

# **Appendix G: Budget 2023/24 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 2023/24.

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 who could be considered at a disadvantage in accessing opportunities or services (such as people with language difficulties or from low-income households), which is also a consideration in Islington's Equality Impact Assessment process.

The report assesses the overall impacts of the suite of savings proposals (cumulative impact) set out in the 2023/24 budget on residents and staff. It also provides a more detailed review – by specific groups and by directorate – of the cumulative impacts of previously agreed savings set out last year, and in this new budget, on specific groups, and the actions to reduce or mitigate these impacts.

There are significantly more savings proposals this year than there were last year, due to the significant medium-term budget gap.

## **2. Context**

### Our commitment to fairness and equality

Our [Islington Together: For a more equal future strategy](#) sets out the Council's vision to make Islington a more equal 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 more equal borough for all our residents without tackling the inequality that continues to hold back some communities. Our '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.

### Our EQIA Process

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 more equal borough for all.

In Autumn 2021, we introduced a new EQIA process to improve efficiency and quality assurance. Each of the savings proposals set out in this budget have been considered through an equalities lens, with initial screening of all completed via our EQIA Screening Tool. Where the screening tool identified significant potential (or perceived) negative or positive impacts, a full Equalities Impact

Assessment was completed in order to mitigate any risks or maximise potential benefits. The Equalities Team was closely involved in all aspects of this process, working with services to identify potential or perceived impacts.

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

### Our priorities

Over the next decade we will maintain a relentless focus on tackling inequality and eradicating poverty in our borough. To bring this vision to life, we have five clear priorities:

**We nurture our children and young people in Islington, so everyone has the very best start** ensuring that every young person in Islington has access to the opportunities they need to thrive in life, including an excellent education.

**We make sure everyone has a place to call home, which is secure, decent, and genuinely affordable** using our power and influence to stand up for private renters and all others in our communities to ensure equity in access to decent, safe, and affordable homes.

**We stand with our communities, so they are safe, connected, and inclusive** fostering a place made up of strong communities, where – regardless of background – people feel safe, connected, and have the resources they need to make change in their local areas.

**We invest in local jobs and businesses to ensure a thriving local economy** addressing precarious employment and ensuring equal access to well-paid jobs with prospects. This has been exacerbated by the pandemic, with the night-time economy and sectors such as leisure and hospitality hit hardest in the borough, which means creating local opportunities is more important than ever.

**We work together to create a cleaner, greener, healthier** borough seizing opportunities to create a sustainable future where people can live independent and healthy lives, while enjoying clean air and people-friendly streets.

### 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 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.

In addition, at Islington we go above and beyond our legal duties to consider impacts on those who could be considered at a disadvantage in accessing opportunities or services. This includes people from low-income households, carers, migrants, refugees, and people with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF), and those with low literacy levels.

### Our diverse population

Islington is an Inner London borough with a diverse population. Data from our 2022 [State of Equalities](#) report paints a profile of Islington as a place and of our diverse communities:

- **Population:** The population of Islington is estimated to be 245,827 in 2022. This is an increase of approximately 19% (39,189 people) since 2011. It is estimated that our population will grow by a further 2.7% (6,600 people) over the next 10 years. Islington is the second most densely populated local authority area in England and Wales, with 16,699 people per square km. This is almost triple the London average and more than 38 times the national average.
- **Age:** Islington has a relatively young population: 9% of the population is aged over 65, compared with an average of 12% in London and 19% in England. Twenty-eight per cent of children under 16 live in low-income households, and 61% of secondary school pupils are eligible for the deprivation Pupil Premium, a grant aimed at raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.
- **Ethnicity:** Islington is a diverse borough, with Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic groups accounting for 32% of our population. 32% of residents are estimated to be born outside of the UK, compared to a national average of 14%.
- **Children growing up in Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic 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 79.5 years, whilst women in Islington have a longer life expectancy of 83.2 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 2021, there were 5,157 Disability Living Allowance claimants in Islington. The estimated number of Islington residents with a disability in 2022 is 34,416, or 14% of the population. There are 3930 people in Islington living with a serious mental illness, the fourth highest prevalence of serious mental illness in London.
- **National research has demonstrated that disabled jobseekers need to apply for 60% more jobs than their non-disabled counterparts.**
- **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 Black and Minority Ethnic 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.

### The impact of the cost-of-living crisis

The cost-of-living crisis has put further pressure on households who were already struggling. In Islington there are more than 11,500 families living in fuel poverty, and 27,400 people in households receiving housing benefit or council tax support. Many households who are just about managing will also soon start to see a decrease in their financial resilience.

Businesses in Islington are closing at the fastest rate since 2017, faced with uncertainty on energy bills and soaring costs for services, labour, and raw materials. In addition, some businesses are already experiencing a drop in consumer spend (e.g., delivery food items) and this is only expected to increase as households reduce discretionary spend. At the same time, the number of businesses carrying debt has more than doubled, initially because of the pandemic, and now increasing because of increased supply and borrowing costs.

In September 2022, the Council declared a “cost of living emergency” and pledged to do all it can to help the tens of thousands of residents likely to be hit hardest by spiralling energy and food costs, and soften the blow for local small and medium-sized businesses.

Despite ongoing pressures on local authority funding, the Council continues to provide a comprehensive range of support for vulnerable and low income households and to support local businesses and communities. In addition to the core support offer, a range of additional support is being delivered or planned, including ensuring any government grants are targeted as effectively as possible in support of the cost-of-living crisis and distributed as quickly as possible.

[Islington's response to the cost-of-living crisis](#) sets out the full range of actions which Islington is taking to protect residents and businesses.

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 a **potential negative impact** because of the budget savings proposals for 2023/24. Much of this is due to the current climate we find ourselves in with the cost-of-living crisis impacting the lives of our residents. Whilst many of these decisions are taken nationally by government, it is the council that feels the brunt of them with even less funding to support those most in need.

The Chancellor's Autumn statement (17/11/22) set out further measures that will impact our residents. The savings proposed as part of this budget are essential in order to be able to continue to deliver services to the most vulnerable. But within this challenging context any savings impacting residents are likely to exacerbate their difficult circumstances.

