

Equality Impact Assessment: Screening Tool

Summary of proposal

Name of proposal	Procurement of Islington Crisis House
Reference number (if applicable)	NA
Service Area	Strategic Commissioning and Investment
Date screening completed	March 2022
Screening author name	Jennie Whitford
Fairness and Equality team sign off	Florrie Cole
Authorising Director/Head of Service name	Jill Britton

Before completing the EQIA Screening Tool please read the guidance and FAQs. For further help and advice please contact equalities@islington.gov.uk.

Please provide a summary of the proposal.

Please outline:

- What are the aims/objectives of this proposal?
- Will this deliver any savings?
- What benefits or change will we see from this proposal?
- Which key groups of people or areas of the borough are involved?

This proposal relates to the procurement of a crisis house service, which provides short-term 24-hour support and treatment in a community, home-like setting to those who perceive themselves to be in, or at risk of moving into, mental health crisis. The service can support up to 12 people at any one time and people can stay for up to 14 days within the service. The service will be based in the borough.

The crisis house service allows early quick and easy access and management during early crisis or relapse phase. This service acts as alternative care pathway for those in the early stages of a crisis, and it also provides a more flexible response, in the least restrictive setting, for those who can be managed in a community setting. The service reduces demand on acute mental health admissions in Islington, freeing up expensive hospital treatment for others who have more significant mental health needs.

Islington Council currently commissions a 12-bed crisis house, which is currently delivered by a voluntary sector provider who sub-contract Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust (C&I) to deliver clinical input. The initial contract term for the service to be procured expires 25 March 2023 and all options to extend have been utilised.

Approval is currently being sought to procure a short-term contract for a period of two years commencing 26 March 2023 to 25 March 2025, with a one-year break clause. This will allow for a strategic commissioning review to be undertaken of the crisis house service and its interface with other crisis alternatives and preventative services commissioned by the council and the ICB. The review will be undertaken in partnership with the ICB, to inform future commissioning intentions and develop a comprehensive procurement strategy for future crisis offer.

An in-depth review is required to ensure investment and resources are being distributed correctly across the crisis pathway, ensuring we have a fully integrated model that supports Islington residents at home, at the right time and in the most effective way.

An initial desktop review of Islington's current crisis care pathway indicates that Islington Council and ICB investment is skewed towards accommodation services and the relatively new VCS crisis alternatives receive less funding. Also, whilst considerable work has taken place in recent years to deliver a VCS and NHS integrated mental health crisis house model, drawing on the strengths of both sectors, there is scope to further develop integrated working.

There are also significant issues with the current crisis house building, a Grade 2 listed building that makes it difficult to repair and maintain. As such, future property options will also need to be considered as part of the review.

Future commissioning intentions will be developed by, and coproduced, over the next few months with service users, and key stakeholders, including the ICB, C&I and VCS specialist mental health providers.

On whom will the proposal impact?

Group of people	Impacted?
Service users	Yes

Group of people	Impacted?
Residents	Yes
Businesses	No
Visitors to Islington	No
Voluntary or community groups	No
Council staff	No
Trade unions	No
Other public sector organisations	No
Others	N/A

What consultation or engagement has taken place or is planned?

Please outline:

- Which groups or communities you have consulted/plan to consult
- Methods used/will use to engage (for example, focus groups)
- How insight gained from engagement or consultation has been/will be fed into decision making or proposal design

If you have not completed any engagement activity and do not plan to, you should outline why this decision has been made.

Engagement work falls into two parts, related to the procurement of the interim contract and engagement and coproduction around longer-term plans/proposals for future crisis house provision in the borough.

Engagement related to the procurement of the crisis house contract 2023-2025

Between March and June 2022 commissioners will be undertaking the following engagement activity to obtain feedback on the current crisis house model to inform the procurement strategy and development of the updated service specification. This includes feedback on what works well with the current service model, key areas for improvement, and initial feedback on the interface between the crisis house and other crisis alternatives and preventative services commissioned by the council and the Integrated Care Board.

- face-to-face group meetings with people who have experience of using the Crisis House Service and/or who may use the service in the future. One meeting with members of Islington Borough User Group and one meeting held at Isledon Road day service. Those not able to attend a face-to-face meeting will be able to submit their responses via a questionnaire (with support from Islington Mind staff). The discussion areas covered include: views on the existing service model, how they would expect to feel on leaving the crisis house/ key areas of support they would expect, what

works well, any key areas for improvement they would like to see in how the service is delivered, feedback on an ideal crisis house building/environment.

