

Appendix F: Budget 2021/22 Cumulative Equalities Impact Assessment

1. Purpose of Report

This report assesses the equalities impacts of the savings proposals set out in the Council's Budget for 2021/22.

It provides an assessment of the likely impacts of the budget savings on residents and employees with 'protected characteristics' as defined by the Equality Act 2010. It also considers the impacts on those facing socio-economic disadvantage, which is also a consideration in Islington's Equalities Impact Assessment process.

The report assesses the overall impacts of the suite of savings proposals (cumulative impact) set out in the 2021/22 budget on residents and staff. It also provides a more detailed review – by specific groups and by directorate – of the cumulative impacts of existing savings set out last year, and in this new budget, on specific groups, and the actions to reduce or mitigate these impacts.

2. Context

Our commitment to fairness and equality

The Council's vision is to make Islington a fairer place – to create a place where everyone, whatever their background, has the same opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life.

Challenging inequality, racism and injustice is mission critical for Islington. We cannot realise our vision of creating a fairer borough for all our residents without tackling the inequality that continues to hold back some communities. Our new 'Challenging Inequality Programme' sets out our long-term ambition for challenging inequality, inequity, racism and promoting inclusion. We are determined to improve life chances for our residents and staff, ensuring no-one is left behind.

We want to challenge inequality in every capacity available to us, taking advantage of our position as an employer, strategic leader and as a service provider/commissioner.

Equality impact assessments are an important part of ensuring our services are responsive to the needs of our diverse communities and help tackle inequality creating a fairer borough for all. Each of the savings proposals set out in this budget has been considered through an equalities lens and, where there is a potential or perceived negative impact, a full Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and actions identified to mitigate any risks.

These individual assessments have been used to inform this overall assessment of the impacts of our budget savings proposals on residents and staff and, in particular, on any specific group.

Our priorities

We want residents to have the opportunity to realise their potential and enjoy a good quality of life. To help bring our vision to life, we have four clear priorities:

- **Decent and genuinely affordable homes for all:** building new council homes, protecting private renters, being a good landlord and preventing homelessness
- **Jobs and opportunity:** delivering an inclusive economy, supporting people into work and ensuring young people have the best possible start
- **A safer borough for all:** tackling antisocial behaviour, ensuring young people are safe and encouraging a more cohesive borough for all
- **A greener and cleaner Islington:** keeping Islington clean and tidy, encouraging greener travel, creating a healthier environment for all and tackling the climate crisis

Our legal duties

Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a legal duty to have "due regard" to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity and
- foster good relations between different groups.

The precise wording of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), together with a list of the 'protected characteristics' defined in the Act, is set out at Annex A.

We are required to demonstrate fulfilment of our duty to pay 'due regard' in the decision-making process and, as such, we need to understand the effect our policies and practices have on equality. Although the Council is not legally obligated to reject savings or growth proposals that could have negative impacts on any particular groups, it must carefully and with rigour consider the impact of its proposals on the PSED, take a reasonable and proportionate view about the overall impact on particular groups, and seek to mitigate negative impacts where possible.

Our diverse population

Islington is an Inner London borough with a diverse population. Data from sources such as Census 2011, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and The Islington Evidence Hub, help to paint a profile of Islington as a place and our diverse communities:

- **Population:** Islington has an estimated population of 236,400 in 2020 compared to 211,000 in 2011. It is estimated that our population will grow by a further 3% (7,000 people) over the next 10 years. Islington is the most densely populated local authority area in England and Wales, with 16,097 people per square km.

This is almost triple the London average and more than 37 times the national average.

- **Age:** Islington has a relatively young population with 38,000 people aged under 18. Of the 176,600 people aged 25-34, 62,900 are aged 25-34. 9% of the population is aged over 65, compared with an average of 12% in London and 19% nationally.
- **Ethnicity:** Islington is a diverse borough, with Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) groups accounting for 32% of our population. 33% of residents are estimated to be born outside of the UK, compared to a national average of 14%.

Children growing up in BME households in Islington are more likely to be living in poverty in comparison to white children.

- **Sex:** The proportion of men and women in the borough is roughly 50/50. However, there are variations in life expectancy between men and women. Life expectancy at birth for men in Islington is 79.6 years, whilst women in Islington have a longer life expectancy of 83.3 years

93% of lone parents with dependent children are female. This is significant because unemployment rates among lone parents are far higher than the wider population - this is likely to affect household income and therefore deprivation levels. In Islington 56% of lone parents are not in employment while just 21% are in full-time employment - half the figure for the wider population.

- **Disability:** In May 2019, there were 6,104 Disability Living Allowance claimants in Islington. 16% of the working age population who identified themselves as disabled or having a long-term health problem in Islington are economically active.

National figures show that 30% of people in a family with at least one disabled person live in poverty, compared to 19% of people in families with no disabled people in 2017/18.

- **Socio-economic:** Islington is the most deprived borough in London for income deprivation affecting children, and fourth highest for income deprivation affecting older people. Poverty is an issue in every part of the borough: almost every ward includes one of the most deprived LSOAs in Islington. Finsbury Park is the most deprived ward. As mentioned above, children in BME households or in lone parent households, and households with a disabled person, are more likely to be living in poverty.
- **Housing:** Islington has a relatively high proportion of social housing. Those in social housing are more likely to be on low income, though increasingly we are seeing households in the private rented sector struggling. Both social and private sector tenants who have moved to Universal Credit have seen increased levels of debt, which may put their tenancies at risk. 9% of households in Islington are lone parents and 11% of households are overcrowded.