The majority of savings for this year will come from council tax and tariff fee rises or changes, service restructures, 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 with small impacts on staff but with little or no impact on residents.

The majority of these impacts were not deemed significant enough to progress to a full EQIA, or had robust enough mitigation in place to mitigate fully against any negative impacts. However, 17 of the new savings proposals submitted for 2023/24 progressed to a full EQIA, and 11 will require a full EQIA at a later stage (for example, following an organisational review).

The 17 full EQIAs identified potential negative impacts on:

- Residents
- 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:

- Restricting non-sports park keepers to the main period of park use
- Council Tax and Adult Social Care precept increase

The proposal to restrict park keepers' role to the main period of park use will mean that public toilets in four parks are closed between October and March, as they cannot be safely kept open without a keeper on site to offer supervision and regular cleaning.

This will affect all residents and is likely to have a disproportionate impact on residents who are disabled, older, pregnant, or caring for small children. Residents may also feel less safe without the presence of park keepers, though the parks security team will continue to respond to and deal with anti-social behaviour.

The Parks Service will mitigate the impact of toilet closures by providing key access to trusted community partners to use the facilities when programmes are being delivered in the park, as well as looking at possible agreements with concession holders to open/close and clean the toilets.

The service will continue to develop opportunities such as volunteering, health-based activities, and community partner programmes in our parks, and to encourage greater diversity in park use and an increased feeling of safety for all users through the Parks for Health programme.

Residents will see a small increase in their Council Tax, including the Adult Social Care precept. However, the most vulnerable residents will continue to be protected. Older people and those on low incomes remain eligible for subsidised Council Tax through our Council Tax Support Scheme, and Islington's Resident Support Scheme continues to provide a safety net for those in crisis and facing severe financial hardship.

The council has also taken steps to protect vulnerable residents through its response to the cost-of-living crisis, which has included work with voluntary sector partners to maximise the borough's collective offer, including the rollout of warm spaces, a communications campaign to increase awareness and take up of the support which is available to residents, and a core offer of financial and other support (e.g., the work of the Income Maximisation team).

### Impacts on specific service users

Most of the proposed changes will have no impact on service users, as the savings focus on contracts, 'back office' staffing, the deletion of vacancies, changes to funding sources, and the removal of excess budgets where there is currently an underspend.

However, five proposals could impact specific groups of service users. The proposals are:

- Charging for all rechargeable repairs
- Repairs staffing review
- Changes to the Bright Start operating model
- Changes to Bright Start locality working
- New administrative charge for appointeeships

The proposal to charge for all rechargeable repairs – council housing repairs where the damage/loss is a result of misuse or neglect – could have a negative impact on older and disabled council tenants, as tenants with a recorded disability are currently exempt from the charges. The proposal will also disproportionately affect low-income and Black and minority ethnic residents, who are overrepresented on our estates.

The service plan to mitigate these impacts by offering tenants access to a subsidised handyperson service. If a tenant calls up about a rechargeable repair and is flagged as vulnerable, they will be referred to housing management and can be linked into intensive support if appropriate. The Income team will also continue to refer tenants who end up having a debt against their property to the Income Maximisation team.

The review of staffing in the repairs service could also have a negative impact on council tenants. As above, any change in service quality would disproportionately affect low-income and Black and minority ethnic residents, who are overrepresented on our estates. The service will mitigate this risk by carrying out a full equality impact assessment alongside the review and focusing on back-office staff.

The changes to Bright Start, which include the deletion of one family support practitioner post and reduced area budgets, could have a negative impact on people who are more likely to access family support – including mothers, families with young children, families where someone has a disability, global majority families, lone parent families, and families experiencing poverty. The proposal will also impact families where a parent attends English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, as the creche facilities for these classes will no longer be able to run.

However, this will be mitigated by improvements in universal early help services, including the development of Family Hubs and the introduction of a universal Early Help case recording system. Families with the greatest needs will be prioritised for support, including through targeted outreach

to temporary accommodation and community organisations, and the service will develop alternatives to creche facilities for ESOL classes.

The proposal to charge clients who have over £1,000 in savings for the council's appointeeship service, which manages the financial affairs of individuals who have been deemed to lack the mental capacity to do so themselves, will impact service users who are older and/or disabled. However, in assessing someone's ability to pay, the team will consider their income and liabilities to ensure that any charges do not have an unfair impact.

### 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. However, a small number of proposals could lead to redundancies or redeployment. These staffing changes are subject to consultation and are not expected to have any negative impacts on protected groups.

The proposal to reduce the number of vehicles in the Repairs and Maintenance fleet could have a negative impact on a small number of older staff, disabled staff and staff in financial hardship, as some operatives will lose the ability to drive their vehicles home and to work and will have to find alternative transport. This will be mitigated by a train loan scheme and by the possibility of on-site storage to minimise transport of tools.

Some of the staffing changes proposed in the 23/24 budget are likely to have a positive impact on staff from protected groups. For example, the proposed new Reablement model in Adult Social Care and the reorganisation of the Mental Health Service will improve career progression opportunities for staff on lower pay grades, who are more likely to be from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.

Several proposals include organisational reviews to identify further savings, which will likely lead to changes in staffing. In these cases, services have committed to completing a full EQIA once each review has taken place. The proposals are summarised in section 5 below.

Of the proposals that did not progress to a full EQIA, there were potential impacts – with mitigating action in place – on the following groups:

- Service users
- Residents
- Staff

However, as these impacts were not significant enough to progress to a full EQIA, they have been outlined in section 5 in the summary of all proposals.

### Overall equalities impact assessment

Looking at the totality of the savings to be delivered in 2023/24, the impacts on Islington residents and staff are assessed as follows:

- The proposals could negatively impact older and disabled residents, Black residents (who are overrepresented among our tenants), households who are more likely to access family

support, and families where a parent attends ESOL classes. However, the council will seek to mitigate these impacts wherever possible. For example, alternatives to creche facilities are being developed for ESOL classes, and older and disabled tenants who are no longer exempt from rechargeable repairs will be able to access a subsidised handyman service.

- While few proposals will have a negative impact on staff, the proposal to reduce the number of vehicles in the Repair and Maintenance fleet could negatively impact a very small number of older or disabled operatives, and a small number of proposals could lead to redundancies or redeployment. The EQIA process did not identify any disproportionate impacts on protected groups from changes to staffing.