- 1-1 and small group meetings held with Heads of Service and Service Manager at Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust (C&I) for Crisis Service and Intensive community mental health services, and the Head of Mental Health Social Work at Islington Council.
- Discussion item at the Islington Mental Health Accommodation Pathway Provider Forum (attended by commissioned VCS providers who deliver mental health supported living and residential care services, C&I Community Rehab Team representative, LBI Housing and Expert by Experience).
- Discussion item at Islington GP Forum

The council has also undertaken market testing to establish market interest in the procurement and views on the service model and financial viability. This included a market engagement questionnaire published on the Tender Portal (6 responses received from interested providers) and meetings with the current service provider.

Engagement and coproduction re longer-term plans for future crisis house provision in the borough

Future commissioning intentions will be developed by and coproduced over the coming months with service users, and key stakeholders, including the ICB, C&I and VCS specialist mental health providers. This will build on engagement activity undertaken to date and will include small focus group sessions and workshops.

What impact will this change have on people with protected characteristics and/or from disadvantaged groups?

Of the groups you have identified above, please now indicate the likely impact on people with protected characteristics within these groups by checking the relevant box below. Use the following definitions as a guide:

Neutral – The proposal has no impact on people with the identified protected characteristics

Positive – The proposal has a beneficial and desirable impact on people with the identified protected characteristics

Negative – The proposal has a negative and undesirable impact on people with the identified protected characteristics

You should then assess whether the negative impact has a low impact, medium impact or high impact. Consider the level and likelihood of impact. Please also think about whether the proposal is likely to be contentious or perceived as a negative change by certain groups, as this could justify the completion of a full EQIA. See the guidance for help.

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Description of the impact (if applicable)
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	The service will work with adults that are aged 18 years and over with mental health needs, who are in the early stages of a mental health crisis or experiencing a relapse phase. The service will offer an opportunity to deliver a person-centered experience and meet age-related needs.
Disability (include carers)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choose an item.	<p>The service being procured will have a positive impact on adults in the early stages of mental health crisis.</p> <p>The service will endure safety and support recovery by offering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • timely skilled assessment, treatment, psychosocial interventions, peer and practical support to address health and social care needs for those in crisis, or at risk of moving into, crisis • structured support planning and crisis planning that promotes access to mental

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Description of the impact (if applicable)
				<p>health and universal services that support resilience building, self-management on discharge, maintenance of wellbeing and prevent future crisis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identification and support for carers. <p>During the two-year contract an in-depth review is being undertaken to ensure investment and resources are being distributed correctly across the crisis pathway, ensuring we have a fully integrated model across the VCS and NHS sectors that supports Islington residents at home, at the right time and in the most effective way.</p>
Disability (include carers)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Low	There is a potential risk of breakdown in service users' mental health as a result of change in support provider. This will be mitigated to reduce/eliminate negative impacts through the following actions:

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Description of the impact (if applicable)
				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) If there is a change in provider, the transition will need to be carefully managed to ensure continuity of support and to manage any service user anxieties arising from a change in support provider. We will work with the current and a new service provider (if applicable) and NHS Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team to ensure residents are supported leading up to and immediately following the transition to a new provider. The transition to a new service would be carried out in conjunction with residents, carers, and family members (where appropriate). 2) Ensure appropriate and timely communications and engagement with residents, and their families. 3) A robust process and methodology will be in place for evaluating and assessing tender submissions, to ensure the provider meets quality requirements. As part of the tender submission bidders will be required to provide

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Description of the impact (if applicable)
				<p>a robust mobilisation and implementation plan to support the new service go live.</p> <p>4) Commissioners will also undertake engagement activity with residents pre-tender to provide an opportunity for them to feedback on the current service model and ensure their views are reflected within the development of the updated service specification.</p>
Race or ethnicity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	The service will proactively engage with people from all ethnic backgrounds through personalised approaches to care and support that are culturally appropriate. This includes supporting residents to access local mental health and universal services that meet support resilience, self-management and maintenance of wellbeing, and that are culturally appropriate.
Religion or belief (include no faith)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	The new service will engage with people from all religions through personalised approaches.