The impact of COVID-19

We know that COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact on many disadvantaged groups. COVID-19 has impacted residents in many ways including affecting employment, health and education to name a few. Our research supports findings nationally that certain groups are more likely to have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 such as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, the elderly including those shielding, young people particularly those living in large households, and those with mental health conditions. We are working hard to support those affected ensuring they receive the support they need. The savings proposals set out in this report will not impact on the level of support provided to those impacted by COVID-19.

COVID-19 has also highlighted issues around digital inclusion (exclusion). Over the years an increasing number of services have moved online but COVID-19 has turbo-charged this trend, necessitating the move to more virtual methods of service delivery in order to continue to support residents. This presents a risk for some residents who may not be able to access services online and therefore risk becoming socially isolated. The reasons for this may include a lack of digital skills / confidence to use digital channels, communication challenges e.g. language and literacy barriers, physical or learning disability and affordability issues (digital poverty).

The proposals in this report do not directly impact or amplify the issues identified around digital exclusion. Where consultation is required on proposals, service leads will ensure that a variety of methods are used to engage residents ensuring we reach those that would otherwise be excluded.

The scale of the challenge

We are currently expecting to have to close a net budget gap of £25m over the 2021/22 financial year. This is in addition to approximately £250m savings we have already had to make over the past ten years. So the scale of the challenge is huge and the Council has been faced with some difficult choices.

This year, as in previous years, we have made every endeavour to protect those in greatest need and at most risk. Where possible, savings focus on optimising efficiencies in service delivery. However, some reductions in services have been unavoidable. Where this is the case, we have assessed the potential impact on groups with protected characteristics. In Islington, with high levels of poverty and deprivation, we also consider socio-economic disadvantage when assessing the impacts of changes to policies and services.

3. Equalities Impacts: overall cumulative impact

The overall assessment is that there is **no cumulative negative impact** as a result of the budget savings proposals for 2021/22.

The budget sets out 46 new proposals, which will deliver savings of around £14m in 2021/22. This is in addition to £11m savings for 2021/22 agreed in last year's budget.

The majority of savings will come from efficiencies, maximising use of the various funding streams the Council has access to, and making better use of technology. These will result in 'back office' changes but with little or no impact on residents.

However, there are some savings that have the potential to impact upon:

- All residents
- Specific service users
- Staff

Impacts on all residents

There are a small number of changes to universal services and charges, and these have the potential to affect all residents. The key proposals are:

- Council Tax increase
- Increased charges related to parking and enforcement and planning
- The change from Bank Holiday waste collections to the following Saturday

Residents will see a small increase in their Council Tax and some may also be impacted by increases in other charges e.g. parking and discretionary planning fees.

However, the most vulnerable residents will continue to be protected. Older people and those on low incomes are eligible for subsidised Council Tax through our Council Tax Support Scheme. Islington's Resident Support Scheme continues to provide a safety net for those in crisis and facing severe financial hardship, and has provided crucial support over the past year for those economically impacted by COVID-19.

Disabled people and others with Blue Badges will continue to be able to park free of charge in designated spaces and will therefore not be affected by increased charges.

Impacts on specific service users

There are a number of proposals that relate to changes in services which support specific groups of residents and their families. These include services for vulnerable adults, disabled people, and those with learning disabilities or mental health problems, and children and young people.

The key impact for these groups is a potential change to the service they currently receive. This may be in the shape of a new provider where services are being re-commissioned to achieve savings, or a review of support packages to focus more upon a person's strengths, resources and ability to access help in their community (strengths-based approach), rather than automatically assigning the highest level of care, regardless of needs or abilities.

Overall, there should be no negative impact on the vulnerable groups these services support as each person will continue to be assessed and to receive the level of support required to meet their needs. Indeed, there may be a positive impact as

people are empowered and supported to access help in their community and retain their independence for longer.

However, there is a risk that service users, families and carers could be unsettled by any change in the normal support arrangements and feel worried that the revised offer will not meet their needs. It will therefore be essential for services to ensure that service users and their families and carers are involved in any review of the support offer, and that the offer is reviewed on a regular basis to identify and respond to any change in needs and tailor the offer accordingly.

Evidence from services that have already moved to a strengths-based approach has been positive. Services users have felt supported and there have been no challenges to date.

Impacts on staff

The vast majority of staff savings and efficiencies will come from deleting / not recruiting to vacant posts, so there will be no direct impact on most staff or specific protected characteristics.

There are a number of proposals relating to reconfiguring or consolidating teams, bringing common functions together to achieve staff efficiencies. However, the number of anticipated redundancies from these proposals is low (maximum of 6 staff). It is not possible at this stage to assess the overall impacts on any specific protected characteristics but as numbers are low and spread across a number of services / types of roles there are unlikely to be any groups disproportionately impacted. Any restructure will be subject to staff and staff union consultation, in accordance with the council's reorganisation policy and procedures. Where redundancies are necessary, affected staff will be offered support and prioritised for any new jobs being advertised within the council.

