islington.

References

- ¹ DEFRA produced an “Evidence statement on the links between natural environments and human health”: http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Document.aspx?Document=14042_EvidenceStatementonnaturalenvironmentsandhealth.pdf
- ² Centre for research on environment, society and health (2012) Regular physical activity in natural environments halves risk of poor mental health: <http://cresh.org.uk/2012/06/20/regular-physical-activity-in-natural-environments-halves-risk-of-poor-mental-health/>
- ³ Green space access, green space use, physical activity and overweight published by Natural England 2011. Natural England Commissioned Report NECR067.
- ⁴ Links between natural environments and learning: evidence briefing (EIN017) published by Natural England: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5253709953499136>
- ⁵ Links between natural environments and learning: evidence briefing (EIN017), Natural England, July 2016: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5253709953499136>
- ⁶ The Impact of Children’s Connection to Nature A Report for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) November 2015, University of Derby: http://ww2.rspb.org.uk/Images/impact_of_children%E2%80%99s_connection_to_nature_tcm9-414472.pdf
- ⁷ The Impact Of Screen Media On Children: A Eurovision For Parliament by Dr Aric Sigman: https://www.steinereducation.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/uk_screen_time.pdf
- ⁸ <https://www.bumblebeeconservation.org/threats-and-pressures/>
- ⁹ <https://www.bto.org/research-data-services/publications/state-nature/2013/state-nature-report-2013>
- ¹⁰ The Natural Capital Account for London published by Mayor of London: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/parks-green-spaces-and-biodiversity/green-infrastructure/natural-capital-account-london>



Figure 16. Wildlife Pond at Gillespie Park

Appendix

Appendices

Appendix A: List of Islington Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation

Site Name	Grade	Area Ha	Easting	Northing	Access
Baxter Road Open Space	L	0.49	532830	184580	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No public access
North London Line in Islington (east)	BI	3.94	532361	185025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only
Caledonian Park	BI	3.13	530198	184756	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
New River Walk	BI	2.15	532322	184642	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Barnard Park	L	3.58	531024	183721	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Archway Road Cutting	BI	0.73	529159	187271	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only
Holly Park Estate	BII	4.16	530554	187675	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Elthorne Park and Sunnyside Gardens	BII	2.95	530011	187396	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
St Josephs Social Centre	BII	0.49	528929	187143	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No public access
Spa Green Garden	L	0.32	531453	182775	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
St Pauls Shrubbery	L	0.5	532536	184905	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Newington Green	L	0.66	532860	185361	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Dowcras Wood	BII	0.24	533008	184958	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited public access
Jewish Burial Ground, Kingsbury Road	BII	0.38	533257	184966	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No public access

St Lukes Churchyard, Old Street	L	0.76	532293	182500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Upper Holloway Railway Cutting	BI	4.73	529916	186851	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only
Moreland Primary School Garden	L	0.02	531954	182771	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No public access
King Square Garden	L	1.25	531970	182634	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Lloyd Square	L	0.19	531088	182770	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only
Winton Primary School Garden	L	0.03	530611	183243	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only
Wilmington Square	L	0.39	531177	182552	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Claremont Square Reservoir	BII	0.68	531171	183064	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only
Culpeper Community Garden	BII	0.42	531204	183455	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Bunhill Fields Burial Ground	BII	1.63	532693	182262	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (part of site)
St Johns Gardens	L	0.14	531633	181931	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Claremont Close Lawns	BII	0.2	531303	183052	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only
Newcombe Estate	L	0.42	532176	185378	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents access only
North London Line in Islington (west)	BI	1.03	530876	184445	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only

Bemerton Estate - Garden (8)	L	0.15	530583	184091	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Dibden Street Open Space	L	0.13	532077	183893	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Copenhagen Junction	BI	2.95	530326	184183	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only
Holloway Road to Caledonian Road Railsides	BI	2.12	530499	184968	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only
Barnsbury Wood	BI	0.35	530852	184219	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited public access
Laycock Gardens	BII	1	531459	184617	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
St Mary Magdalene Garden	L	1.79	531277	184951	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Highbury Fields	L	10.12	531777	185278	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Bingfield Park	L	1.21	530403	183967	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Thornhill Square	L	1.14	530803	184045	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Barnsbury Square	L	0.5	531117	184241	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (part of site)
St Marys Church of England School Garden	L	0.05	531824	183993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No public access
St Marys Church Gardens	BII	0.59	531753	183864	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Market Road Garden	BII	1.11	530464	184710	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Freightliners Farm	BII	0.47	531030	184884	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)

Tufnell Park Primary School Gardens	L	0.23	529801	185603	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No public access
Hatchard Road Wildlife Garden	L	0.05	529998	186917	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No public access
Foxham Gardens	L	0.61	529633	186183	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Whittington Park	L	3.77	529818	186457	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Margaret MacMillan Nursery School Nature Garden	L	0.29	529949	187541	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No public access
Royal Northern Hospital	L	0.48	530311	186361	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents access only
Gillespie Park	M	3.45	531345	186082	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Isledon Road Railsides	BI	2.53	531202	186199	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only
Drayton Park Railsides and Olden Garden	BI	5.79	531286	186070	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only
Dartmouth Park Hill and Reservoir	BI	3.15	529040	186377	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (part of site)
Junction Road Railway Cutting	BI	0.5	529131	186031	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only
Spa Fields Gardens	L	0.84	531321	182425	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free public access (all/most of site)
Andersons square gardens	L	0.04	531714	183722	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No public access

Parkland Walk	M	3.45	528261	188677	• Free public access (all/most of site)
Radnor Street Open Space	L	0.38	532379	182533	• Free public access (all/most of site)
Skinner Street Open Space	L	0.38	531442	182458	• Free public access (all/most of site)
Archway Park	L	0.84	529404	187002	• Free public access (all/most of site)
Charterhouse	BII	0.85	531877	182051	• No public access
Fortune Street Garden	L	0.37	532349	182079	• Free public access (all/most of site)
Redbrick Estate	L	0.27	532444	182431	• Free public access (part of site)
Regents Canal	M	4.30	512336	181157	• Free public access (all/most of site)

Key to SINC Grades (in order of ecological importance) :

M = Metropolitan Level

BI = Borough Grade 1

BII = Borough Grade 2

L = Local

In addition, Islington and St Pancras Cemetery is a 62 hectare Borough Grade 2 SINC, owned and managed by the London Boroughs of Camden and Islington. However the site is located in the borough of Barnet. Hampstead Cemetery is also managed by Islington Council and is a 9.3 hectare Borough Grade 1 SINC, situated in Camden.

Changes to SINC's proposed in the new Local Plan (2019) are as follows:

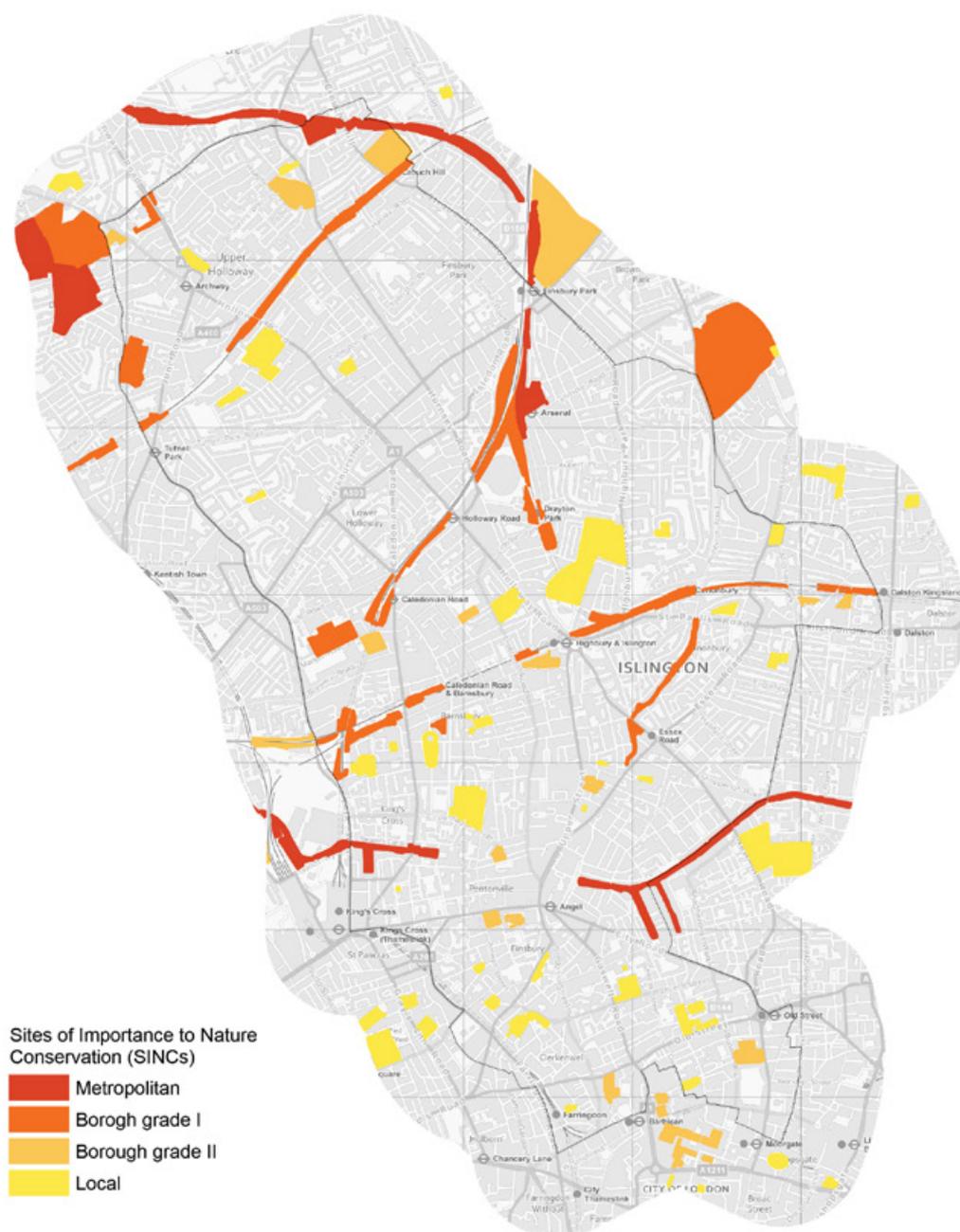
Whittington Park – upgrade from Local status to Borough Grade II, with an extension of the boundary.