In light of the extremely challenging fiscal situation and the need for services to remain financially sustainable, the conclusion is that the Council’s proposals for achieving savings are 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 2023/24:

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Directorate</b>
<b>Age (older people)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charge for all rechargeable repairs</li> <li>• Remodel Repairs and Maintenance fleet strategy</li> <li>• New administrative charge for appointeeships</li> <li>• Restricting non-sports park keepers</li> </ul>	Homes and Neighbourhoods Homes and Neighbourhoods Community Wealth-Building Environment
<b>Age (younger people)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Children’s Services Operating Model: Bright Start</li> </ul>	Children’s Services
<b>Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charge for all rechargeable repairs</li> <li>• Remodel Repairs and Maintenance fleet strategy</li> <li>• New administrative charge for appointeeships</li> <li>• Restricting non-sports park keepers</li> </ul>	Homes and Neighbourhoods Homes and Neighbourhoods Community Wealth-Building Environment
<b>Race</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Children’s Services Operating Model: Bright Start</li> <li>• Restricting non-sports park keepers</li> <li>• Repairs staffing review</li> </ul>	Children’s Services Environment Homes and Neighbourhoods



<b>Socio-economic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remodel Repairs and Maintenance fleet strategy</li> <li>New Children's Services Operating Model: Bright Start</li> <li>Repairs staffing review</li> </ul>	Homes and Neighbourhoods Children's Services Homes and Neighbourhoods
<b>Pregnancy / maternity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restricting non-sports park keepers</li> </ul>	Environment
<b>Gender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Children's Services Operating Model: Bright Start</li> </ul>	Children's Services
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bright Start Locality Working (families where English is spoken as an additional language)</li> </ul>	Children's Services

There are no disproportionate impacts relating to:

- Marriage and civil partnership
- Sexual orientation
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment

## 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. This includes proposals that necessitated full EQIAs as well as proposals that only necessitated completion of an EQIA screening tool – i.e., the proposal did not demonstrate a significant (negative or positive) equalities impact.

### a) Council wide

*New savings:*

Five cross-cutting proposals were submitted, two of which will require a full EQIA at a later stage.

#### Making the Organisation more Efficient (full EQIA to be completed at a later stage)

The proposal is to review back-office structures and management to reduce silo working between departments, ensure technology and processes are in place to get things right first time and eliminate waste to focus on what matters for residents. This review will include consideration of staff and budgets from around the council associated with complaints, information governance, business support, printing/paper, postage/courier costs, payments and processing teams and other relevant budgets.

The screening tool identified that the proposal will likely lead to the deletion of multiple posts, and to potential redundancies. A full EQIA will be completed following the review.

#### Reduction in departmental management costs (full EQIA to be completed at a later stage)

The proposal is to delete four Senior Officer posts. While the screening tool did not identify any negative equalities impacts at this stage, a consultation will be held with all impacted staff and a full EQIA will be completed after this has taken place.

#### Removal of Unallocated Member Investment Base Budget

The 2022/23 budget included investment to fund manifesto commitments. The proposal is to remove the unallocated investment budget – the amount which remained after all commitments were funded. The screening tool did not identify any negative equalities impacts.

#### Enhanced Business Efficiency scheme

The proposal is to establish a time-limited scheme where staff can request to leave the council voluntarily, on either redundancy or business efficiency grounds. The scheme will be applied consistently to all employees and proposed application outcomes will be subject to equality impact analysis. The screening tool did not identify any negative equalities impacts.

#### *Previously agreed savings*

None of the cross-cutting savings proposals from the 2022/23 budget required a full EQIA.

### **b) Adult Social Care**

#### *New savings:*

The budget for 2023/24 sets out seven savings proposals, five of which were assessed to have no significant equalities impacts at the screening stage. One proposal will require a full EQIA as it is developed further.

#### Review Mental Health Crisis and Recovery Pathways (full EQIA to be completed for 2024/25 savings)

This proposal is based on efficiencies in several contracts for commissioned mental health services, following service reviews. It includes savings for the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25.

The savings for 2023/24 are based on a reduction in contract value for the commissioned Community Wellbeing Service, and on the outcome of a procurement process for the Islington-commissioned Crisis House Service. The screening tool did not identify any significant negative equalities impacts. Savings in the Community Wellbeing Service will not undermine the community outreach for protected groups which is provided by the service, and the successful provider for Crisis House submitted a tender which met the department's quality criteria but was below the allocated budget.

However, the screening tool did identify a potential small negative impact on service users' mental health, within the protected characteristic of disability. While the quality of the service will not change, the transition to a new provider could be unsettling for some service users. The tool set out appropriate mitigations: tailored and timely engagement with service users and their families and a carefully managed transition process.

The savings for 2024/25 are based on the outcomes of two further service reviews, one of which is ongoing and one of which has not yet started. The reviews are expected to lead to a reduction in the value of contracts, and a shift towards more flexible and strengths-based support in the community. The screening process found that a full EQIA would be needed at a later stage, as the service reviews will likely lead to the redesign of services.

### Introduction of a 7-day 'Recovery Model' to reduce the demand for ongoing care services

The proposal is to pilot the 7-Day Recovery Model, an approach to managing discharges from hospital which has already been introduced in other local authorities (Kent, Camden, and Gateshead) with positive outcomes. In this model, people who have been discharged from hospital receive free homecare support for up to 7 days, helping them to recover and providing space to assess their needs.

The screening tool explained that Reablement are finding it difficult to respond to the level of demand from hospital discharge and are quickly hitting capacity. Once this happens, people can only be discharged with a long-term care package or, in exceptional circumstances, into residential care. The new model will allow for a more targeted reablement approach, allowing more people to discharge safely back home and receive support which matches their needs.

The screening tool identified that the proposal mainly affected older people, disabled people, and carers, but found that it would have a positive impact on these groups, as the new model will maximise people's independence and work on their strengths before any long-term decisions are made. Data and feedback from residents and staff will be captured throughout the six-month pilot, allowing Adult Social Care to adjust the service before committing to a final model.