Overall equalities impact assessment

Looking at the totality of the savings to be delivered in 2021/22, the impacts on Islington residents and staff are assessed as follows:

- There are no significant impacts on Islington residents as a whole – and where changes have been introduced around universal services and charges, vulnerable residents are not disproportionately impacted and those facing socio-economic disadvantage are protected from financial impacts.
- There are some changes to services for specific groups – older vulnerable people, disabled people, including those with learning disabilities, and mental health problems. However, service users will continue to receive the appropriate level of support to meet their needs. Where potential impacts have been identified for individual proposals, mitigating actions have been set out which will minimise any adverse impact.
- A number of proposals will bring positive impacts for the community (for instance Schools Streets) and a move to a strengths-based approach could have a positive

impact on service users by supporting them to retain some independence and engage in their community

- However, a number of savings proposals, together with wider initiatives e.g. People Friendly Streets, will impact vulnerable older people and those with physical or learning disabilities in particular. Whilst these changes are largely positive, any change can be disruptive. It is therefore essential that we continue to engage with these groups to ensure their voice are heard and that we recognise and respond to any needs and concerns as proposals are developed and rolled out.
- There are no significant impacts on staff – the number of redundancies from these proposals is low and there are no obvious impacts on specific protected characteristics.

The conclusion is that the Council’s proposals for achieving savings are therefore considered reasonable and have shown due regard to the PSED.

4. Equalities groups impacted by savings proposals

This section looks in more detail at the impacts of specific proposals on protected characteristics and on socio-economic disadvantage. It includes proposals from this year’s budget and from the budget last year that have a potential equalities impact.

Based on individual Equalities Impact Assessments the following protected characteristics are potentially impacted by one or more of the savings proposals for 2021/22:

Characteristic	Proposal	Directorate
Age (older people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary Accommodation • Mental Health - Demand Management • Transformation of Operational Social Work Teams • Assistive Technology Transformation • Review of Charging Policy • School Streets Phase 2 	Housing People – Adult Social Care People – Adult Social Care People – Adult Social Care People – Adult Social Care Environment & Regeneration
Age (younger people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Breaks Efficiencies • Investment in the House Project • Health Visiting Transformation • Demand Management - Children's Social Care • Review of Early Help Service • Play and Youth Commissioning 	People – Children, Employment & Skills People – Children, Employment & Skills Public Health People- Children, Employment & Skills People – Children, Employment & Skills People – Children, Employment & Skills
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary Accommodation • Mental Health - Demand Management • Learning Disability Reviews • Transformation of Operational Social Work Teams • Assistive Technology Transformation • Review of Charging Policy 	Housing People – Adult Social Care People – Adult Social Care People – Adult Social Care People – Adult Social Care People – Adult Social Care

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Floating Support Services 	People – Adult Social Care
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Visiting Transformation 	Public Health
Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Breaks Efficiencies • Temporary Accommodation • Mental Health Demand Management 	People – Children, Employment & Skills Housing People – Adult Social Care
Pregnancy / maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Visiting Transformation 	Public Health
Sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health - Demand Management 	People – Adult Social Care

There are no disproportionate impacts relating to:

- Religion and belief
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Gender re-assignment
- Socio-economic disadvantage

5. Savings proposals and impacts – by directorate

This section provides a detailed assessment by Directorate of those savings proposals – both new and existing - that will potentially impact specific groups.

a) Council wide

- Council tax increase

Out of 32 London Boroughs (excluding the City of London), Islington’s basic council tax is currently the 12th lowest (i.e. below the median) in London and significantly below the national average.

In 2021/22, the government has confirmed that the council tax referendum threshold will remain at 2% and there will be further flexibility for an Adult Social Care (ASC) precept of 3% specifically for ASC services.

It is proposed that the council increases core council tax by 1.99% and applies the 3% ASC precept, and this proposal is assumed within the council’s overall budget gap. This will enable us to continue to deliver good quality basic services – such as cleaning the streets and emptying the bins – together with vital support for the most vulnerable, including older people (through the ASC precept), children and families in need, and disabled people.

The financial impact of the increase will be minimal – the proposed 1.99% increase in core Islington council tax and 3% ASC precept (4.99% in total) equates to an additional £1.18 per week in 2021/22 for the average (Band D) property.

The increase will have a socio-economic impact on residents. However, we will continue to support and protect the most vulnerable groups: foster carers are exempt from paying Council Tax, older people will continue to receive £100

discount, and families struggling on low incomes (including single parents, disabled people, and BME families) can apply for a significantly reduced rate through our Council Tax Support Scheme. The average increase for working age council tax support clients will be 10p per week.

Poorer residents tend to be heavier users of council services and so may experience disruption with the introduction of new delivery models, although our Council Tax Support Scheme and Resident Support Scheme will protect the most financially vulnerable. Though proposals have been prepared with an emphasis on prevention and efficient use of resources, careful planning and monitoring is in hand to manage changes.

b) Environment and Regeneration

New savings:

This year's budget for 2021/22 sets out 15 savings proposals, which have no specific impact on residents with protected characteristics. While the proposal to create a single team to support licensing, street trading, land charges, naming and numbering through new back office system will not impact residents it will have an impact on a small number of staff and result in the deletion of 3-4 posts. Any restructure will be subject to staff and staff union consultation, in accordance with the council's reorganisation policy and procedures, to ensure that there is not an unfair impact on any member of staff or group.