Three new Local SINC's – Grenville Road Gardens, Wray Crescent, Bevin Court.
Caledonian Park – extension of the boundary.

Appendix B: Map of Islington SINCs

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)

Produced by Greenspace Information for Greater London on behalf of LB Islington, April 2018



Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINCs)

- Metropolitan
- Borough grade I
- Borough grade II
- Local



GiGL Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC
the capital's environmental records centre

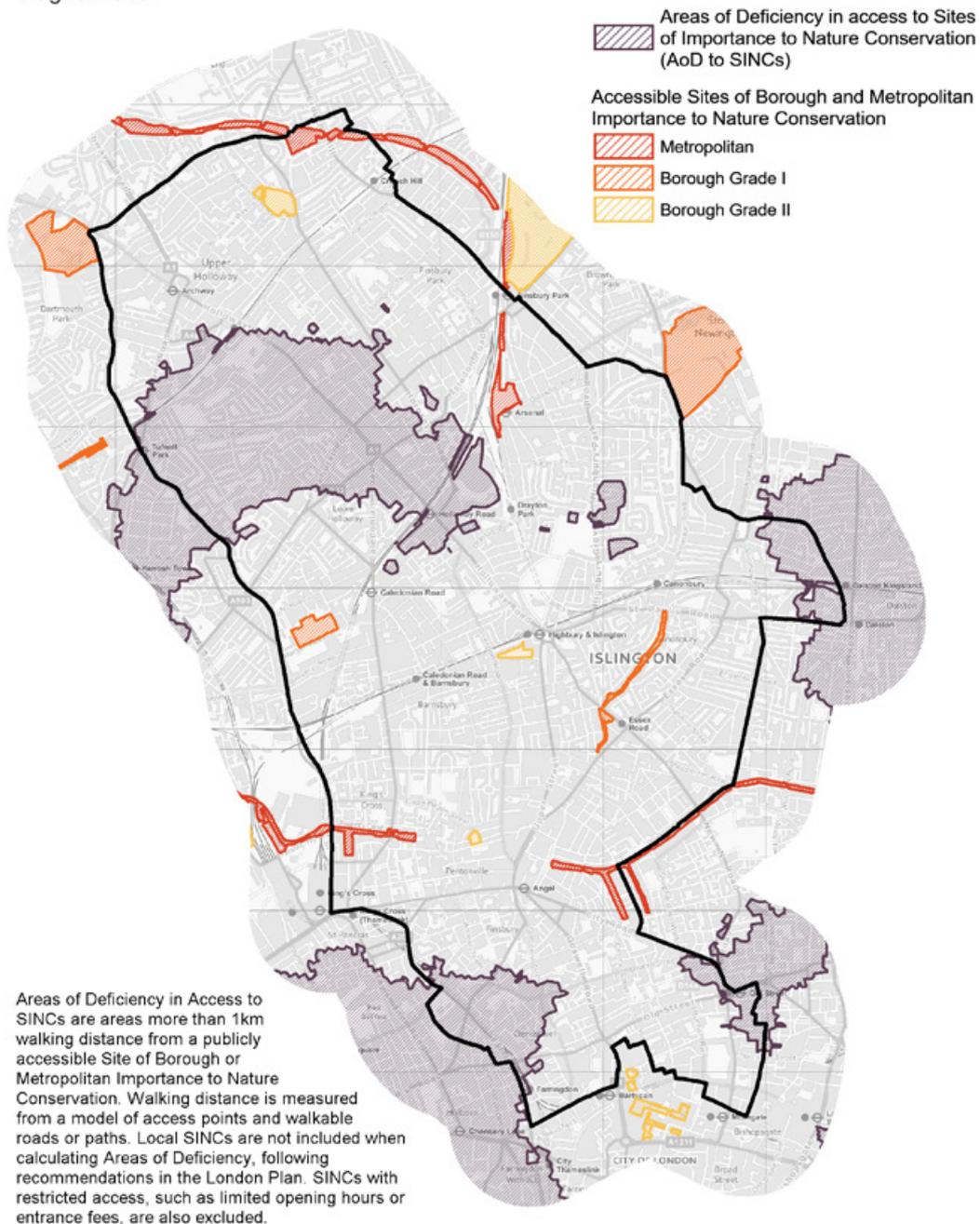
Scale 1:32000 at A4

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Appendix C: Map of Areas of Deficiency in Access to Nature

Areas of Deficiency in Access to Nature

Produced by Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC on behalf of LB Islington, August 2018



GiGL Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC
the capital's environmental records centre

Scale 1:33000 at A4

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Appendix D: List of partner organisations

The following organisations are active in Islington and all have a role to play in implementing the actions outlined in this BAP. However, the list is not intended to be exclusive, and it is hoped that further organisations and groups will be added as the plan is reviewed.

Friends of Parks Groups
Community Gardens
Octopus Community Network's Wild Places Project
The Garden Classroom
Islington Gardeners
The Canal and Rivers Trust
Groundwork
London Wildlife Trust
London Bat Group
London Bee keepers Association
London Natural History Society
Islington Swifts
Livingroofs
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
St Luke's Parochial Trust
Voluntary Action Islington



Islington Biodiversity Action Plan – Consultation Feedback Report

What was the consultation about?

The Council has consulted on a new Biodiversity Action Plan for Islington. The plan consists of a strategy document followed by four Action Plans. The aim of the BAP is to outline how Islington will protect and enhance biodiversity in the borough over the next five years.

Who did we consult with and how?

The consultation ran from 1st April and to 31st July. Due to the Covid 19 lockdown, it was not possible to run any consultation meetings or to deliver any paper based materials. The consultation was therefore completely online based. In order to tell people that the consultation was happening, the Council put out a press release and messages on twitter. Emails were sent to all interested parties that we had existing contact details for, e.g. Friends of Parks Groups and partner organisations.

The online consultation was a questionnaire divided into two sections. Section 1 was aimed at people who did not necessarily wish to read a Council strategy document but who wanted to engage with the process. This section also gave us the opportunity to capture people's views on wildlife and nature generally. Section 2 went into more detail about the BAP priorities and actions and asked for people's specific comments on these areas.

In total we received 175 responses to the BAP consultation. 164 of these were received via the online survey and 11 were sent in by email.

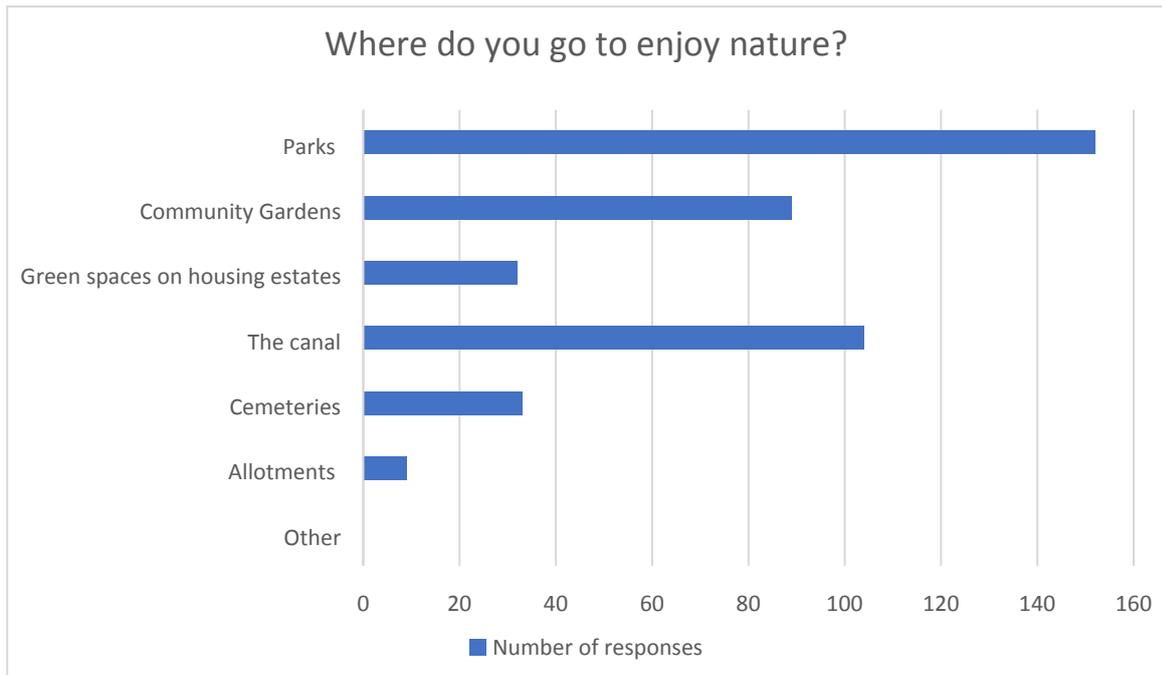
Results of the consultation:

Section 1: You and Your Views

1. Do you live or work in Islington?

97% of the online participants said yes to this.

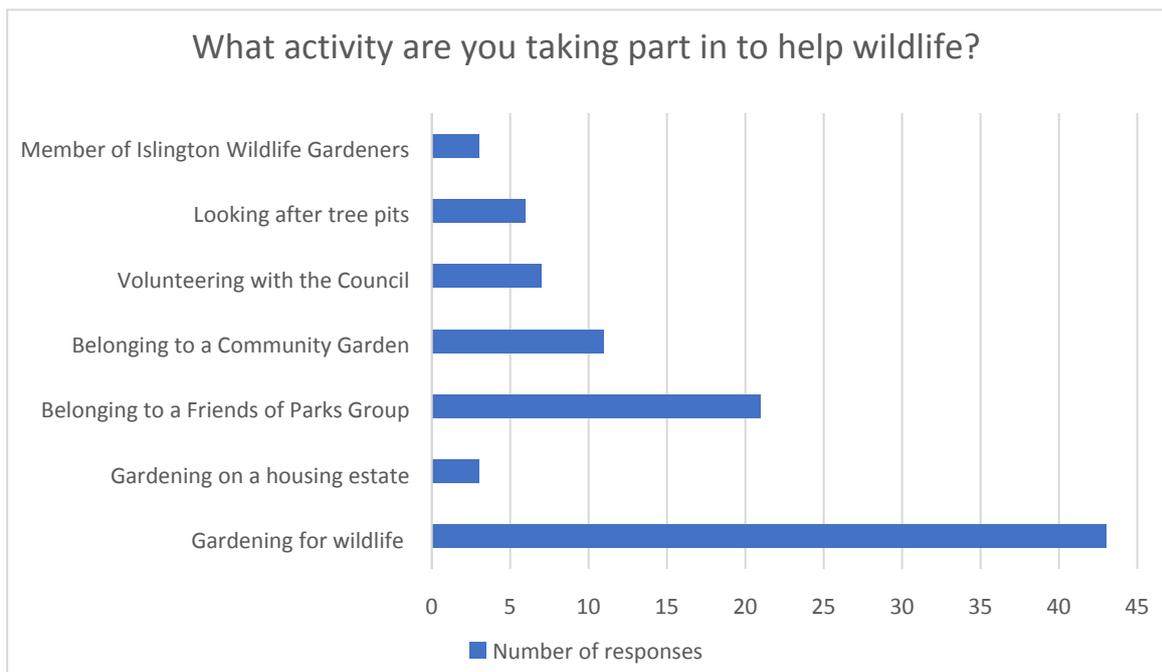
2. Where do you go in Islington to enjoy/access nature? People were asked to tick all that apply.