### New Reablement Model

This proposal is based on a restructure of Reablement. The proposed savings are from staffing changes and an expected reduction in the homecare budget, as a more effective reablement service will reduce the need for long-term care. The screening process identified no negative equalities impacts, as service quality will not be affected and the reduction in staffing will be achieved through deleting vacancies and reducing agency use. The service had engaged with staff through a consultation process and had been able to ensure that the restructured roles met individual and home/family needs.

The screening tool also identified potential positive equalities impacts. While the staff in the service are predominantly from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, the restructure may benefit this group by providing more consistency, more opportunities for career progression and a potential increase in paygrade. The screening also found that the restructure will benefit disabled people by increasing capacity in the reablement service, providing more focused support, and extending the service to people with a learning disability or mental health needs.

### Review Floating Housing Related Support Contract

This proposal is based on efficiencies identified through an ongoing strategic commissioning review. The early stages of the review process found that six staff posts in this commissioned

service could likely be reduced through vacancies and redeployment, without any significant change in service provision.

The screening tool identified no negative impacts on protected groups. However, as the proposal was still under development and it was not possible to rule out future negative impacts, the screening tool committed to working with the provider to continually monitor the equalities impact of each proposed and agreed change. The screening tool will be updated as the proposal develops.

### Review of Older People's Day Services

This proposal is to redesign day service provision by reconfiguring a day centre building, adopting a new model which was more enabling and community focused, and developing inhouse day provision to meet more complex needs. The saving is based on a reduction in the homecare budget and delayed admission to residential care, as more residents will be able to access day services which meet their enhanced needs.

The screening tool identified a positive impact on older people, disabled people and unpaid carers, whose needs would be better met by the redesigned service. It did not identify any impacts on other protected groups.

### Improved price negotiations with providers

The proposal is to introduce a dedicated post to focus on contract negotiation. The postholder will draw on their commercial knowledge and experience to achieve the best value for money in contracts with providers, without impacting quality of care. The screening tool did not identify any negative or positive equalities impacts.

### Reorganisation of the mental health service

This proposal is to restructure the Mental Health Service. While the number of FTE positions will be reduced, all permanent members of staff will be assimilated into the new structure and (due to vacancy levels in the service) there will be no redundancies.

The screening tool found that there were no negative equalities impacts. Staff on maternity leave would be included in the consultation and the new structure would improve career progression opportunities for more junior staff, who were more likely to be from a Black or other ethnic minority background.

### *Previously agreed savings*

None of the savings proposals from Adult Social Care in the 2022/23 budget required a full EQIA.

## **c) Fairer Together**

### *New savings*

The budget for 2023/24 sets out two savings proposals, both of which required a full EQIA.

The proposals include:

Redirecting money from commissioning budgets into new Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) grants programme (full EQIA completed)

The proposal is to identify commissioned contracts which can be effectively delivered by local Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, then divert them into the grants programme. The saving will come from a small reduction in the value of the grant compared to the previous contract.

The EQIA identified potential positive and negative impacts for each protected group. The shift to VCS delivery was assessed as positive for protected groups, as local VCS organisations have expertise in reaching people from different backgrounds. However, the reduction in funding could mean reduced capacity to support residents. The EQIA identified that additional screening tools would be required for each contract which was moved to the grants programme, to identify any potential impacts on protected groups.

Library/Access Islington Savings (full EQIA completed)

The proposal is to bring together Libraries and Heritage and Access Islington, to form a division within the new Community Engagement and Wellbeing Directorate. The savings will come from a realignment of managerial roles and responsibilities. Separately, the service will carry out reviews of non-management roles and the borough's libraries and community centres/spaces. The service will aim to make any staffing changes through deleting vacancies, and the reviews may also identify sufficient savings without any reduction in posts.

The EQIA identified positive impacts for residents with limited mobility and those with complex needs, as a range of services and support would be moved closer to people's homes – for example, through the development of the new Fairer Together hubs and the use of libraries to deliver frontline services. However, it also identified the need for a further screening tool, or potentially a full EQIA, if changes to staffing are made following the reviews.

The service will also update the EQIA following the review of the borough's libraries and community centres, to consider any potential negative impact on protected groups who may have to change where they access support.

*Current savings*

This directorate did not exist at the time proposals were submitted for 2022/23.

**d) Environment**

*New savings:*

The budget for 2023/24 sets out 16 savings proposals. One proposal required a full EQIA, and an additional three proposals may require full EQIAs at a later stage, depending on the outcome of organisational reviews.

The proposals include:

### Non-sports park keepers winter provision (full EQIA completed)

The proposal is to restrict provision of park keepers to the main period of park use, from April to September, and to redeploy staff to other suitable roles within the grounds maintenance council cleaning service. Public toilets in four parks would be closed between October and March, as they could not be safely kept open without a keeper on site to offer supervision and regular cleaning. The EQIA found that the negative impacts of the proposal on protected groups could not be fully mitigated.

The EQIA identified that the closure of public toilets would have a negative impact on disabled people, older people, and parents of young children. By reducing supervision and perceived safety in the affected parks, the loss of park keepers could also disproportionately affect people who feel less safe in our open spaces, including disabled people and people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.

The Park Service will mitigate the impact of toilet closures by providing key access to trusted community partners, so that the toilets can be kept open when programmes are being delivered in the park. The service will look into making arrangements with concession holders to open/close and clean the toilets.

The service will mitigate the impact on perceived safety through the work of the parks security team (which will continue to respond to reports of anti-social behaviour), and by working closely with the police and the Community Safety team. The service will also address perceptions of safety by developing opportunities for positive activities in the parks and through its Parks for Health programme, which works with target groups from different racial backgrounds.

### Integrate and commission the Out of Hours ASB service with the Patrolling and ASB Enforcement service contract (full EQIA required at a later stage)

The proposal is to add the Out of Hours Anti-Social Behaviour Service – including the response to noise complaints – as a provisional item in the tender for the next Patrolling and ASB Enforcement service contract. The screening tool found that there could be a negative impact on residents and staff with protected characteristics, especially in-house Out of Hours ASB staff whose roles could be deleted. However, as any changes adopted following the tender will be subject to an organisational review, the service committed to carrying out a full EQIA alongside this review (in 2023).