Existing Savings:

There is one previously approved saving proposals, which identified potential impacts on protected characteristics:

- School Streets Roll out: Phase 2

The School Streets programme forms part of Islington's commitment to create a healthy, fair, accessible and enjoyable transport environment. The primary aim of the programme is to restrict through-traffic to schools at drop-off and pick-up times. It has already been rolled out across a number of locations in the borough. Phase 2 will introduce the scheme to more schools across the borough.

This will have a positive impact on a number of groups with protected characteristics. For young people, there will be a reduction in their level of exposure to harmful vehicle fumes and a reduced risk of collisions with vehicles. Residents with cognitive disabilities will benefit from the reduction in noise pollution. Pedestrian enhancements will positively benefit disabled people, including but not limited to those using walking aids, wheelchair or mobility scooters. This will also help parents with prams or who use bicycles for family mobility. Older people, who have higher instance of disabling conditions such as mobility impairment, deafness or blindness will benefit

from reduced traffic and road danger. In addition, older people are also more likely to live with dementia and will benefit from reduced noise pollution. In London, women are less represented than men in cycling, and lack of cycle infrastructure disproportionately impacts women. Reduced traffic during the school run will therefore benefit and empower more women to cycle.

Disabled residents or older people who may rely more on private cars or private vehicles may be inconvenienced by longer journeys if they regularly travel through the school street zones. Longer journeys may also involve higher costs. However, data indicates that private cars are just one means of travel for disabled residents and therefore should be considered on balance with the many benefits from a decrease in through traffic in the borough generally.

Additionally, residents, local businesses or disabled residents will be able to apply for exemptions if they will be affected by the location of one of the sites. People living within the school streets zone with parking permits will be automatically exempt from the scheme.

Exemptions will also be provided to blue badge holders from outside the area who require access to the streets during the school street hours and further individual assessments will be undertaken for those without blue badges who have mobility issues.

The London Taxicard Scheme offers subsidised travel in licenced taxis and private hire vehicles to London residents with serious mobility impairments or who are severely sight impaired.

c) Housing

New savings

The Housing directorate has put forward three saving proposals in the 2021/22 Budget, none of which will have a negative impact on residents or staff:

- Growth reduction in the Specialist Housing Needs team
- Anticipated reduction in the No Recourse to Public Fund caseload
- Decommissioning of the high cost temporary accommodation scheme in Barnet.

Existing savings

Looking at last year's budget, there were two proposals for achieving savings in 2021/22 which could impact on specific groups – in both cases the impact is positive:

- Reducing usage of private sector provision within temporary accommodation:

Acquiring a further 100 properties for use as temporary accommodation to reduce dependency (and associated high costs) of using private sector provision. Households in temporary accommodation are more likely to be those with protected characteristics, such as women, those with a disability and BME. Securing good quality accommodation within the borough will reduce some of the associated disadvantages of being housed in temporary accommodation and have a positive impact on residents overall

- Offer more permanent housing to families in temporary accommodation:

The proposal aims to increase permanent housing allocations to homeless families by 70 households, helping to reduce the number of residents in temporary accommodation. Every household moved from temporary to permanent accommodation will generate a saving, and this will also have a positive impact on these households due to higher quality, stable accommodation.

d) People Directorate – Children, Employment & Skills

New savings

This year's budget for 2021/22 sets out nine savings proposals, most of which have no impact on residents. This includes reducing the Remand budget and growth funding for Violence Against Women and Girls in line with demand, efficiencies across the service, and small savings in libraries (deleting a vacant post and a reduction in the budget for new stock).

There are, however, two proposals which will impact specific groups with protected characteristics:

- Short Breaks Efficiencies

Short breaks support children, and the families of children with severe and complex special educational needs and disabilities. These breaks enable the child to participate in fun, interesting and safe activities, whilst providing the parents and families with a much-needed break from their regular caring duties.

It is anticipated that, through reviewing the commissioning arrangements, we will be able to achieve the same, or better quality outcomes for children and families using these short breaks at a reduced cost.

Whilst there are no direct legal issues as a result of this change (as we are reviewing the commissioning activity whilst maintaining the same level of service), the Council will be mindful of the duties under the Children's Act 1989 (amended 2004). Specific regard will be paid to the short breaks duty and the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children duties in the 2011 Regulations.

Regular co-production and SEND Parent Forum meetings are held between the council and service users, and these have remained well attended during

COVID (virtual meetings held). Dialogue will continue through these channels and the council will carry out direct consultation with any affected families once a further feasibility of options has been undertaken. All users have an allocated social worker who can support them in considering options.

The impact of this proposal will be mitigated by reviewing the impact on families directly affected within 6 months of implementation; the lessons learned from these reviews will inform future commissioning.

- Investment in the House Project as a permanent service in Islington

The proposal is based on investment in 'The House Project', an initiative for care-experienced young people who are keen to live independently in their own home from the ages of 17-18 years old and onwards, and who have been assessed by social workers as being capable of doing so safely, contingent on the right preparation and support.

The House Project is positioned to deliver savings to the Council as the cost of placing young people in their own Council property with support from the House Project team is generally cheaper than the cost of foster care and other semi-independent placements. A successful pilot of the House project has been undertaken with two groups of young people, and this proposal will continue this project on an ongoing basis. This proposal will benefit young people - a recent evaluation report from the University of York (looking at House projects nationwide) highlighted improved wellbeing, autonomy, and integration among young people taking part in these projects.