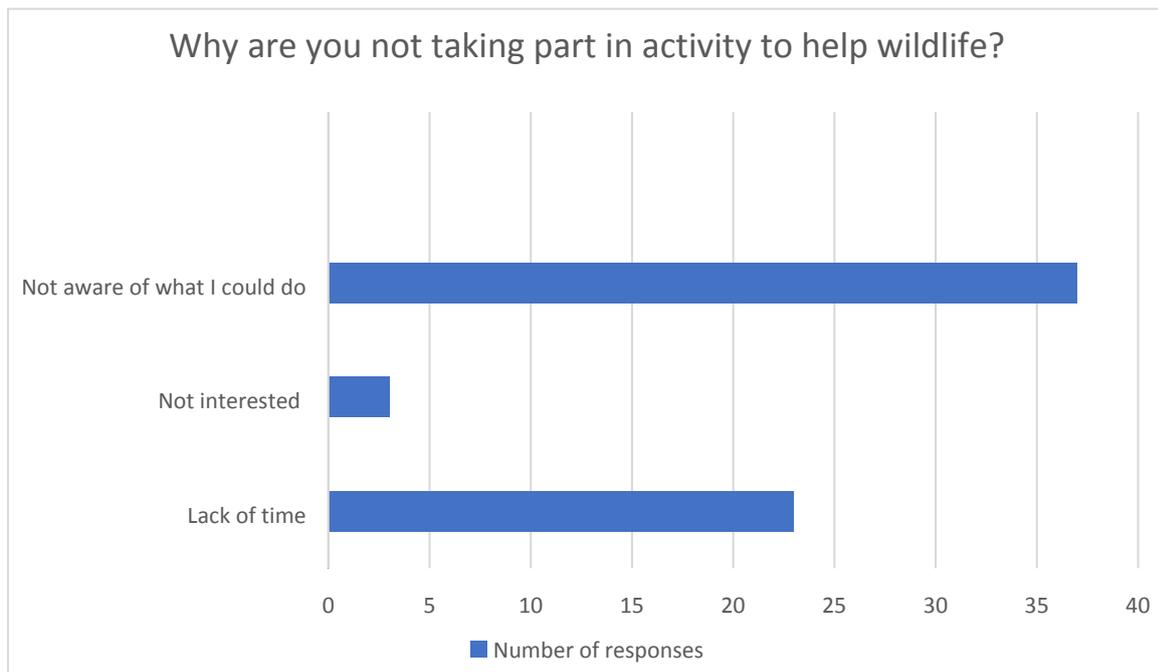
3. Are you taking part in any activity to help wildlife in Islington, for example in your garden, local park or school?

101 participants said yes to this.

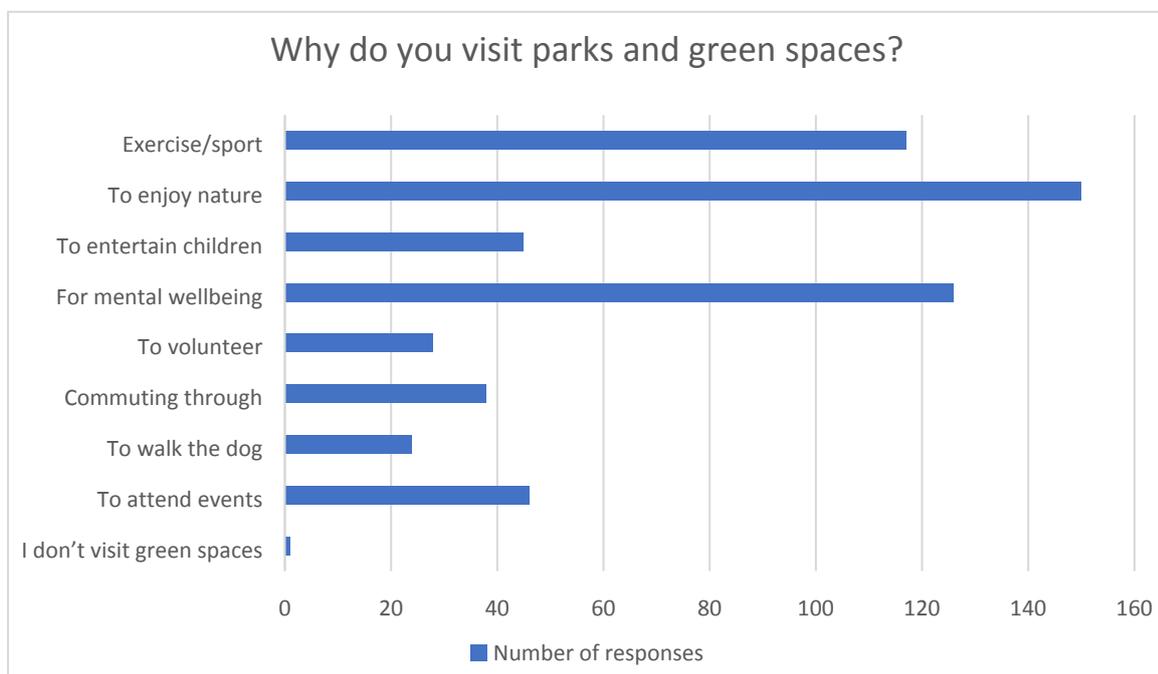
The questionnaire asked people to describe what activity they were taking part in to help wildlife. The bar chart below shows how many people mentioned the following categories in their answers. Some people listed more than one activity.



If people said they were not taking part in any activity, they were asked to say why:



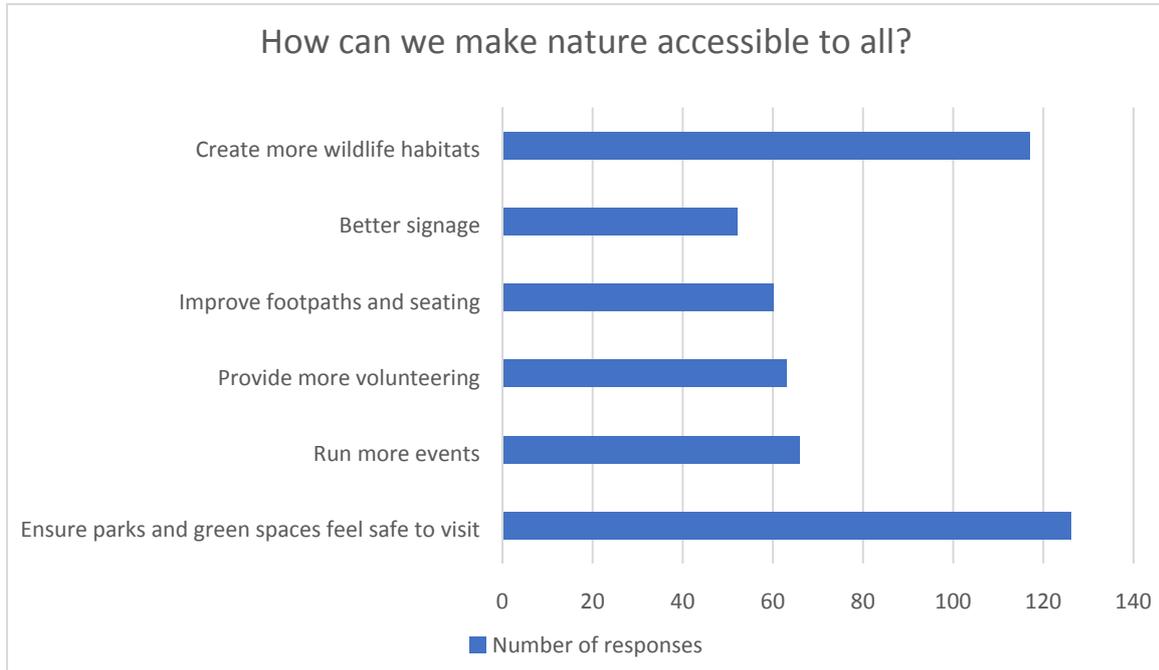
4. Why do you visit parks and green spaces? People were asked to tick all that apply.



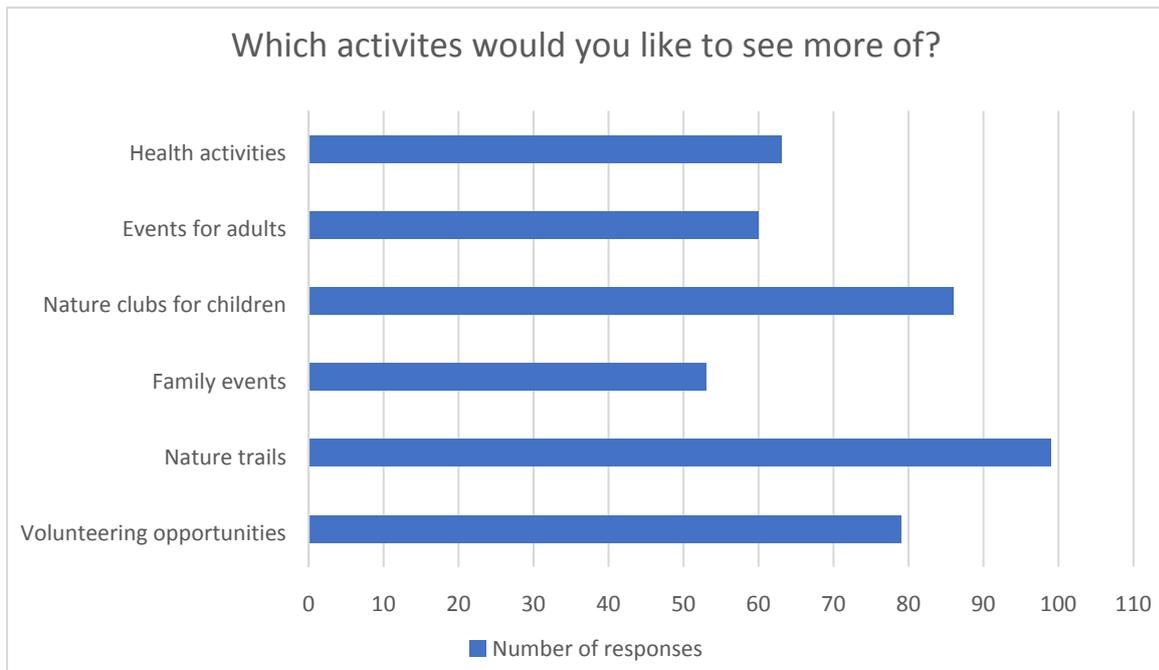
5. Did you know that Islington has an Ecology Centre and a nature reserve at Gillespie Park?