### Out of Hours ASB Service Hours (full EQIA required at a later stage)

The proposal is to reconfigure the Out of Hours ASB Service to operate from 10pm, instead of 5pm. While most out-of-hours calls are after 10pm, 44% of premises-based ASB calls are made during the hours from 5pm to 10pm. The proposal is that these calls would be assigned to the response and patrol team, with callers advised that ASB officers could call back and visit from 10pm if needed. Any immediate safeguarding concerns would still be escalated, e.g., to police or the duty social worker.

The screening tool found that there could be a negative impact on residents and staff with protected characteristics. However, as any changes to the structure of the service would

require an organisational review, the service committed to carrying out a full EQIA alongside this review (by April 2023).

#### Integration of the appeals processing and correspondence staff into the parking services contract (full EQIA required at a later stage)

The proposal is to either integrate the appeals processing and correspondence teams into the outsourced parking services contract, or to relocate appeals staff from Greater Manchester to Islington. The screening tool identified that this could negatively impact disabled staff, who could be disproportionately impacted by relocation, and staff on a low income who would be faced with higher living costs. The service committed to completing a full EQIA once a decision had been made, and before the implementation of any restructure.

#### Revise Street Cleansing and Enforcement Operations to meet needs of the borough - Variable Back Street Sweeping (4 days)

The proposal is to remodel the street cleansing service to provide a better value for money solution, while maintaining a high level of cleanliness. The changes will affect side/residential streets with low footfall and the saving will come from reduced agency use. The screening tool did not identify any negative equalities impacts.

#### Additional filming income via the Filmfixer contract

The proposal is based on additional income from the suspension of parking for filming. The surplus income has been generated through the creation of a specific officer post, streamlining the process, and ensuring that parking suspensions are implemented in a timely way. The post was created in the previous financial year and has already successfully increased income.

#### Increase in pavement licence fees

This proposal is based on an upcoming increase in the statutory fees which businesses must pay to apply for a pavement licence. These fees are set by central government and will be increased through legislation in 2023. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts on protected groups.

#### Increasing CPZ controllable hours on a Saturday

The proposal is to introduce consistent Saturday operating hours for all Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ) in the borough. This will increase CPZ hours for 11 zones and will generate additional income from pay and display parking charges and resident visitor vouchers. It will also mean that residents and businesses have greater access to their parking zones, as CPZs provide priority parking for residents, their visitors, and businesses. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts on protected groups.

#### Reducing energy costs in street lighting

The proposal is to accelerate the replacement of older streetlights with low energy, low maintenance LED lights. The LED lights are lower in terms of energy consumption but have no impact on lighting levels. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts on protected groups.

### Commercial Waste Service

The proposal is to implement a commercial waste and recycling strategy developed with ReLondon, a partnership between the Mayor of London and London boroughs to improve waste and resource management. The strategy aims to increase commercial recycling and will raise money by increasing the number of customers for the council's Commercial Waste Service. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts on protected groups.

### Improving waste crime enforcement

This proposal will increase the number of night-time Waste and Environmental enforcement officers from one to two. The savings will come from overtime and an increase in enforcement fines. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts on protected groups.

### Improved hosted IT system

The proposal is to introduce a hosted parking system, which will increase functionality, support intelligence-led parking enforcement, and improve resident experience by creating functionality for online permits and enabling residents to apply for parking suspensions online. The saving will come from an expected increase in the number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) for traffic violations, as a greater proportion of traffic offences will lead to enforcement. The screening tool did not identify any negative equalities impacts.

### Improve debt recovery of Penalty Charge Notices

The proposal is to begin the debt recovery process earlier, which will increase the likelihood of recovery via our internal teams and reduce the number of cases where debt recovery is passed to specialist companies, with associated costs. The screening tool did not identify any negative equalities impacts.

### Accelerated vehicle purchases to reduce hire costs

The proposal is to accelerate the purchase of council vehicles where the existing vehicle is leased or hired, to reduce revenue costs. The initial programme will replace nine hired vehicles with purchased electric vehicles. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts on protected groups.

### Restructuring street trading

The proposal is to reduce the managerial role in the Street Trading service from a full-time to a part-time (3 days a week) role. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts on protected groups. However, if the proposal is accepted, an organisational review and a full EQIA will be carried out during the restructure (by April 2023).

### Additional Streetworks Inspector enforcement activity

The proposal is to recruit an additional Streetworks inspector to support highways enforcement. Streetworks is an internal council service which checks on external street works, e.g., by utility companies. The saving will come from an increase in Fixed Penalty Notices



(FPNs) for non-compliant permits, and from an increase in licences issued for works. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts on protected groups.

*Previously agreed savings:*

Three savings proposals from the 23/24 budget required a full EQIA. However, two of these proposals – Review of in-house compliance service and Stream-lining the daytime response services – were not implemented.

The other proposal, Re-design and simplify the resident parking zone permit price-tariff, has been included in a separate report on an in-year increase in fees and charges.

## **e) Homes and Neighbourhoods**

*New savings*

The budget for 2023/24 includes 16 savings proposals, two of which required a full EQIA. A further two proposals will require a full EQIA at a later stage.

### **Charge for all rechargeable repairs (full EQIA completed)**

Rechargeable repairs are council housing repairs where the damage/loss is a result of misuse or neglect, and where the tenant can be charged for the cost of the repair. Currently, tenants who have a vulnerability recorded on the system will not be charged for these repairs – for example, the council will change their locks free of charge if they lose their keys. The proposal is to charge all tenants for rechargeable repairs.

The EQIA identified a negative impact on older and disabled people, who are more likely to have a recorded vulnerability (the flag is used for physical and mental ill-health, learning difficulties and neurodevelopmental conditions) and so to be exempt from the charges. The service plan to partially mitigate this impact by offering tenants access to a subsidised handyperson service. However, as the subsidised service is not free, it will not fully mitigate the impact of the charges.

There are additional safeguards built into the process, which will help to protect disabled and low-income tenants. If a tenant calls up about a rechargeable repair and is flagged as vulnerable, they will be referred to housing management and can be linked into intensive support if needed. Any tenant who ends up with a debt against their property will also be referred to financial support by the Income team.