Existing savings

Previously approved savings within Children, Employment & Skills which were identified as having a potential impact on protected characteristic groups are

- Demand management for children's social care and new commissioning strategy for children looked after

The savings are a mixture of embedding new practice model alongside lower caseloads to provide intensive intervention with the ultimate aim of reducing re-referrals and preventing children from becoming looked after. Much of our effort, focus and expenditure is on a very small cohort of children and young people who are especially vulnerable and whose lives involve a high level of complexity and risk.

Our work with these children, young people and their families is fundamentally geared to reducing inequality by working intensively with them to improve their outcomes including enabling more families to stay together and fewer children needing to come into the council's care. This has a positive impact on young people and a saving on the children's service placement budget.

A review of commissioning arrangements will also identify efficiencies in this budget with no negative impact on service delivery.

- Review of the Early Help 0 to 19 Service

A review of the council's early help service that will ensure continued high quality and joined-up provision at a reduced budget that delivers against government expectations, is consistent with research and evidence on best practice, and supports children and families early and in ways that best meet their needs, supporting positive and sustained outcomes, preventing escalation of need.

- Play and Youth Provision

Changes to commissioning and contracts in ways that preserve the availability or scope of play and youth services.

The proposed savings have been designed to protect the quality and range of our front-line services and it is not anticipated that the majority of savings will have any adverse impact on children and young people.

e) People Directorate – Adult Social Care

New savings

Proposals set out in this year's budget build upon the approach set out last year. A move to a strength based approach in Adult Social Care will shift the emphasis from the current default position of higher levels of care towards people being assessed based on their strengths and accessing more support in the community. Proposals for support around Mental Health, Learning Disabilities, and Housing support all look to achieve savings through this approach.

Tailoring support according to strengths will have a positive impact in not making people dependent, however, there is a risk that service users and their families will perceive this as a reduced offer. To mitigate this, all care will be discussed and agreed with the service user and their family / carer to ensure it meets needs.

Looking in more detail at the proposals set out in this budget, those that could potentially impact on groups with protected characteristics are as follows:

- Mental Health Demand Management

Statutory Mental Health Services in Islington are overseen by Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust (CandI). An agreement exists between CandI and LBI as part of the agreement, a number of statutory functions like assessments, reviews, safeguarding etc. are undertaken by CandI.

There were 25,526 adults diagnosed with depression, anxiety or both registered with an Islington GP practice in 2018 and 3,834 adults with a Serious Mental Illness (SMI) (such as bipolar disorder or psychosis).

In Islington, people with Common Mental Illness (CMI) and Serious Mental Illness (SMI) have significantly higher rates of inpatient admissions than the total population. In Islington, 6,380 people are on Employment Support Allowance due to a mental illness, this is 53% of all claimants. People with an SMI are twice as likely to have at least one other diagnosed Long Term Conditions (LTC) as people who don't have an SMI. More than one third of people with CMI and nearly half of people with SMI are smokers (34% and 48% respectively) compared to the general population (23%).

As part of this saving plan, those service users under the acute division and having a diagnosis of SMI will be the focus as part of this review work. Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health 2017 suggested that services should focus on prevention, facilitating a universal response and promoting good wellbeing. This is in line with the five year forward view for mental health.

As part of this saving plan, there are two pathways as outlined below:

1) Demand Management: savings will be made by working within the strengths-based model and reviewing service users as outlined below to move through the accommodation pathway within Islington i.e. from high cost residential care, to lower level support living to own self-contained flat and so on. The step-down process will result in the savings and avoid service users getting stuck in placements for a large number of years.

2) Review of service users based out of area with care packages will be reviewed on a six-monthly basis using the strengths-based practice model by checking:

- Can the service user be transferred back into accommodation within the borough of Islington where care and support can be offered locally with a view of increasing independence?
- Can the care package be reduced with the service user moving to a least restrictive model i.e. step down from 24 hrs to supported living?
- Can the cost of the care package be negotiated/reduced with the current provider where it is deemed appropriate for longer term placements and the service user cannot be moved due to clinical/forensic concern?

Those in age range between 40-69, women, those who recognise themselves as LGBT+, individuals with a disability and individuals from ethnic groups are more likely to suffer from mental health symptoms.

These groups will not be negatively impacted by the proposed change, as each person's support offer will be tailored to their strengths and need. Any change in the level of support offered will be based on need, what is in the borough and based on a robust review.

Regular review of service provision will be undertaken by analysing data of how many reviews have taken place, how many have moved into the borough and how many have stepped down. Additionally, engagement will be held with staff and managers about the process and service users to understand their wishes and needs.

- Transformation of Operational Social Work Teams

The current customer journey involves an initial assessment with Contact Islington, referral through to Urgent Response before further referral through to long-term teams. Each stage involves an assessment process. There are currently too many hand-offs between teams in the ASC department which means that we assess people multiple times before providing a care package.

The council are reviewing and streamlining the process to make the customer journey experience smoother, with the focus on assessing people at the first point of contact, resolving issues and signposting to other agencies where appropriate. This will reduce the number of people referred through to urgent response and subsequently reduces the size of the urgent response team.

An end-to-end review and streamlining of the pathway identified a number of potential savings from posts in the Urgent Response, Safeguarding, Community Placement Review, and the North and South Locality Community Teams (NLCT/SLCT).