111 people (68%) said that they knew about the Ecology Centre and 93 of them had visited. 48 people said they didn't know about it.

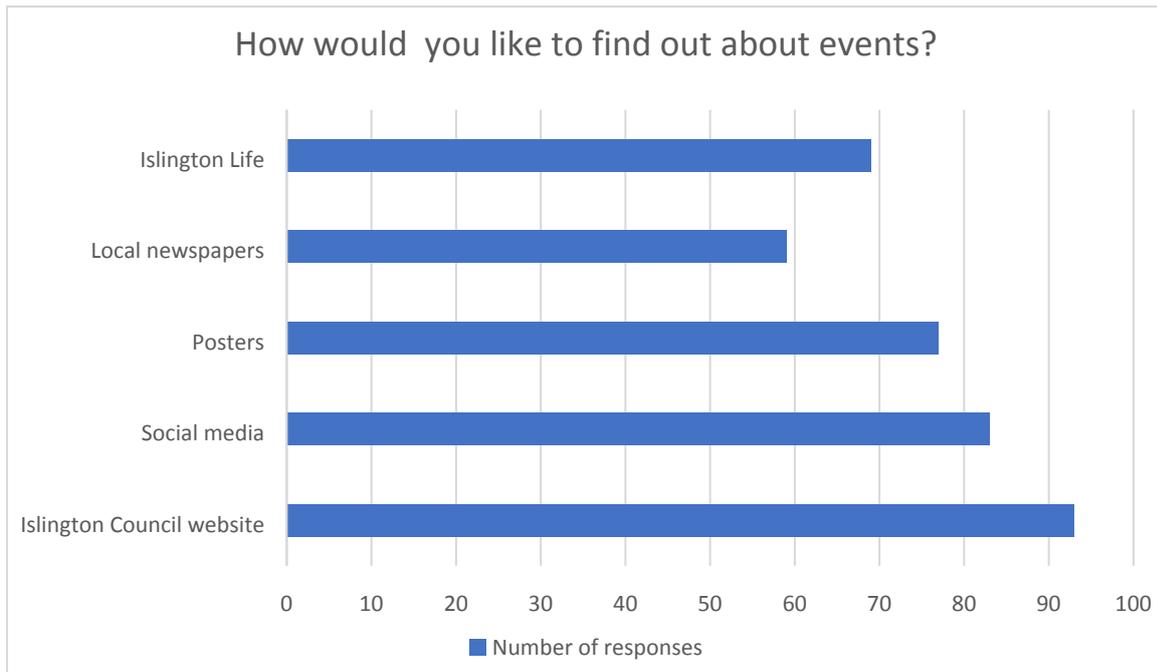
6. One of the key aims in the draft BAP is to make nature accessible to all. What do you think the Council could do to achieve this? People were asked to tick all that apply



7. The draft BAP outlines some ways in which people can engage more with nature in Islington. Which activities, if any, would you like to see more of in parks and green spaces? People were asked to tick all that apply.

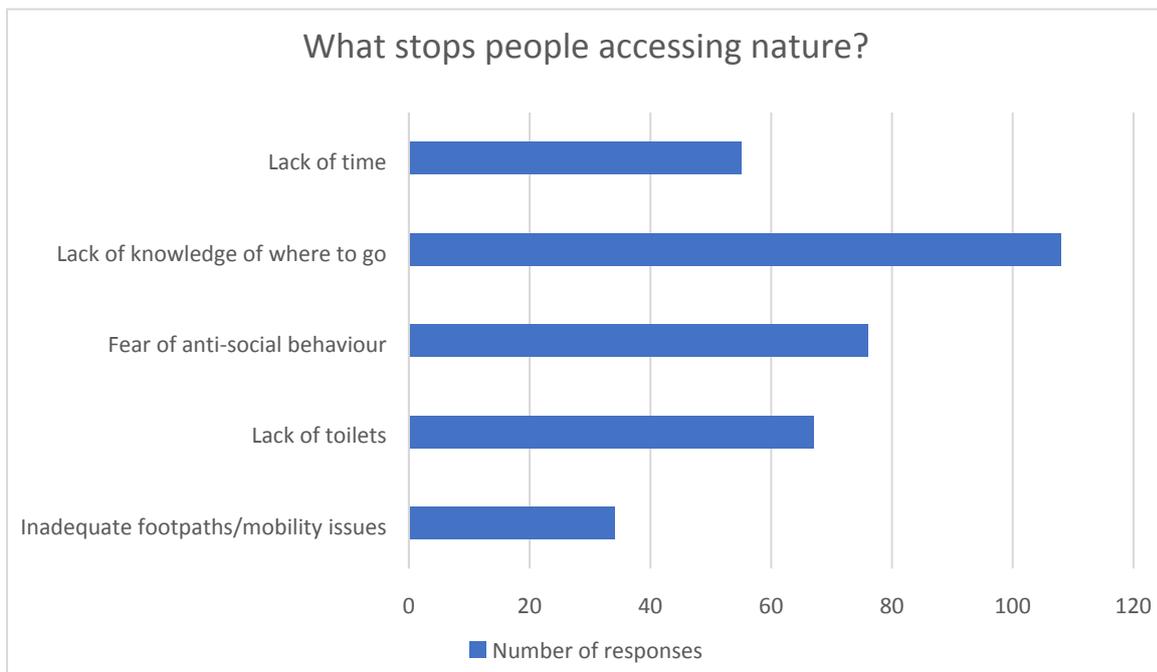


8. How would you like to find out about future events and activities?



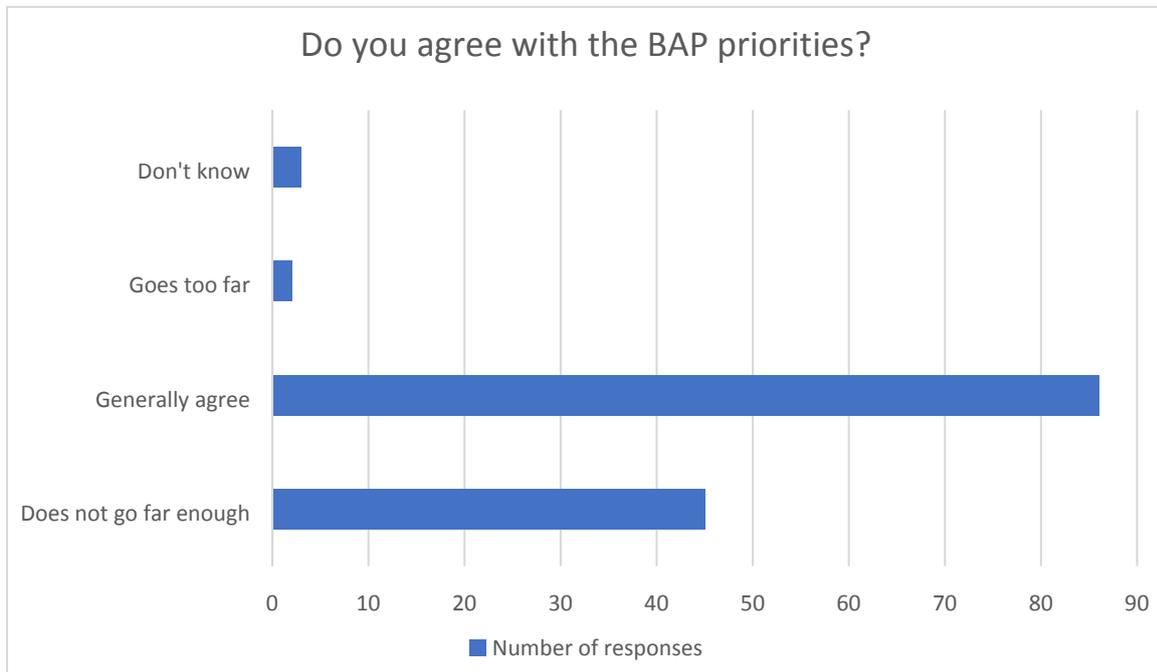
People listed a variety of other ways in which they would like to get information. The most popular suggestions were via email and partner organisations.

9. What do you think stops people from accessing nature in the borough? People were asked to tick all that apply.

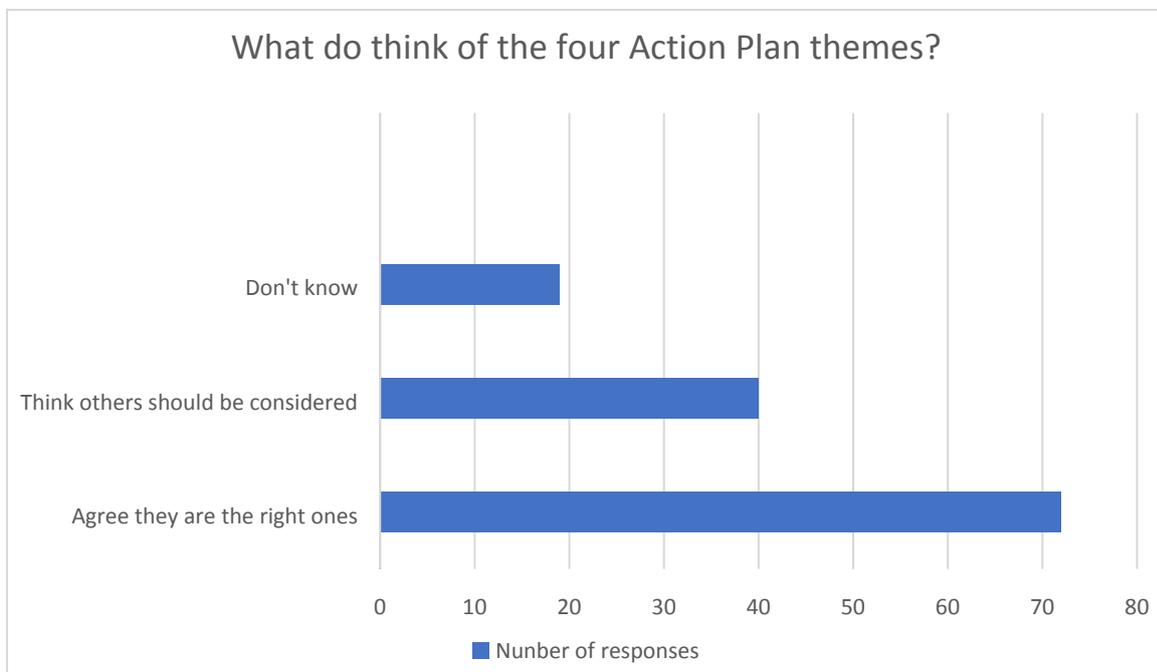


Section 2: Our Strategy

People were asked whether they agreed with the key headline priorities identified in the BAP:



People were asked what they thought of the four BAP Action Plan themes:



Additional themes that people wanted to see included were:

- Private gardens
- Schools
- Allotments

- Climate change
- Streetscape environment

For each of the four Action Plans, the key actions were listed and people were asked what they thought of them:

	Built Environment	Parks and Urban Green Spaces	Designated Sites	Access to Nature
Does not go far enough	45	37	16	28
Generally agree	83	92	93	98
Goes too far	2	1	3	7
Don't know	3	2	18	2

For each Action Plan, as well as for the BAP as a whole, people were invited to make further comments. The comments are too numerous to include here but they are available to view in a full report of the raw data. There were several common themes into which many of the comments fell:

- Concerns about there being too much new development and a desire to see the Council go further in putting pressure on developers to do more for biodiversity and sustainability.
- Concern about wider sustainability issues and climate change, e.g. food miles, peat usage, pesticide usage, water usage, littering, renewable energy and car usage.
- Calls for the Council to do more to protect trees and to plant more street trees.
- A desire to see more green space, particularly more allotments, created in Islington.
- The importance of small spaces, parks and street features (e.g. tree pits) to wildlife and people and the need to recognise the value of these.
- Calls for the BAP to have more specific actions with more ambitious targets and more funding available for implementation.
- A desire to see greater links with schools and to encourage both adults and children in learning about biodiversity.
- A desire to see the BAP put into action and concerns about capacity to deliver.
- A desire to see the BAP have more power to control actions by organisations such as TFL and Network Rail.
- Requests to improve the Council's website.
- Suggestions to put more emphasis on biodiversity in the Islington in Bloom competition.
- A desire to see more projects on housing estates and better use of these areas.
- Support for more food growing projects.
- Calls for more encouragement for individuals to take action, particularly in regards to private gardens.
- Suggestion to link the BAP with the London National Park City campaign.
- Positive comments of support and appreciation.

Summary and Officer Recommendations

People responding to the consultation showed a high level of interest and commitment to biodiversity in the borough. Parks and community gardens were particularly important to

people's enjoyment of wildlife. A high number of people responding already make a positive contribution to biodiversity, principally through wildlife gardening and participation in Friends of Parks Groups. In terms of offering people increased opportunities to engage with nature, respondents showed a lot of support for activities for children, nature trails and the creation of more wildlife habitats in parks. There was concern that people were prevented from accessing nature through a lack of knowledge of where to go and a feeling of not being safe.

137 out of 164 online participants completed Section 2 as well as Section 1 of the questionnaire. There was overall support for the BAP priorities and actions, with 62% of respondents agreeing with the key priorities and only two people feeling that they went too far. 32% felt that the BAP priorities did not go far enough and between 11% and 33% felt that the actions in the Action Plans did not go far enough.

Some of the key reasons for this arose from dissatisfaction with the existing legislation and policy frameworks which protect biodiversity, for example through the planning system. It is the Council's intention to ensure that the BAP is implemented to maximise protection and enhancement for biodiversity as far as existing policies, both national and local allow. However the Council cannot commit to actions which are not currently possible within existing legislation.

It is also important to note that the BAP is a five year strategy, and the actions it outlines must be achievable within current levels of capacity and funding. However, it is hoped that the principles laid out in the BAP will help to bring in further funding and will lead to additional actions being undertaken to benefit wildlife, both by the Council and other organisations.

Some respondents felt concerned that wider sustainability issues were not included in the BAP. These issues are all closely linked to biodiversity and the overall state of the environment. However, the BAP is not intended to be an all encompassing sustainability strategy and its remit is limited specifically to biodiversity. The Council is following national guidance in this in terms of what is an accepted BAP template. The Council has set out its efforts to tackle a number of other environmental issues through other complementary action plans, e.g. Vision 2030: Creating a Net Zero Carbon Islington by 2030, the Islington Transport Strategy and the Islington Air Quality Strategy.

With regards to suggestions to strengthen involvement from schools and housing estates and to encourage more action from individuals; the Council accepts that these are positive ideas and the BAP does lay out a framework for action to be taken in these areas. However in order to do more, the Council would need access to resources (for example staff) that are not currently available.

As a result of the consultation response as well as feedback from internal stakeholders, a number of additions have been made to the BAP:

- The links were strengthened between the Vision 2030 Carbon Zero Strategy and the BAP detailing the role the BAP will play in helping the borough achieve this vision. Actions in the BAP that support carbon reduction were clearly identified.
- A reference has been added to the London National Park City initiative and Islington's desire to engage with it, for example in organising events during National Park City Week.
- A reference has been added to the Community Food Growing Strategy that Octopus has been commissioned to produce.

- A reference has been added to planning policy which encourages the temporary use of development sites for nature conservation, including the creation of pocket parks and the use of parking spaces as parklets.
- More emphasis has been placed on the opportunities for enhancing biodiversity on housing estates.
- An explanation of the successful action we are already taking and the resources that we currently put into this work (e.g. volunteer and staff resources) has been added.
- More information has been included about the ecological value of the cemeteries we manage and the actions that we can take to enhance them.

In conclusion, support for the BAP was strong with the percentage of respondents agreeing to the priorities and actions varying between 62% and 71%. Most people who did not agree felt that the actions did not go far enough or they did not express an opinion. Very few people felt that the actions of the BAP were going too far. As a result of the consultation feedback, the Council recommends adopting the BAP.

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Report of: Executive Member for Health & Social Care

Meeting of:	Date:	Ward(s):
Executive	10 th September 2020	All

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APPENDICES 1, 2, 3, 4 AND 5 TO THIS REPORT ARE EXEMPT AND NOT FOR PUBLICATION

SUBJECT: Leisure Mobilisation and Recovery Plan

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 On the 20th March 2020 at 5pm the government issued an instruction as part of the Covid-19 lockdown procedures that all Leisure Centres had to close with immediate effect. The Council issued a formal instruction for the leisure operator GLL (trading as Better) to close all 8 of Islington's Leisure Centres. All customer memberships were suspended and the organisation that was already struggling from the trading impacts of the Coronavirus in early March and reduced usage and membership uptake went overnight to a zero income position. The closures are a qualifying change of law event under the contract.
- 1.2 There are 9 years remaining on the 15-year contract, which runs to March 2029. It is a concession contract and yields the Council a significant revenue contribution in the form of rent. The Leisure contract is to manage and deliver Leisure services from our 7 Leisure Centres and the Market Road pitches and to deliver sports development for the borough, which includes tennis and football development and schools and community outreach work.
- 1.3 The Council receives an annual rent payment from GLL for the profitable centres and pays a management fee for the one unprofitable centre and additional services; this is a VAT efficient payment system so there are two transactions per annum that yield the net income to the Council.
- 1.4 This report follows on from the Urgent Officer Key Decision made on 19th May 2020 that provided financial support for leisure services via the Council's leisure services operator (GLL trading as Better) due to the immediate loss of income to GLL and therefore the ability to pay the rent to the Council). The financial support agreed comprised payment of the management fee, deferral of the rental and reimbursement of continuing costs to to enable GLL to continue to operate throughout March to June 30th 2020 (or later) and to enable them to resume delivery of services at the leisure centres when

the Government's lockdown on leisure centres was lifted, which was on the 25th July 2020. The re-opening of leisure centres is with restrictions to ensure social distancing measures and will impact on the amount of income that GLL is able to generate on our behalf.

- 1.5 The Urgent Officer Key Decision made on the 19th May 2020 allowed for a short-term extension of the support to cover any continued closure beyond the initial phase 1 period of support to the end of June to the end of September 2020. It authorised the Corporate Director of Environment & Regeneration in conjunction with the Corporate Director of Resources and acting Director of Law and Governance to negotiate and agree the terms of the financial support to be provided to enable GLL to continue maintain the Council's assets and to agree the deed of variation to the contract to give effect thereto, including the extension of arrangements between the Council and GLL for up to three months (until the end of September 2020).
- 1.6 On Thursday 9th July the government announced the date for the re-opening of gyms and Leisure Centres as the 25th July. Five of the centres re-opened on the 25th July as per GLL's mobilisation plan but with limited facilities. Other elements have re-opened as the guidance has allowed. The Trampoline Park re-opened on the 29th July with a limited 5 day a week programme and some Spa treatments recommenced on the 1st August.
- 1.7 GLL, in collaboration with the Council has developed a leisure facilities Mobilisation Plan. This has been based upon the industry framework for re-opening developed by UK Active¹ and guidance issued by Swim England². Specific sector guidance from the government has also been published³ and the UK Active guidance updated to reflect this. This has been implemented to ensure the centres are operating in a Covid-19 secure manner. This first phase of the mobilisation period enables the Council to restore the service and get health and wellbeing services to its residents. It is vital that GLL re-build community confidence in service provision, clearly defining service standards and positive steps to address social distancing, cleanliness, and health and safety regimes to ensure compliance.
- 1.8 The feedback from users has been very positive particularly about the new layouts the Covid secure operating systems and the new rigorous cleaning regimes. The uptake has been somewhat slower than anticipated as it coincided with both summer holidays and some very good weather which has prolonged the emphasis on people continuing with outdoor recreation in their parks. Initial usage levels and membership levels are shown Exempt Appendix 1.
- 1.9 The lockdown, as a result of Covid-19, meant the closure of leisure centres and health clubs across the UK which has been an unprecedented situation for the leisure, health and fitness sector, and has presented major challenges financially and operationally. It has had a profound and significant impact on the service and had a major financial impact on the Council. The whole Leisure and hospitality sector with the forthcoming end of the furlough scheme and the restrictions remaining in place limiting capacity, faces some difficult decisions going forwards. It is likely that there will be staffing restructures going forwards to re-balance the business to ensure sustainability with the reduced operating capacity.
- 1.10 This report seeks approval to extend the period of financial support for the Leisure service to the end of March 2021. The impact on the service is profound and with a limited operating capacity, reduced customer confidence and the risks of further spikes of coronavirus. The service requires a period of ongoing financial support to ensure that it can continue to deliver services to residents. The report sets out an analysis of the options available to the Council, provides a financial analysis of the