### **Remodel Repairs and Maintenance fleet strategy (full EQIA completed)**

The proposal is to reduce the number of vehicles in the Repairs and Maintenance fleet. The EQIA identified that some staff would lose the ability to drive their vehicles home and to work, and that this would have a negative impact on older staff (operatives are disproportionately over 55), disabled staff (though the nature of the job means that staff are unlikely to have mobility problems), and staff in financial hardship.

The impact will be partly mitigated through a train loan scheme, and the service will investigate on-site storage so that operatives do not have to transport hand tools.

### **Repairs staffing review (full EQIA to be completed at a later stage)**

The proposal is to review staffing levels and identify any areas where the service can reduce staff numbers, with a focus on back-office staff. The screening tool identified potential negative impacts on staff and residents with protected characteristics, depending on the outcome of the review.

For example, a reduction in staffing following the review could undermine service quality. This would disproportionately affect Black and minority ethnic residents, particularly Black residents, who are overrepresented among our tenants. While data quality is poor due to a high level of missing data, more than a quarter of tenants with a recorded ethnicity are Black, compared to 12 per cent of the borough's population overall.

The service will complete a full EQIA alongside the review and will ensure that the consultation process includes staff members who are on maternity or sickness leave. The service will also prioritise the deletion of vacancies and redeployment over redundancies.

#### Establish corporate contracts (full EQIA to be completed at a later stage)

The proposal is to review the possibility of combining contracts for day-to-day repairs, cyclical repairs, and compliance. The saving would come from larger, more competitive contracts and the need for fewer staff to manage contractors.

The screening tool identified the need for a full EQIA alongside the reorganisation of the service, which will take place in summer 2024. The service will ensure that the consultation process includes staff members who are on maternity or sickness leave and will prioritise the deletion of vacancies and redeployment rather than redundancies.

#### Setting adaptations budget at current demand

The Housing Revenue Account funds all adaptations for disabled residents in council homes. The proposal is to set the adaptations budget at a level which reflects current demand, as this budget has been underspent in recent years. However, the service will spend more than the new allocated budget if needed, as adaptations are a statutory duty. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts for protected groups, as service provision will remain the same.

#### Temporary Accommodation (TA) Demand Management

The proposal is to place homelessness prevention at the heart of the service and ensure that fewer people are placed in temporary accommodation outside the borough. The savings will come from improvements in performance management and efficiency, and from a reduction in expensive and unnecessary private sector temporary accommodation. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts for protected groups.

#### Commercial letting of storage space in disused car park

The proposal is to convert unused car parking facilities into storage facilities for Islington residents. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts for protected groups.

#### Staffing review of the Housing Strategic Business Planning and Investment team and the Integrated Services team

The proposal is to delete two vacant posts from the service. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts for protected groups.

### Insource more voids work

The voids service is currently delivered by both external contractors and in-house teams. The proposal is to increase the work levels taken on by in-house teams, saving money and benefitting local employment. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts for protected groups.

### PFI 2 rationalisation

The proposal is to reduce the budget for repairs to housing which was previously provided through Islington's Partners for Improvement 2 contract, but which has now been integrated into the council's housing stock. The service's forecasts have identified that the agreed budget is excessive and can be reduced without any impact on service delivery. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts for protected groups.

### Completed multi-skills training program

The proposal is to reduce the Repairs and Maintenance training budget, as the service's investment in multi-skill training for inhouse repair operatives has ensured that all current staff have now been trained, and new employees will be multiskilled as a matter of course where there is a business need. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts for protected groups.

### Diversify funding and provision of apprenticeships

The proposal is to apply the success achieved to date in other areas of council procurements and fund apprenticeships in the repairs team via corporate social responsibility contributions from contractors rather than paying for them directly. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts for protected groups.

### Remodel the HRA Income team

The proposal is to reverse an internally agreed restructure of the Income team. The savings are compared to the budget agreed for the previous restructure proposal, which had not yet been communicated to staff, and are based on the deletion of three vacant posts. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts for protected groups.

### Reducing Homes and Neighbourhoods management team

The proposal is to reduce the Homes and Neighbourhoods departmental management team by one post by 2026/27. This will be achieved through consolidating senior management across services and will not impact frontline service delivery. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts for protected groups.

### Review Floating Housing Support

This proposal will be implemented by Adult Social Care and is summarised above (page 15).

### Review the Repairs and Maintenance team power tools procurement strategy

The in-house repairs operative service currently hires all power tools. The proposal is for the council to purchase these power tools following the end of the current contract, as this would

be more cost effective. The screening tool did not identify any negative impacts for protected groups.

#### *Pre-existing savings*

None of the savings proposals from Homes and Neighbourhoods in the 2022/23 budget required a full EQIA.

### **f) Children's Services**

#### *New savings*

The budget for 2023/24 sets out 14 savings proposals, seven of which progressed to a full EQIA. The proposals include:

#### **Lunch Bunch: 5–16-year-olds (full EQIA completed)**

The proposal is to remove £140k from the core Lunch Bunch budget, as the government-funded Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme has funded and expanded holiday activities and a healthy meal for 5–16-year-olds in receipt of benefits-related free school meals. The overall level of funding through the HAF grant is over six times as much as the Lunch Club budget. The proposal would retain £20k to develop and provide a food order for children under five and their families. The EQIA did not identify any negative equalities impacts.

#### **New Children's Services Operating Model: Motivational Practice Review - Phase 1 (full EQIA completed)**

The proposal is to reconfigure the operating model for children's social care and early help, following a reduction in re-referrals for the Children in Need and Child Protection services. The saving would come from a reduction in staffing in these services, with most of the deleted posts – and all deleted frontline posts – currently vacant.

The EQIA found that while global majority groups are overrepresented within the child protection system, the new operating model will realign service capacity to the areas of greatest demand and will not negatively impact service users. The EQIA did not identify any other negative impacts on protected groups at this stage. However, the service noted that the demographic profile of staff at risk would be compared against the overall profile of staff, to understand and mitigate any potential equalities impacts.

#### **New Children's Services Operating Model: Motivational Practice Review - Phase 2 (provisional EQIA completed, full EQIA required at a later stage)**

The proposal has not been worked up as it is subject to legislative changes that are due to be reported on, in terms of implementation by December 2022. Any reductions are likely to protect frontline practitioners and to maintain caseloads as they are in line with our Practice Model. A full EQIA will be completed after the government announces its response to the Independent Review of Social Care.