These savings relate to the staffing establishment in those areas and this proposal will look to reduce the total staffing establishment/budget of all teams in scope by 10% (a total of £0.366m across six posts). Our current expectation is that the entirety of this saving can be made by deleting existing vacant budgeted posts meaning that all staff currently in a position, would remain in that position after this review. As a result there will be no negative impacts on any of the protected characteristic groups.

The impact of this proposal monitored the transformation programme benefits through the KPI Tracker, Independent Quality Assurance Monitoring Panels, Transformation programme board and other governance routes.

- Assistive Technology Transformation

Assistive technology (AT) is any item, piece of equipment or software that is used to increase, maintain or improve an individual's ability to perform daily tasks or to communicate, learn and live independent fulfilling, and productive lives.

The development of the current in-House Telecare service will enable the service to utilise the full range of technology available in the market, in a person centred and strength-based way. This will lead to the telecare service being able to offer increased independence, choice and quality of life for

people who require social care, reducing the need for domiciliary and residential care, while also potentially increasing the possibility of timely hospital discharge.

Savings will be achieved through care package reduction and by avoiding unnecessary increases to future care package costs. Service users are currently older people and those with disabilities. Engagement with service users and stakeholders has been undertaken with an online survey completed by over 200 current and potential service users, as well as a telephone service user survey, practitioner focus groups and internal and external stakeholder interviews such as with CandI NHS and Healthwatch. It is expected that the transformation will have a positive impact by improving the offer of care for residents with disabilities who receive care and support at home. The outcome of this will enable people to live more independently at home, and live happier lives. No negative or discriminatory impacts expected.

The impacts of this proposal will be monitored by the introduction of a benefits framework and quality assurance process to regularly monitor and oversee impact and issues arising following implementation. The introduction of a quality assurance framework and a method of measuring the financial and non-financial benefits of AT will enable the service to truly demonstrate its impact

- Learning Disability Reviews

This proposal aims to achieve a saving through a review of support for adults with learning disabilities.

This proposal relates to adults with learning disabilities over the age of 18 years that Islington Council has social care responsibility for. This responsibility arises because these individuals have been assessed by a social worker to have a need for care and support, which is eligible to be funded under the Care Act (2014) and Islington Council, has a duty to meet that need.

The proposal will seek to achieve reductions in the cost of existing care, while at the same time improving health and social care outcomes for these individuals by undertaking a review of their needs. Reviews will take place of people living in care homes (residential and nursing), supported living and community settings and will focus on maximising access to local resources, supporting pathways to employment, promoting independence and supporting skills development and recovery.

This model of assessment and support planning is called Strengths Based Practice. This is a collaborative process between the person supported by services and those supporting them, allowing them to work together to determine an outcome that draws on the person's strengths and assets.

In many cases this is more cost effective as it draws on resources already available in the community (e.g. those provided by voluntary, community and faith based groups or by friends, neighbours and families). It is not about cutting services and the intention of the review is not to save money but to improve the person's health and wellbeing.

However, the reality is that some people may currently be receiving services, which are not meeting their needs as effectively as possible and in some cases may be increasing dependency rather than promoting independence. These reviews are an opportunity to unlock that potential. Therefore, for some individuals this may cost less to the Council, creating a saving. For others however, costs may increase as a result of a review related to an increase in the need for social care support.

The review programme will be delivered in partnership with the commissioning and brokerage teams to ensure that as well as service provision meeting individual needs they also represent value for money. A schedule of reviews has been drawn up to ensure that everybody currently receiving care will be reviewed by a social worker. This is in line with the expectations of Adult Social Care set out in the Care Act (2014).

This proposal also seeks to deliver savings by undertaking learning disability reviews collaboratively across North Central London (NCL) authorities and by negotiating better deals with common providers. This approach will be supported by embedding the national learning disability pricing tool called the Care Cube Calculator (CCC), which sets out what is a fair price to pay for comparable care settings.

Consultation will be required with families of those with learning difficulties/disabilities whose placements are being reviewed. The impact of this proposal will be monitored by analysing data of reviews and through Care Package Panel Meetings alongside discussions with staff and managers on the process as well as service user's wishes and needs.

- Recommissioning of the 'low support' Housing Related Support services

The Council commissions a range of supported housing, where housing is provided alongside support or supervision to help people live as independently as possible in the community. Services are arranged into three levels of support – high support (24/7 support staff), medium support (support staff on-site every week day) and low support (less intensive visiting staff support). Our low support covers 118 units of accommodation, or 23% of our total of 515 units.

A review undertaken of our low support supported housing services found that our spending in this area is of limited benefit to our residents and does not represent good value for money. The council and providers believe that

residents would be better served living independently, with tenancy support provided should the need arise. Individual assessments carried out by current providers will determine the ongoing accommodation and support needs of each tenant currently residing in these supported housing units.

The intention of these assessments is not about cutting services or saving money but to provide the best outcomes for residents. Indeed a small number of residents will be referred into higher support housing services; these residents have already been identified and are being referred to these alternative sites. In other instances, should the current provider, landlord, housing colleagues and commissioners agree that a resident is able to live independently, they will be supported to do so. This will result in a saving to the council. This support will include tailored support from a move-on coordinator situated in the Council's Housing department and access to the council's Resident Support Scheme. In this way it is not expected that the saving will negatively impact on groups with protected characteristics, but to ensure this is the case further information from providers has been requested and an updated Equalities Assessment will be undertaken.

