

# Equalities Impact Assessment: Full Assessment

Before completing this form you should have completed an Equalities Screening Tool and had sign off from your Head of Service and the Fairness and Equality Team.

This Equality Impact Assessment should be completed where the Screening Tool identifies a potentially negative impact on one or more specific groups but it can also be used to highlight positive impacts.

## Summary of proposal

Name of proposal	FutureWork Business Case
Reference number (if applicable)	
Service Area	FutureWork Programme, Community Wealth Building
Date assessment completed	23/02/23

Before completing the EQIA please read the guidance and FAQs. For further help and advice please contact [equalities@islington.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@islington.gov.uk).

1. Please provide a summary of the proposal.

Please provide:

- Context on how the service currently operates (if relevant) and the scope of suggested changes
- The intended beneficiaries and outcomes of the proposal
- Reference to any savings or income generation

The FutureWork Programme was initiated in May 21 with a remit to design and deliver a post-Covid operating model, co-designed with our staff. Since then, the programme has:

- Delivered a successful programme of works to enable staff to return to working back in the office environment safely, including installation of Co2 monitors across our estate and delivering new hybrid meeting technology in all our meeting rooms.
- Implemented and thoroughly evaluated Islington's future office designs by creating two FutureWork pilot offices, co-designed with our staff, at both Upper Street and Newington Barrow Way.
- Established and implemented new "workstyles" across the Council to support the incredibly diverse ways we work, the broad range of distinct roles we undertake, and the presence required in the borough, by each role, to deliver excellent services to our residents.
- Delivered an interim moves plan to support the organisation with the transition to increase on site presence post Covid. This work provided teams with the right spaces, desk allocations and office locations to enable them to work in the borough, and on site, in line with the organisation's workstyles.

The work styling exercise shows that the Council has 4228 FTE (Full Time Equivalents) that are based at our 9 main sites who require 1232 desks to operate effectively (w.e.f. Jul 22). This figure includes a 20% uplift factor to account for vacancies, peaks, and troughs.

The Pilot Evaluation Process, which include the outcomes of an Independent Accessibility Audit of the pilots, has led to several proposed changes to the future design of Islington's office spaces. This work has enabled the programme to calculate that the optimum size of the organisation's future office footprint should be circa 11,500 sqm.

The total amount of office space across our existing 9 main sites equates to circa 17,800 sqm.

This means that the organisation has an excess of circa 6,300 sqm of office space.

Please note that changes to, or the refurbishment of, common areas, and facilities e.g. toilets, lifts, stairs, ventilation, prayer/quiet rooms etc., are not within the scope of the FutureWork programme.

## 2. What impact will this change have on different groups of people?

Please consider:

- Whether the impact will predominantly be external or internal, or both?
- Who will be impacted – residents, service users, local communities, staff, or others?
- Broadly what will the impact be – reduced access to facilities or disruptions to journeys for example?

The impact of the changes will be external and internal. The delivery of the programme will have an impact internally on our staff and partners.

Disabled staff and partners - the work and transition will impact staff who experience barriers within the workplace, in particular those who have existing workplace adjustments which will be affected. Disabled staff due to be relocated may experience greater impact as the change will also affect travel into work.

Once work is complete, we anticipate disabled staff and partners would be impacted positively, in that they will be working in environments with better accessibility.

Parents and Carers - the closure and change of office location is likely to have greater impact on parents or carers who will have to change their routine for school/ day care pick-up and drop off.

The closure of buildings, specifically Elwood Street, will impact service users who currently travel there to access to services.

The closure of buildings in itself may not impact other residents directly, however, future redevelopment of those vacant sites will need to go through the normal consultation processes as these schemes are developed by the New Build Team. This is not in the scope of the FutureWork programme which simply delivers the vacant possession of sites. The New Build team will have to undertake separate EQIAs on the scheme they propose.

Some local businesses may lose custom as a result of the staff relocating. However, this will be counteracted by the new custom they will get from a future influx of new residents in the new area and in the case of Brewery Road new organisations moving into the office we vacate.