#### **Redundancies across Bright Futures - in conjunction with Fairer Together (full EQIA completed)**

The proposal is to reduce either the hours or the number of administrative posts in the Bright Futures team. The EQIA did not identify any negative equalities impacts, as the number of posts affected is small and the consultation process will be inclusive of staff members on maternity leave. It also found that there will likely be no impact on residents/service delivery, due to changed workstyles and a modernisation of systems since these roles were first created.

#### New Children's Services Operating Model: Early Years and Childcare (full EQIA completed)

The proposal is to reduce staffing in the Quality function of the Early Years and Childcare Service, which supports providers across the Early Years sector to improve practice. The EQIA identified potential negative impacts for the protected characteristics of gender (as all team members are women), though natural attrition could mean that no current postholders were subject to redundancy or redeployment.

The EQIA did not identify negative impacts for service users, as the service will continue to prioritise quality support for providers with low Ofsted outcomes, concerns around risk, or a higher proportion of vulnerable or disadvantaged children.

#### New Children's Services Operating Model: Bright Start (full EQIA completed)

The proposal is to reduce the overall number of family support practitioners by one Full Time Equivalent post. The reduction will likely come from turnover rather than redundancy or redeployment. The EQIA identified potential negative impacts on families with young children, families where someone has a disability, global majority families, lone parent families and families experiencing poverty – all of whom are more likely to access family support.

However, these impacts will be mitigated by improvements in universal early help services, including the development of Family Hubs and the introduction of a universal Early Help case recording system. If some families cannot be allocated support at the point of referral because of the reduction in capacity, the service will mitigate negative impacts by prioritising families with the highest needs. Requests for service will also be signposted elsewhere via triage, and families will remain linked into universal support services.

#### Bright Start - Locality Working (full EQIA completed)

The proposal is to reduce the area budgets for each Bright Start locality, leading to reduced capacity to deliver the current broad and varied range of commissioned universal services for families. The screening tool identified potential negative impacts on people who have English as a second language, as access to creche facilities for English for Speakers of Other Languages classes will be reduced.

However, this will be mitigated by Family Hub funding for children aged 0–2 and their families; by alternatives to creche facilities; and by the service continuing to prioritise children and families living in poverty, homeless families and refugees. The service does this through targeted outreach, including to temporary accommodation and community organisations who are linked into and directly inform service delivery.

#### Adopt London North (Regional Adoption Arrangements)

Adopt London North (ALN) includes six North London boroughs and was formed in October 2019, following legislation which required local authorities to enter into Regional Adoption Agency arrangements by 2020. The ALN Governance Board are currently reviewing its financial contribution arrangements and are considering a range of alternatives, all of which would lead to a reduction in Islington's budget contribution. The screening tool identified no negative equalities impacts from Islington's reduced contribution to ALN, as there will be no impact on staff or service delivery.

### Bright Start - Hosting Arrangements

The proposal is to remove Bright Start hosting budgets from the 5 LBI-maintained children's centre nurseries, giving a saving to core council budgets of £106k. Costs will be passed onto settings, which are judged to be easily able to absorb them. The screening tool found that the impact of the proposal was expected to be minimal, with no impact for residents. It identified no negative equalities impacts.

### New Children's Services Operating Model: Learning and Culture

The proposal is based on the deletion of vacant posts in Learning and Culture and will not impact postholders or service users. The screening tool identified no negative equalities impacts.

### New Children's Services Operating Model: Young Islington

The proposal is to review the management and staffing structure and recruitment and retention costs in Young Islington, and to reduce staffing through natural turnover. The views of service users, the Youth Justice Service and Targeted Youth Support Young Advocates will be incorporated in the review process. The screening tool identified no negative equalities impacts.

### Elective Home Education

The proposal is to switch the funding source for an Elective Home Education officer post. The new role will focus on reintegrating children who are at risk of poor outcomes from Elective Home Education – for example, children who have been illegally removed from school because of their impact on educational outcomes ('off rolling'). The existing vacancy will be replaced by a post funded through the School Improvement Monitoring and Brokerage Grant, instead of core funding, and the post will increase from 1.5 days a week to three days a week. The screening tool did not identify any negative equalities impacts.

### SEND transport

The proposal is to increase the use of flexible personal transport budgets for families where children have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), as the service is not currently achieving value for money. The saving is expected to come from an increase in personal budgets to parents/carers as opposed to commissioned transport, and from the provision of independent travel training for older children. The service will also review the cost of commissioned taxi and minibus routes, to assess value for money against existing contracts.

The screening tool identified no negative equalities impacts. Personal transport budgets will only be taken up by those opting for this flexibility, and any change of providers will be managed sensitively so that children and families can adjust to any change in routine.

#### Family hubs: funding swap/s

The proposal is to swap core council funding for 5.3 FTE Family Engagement Worker (FEW) posts with family hubs grant funding, achieving an annual saving of £210k. FEWs funded through the Family Hubs programme will focus their work on outreach to families in the conception – 2 phase, while FEWs funded through core council funding will have a focus on children aged 2–5 and their families. The screening tool identified no negative equalities impacts, as the proposal is a funding swap which will not reduce staffing or service provision.

#### *Previously agreed savings*

None of the savings proposals from Children's Services in the 2022/23 budget required a full EQIA.

### **g) Community Wealth Building**

#### *New savings*

The budget for 2023/24 sets out four savings proposals, one of which progressed to a full EQIA and one of which will require a full EQIA at a later stage. The proposals include:

#### Council Tax Support Scheme: Introducing Banded Scheme (full EQIA to be completed)

The proposal is to change the Council Tax Support Scheme to a banded income scheme for residents on Universal Credit. At present, a new payment instalment plan is issued with each new council tax bill. For residents on Universal Credit who have a fluctuating income, new payment plans can begin before the first instalment of the previous plan is due. The banded scheme will mean that small fluctuations in income do not lead to a changed payment plan.

The screening tool identified a potential negative impact on low-income households with children, if parents have to find additional money to cover the shortfall in Council Tax Support. However, the income from disability benefits will be disregarded in the new scheme and there will be greater consistency for residents on Universal Credit. A full EQIA will be completed as the proposal develops.