- Review and reduce the floating support service

The Housing Related Support (HRS) budget funds a range of supported accommodation services and the floating support service. A review of this service, has identified a number of efficiencies arising as a result of duplication of activities, with areas of duplication with other services provided by Islington Council and Housing Associations. The service will also improve its strengths based approach, equipping residents to independently manage their tenancies more quickly than is the current case.

The service works with up to 700 residents at any one time. Residents access the service via a variety of avenues and have a range of needs – though their primary needs in accessing the service relate to housing related support.

Service users include a small portion of young people and residents with a Learning Disability, residents with substance misuse needs, residents with mental health needs and residents with physical health issues. Any changes in support for people with learning disabilities will be risk assessed by a social worker in advance. Consultation with families about changes in support would also be required.

We will work with the provider to ensure that people are supported to understand the changes; including via the provision of accessible information. We will also work closely to ensure that there continues to be access to tenancy sustainment support services through the range of services available in Islington. Residents who require floating support will be able to receive it from our current providers or via similar tenancy sustainment services provided by the Council and Housing Associations.

- Review of Charging Policy (introduction of administration fee)

Currently all residents can arrange care through Islington Council. The Care Act (2014) allows the council to charge an administration fee on those residents using non-residential services that have the mental capacity to make the arrangements themselves who are full cost payers (capital in excess of £23,250). In these circumstances the local authority may apply an administration fee to cover its costs.

The administration fee will allow choice for the resident of arranging the care themselves or requesting that the council make all the arrangements in the knowledge that an administration fee will be charged.

Those who lack the mental capacity to arrange their own care will not be charged an administration fee, the council will continue to make those arrangements at no cost. We anticipate that the introduction of this fee would achieve additional income.

Over 80% of users would be over the age of 65. These users would benefit due to lower block contracts provided through Islington. Additionally, there are a high number of disabled service users. This will allow more residents with a disability to have care provided through Islington with regular care reviews and lower costs through to block contracts.

A mental capacity assessment will be completed where required so the charge is not raised for those lacking capacity. Additionally, reviews will be carried out on a yearly basis to ensure financial assessments remain correct.

Existing Savings:

In addition to the new savings proposals set out above, there are a number of savings proposals set out in the budget last year which potentially impact on specific groups:

- Annual reviews of adult social care packages in line with relevant legislation
- Package of savings through recommissioning of services
- Demand management and better use of residential block provision
- In-house services transformation

These savings will:

- Embed strength-based practice into adult social care ways of working through an intensive programme of reviews ensuring that there is recognition of residents' choices and goals, residents' strengths are the focal point of provision and recognising that people are experts on their own lives. We will also ensure that residents are at the centre of any safeguarding activities as we embed the Making Safeguarding Personal Approach (MSP). MSP will empower residents and ensure that any safeguarding protection plans are realistic and reflect the wishes, strengths and desired outcomes of residents. MSP at its core will ensure a stronger offer on prevention of abuse and

neglect as the input from residents into their own safeguarding arrangements is more likely to lead to a reduction in the likelihood of poor/non-compliance with plans to prevent harm in future.

- Work through an intensive programme of reviews ensuring that there is recognition of residents' choices and goals, residents' strengths are the focal point of provision and recognising that people are experts on their own lives.
- Re-commission certain services and re-invest where there are gaps in provision to ensure early intervention and prevention provision is evidence based.
- Further integrate services, enabling joint-working and partnerships within the council, with the NHS and with the voluntary sector, with these things contributing to better outcomes and experiences for residents. This includes increasing partners' awareness of their statutory responsibilities to prevent harm and abuse and safeguard adults at risk.
- Ensure our behaviour change interventions and programmes are effectively targeted to those residents and population groups where lifestyle-related inequalities are greatest.
- Move towards innovative use of technology to meet people's needs; while promoting safety and prevention of harm.

Although these directly affect residents with protected characteristics (older people and those with a disability), we believe these will deliver positive outcomes for individuals involved. No changes that would adversely impact on an individual's safety or wellbeing are proposed, and so none of the new savings proposals for this year are identified as having a negative cumulative impact on these same groups.

f) Public Health

New saving

There is one new saving which will impact upon one or more specific groups.

- Health Visiting Transformation

This review includes the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP), an intensive home visiting service for teenage mothers, which is offered in place of the universal health visiting service from pregnancy through to the child's second birthday. Family Nurse Partnership is currently commissioned as a separate service from Whittington Health, who provide both FNP and the universal health visiting service.

The review will consider the cost benefits of the FNP service and potential alternative options from the current stand-alone service. FNP is a nationally licensed programme, and we are considering with the providers and the national programme whether to merge FNP into the existing universal service,

or to cease provision of the licensed programme, to be replaced with a bespoke pathway for teenage parents within the universal health visiting offer.

We will also be looking within the main service, at the proportionality of the division of health visiting resource which goes towards universal delivery and to more targeted support to families with other vulnerabilities. Currently there is a disproportionate resource that goes to some young mothers compared to that available to young mothers who choose not to participate in the FNP programme, or to other extremely vulnerable families who do not fit the criteria for inclusion in the programme.

The overall impact would be a rebalancing of resource, which may have a negative impact on a small number of teenage parents, but a positive impact on other families of high vulnerability (with an associated positive impact on those with the protected characteristics of maternity/pregnancy, and females).

The review will also consider the learnings from remote delivery during coronavirus, and scope for future savings in terms of some ongoing remote delivery, whilst maintaining safeguarding and the overall effectiveness and impact of service.