We accommodate several organisations within our existing office footprint. As a result of the changes some of these organisations may need to decant from office space whilst works are completed. One example is Islington Citizens Advice who are located on the ground floor of Upper Street where we have recently refurbished their office space. We worked very closely with them to provide workable decant accommodation for them and their customers and undertook detailed design sessions with the team to ensure their new space was fit for

purpose. The team are now working successfully in their new space and are pleased with the improved accommodation.

All staff working in the council's main sites will be affected by the works and moves proposed as part of the business case. In some cases this is a straightforward move from one floor in a building to another. In other cases it means moving from one building to a new building, and some staff may be impacted by decant moves required in order to undertake the necessary capital works to improve the office environment.

The changes to working arrangements, i.e. reduced desk numbers and a new office layout, and the disruption of teams moving must not be under-estimated. Appropriate engagement, communication and support will be essential throughout the programme delivery, considering both the impact of groups with protected characteristics/disadvantaged groups and on individual members of staff; accommodations will need to be made to ensure they can work safely and comfortably throughout the moves and in the new working environment.

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

This section of the assessment looks in detail at the likely impacts of the proposed changes on different sections of our diverse community.

#### 3A. What data have you used to assess impacts?

Please provide:

- Details of the evidence used to assess impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups (see guidance for help)
- A breakdown of service user demographics where possible
- Brief interpretation of findings

All staff and services will be affected by the moves. Separate EQIAs to assess the impact of staff and service users in each building will be in place once a detailed breakdown of the demographics for each service is available.

#### **Disability**

Based on our most recent data 9.43% of staff currently identify as having a disability and they are the group who are most likely to be impacted by the transition to the new office environment. As a Disability Confident employer, we recognise the value of diversity and are committed to ensuring that people with long-term health conditions or impairments do not encounter discrimination. The Council is working to achieving level 3 of the Disability

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Confident Employer scheme by reviewing its approach to reasonable adjustments, recruitment and completing a range of initiatives as part of its Health and Wellbeing Action Plan to challenge mental health stigma and discrimination. The FutureWork programme will support this ambition, as it works closely with individuals and teams who will be impacted by the changes to location and office environment.

Over 40% of staff have not declared whether they have a disability. A recent survey about safe and accessible working completed by 1324 staff, indicates that only 4% felt unable to discuss their disability or health condition with their manager. Where reasonable adjustments had been discussed and were required, these had been implemented or were in progress.

Where adjustments are in place or in progress, the FutureWork programme will ensure that these are available in any temporary or permanent working location. Through close liaison with managers, services and individuals, the programme will support staff with disabilities or health conditions to feel safe enough to report them so that accessibility needs can be identified and responded to appropriately.

Managers should follow the usual processes for engaging with staff who are on long-term sickness or absent for any other reason about the changes.

### **Gender**

Women are more represented than men at almost all salary bandings with the exceptions of £20-£30k and £60-£70k. The £20-£30k includes the predominantly male groups of Public Realm operatives and Caretakers. A larger percentage of males are employed in Environment (72.01%) and Homes and Neighbourhoods directorates (62.8%). Conversely, females are represented significantly in Fairer Together (83.1%), Public Health (79.22%) and Adult Social Care (76.77%) directorates.

Depending on individual circumstances, people will be affected positively and negatively by the move. Journeys to and from the office may be longer or shorter and there may be challenges or positive impacts for staff with caring responsibilities.

Managers should follow the usual process of engaging with staff who are pregnant and on parental leave about the changes.

### **Race**

When looking at broad ethnic groups, the percentages of employees from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities within Islington Council is 41.59% of employees compared to 51.00% who are White and 7.41% who have either not disclosed their data or prefer not to say. More specifically, 26.65% are of Black or Black British ethnicity, 4.99% were of Mixed

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- A breakdown of service user demographics where possible
- Brief interpretation of findings

Ethnicity and 8.32% of Asian or Asian British ethnicity. Those of White British ethnicity were 34.99% compared to White Other at 16.01%.