¹ Covid-19 – A framework for the re-opening of gym, leisure centre and wider fitness industry during social distancing, UKActive, May 2020

² Swim England – Return to the pools guidance

³ Gov.uk - Guidance for people who work in grassroots sport and gym/leisure facilities.

financial status of GLL, sets out the updated Mobilisation plan and seeks approval to continue to provide financial support to the service whilst the business recovers.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the Mobilisation Plan for re-opening of the Leisure centres from the 25th July 2020 as summarised in Section 5.
- 2.2 To note the financial viability assessment of GLL as set out in Exempt Appendix [2].
- 2.3 To agree to provide further financial support to GLL to facilitate GLL's continued provision of the Leisure service for the Council up to the end of March 2021 based on the financial projections set out in Exempt Appendix [1]. This would be a further deferral of rent for 2020/21 reflecting projected income and costs in the financial business plan reconciled through the open book process.
- 2.4 To note that a formal quarterly performance review of GLL will be implemented to monitor progress against the financial projections.
- 2.5 To agree to authorise the Corporate Director of Environment & Regeneration in consultation with the Executive Member for Health and Social Care and Corporate Director of Resources to agree changes to the mobilisation plan.
- 2.6 To note that a contract deed of variation for the first period of support has been agreed and signed by the Council and GLL.
- 2.7 To agree to authorise the Corporate Director of Environment & Regeneration in consultation with the Corporate Director of Resources and the acting Director of Law and Governance to negotiate and agree the terms of the financial support to be provided to GLL for the period up to 31st March 2021 and authorise the acting Director of Law and Governance (or officer authorised by them) to enter into a further deed of variation to the contract to give effect thereto.

3. Background

- 3.1 There are 9 years remaining on the 15 year contract with GLL which runs to the end of March 2029. It is a concession contract that provides a net revenue benefit to the Council.
- 3.2 The Council receives an annual rent payment from GLL for the profitable centres and pays a management fee for the one unprofitable centre and additional services; this is a vat efficient payment system so there are two transactions per annum that yield the net income to the Council. Further details of the finances of the contract and the recent trading positions are set out in Exempt Appendix [1].
- 3.3 Following the Government's announcement to close the Leisure Centres on the 20th March, GLL formally wrote to the Council along with its other local authority partners to request financial assistance to support it through this closure period. GLL requested that the Council suspend the rental payments for this period, continue to pay the management fee, pay the residual costs of managing and maintaining the Councils assets and the cost of topping up the remaining 20% of the staff's salary during their furlough period.
- 3.5 GLL considered that there would be 3 separate periods in terms of financial impact.
 - Period 1 – Covid-19 period - From March 2020 until services are fully reopened
 - Period 2 – Business rebuild period – Estimated 12 months
 - Period 3 – Steady state operation

There are costs that could not be eliminated even when the centres were closed. In order for GLL to manage and maintain the Leisure Centres for this temporary period and to look after the remaining customers there were costs that have been incurred. Buildings and plant still needed to be checked and serviced for example and there were underlying utility and staffing costs. Further support is required in the period after re-opening as GLL is now incurring expenditure again to operate the Leisure centres and the income will take time to recover and build up through the re-opening phase.

On the 19th May 2020, the Corporate Director of Environment and Regeneration made a key decision under the council's urgency procedure to ensure that GLL had the immediate short-term financial support so that the organisation would be in a position to resume delivery of the council's Leisure offer when the government permitted the leisure centres to re-open. The following recommendations were made and agreed:

1. To use an Open Book process to agree a financial package of support to GLL rather than invoking the 'change in law' provisions of the contract and to incorporate the agreed support measures in a deed of variation to the leisure contract.
2. To support GLL with the deferral of their rental payments (£1.274 million) in line with the Policy Procurement Note 02/20 guidance and pay them the cost of their legitimate and actual costs to maintain the assets as set out in the exempt appendix for the period from the 20th March to the end of June 2020.
3. Not to top up the additional 20% of salaries for the furloughed GLL staff.
4. To pay the contractual management fee (£0.195m) for the first quarter to the end of June 2020 immediately rather than in arrears in order to support with GLL's cash flow and to reconcile any difference through the open book account process.
5. To obtain external commercial and legal advice to support the process of assisting GLL through the period of COVID impact whilst protecting the council's interests and to explore options for the future leisure provision post COVID.
6. To authorise the Corporate Director of Environment & Regeneration in conjunction with the Corporate Director of Resources and acting Director of Law and Governance to negotiate and agree the terms of the financial support to be provided to GLL and the deed of variation to the contract to give effect thereto, including the extension of arrangements between the Council and GLL for up to three months (until the end of September 2020).

It was not agreed to cover the cost of topping up the remaining 20% of GLL salary costs beyond the 80% covered by the government's coronavirus job retention scheme. This would represent a significant additional cost to the Council that would not be recoverable from the government and would need to be borne by the Council. It would have had significant financial implications for other council contracts where suppliers are seeking or may seek similar support to top up wages. This approach is consistent with the principles agreed with many other London boroughs with GLL contracts. Although the Council welcomed GLL's decision to pay their staff in full to the end of April and May there is no obligation on the Council to top up the salaries under an open book approach. Although the 80% level does bring some staff below the London Living Wage that is not a requirement for staff who are furloughed as they are not working.

3.6 London Local Authority Director Steering Group

In April 2020, a steering group made up of the London local authorities who have contracts with GLL was established to ensure a collective and consistent approach, share intelligence and act as a single co-ordination point with GLL. There was an early consensus amongst the client Boroughs that collectively it was important that GLL was supported through this crisis and that some clear principles were agreed for doing that.

The principles that have been agreed between the Boroughs are:

1. GLL should maximise Government support, bear a reasonable proportion of the financial risk themselves and minimise demands on Local Government;
2. GLL should be treated like a private sector organisation and as far as furloughing staff are concerned and local authorities should not fund the additional 20% above the job retention scheme funding;
3. Funding from local authorities should be limited in first instance to the 3 month lockdown period where costs are known, but retaining the option to review as time goes by;
4. Where funding provided by London Boroughs is other than an interest bearing loan it should be recoverable from GLL through a clawback mechanism. Attempts should also be made for this to be recovered from Central Government as a cost of Covid-19;
5. If not recoverable from Central Government then recovery of funds should be over the remaining period of the contract where possible;
6. Boroughs should look to work with GLL to explore changes to the leisure offer to best meet community needs and mitigate the financial impact of Lockdown;
7. Boroughs should rely on their contract documents as well as PPN 02/20 in reaching local settlements based around these principles.

The emerging position across London is that all Local Authorities are in a similar position having agreed to or in the process of agreeing to provide initial financial support to their Leisure Service. Most boroughs are also considering their options and have commissioned specialist leisure advice.

3.1 External Specialist Advice

The Council has appointed Max Associates to provide specialist Leisure advice to support the Council through this period. Max Associates are a very experienced Leisure consultant and originally supported Islington in the development of the Leisure contract that GLL secured. At the same time they are supporting a number of other London boroughs. They have delivered for us an initial appraisal of the different options for proceeding; scrutiny and review of the GLL Mobilisation Plan and advice on the contract Deed of Variation. They will be providing advice to support and review the development by GLL of a new Business Plan; to support our review of the open book process agreed with GLL and to conduct a review of the Council's leisure estate to create a new Facilities Strategy and Leisure Strategy.

The Council is in addition collaborating closely with other London boroughs to share specialist advice to avoid duplication.

4.0 Contract Deed of Variation

4.1 The Council commissioned external lawyers, Sharpe Pritchard to draw up the contract variation to implement the Key Decision taken on 19th May 2020 as follows:

- The deferred rent and extra payment will be a first charge against any surplus profits GLL may make during the balance of the contract term. At present, the profit share clause (clause 30) enables GLL to set off any accumulated losses on the contract against any surplus profit. Recovery of any losses incurred by GLL on the contract since the commencement date will be postponed until after the recovery of the deferred rent and extra payment.
- The open book account will be used to ascertain GLL's actual additional costs from closure until end of June 2020 and reconciled against the extra payment with a balancing payment either way.

- GLL agreed to pay all their staff (including furloughed staff) 100% up to the end of May from their own resources and therefore the 20% salary costs should not be taken into account in the reconciliation.
- The inclusion of a requirement for GLL to draft a Mobilisation Plan in readiness for when the Government relaxes the closure of leisure centres and also a commitment to prepare a sustainable business plan for the future of the leisure centres to be discussed and agreed with the council.

The contract variation has been agreed with GLL and has been signed by both parties. The Council and GLL agreed that the forced closure of the leisure centres amounted to a Qualifying Change in Law under the contract thereby entitling GLL to seek financial adjustment. The package of financial assistance being provided to GLL is in accordance with the provisions of the contract and therefore does not amount to state aid. Although it has been accepted that it is a Qualifying Change of Law the Deed of Variation that has been agreed for the first period of support is an agreement to adopt a different approach for dealing with it and that both parties accept that they will not invoke the contract terms for that agreed period of support.

4.2 Open Book accounting is already part of the GLL contract and the key decision affirmed that the open book would be used to establish the actual costs that have been legitimately incurred by GLL during the lockdown. GLL took rapid steps in March to reduce their operating costs with the furloughing of the majority of their staff and close down of facilities but there remained a core staff team, utility costs and standing charges that needed to be funded. The additional payment that was agreed as part of the key decision was based upon the Council's evaluation of the estimates that GLL provided of the costs incurred from the 20th March when the closure came into force up until the end of June as the initial period of support. The Council has now received the open book accounts for the period of the lockdown and that has aligned very closely with the figure paid despite the lockdown lasting for a further month than anticipated. The figures are set out in Exempt Appendix [1].