Risk assessments will be undertaken to negate the impact of changes on residents and ensure that we continue to meet all of our duties and responsibilities. The impact of this proposal will be monitored by review of new provision 1 year after implementation of changes and reviewing performance at quarterly contract monitoring.

Existing savings:

There is an existing saving to redesign our local health improvement and lifestyle services, and change the way we deliver public health behaviour-change programmes. This includes health checks and exercise on referral, through our universal services and other more cost-effective methods.

Changes to NHS Health Checks and weight management services could potentially reduce access for certain high-risk groups, such as people living in areas of high deprivation, people from BME groups and men, who might be less likely to access/use the new offer. To mitigate this risk, we will take the following actions:

- In relation to NHS Health Checks, we will continue to incentivise GPs to proactively target Islington's residents at greatest risk of heart disease.
- We will continue to collect and monitor data on those accessing and using services including people who have experienced harm or neglect, to identify and understand any inequalities in access and outcomes and adapt the

marketing and delivery of services rapidly to address unmet need or areas of risk.

- We will review the local physical activity offer to ensure it has a core focus on reaching and engaging those who are less likely to access wider leisure services.

6. Staffing Impacts

As summarised in section 3, some proposals will have staffing implications. While the significant majority will come from deleting / not recruiting to vacant posts, some proposals will have implications which may include changes to current roles or a potential risk of redundancy (for a very limited number of staff).

The impacts of these proposals on staff with protected characteristics cannot yet be fully determined but as numbers are low and spread across a number of services / types of roles there are unlikely to be any groups disproportionately impacted. Any changes to staffing structure will require consultation with staff unions in accordance with the council's reorganisation policy and procedures.

Our established organisational change process ensures we support all of our staff through this change. Where restructures are proposed we carry out a comprehensive Staffing Impact Assessment that identifies the implications for those with protected characteristics and finds ways to mitigate accordingly.

Where a redundancy situation is possible, we will take a number of steps including:

- not filling vacancies in advance of a restructure so as many opportunities as possible are available to our existing staff
- using our redeployment process to help staff at risk find suitable alternative employment within the council
- considering alternative options to redundancy such as early retirement, flexible working or other 'working differently' options.
- stress management support and counselling services will be offered to staff through the Employee Assist Programme to help them cope with the additional pressures that structural change may bring.

We have an ongoing commitment to making Islington an employer of choice and are Timewise accredited, supporting flexible working opportunities available where possible, including condensed hours, flexible start and end times and part time working.

The Council is committed to a workforce that is representative of the borough at all levels and will continue to look for new ways to improve progression routes for staff and equip them to be senior managers of the future. We will continue to promote our staff equality forums as a way of engaging with staff and working together to continually improve their experience of working in Islington.

7. Human Rights and Safeguarding

Human Rights

It is unlawful for the council to act in a way that is incompatible with a European Convention right (unless the council could not have acted differently as a result of a statutory provision).

An interference with a qualified right (e.g. the right to respect for private and family life) is not unlawful if the council acts in accordance with the law and the interference is necessary in a democratic society.

In deciding whether the interference is necessary, the law applies a proportionality test, including whether a fair balance has been struck between the rights of the individual and the interests of the community.

Safeguarding

Implications for safeguarding in Adult Social Care

Proposals outlined in this document build on the Council's work on Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP). MSP is enshrined in the Care Act (2014) and the Pan London Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures.

MSP puts the person at risk of harm or abuse at the centre of decisions and actions about them. Just like the Strengths Based Practice approach for general social work activities, MSP respects that adults often bring ideas and solutions which will work best for them and the outcomes they need support in achieving.

This means that safeguarding adults continues to be integral in the work we are undertaking to really embed strengths-based practice. Ensuring vulnerable adults are safe and focusing on wellbeing is a core element of strengths-based practice and ensures there is consistency in approach whether we are working with a vulnerable person on a support plan or a safeguarding plan.

Implications for safeguarding in Children's Services

Safeguarding children is about protecting them from maltreatment, preventing their health and development being impaired, ensuring that they grow up in environments which provide safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The mitigation identified for each proposal reduces very significantly the risk of poor safeguarding practice. The council's mitigation should include not adopting any policy where safeguarding practice is adversely affected.

The proposals put forward have been tested against effective safeguarding practice. A broad range of quality assurance measures are already in place and will continue to be monitored and responded to robustly.

8. Monitoring

Whilst the overall assessment is that there is not a cumulative negative impact on any group as a result of the savings proposals, there is a need to continue to monitor this. Each individual proposal will continue to be reviewed and updated as required. Consultation will be carried out where required to seek the views of residents and service users. The lead officer for each proposal will be responsible for ensuring that equality considerations remain at the forefront of decision making as each of these proposals are progressed.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 provides that:

- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to —
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- (2) A person who is not a public authority but who exercises public functions must, in the exercise of those functions, have due regard to the matters mentioned in subsection (1).
- (3) Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to —
 - (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
 - (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
 - (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- (4) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- (5) Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to —
 - (a) tackle prejudice, and
 - (b) promote understanding.
- (6) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favorably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.
- (7) The relevant protected characteristics are —
 - age

- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

(8) A reference to conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act includes a reference to —

(a) a breach of an equality clause or rule;

(b) a breach of a non-discrimination rule.

(9) Schedule 18 (exceptions) has effect.