We know from a previous children's services EQIA that 23% of social work staff are Black and 9.5% have a disability, and that more than 60% of children with a social worker are from global majority groups (28% are mixed, 26% are Black, just under 5% are Asian, and just under 3% are from 'other' ethnic groups). This could suggest that any uncertainty around the move from Elwood Street will disproportionately impact Black and mixed-race staff and service users.

The closure of Elwood will involve extensive consultation and co-design of the new office space, taking detailed evidence of the impact on different groups into account.

The demographic analysis of the Council's workforce provided by the Director of HR underlines the importance of the FutureWork programme's commitment to respond positively and effectively to the different needs of a diverse workforce and community.

3B: Assess the impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups in the table below.

Please first select whether the potential impact is positive, neutral, or negative and then provide details of the impacts and any mitigations or positive actions you will put in place.

Please 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

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Age	Neutral		

<p>Disability (include carers)</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>The redesign of the office environment and the upgrading of communal areas across office sites will improve accessibility and inclusivity for disabled staff and customers. However, there are potentially negative impacts which need to be considered and mitigated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moving disabled staff to different buildings.</li> <li>• Moving carers of disabled people to different buildings. This could mean change in travel needs and routines for drop-off and pick up.</li> <li>• Disruption caused by works taking place within buildings. For example: loud noise, or changes to routes within buildings.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Positives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A significantly high proportion of height adjustable desks</li> <li>• Ergonomic chairs with additional adjustability</li> <li>• More generous circulation spaces in line with the accessibility audit recommendations</li> <li>• Different locker sizes and design options to ensure easy accessibility for everyone</li> <li>• Investment in many accessible individual and one-to-one meeting spaces</li> <li>• Larger and more spacious meeting rooms for easy access</li> <li>• Moving away from zoning design to landscaping design concept so that different settings are closer to team neighbourhoods, reducing the need to travel around the office.</li> </ul>
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		<p style="text-align: center; opacity: 0.5; font-size: 48px; transform: rotate(-30deg);">DRAFT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contrasting colours, adjustable lighting, and accessible power throughout the floors</li> </ul> <p><b>Reducing/eliminating negative impacts:</b></p> <p>This is covered by the consultation and engagement approach in section 5.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extra communication, work with individuals and their manager to address needs. Offer guided visits to new sites. Encourage management to create/ update Workplace Passports. Support from Disability and Wellbeing Officer where required. Signpost to CH&amp;S especially in cases where PEEPS are required.</li> <li>• Give people time to plan, encourage conversations with management on flexible working needs.</li> <li>• Clear and advanced communication, encourage management to provide extra</li> </ul>
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Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
			support and reassurance, ensure facilities including security are informed and ready to provide extra assistance where needed.
Race or ethnicity	Neutral		

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Religion or belief (include no faith)	Neutral		
Gender and gender reassignment (male, female, or non-binary)	Neutral		

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Maternity or pregnancy	Neutral		
	Choose an item.		

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Sex and sexual orientation	Neutral		
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral		

<p>Other (e.g. people living in poverty, looked after children, people who are homeless or refugees)</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Positive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A more modern working environment for staff which supports hybrid working</li> <li>• New locations may be more convenient for residents and staff</li> <li>• Sites have more accessible transport links for service users</li> <li>• Co-creation of a new site, e.g. Elwood, with service users</li> <li>• Increased footfall for businesses in the area</li> <li>• Early Intervention services are more local to residents through co-located services in the Hubs</li> </ul> <p>Negative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New locations, e.g. Elwood, may increase the cost of travel for people living in poverty</li> <li>• New locations may be inconvenient and increase travel costs for staff</li> </ul>	<p>Looked after Children, virtual school services to be relocated from Elwood to 222 Upper Street and Laycock Centre.</p> <p>A separate EQIA is required which will assess the impact on the staff and residents in each building as soon as we have the data.</p>
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Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looked After Children may be discouraged by needing to attend a different building and/or increased travel costs</li> <li>• Decreased footfall for businesses in areas where buildings have been closed, although mitigated by other services which use the sites.</li> </ul>	

## 4. How do you plan to mitigate negative impacts?

Please provide:

- An outline of actions and the expected outcomes
- Any governance and funding which will support these actions if relevant

Action	Outcome
Effective programme management	Change is planned and the purpose, impact, details and process can be clearly explained and understood
Consultation with staff groups and residents likely to be disproportionately impacted by the programme	Corporate or local arrangements put in place to support those negatively affected
Early communication and engagement through staff forums and affected services	Staff and customers involved and prepared for change
Supporting senior staff to lead the change	Leadership and reassurance
Specific engagement with DSF	Work with DSF and Accessible Design Specialists to ensure office designs provide greater accessibility for those with a wide range of disabilities
Respond to individual accessibility requirements	Meet legal requirements under the Equality Act 2010 and promote a positive working environment for everyone
Co-design with service users where appropriate	<p>Spaces are designed to achieve the best outcomes for residents</p> <p>Consult and co-design spaces at 222 Upper Street and Laycock Centre with Service Users and interest groups such as the youth community</p>



## 5. Please provide details of your consultation and/or engagement plans.

Please provide:

- Details of what steps you have taken or plan to take to consult or engage the whole community or specific groups affected by the proposal
- Who has been or will be consulted or engaged with
- Methods used or that will be used to engage or consult
- Key findings or feedback (if completed)

To date during the Business Case development we have worked closely with Finance and Property Services and used the following methods to engage with staff and specific staff groups to develop office design proposals within this business case:

- Engagement, consultation, and feedback from FutureWork Change Agents
- Detailed staff evaluation surveys
- Staff forums and focus groups to establish how well the spaces were working.
- A detailed and independent accessibility audit
- Occupancy analysis.

Proposals from this evaluation and specific feedback from the Disabled Staff Forum (DSF) are integral to the conceptual plans for the office space. These include:

- A significantly high proportion of height adjustable desks (33%) alternated by window and aisle locations to support neurodiverse staff.
- Ergonomic chairs with additional adjustability on the arms
- More generous circulation spaces in line with the accessibility audit recommendations
- Different locker sizes and design options to ensure easy accessibility for everyone
- Investment in many accessible individual and one-to-one meeting spaces
- Larger and more spacious meeting rooms for easy access
- Moving away from zoning design to landscaping design concept so that different settings are closer to team neighbourhoods, reducing the need to travel around the office

Further engagement and consultation with staff forums, FutureWork Change Agents and senior leaders on the design concepts for the new office space will be undertaken before the FutureWork programme begins. This will be conducted using existing meetings and forums to make any further adjustments.

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Based upon the feedback from the evaluation the programme has concluded that overall, the furniture selected for the pilot has been successful, functional and is popular with staff.

Nonetheless several items that were trialled in the pilot were under-utilised, unpopular or did not meet desired outcomes.

As a result, the programme has concluded that where items are popular, functional, and working well the Council should continue to roll out these across the estate as part of the FutureWork design template.

There are several recommendations for alternative furniture. These items tended to be popular with most staff and functional but could be improved by an enhanced design, or alternative item, to make even more functional and more accessible.

There is some furniture that were trialled that were unpopular and will be discontinued.

**Retain and continue** – standard desks, height adjustable desks, agile tables, sofa booths, tambours

**Retain but adapt** – acoustic meeting booths, more locker choice, standard ergonomic task chairs adapted with arm rests that also rotate outwards, alternative seating

**Introduce** – phone booth style confidential spaces, accessible 1:1 meeting booths, L-Shaped Sofa areas, planters on lockers

**Discontinue** – acoustic pods, Amphitheatre areas, free standing meeting rooms in favour of building permanent structures into the floor plate with much more larger rooms.

Continue to work with DSF and accessibility specialists to assure best practice accessibility for staff within the scope of the programme.

### **Programme Structure**

The FutureWork programme has four workstreams: People, Place, Technology and Paperless working/storage. To deliver a successful programme, the workstreams need to work together and with leaders, managers, staff and partners across the organisation to ensure

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all the different strands coordinate to meet the needs of the services, teams and individuals who are impacted by the changes.