4.3 The Council is currently negotiating with GLL on-going support for the Leisure provision for the period from the re-opening of the leisure centres (25th July 2020) to 31st March 2021 or if earlier, the lifting of all Covid related restrictions on the operation of the leisure centres. A second deed of variation to the leisure contract has been drafted and is the subject of ongoing discussion with GLL. It is based along very similar principles to the first deed of variation. The key principles are set out in exempt appendix [1]:

- The same clawback mechanism to ensure that any additional support payments and deferred rent are the first call on any future excess surplus on the contract until it has all been re-paid.
- Reduction of the margin allowed in the contract to allow for the re-building of reserves throughout the second period of support. During the first period of support no margin was allowed as no leisure services were being delivered.
- Formal quarterly reviews to be held with GLL to review performance against the financial projections and agreed revised performance indicators including social outcomes.
- To set a cap on the level of support reflecting the projected costs and income and to use the formal quarterly reviews to agree any required changes to the provision of the service to ensure financial sustainability.
- GLL continue to provide the sports development and outreach as part of the management fee paid by the Council.

- To develop jointly a business plan for the services to apply during and following the end of the second period of support.

5.0 Mobilisation Plan & Re-opening Strategy

- 5.1 GLL has developed and implemented a mobilisation plan. This has evolved and been adapted as guidance has emerged for other activities. This has meant that GLL could re-start the Trampoline Park on the 29th July with a reduced programme. There is also now guidance from the FA on football and so GLL are reviewing the emerging guidance and modifying their mobilisation plan in consultation with the Council.
- 5.2 The mobilisation plan is fully compliant with the UK Active framework for the re-opening of gym, leisure centre and wider fitness industry during social distancing and the government guidance.
- 5.3 The Mobilisation plan has tried to balance several different factors. Firstly, it must ensure that the re-opening is as safe an environment as possible for both customers and staff. This is important not just from a public health perspective but also a business one. It is vital that customers have confidence to return to the Centres once they are re-opened and that first customer experience will be crucial in re-building customer confidence and ensure memberships are retained and customers return. Secondly, it must do so to ensure as much accessibility to customers and users to centres and facilities as possible. Leisure centres are a key resource to ensure the health and well-being of Islington's communities. They support the Council in tackling health inequalities and provide an essential life line for many people but particularly young and old people and people with disabilities. The Coronavirus pandemic has brought into stark focus the importance of tackling underlying health conditions and physical activity is essential in achieving that. Thirdly, GLL and the Council need to balance the benefits of re-opening against the costs of re-opening. Going to full 100% operation from the start would increase the financial risk to the Council as it will take time to build up the income streams. The Mobilisation plan seeks to phase re-opening to ensure that it can be done so safely and that the costs of re-opening are minimised and the income levels can be built back up through the health and fitness element first.
- 5.4 The plan summarised here and is set out fully in Exempt Appendix [6] which is updated with the latest information but is still subject to ongoing review and change with the publishing of new guidance.

The key service headlines of the plan are:

- Opening Archway Health and Fitness without pool facilities, Islington Tennis Centre all facilities, Ironmonger Row Baths fitness and pool, Sobell Leisure Centre fitness and the fully refurbished Highbury Fitness facilities. (All without Sauna and steam facilities at each centre due to guidance).
- Trampoline park opened with 4 sessions across 5 days from the 29th July 2020.
- Restricted Spa treatments commenced 1st August 2020 at Iron Monger Row Baths and close contact services such as facials resumed on the 15th August (no steam and sauna).
- Keeping Cally Pool, Finsbury Leisure Centre, Archway Pool and Market Road closed for July and August until further restrictions are lifted so that costs are reduced and to grow Health and fitness income and customer confidence over the summer.
- All activities would be bookable with reduced capacity and social distancing measures in place.

- All Leisure centres set up as per Covid Secure guidelines and the UK Active Framework for re-opening gyms and Leisure centres, which is the industry best practice guide.
- Stringent cleaning regimes in place with continuous cleaning of all high contact areas, hand sanitizer stations and wipe down of all equipment after use. Public Health and Environmental Health will be part of the sign off process
- The remaining facilities including Finsbury Leisure Centre, Caladonian and Archway pools and the football pitches at Finsbury Leisure centre and Market Road will re-open from the 7th September.
- Currently still no date for the re-opening of the ice rink.
- Streamlined staffing model with concierge system to manage access and queueing and to be marshalling customer flows and cleaning regime
- Full staff return by October according to business needs

Since the Centres re-opened on the 25th July there has been really positive feedback from customers about the COVID secure measures put in place and the revised operating systems cleaning regimes although there has only been a slow and steady increase in the numbers of usage. There was not a release of pent up demand that had been indicated by the market research. Swimming at IRB is popular as are the fitness classes at Highbury and Sobell. Gym and fitness usage has been much lower. This may in part be due to the fact that so many people are working from home and people working in Islington form a significant part of the membership. This is particularly noticeable in the south of the borough.

5.5 Covid Secure Centres

Essential to the whole operation is that the centres are safe both for the users and the staff working there. This is critical from a public health perspective but also from a business perspective. It is vital that customers have confidence to be ready to return to the Leisure Centres and when they do come that experience must be a positive one that gives the customer full confidence to return. The mobilisation plan shows some of the detail of this.

Key elements of this are:

- Room capacities reduced to be Covid-Secure
- Equipment layouts and space repurposing plans underway
- Personal activity zones will be clearly marked
- Swimming pools will have restricted numbers and less lanes
- Heightened cleaning and sanitisation a requirement
- Each centre to have a specially trained C-19 Secure Champion
- Bulk order placed for 4 key COVID Secure elements:
 - Signage (including tape, floor and wall stickers)
 - PPE
 - Cleaning chemicals
 - Sanitizer

Cleaning is a major priority. There is continuous cleaning of high contact areas and all staff are involved in cleaning duties. Detailed operational procedures and risk assessments have been shared with the Council and Environmental Health and Public Health inspected all of the centres prior to opening and approved the plans.

The Council's Public Health team has reviewed the high level mobilisation plan, and notes the steps taken to ensure social distancing among gym/leisure centre users, including restricting bookings,

adequate spacing between users, and appropriate signage. The phased mobilisation, with full operation not achieved until January 2021 further supports a safe environment for users and staff, although should the Covid alert level increase significantly, flexibility will be required.

6.0 Financial Projections, Options to Mitigate Long Term Risk and GLL Financial Viability

- 6.1 GLL have done some financial modelling based on the above re-opening plan, taking into account the reduced capacity. This has been presented to us in Exempt Appendix [4] as part of the mobilisation plan as the Minimum Viable Offer (MVO). GLL have also done some detailed usage projections for each activity and the percentage against pre-Covid usage levels to give them a prediction of the likely income levels that they might hope to see.
- 6.2 GLL are also committed to reducing central support costs as part of a new, slimmed down business. The model currently assumes a full staff return in October. GLL have been clear that there will be a need to review their staffing structures and model at that point as the furlough scheme ends. It will depend on what they have been able to re-open and what programmes and activities they are able to run. They may have to look at re-deployment and redundancy options at this point. GLL have already written to all staff to make them aware that this may be required.
- 6.3 GLL have also projected that from January 2021 onwards the programmes expand and capacity can be increased as well as the return of the pool at Highbury Leisure Centre, they also gave members the benefit of accessing all facilities across the UK with their membership for July and August 2020. The financial projections were based upon market research into the anticipated response by Members and users to the re-opening of the centres but they are projections based upon a lot of unknowns and uncertainties. There has only been a month of trading so it is not possible to get a clear analysis of the performance. Some initial usage and membership levels are set out in Exempt Appendix [1]. Customer feedback has been positive from those that have been using the centres and usage levels are building steadily. GLL are working through continuously emerging guidance for other specific activities that will bring more income streams on-line.
- 6.4 The second Deed of Variation will include a formal quarterly review process. This will be used as a mechanism to closely monitor and scrutinise the performance of GLL against the costs and income projections and provide an opportunity to adjust the mobilisation plan to ensure that the risks and liabilities that the Council is now exposed to under the open book process are able to be managed. This may mean that decisions need to be made to cease certain activities if only temporarily if the net cost of provision is too high or to make in year price changes to activities to cover increased costs or shortfall of income. This will need to be carefully balanced with the wider social objectives of the service to reduce health inequalities and enable access to physical activity for disadvantaged groups. The council's potential financial exposure will be controlled by way of a cap on the level of support that the council is willing to offer based on the financial projections provided by GLL and verified by the council. The aim is to make a steady transfer of some of the risk back to GLL before hopefully moving back to a pre-Covid contract position. At this stage we do not know how long that will take and it will be dependent upon a number of factors many of which are external to the Leisure service such as how quickly people return to working in offices or whether there is a second wave or local lock down.
- 6.5 GLL are unlikely to be able to revert back immediately to the original contract tendered position from the date that all restrictions on the reopening of the leisure centres are lifted, as they will need a sustained period in which to build up their business again. It is recognised that the impact of the closure and restricted re-opening will extend beyond the date when all Covid related restrictions are lifted and therefore operators will require financial assistance until they build back to pre-COVID-19 position. It is not known how long it will take the business to recover. The Council will need to review

the position at the end of the current PPN notice – October 2020 and again in January 2021 to consider the future position and longer term financial risk to the Council.

6.6 A key risk for the Council is the short and long term financial viability of GLL as an organisation and their ongoing viability. GLL have provided a significant amount of financial information to the Council regarding the organisations finances and the measures that they have taken to manage short term cash flows and ensure they are not at risk. The Strategic Financial Planning Team have carried out a review and assessment of that information and the details are set out in Exempt Appendix [2] of this report.

7.0 Longer Term Business Plan

7.1 The Council will develop a new commercial strategy in collaboration with GLL and with support from an external specialist consultancy commissioned by the Council for recovering Islington's leisure business that is sense checked and subject to external challenge. The re-opening phase is much more complex and carries significant financial risk for the Council so a new business plan will help to protect the Council against the potential risks associated with the economic position and restrictions, alongside new marketplace challenges such as the growth in online classes, outdoor exercise trends and less available/disposable income. The Council has a number of assets that require long term investment and repair and this is set against the private sector who can lease shopfronts or prominently located buildings, lease equipment and capture sales by providing regular new fresh businesses that capture niche and trend markets, so the ability of the Council to sustain such assets needs factoring into the business models beyond the life of the existing contract. This will be a requirement and condition of the support to GLL set out in the second deed of variation.