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Description of the impact (if applicable)
				Residents will be supported to observe and practice their faith, and participate in their faith community, where that is their choice/is applicable.
Gender and gender reassignment (male, female or non-binary)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	The service is for adults who identify as male, female or non-binary, offering a tailored, person-centred approach based on the individual needs of the resident. People that have experienced gender reassignment experience poorer mental health outcomes. The integrated service will ensure that staff delivering the service have training plans around tailored support to different groups, including gender reassignment.
Maternity or pregnancy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	The service will continue to be accessible to people during pregnancy and post birth; linking users to referral pathways within perinatal services where applicable in liaison with the Community MH Teams (if the person is already under their care).

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Description of the impact (if applicable)
				Residents will be supported to maintain important relationships, through a close partnership approach with, and inclusion of, families, where this is the individual's wish. This could include people who are pregnant and working parents under this characteristic.
Sex and Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	LGBTQ people experience poorer mental health outcomes compared to the general population. The service provider will support residents who are LBGT+ by working with both staff and other residents to foster a culture of dignity and respect, enabling residents to feel safe and secure. This includes a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment. The crisis house service provider will develop stronger links with key community providers and LGBTQ+ organisations, such as the London Friend and Opening Doors London, to share learning and better understand needs of this group, as well as support residents to link with local LGBTQ

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Description of the impact (if applicable)
				networks/services based on individual need and wishes.
Marriage or Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	The service will support people to maintain important relationships, through a close partnership approach with, and inclusion of, families, where this is the individual's wish.
Other (e.g. people living in poverty, looked after children, people who are homeless or refugees)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<p>In the tender 20% of the award criteria will be allocated to social value for the new contract. Providers will be asked to identify additional opportunities for social value to the community that will be undertaken as part of the new contract. This will provide a range of benefits for the borough including, but not exclusively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment from the provider to supporting local recruitment – including in partnership with the iWork Service; • Voluntary/peer support opportunities within the service for people with lived experience;

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Neutral impact	Negative impact	Description of the impact (if applicable)
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment from the provider on training and upskilling of staff, including via apprenticeship and formal qualifications; • Commitment from the provider to using local supply chains; • Community engagement commitments from the provider, including partnership working with other local community services, VCS organisations, community groups/resources, and making use of shared spaces within the crisis house building; • Commitment from the provider to staff wellbeing – for example via adoption of specific workplace health initiatives; and • Commitment from the provider on delivering environmental and bio-diversity improvements within the service, reducing waste, use of sustainable resources, and limiting energy consumption.

How do you plan to mitigate negative impacts?

Where there are disproportionate impacts on groups with protected characteristics, please outline:

- The other options that were explored before deciding on this proposal and why they were not pursued
- Action that is being taken to mitigate the negative impacts

Action	Lead	Deadline	Comments
<p>Commissioners will work with the current and a new service provider (if applicable) and community Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment teams to ensure residents are supported leading up to and immediately following the transition to new service.</p> <p>Robust transition plans devised with each resident and carefully monitored. The transition to a new service would be carried out in conjunction with service users, carers, and family members (where appropriate).</p>	<p>Senior Mental Health Commissioning Manager, Service providers and NHS Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment team</p>	<p>November 2022 – March 2023</p>	
<p>Ensure appropriate and timely communications and engagement with residents, and their families.</p>	<p>Senior Mental Health</p>	<p>November 2022 – March 2023</p>	<p>As part of mobilisation of the new contract.</p>

Action	Lead	Deadline	Comments
	Commissioning Manager		
A robust process and methodology will be in place for evaluating and assessing tender submissions, to ensure the provider meets quality requirements.	Senior Mental Health Commissioning Manager	September 2022	
Robust implementation of new contract, including regular implementation meetings with the new provider that is minuted, monitoring progress against the service implementation plan and monitoring risks and mitigation using an implementation risks and issues log.	Senior Mental Health Commissioning Manager	Implementation of new contract December 2022 – March 2023	
Engagement activity with residents who have experience of using the crisis house and/or may use the service in the future, pre-tender to provide an opportunity for them to have an input into the service specification.	Senior Mental Health Commissioning Manager	April – June 2022	

Screening Decision	Outcome
Neutral or Positive – no full EQIA needed*.	Yes
Negative – Low Impact – full EQIA at the service director’s discretion*.	No
Negative – Medium or High Impact – must complete a full EQIA.	No
Is a full EQIA required? Service decision:	No
Is a full EQIA required? Fairness and Equality recommendation:	No

* If a full EQIA is not required, you are still legally required to monitor and review the proposed changes after implementation to check they work as planned and to screen for unexpected equality impacts.

Please send this completed EQIA Screening Tool to equalities@islington.gov.uk for quality checking by the Fairness and Equality Team.