### **Staff Moves**

- Work with Change Agents and Service Leads to coordinate decant and office moves to assure service delivery, staff accessibility requirements are met and new office space designs are effective for their service operations.
- Planning works with Corporate Directors, Service Directors and Service Leads and for all move and office design works.

### **Elwood Street Closure**

- Elwood Street staff consultation about moving from Elwood Street to Laycock Centre and 222 Upper Street
- Elwood Street service users and youth groups about the move of services from Elwood Street to Laycock Centre and 222 Upper Street and work with interested parties to co-design the service delivery spaces at both sites.
- Elwood Street local Ward Councillors and portfolio lead for Children's
- EQIA

### **Brewery Road Closure**

- Brewery Road staff consultation about moving from Brewery Road to WRC
- Brewery Road local ward councillors and portfolio lead for Housing
- EQIA

### **NBW Closure**

- NBW staff consultation about moving from NBW to Town Hall, Upper Street and Holland Walk
- NBW local ward councillors and portfolio lead for Resources
- EQIA

### **In each Phase of the Programme**

- All staff briefings virtual and in person, led by senior managers and the FutureWork team – overall programme and each phase

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- Completion of team checklist by Change Agent
- Move and Change Readiness surveys for each phase will identify a baseline for each move to address individual and team concerns
- Change Manager attendance at team meetings
- Visits and tours to new locations to identify accessibility and other individual requirements
- Referral made to Disability and Wellbeing Officer/H&S team if required
- Meetings with team managers to agree workstyles, ensure accessibility requirements are met, promote the use of the Safe and Accessible Working Checklist and the Workplace Passport, identify where a PEEP is required and develop office working protocols
- Support for managers in managing hybrid teams

**This is the baseline EQIA which supports the Business Case. The scale and complexity of the programme as it rolls out demands more specific and detailed EQIAs for each phase and for the different buildings to accurately identify and assess the impact on different groups of people, particularly those from disadvantaged groups or with protected characteristics.**

Team moves may involve decanting teams and services to other spaces on a temporary basis and the equality impacts of both these and the permanent moves need to be identified and assessed. As previously stated, the moves will impact individuals and groups in different ways, both positively and negatively. Engagement, communication, responding to feedback and working closely with teams and services to support them throughout the change will be critical is identifying and responding to the potential impact on individuals and those from disadvantaged groups.

The FutureWork programme has a significant impact on our buildings and how we use them in the future. This means that disabled staff are likely to be impacted more than other groups. As explained, we anticipate that the changes will have a positive impact on the accessibility of the office as extensive staff consultation and audit our buildings and office accommodation conducted following the implementation of the pilot offices.

The accessibility review conducted at 222 Upper Street and Newington Barrow Way by ARUP (a global collective of designers, engineering and sustainability consultants, advisors and experts dedicated to sustainable development) identified essential, recommended and

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preferred improvements to the buildings and the pilot floors. The results of their audit can be viewed [here](#) in a checklist which will ensure that the refurbishments which are in scope for the FutureWork programme will meet these industry standards.

The programme is also working with the corporate Accessibility Project, led by Corporate Landlord Services, to ensure that the accessible and inclusive working space in offices is reflected across communal areas, including entrances, lifts, automatic doors, bathrooms, and kitchen facilities. The kitchen facilities in the new area will be upgraded in line with the Accessibility Programme's timetable.

## 6. Once the proposal has been implemented, how will impacts be monitored and reviewed?

Please provide details in the table below.

Action	Responsible team or officer	Deadline
Move readiness surveys – pre and post move	FutureWork	1 month before teams move
Review meetings with staff forums after each phase	FutureWork	Monthly

Action	Responsible team or officer	Deadline
Engagement with Change Agents	FutureWork	Monthly

Please send the completed EQIA to [equalities@islington.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@islington.gov.uk) for quality checking by the Fairness and Equality Team. All Equality Impact Assessments must be attached with any report to a decision-making board and should be made publicly available on request.

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

Member	Name	Signed	Date
Staff member completing this form	Alison Ford		23/02/23
Fairness and Equality Team	Imogen Resnick		
Director or Head of Service	Tony Morrison		12/02/23