7.2 Alongside the second deed of variation to the contract the Council is requiring the following from GLL and will work with the external consultants to develop the robustness of these plans and to advise on future options

- A marketing campaign in the build up to this that uses its wider reach to respond to an aggressive private sector marketplace.
- A business continuity plan for the 12 -18 months post lockdown with key financial milestones to enable authorities to have financial clarity about outlay /return on investment and the growth risk that emerges from the sector opening up for business again.
- A financial update on the quarter 1 open book and a clear plan for quarter 2. An update will also be provided on GLL Furloughed staff and LLW implications for GLL employees as the Government's job retention scheme was extended until October for sectors that may be affected such as leisure and hospitality sectors

8.0 Implications

3.2 Financial implications:

The Council has agreed to support GLL through rent deferral and residual operating costs over the initial period from 21 March until the end of June. This report recommends extending these support arrangements over the next period covering July to March 21. GLL are required to submit monthly profit and loss accounts on an open book process to verify the actual level of support that is required and this has been in line with expectations. This is detailed further in exempt appendix 1.

The government has recently announced a scheme to support local authorities for income losses that includes income loss from payments due from their leisure operators. The scheme proposes to compensate local authorities for 75% of losses, over and above the first 5% of income loss on the authority's total sale, fees and charges receipts. The details are still to be finalised but could provide a significant level of cover for the level of support being provided over the 2020-21 period.

The change in law provision, in which under the contract conditions entitles GLL to support to a 'no better nor worse' position and this will cover the period while social distancing restrictions remain in place. However, it is likely that GLL will require additional support in the medium and possibly long-term depending upon the timeline of the Covid restrictions and longer-term impact on the leisure industry and local economy that will delay recovery of the pre-Covid baseline position.

3.3 Legal Implications:

The leisure contract is a concession contract whereby GLL has the right to operate the council's leisure centres in accordance with the council's specification until end of March 2029 in return for paying the council a guaranteed net rental each financial year. The legislation requiring the closure of the leisure centres and allowing their reopening subject to compliance with social distancing requirements are Qualifying Changes of Law under the contract which enable modification of the base Financial Model to take account of changes in costs and income whilst leaving GLL in 'no better and no worse' financial position. This enables the council to modify the leisure contract to provide support to GLL as an 'at risk' supplier to ensure that it remains viable and therefore able to continue delivery of leisure services for the council and its residents following the reopening of the leisure centres.

The detailed legal implications are set out in the Exempt Appendix [1] to this report including the relevant considerations that the Executive will need to take into account when deciding whether to approve the recommendations.

8.3 Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

Apart from the Sobell Leisure Centre which was used for the Emergency Food distribution centre for the Borough the rest of the centres have been dormant throughout the lockdown in terms of energy consumption. Daily plant checks have been carried out by a core GLL staff team to ensure that there was no leaks or service failures as the long-term implications would be significant. The only exception to the shutdown of services was the Sobell Ice Rink plant as this cannot be shut down without major risk so this was kept operational. Any long term asset strategy changes need to align to the Councils Carbon neutral targets and or ensure that there are energy efficiency measures that maximise opportunities to enhance Council buildings.

8.4 Resident Impact Assessment:

The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The Council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The Council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

The Leisure Centres are having to operate within a framework that sets strict parameters on social distancing, sports to be allowed as well as several usage, management, Health and Safety and housekeeping minimum requirements.

These will form the initial goalposts that the sector can work within, this may affect protected groups, it will definitely affect capacity as there will be space restrictions that reduce and limit our ability to deliver participation levels to the Contractual KPI's.

Where possible we will ensure that a diverse range of services and facilities and innovative approaches are re- introduced this may be on a phased basis to ensure that the safety is managed in a controlled and measured way as well as building up customer confidence and ensuring the least financial risk to the authority.

A key issue is the move to on-line booking through the App. This immediately raises questions of accessibility for non-digitally savvy users or those that are digitally poor. GLL have tried to mitigate this by providing very clear instructions and walk through videos, retaining the ability for customers to book in centre when absolutely required and having concierge staff available and dedicated to providing support and assistance to customers that need it. All calls are now directed to a central call centre enabling staff in centre to be fully focused on supporting customers in centre.

The interim approach which may be necessary while the sector re-opens and the business recovers does hold the risk of widening inequalities and disproportionately impacting certain protected characteristic groups. The Council has ensured the protection of concession pricing but the reduced capacity and shift to on-line booking for all activities may mean only those with easy access to IT can participate. The council is going to monitor the impact of this closely and assess mitigations as required.

One option would be to include within any financial support agreement for the operator to include a position statement on equalities and access before and after the impact of COVID-19. For example, GLL provides a profile of all known users by gender / age and demographics (e.g. mosaic profile) pre-COVID-19 and then provide the same information each quarter, as part of any financial claim. The Council will then know the impact on user profiles. This insight can then support any service changes as we emerge to a 'new normal'.

The Council will also require GLL to state how operational plans impact access for people with disabilities and consider the impact of social distancing measures on inclusiveness and disability access as part of the Mobilisation Plan.

9.0 Reason for recommendations

- 9.1 Although not a statutory service the Leisure provision is vital in tackling health inequalities by enabling inactive communities to get active and help maintain people's health and wellbeing. The Leisure offer provided by the Council via our partner GLL offers important reduced cost access to a wide range of sport and physical activity programmes that would otherwise not be accessible to a large number of our residents. It is therefore important that the Council seeks to maintain the provision of this Leisure and physical activity offer by continuing to support GLL as the provider of that service.
- 9.2 To balance the recovery of the Leisure contract through the phased approach to re-opening to ensure Covid secure guidelines can be followed and to enable the financial risks to be managed and minimised whilst enabling access to facilities.
- 9.3 With lockdown lifted expenditure has increased but it will take time for the income levels to recover. There will need to be a further period of support, primarily in the form of a rent deferral. There will be review points for October, end of December and the end of March to review performance and options.

Appendices

- Exempt Appendix 1 – Full Financial and Legal Implications

- Exempt Appendix 2 – GLL Financial Viability Assessment
- Exempt Appendix 3 – Full Options Analysis
- Exempt Appendix 4 – GLL Financial Forecast June 2020
- Exempt Appendix 5 - Mobilisation Plan from GLL
- Appendix 6 – Resident Impact Assessment

Background papers: None

Final report clearance:

Signed by:



27 August 2020

Executive Member for Health and Social Care

Date

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Resident Impact Assessment

Leisure Centre Re-opening Strategy and second phase of support to GLL

Service Area: Greenspace, Leisure & Divisional Development

1. What are the intended outcomes of this policy, function etc?

Following the government instruction to close Leisure centres on the 20th March we are now expecting that closure to be lifted and there to be a phased re-opening of the Leisure Centres operated on behalf of the Council by GLL. The anticipated start date for this will be the 6th July subject to a formal announcement from the Government.

2. Resident Profile

Who is going to be impacted by this change i.e. residents/service users/tenants? Please complete data for your service users. If your data does not fit into the categories in this table, please copy and paste your own table in the space below. Please refer to **section 3.3** of the guidance for more information.

		Borough profile	Service User profile
		Total: 206,285	Total: 91,265 (membership)
Gender	Female	51%	52%
	Male	49%	48%
Age	Under 16	32,825	
	16-24	29,418	
	25-44	87,177	
	45-64	38,669	
	65+	18,036	
Disability	Disabled	16%	8%
	Non-disabled	84%	92%
Sexual orientation	LGBT	No data	No data
	Heterosexual/straight	No data	No data
Race	BME	52%	22%
	White	48%	78%
Religion or	Christian	40%	No data

belief	Muslim	10%	No data
	Other	4.5%	No data
	No religion	30%	No data
	Religion not stated	17%	No data

3. Equality impacts

With reference to the [guidance](#), please describe what are the equality and socio-economic impacts for residents and what are the opportunities to challenge prejudice or promote understanding?

The sports and leisure sector re-opened on the 25th July after the 20th March Government lockdown, this is working within a framework for operators which has set parameters on social distancing ,sports to be allowed as well as several usage, management, Health and Safety and housekeeping minimum requirements.

This has formed the initial goalposts that the sector can work within, this may affect protected groups, it clearly affects capacity as there are space restrictions that reduce and limit our ability to deliver participation levels to the Contractual KPI's.

Where possible we will ensure that a diverse range of services and facilities and innovative approaches are re-introduced this may be on a phased basis to ensure that the safety is managed in a controlled and measured way as well as building up customer confidence and ensuring the least financial risk to the authority.

The 8 Leisure centres attract an average of 181,750 user visits on a monthly basis, this is made up of residents, and our transient community, this service offer forms an important role in much wider context than just the health and wellbeing of our residents. The leisure centres act as community hubs social gathering clubs networks and regular contact places to meet and connect with friend's social inclusion and the list goes on.

The Leisure Contract provides access to all sectors of our community and this balance of usage is a positive reflection of Islington. This service not only provides a valuable contribution to the health and well-being of our community it also generates the Council a net financial benefit which in turn supports the financial ability of the Council to contribute to wider services.

The significant concessions that are available means that the Leisure offer provided by GLL is particularly important to young people, older people and people with disabilities in being able to maintain their physical and mental health and well-being. The current lockdown and future restrictions on use are likely to have a disproportionate impact on these particular groups.

Careful consideration has been given to this with the development of the re-opening strategy. The plan will need to address how we ensure that there is provision made to ensure that disabled people and older people in particular are able to get safe access to exercise and

physical activity. Not being able to exercise regularly will have a disproportionate impact upon those groups. We will of course be restricted by the guidance and the social distancing restrictions that will be in place.

Special consideration will also need to be given to those individuals who have been shielding as they come out of isolation and those with other long term health conditions that might make them more vulnerable.

4. Safeguarding and Human Rights impacts

a) Safeguarding risks and Human Rights breaches

Please describe any safeguarding risks for children or vulnerable adults AND any potential human rights breaches that may occur as a result of the proposal? Please refer to **section 4.8** of the [guidance](#) for more information.

None

If potential safeguarding and human rights risks are identified then **please contact equalities@islington.gov.uk to discuss further:**

5. Action

How will you respond to the impacts that you have identified in sections 3 and 4, or address any gaps in data or information?

For more information on identifying actions that will limit the negative impact of the policy for protected groups see the [guidance](#).

Action	Responsible person or team	Deadline
To review the equality implications of the mobilisation plan on disabled groups and older people in particular.	Mark Christodoulou	Reviewed at each quarterly review
Ensure there is provision in the programme for young people.	Mark Christodoulou	4 th July 2020
Protect concession prices	Andrew Bedford	

Please send the completed RIA to equalites@islington.gov.uk and also make it publicly available online along with the relevant policy or service change.

This Resident Impact Assessment has been completed in accordance with the guidance and using appropriate evidence.

Staff member completing this form:

Head of Service or higher:

Signed: Mark Christodoulou

Signed: 

Date: 10/07/2020

Date: 24/08/2020

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