#### Future Work Business Case (full EQIA to be completed at a later stage)

The proposal is to provide diverse and modern workspaces that support the organisation's commitment to hybrid working. The saving will come from a reduction in excess office space, with several options under consideration.

The screening tool identified a positive impact on disabled staff, as office spaces will become more accessible. However, other impacts cannot be predicted until a preferred option is agreed. Community Wealth Building will complete a full EQIA once this has happened.

#### New administrative fee for adult social care self-funders

The proposal is to introduce an administrative fee for Adult Social Care service users who are funding their own care (as they have assets above the upper capital limit of £23,250). Self-funders will be able to choose between arranging their own care or paying the administrative fee and allowing Islington to arrange their care.

The screening tool found that the proposal would have a positive impact on disabled and elderly service users, as self-funders who opted to pay the admin fee would be able to access lower-cost provision through the council's block contracts.

#### New administrative charge for Appointeeships

The council can manage the financial affairs of someone who has been deemed to lack the mental capacity to do so themselves through an appointeeship order. The proposal is to begin charging for the appointeeship service where clients have over £1,000 in savings. The screening tool identified that the proposal would affect older and disabled service users, most of whom are men, but assessed that the negative impact is likely to be low.

#### *Previously agreed savings*

None of the savings proposals from Community Wealth-Building in the 2022/23 budget required a full EQIA.

## **h) Resources**

#### *New savings*

The budget for 2023/24 sets out six savings proposals, two of which will require a full EQIA at a later stage. The proposals include:

#### Future Operating Model Staffing (full EQIA to be completed at a later stage)

As the modernisation of the services reduces staffing requirements in Digital Services, the proposal is to transfer administrative staff to appropriate services and reduce posts related to technology which is no longer being used. The screening tool identified that a full EQIA might be required prior to the review of staffing structures.

#### Reduced costs in HR services (full EQIA to be completed at a later stage)

The proposal is to reduce staffing in the operational HR team, following a restructure. The service plan to make savings through natural attrition, with vacant posts being deleted as people leave the service or are promoted. However, if this is not possible, some staff could be placed at risk of redundancy. The screening tool identified that a full EQIA could be required at a later stage if the savings cannot be made through natural attrition of staff.

#### Reduced costs of the finance service

The proposal is to reduce costs through consolidating systems, improving processes, and developing staff. Staffing-related savings will come from natural attrition over time, as vacant posts are deleted when staff leave the service or are promoted into more senior roles. The screening tool did not identify any negative equalities impacts.

#### Legal Income



This proposal is based on maintaining and maximising additional legal income. The current increase in income – which the service expects to continue – comes from leaseholder lease extensions, Right to Buy applications, and developers looking to complete their section 106 agreements so that they do not have to retender in the current market (these agreements set out the contributions which developers will make to mitigate the impact of the development). The service is looking at alternative/revised charging processes to consider opportunities to maximise this income.

The screening tool identified that leaseholders, developers and Right to Buy applicants will be impacted if charging processes are revised (though this has not yet been decided). However, the service could mitigate any impacts on protected groups by reducing or waiving legal fees where the use of the service arises out of necessity – for example, where the seeking of a landlord’s consent to carry out works is necessary because of the particular needs of a disabled service user.

### Contract Consolidation

The proposal is to consolidate and eliminate third-party contracts in Digital Services to provide better value. Some core costs can be offset through services moving to the cloud, the downgrading of consumption-based contracts (e.g., less use of Zoom), contract renewals and improved auditing of usage. Under the Future Operating model, IT service costs will be transferred to services rather than being held by Digital Services. This will incentivise services to reduce consumption within contracts. The screening tool did not identify any negative equalities impacts.

### Council tax increase and additional Adult Social Care precept

The proposals are to increase council tax by the government’s council tax referendum threshold and to include an additional Adult Social Care precept to fund increased costs. The council recognises that council tax is a regressive taxation method within which the more asset rich in society will generally pay proportionately less of their income. Nevertheless, the council has no control over the structure of this tax, which is vital to funding our essential services.

One screening tool was completed for both proposals. The screening tool judged that, given the safety net for residents who struggle to pay council tax, the proposal would not have a negative impact on protected groups. Households on low incomes can apply for a significantly reduced rate of council tax through Islington’s Resident Support Scheme, foster carers are exempt from paying council tax and older people receive a £100 discount.

### *Previously agreed savings*

None of the savings proposals from Resources in the 2022/23 budget required a full EQIA.

## **i) Public Health**

### *New savings*

The budget for 2023/24 sets out two savings proposals, neither of which progressed to a full EQIA. The proposals include:

### Introduce Targeted Offer of Oral Health Fluoride Varnish

The proposal is to move from the current, universal, fluoride varnish offer for children aged 3-7 to a more targeted offer for children aged 3-7 years old within selected Children's Centres and Primary School based on levels of deprivation and tooth decay. Fluoride varnish will remain freely available through general dental services, and the proposal will only be implemented if payment for the fluoride varnish offer within schools and early years settings is not transferred to the NHS.

The screening tool identified that some children and families could struggle to access general dental services, for example because of language barriers or not being signed up to a general dental practice. However, if the proposal is implemented, Public Health will work with dental commissioners on a communications campaign to promote fluoride varnish and will develop a more targeted fluoride varnish offer at a smaller scale. This will mitigate the proposal's potential equalities impacts.

#### Commissioning Efficiency – containing commissioning cost increases in order to release PH Grant uplift

The proposal is to work with commissioned services to deliver efficiencies. Depending on the service type, this will build on the adoption of new delivery models and ways of working developed during the Covid-19 pandemic, such as increased use of online and remote appointments and support.

By containing commissioning costs growth, the department will be able to release the Public Health grant uplift awarded in the financial year 2022/23, which will be re-invested in other eligible expenditure across the council.

The screening tool did not identify any negative equalities impacts.

#### *Previously agreed savings*

None of the savings proposals from Resources in the 2022/23 budget required a full EQIA.

## **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**

This year, the Equalities Team has reviewed the equalities impacts from current savings to screen for any unexpected impacts as the projects have progressed – this process will continue.

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.

## Annex A: 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, including non-binary and gender-fluid identification

- 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.