

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	Procurement Strategy: Office Furniture
Reference number (if applicable)	2324-0161
Service Area	Strategic Procurement and Supply Assurance
Date assessment completed	28/07/2023

Before completing the EQIA please read the guidance and FAQs. For further help and advice please contact 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 council intends to maintain its current access to the Hertfordshire County Council framework agreement for the supply of office and commercial furniture until May 2027. Access to the agreement already helps the council secure suitably experienced suppliers with practical knowledge and resources to deliver furniture supply services. This could range from the supply of individual furniture items to complete project solutions for major office refurbishments. Furniture supplied will include for example office chairs, desking, and collaborative furniture.

The beneficiaries of the orders placed through the agreement are site users, visitors and council staff working in council owned buildings and also staff working remotely that need to access suitable office furniture to carry out the work safely and effectively.

This arrangement will support the delivery of the council's FutureWork programme and provide access to general day to day orders. The FutureWork programme is set to deliver significant financial savings to the council through the rationalisation of existing council builds which is set to deliver an estimated saving of £2.5m per annum. It will also deliver a more modern and efficient work environment for council staff and welcoming spaces for residents and other visitors to council buildings and the provision of replacement and whenever possible repaired existing furniture will be a key element of this objective.

Improved furniture and floor space layouts will enable staff to work across the borough in different sites, maximising benefits for residents, customers, accessibility and safety and welfare of staff.

The office furniture will facilitate office work zones such as:

- Focus zone with a mixture of standard and height adjustable desks and ergonomic chairs, with acoustic booths to make and receive calls – including video calls
- Collaboration zone enabling staff to meet and collaborate
- Meeting zone covering formal and informal settings to meet

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?

- Staff:

The impact on staff will be positive with improved office layouts and better furniture designs facilitating more flexible working opportunities in a more modern, comfortable and safer working environment. Enabling flexibility of where staff can work in the borough supports more effective and efficient visits to residents and other customers in their own homes, businesses and offices within a remote working structure.

- Residents:

Residents will experience an improved environment when they visit council buildings through modernised reception areas and meeting rooms. Improved furniture will have a significant contribution to this change.

- Other site visitors/users:

As with residents, other visitors to council buildings and sites will also experience an improved environment when they visit council buildings through modernised reception areas and meeting rooms. Improved furniture will have a significant contribution to this change.

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

The primary user of the framework agreement for the order of furniture will be the project team delivering the council's FutureWork programme. The FutureWork business case noted its impact on different equality groups, citing the difference impacts from sites which are open to the public and sites which are not public facing. They noted specific feedback from the Disabled Staff Forum (DSF) which was integral to the conceptual plans. The feedback received noted a requirement for the following proposals around furniture:

- 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.
- Contrasting colours, adjustable lighting, and accessible power throughout the floors

This feedback has formed the basis for types of furniture being ordered through the agreement and this will continue throughout the remainder of the programme. On completion of the FutureWork programme oversight of office furniture orders placed will be maintained and types of furniture that can be ordered will continue to meet these requirements.

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	Positive	The redesign of customer facing areas and the furniture they will contain supports the multi-generational community and workforce making spaces more accessible to people of different age groups	Pilot schemes have taken place with the council to assess the impact of new furniture schemes. Consultation has taken place with staff and users. This is led to changes in design to better meet needs.

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?
Disability (include carers)	Positive	New furniture is to align with ongoing accessibility works being carried out by the council. The new furniture will provide meeting rooms and areas with a quiet and welcoming atmosphere. The new areas will enable confidential discussions more easily for people with hearing impairments. There will be furniture with colours specifically chosen to assist people with visual impairments.	Choices of new furniture has been broadly consulted with stakeholders representing the needs of disabled staff and residents.

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?
Race or ethnicity	Neutral		The area of furniture has a neutral impact on Race or ethnicity

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		The area of furniture has a neutral impact on Religion or belief
Gender and gender reassignment (male, female, or non-binary)	Neutral		The area of furniture has a neutral impact on Gender or gender reassignment

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		The area of furniture has a neutral impact on Maternity and pregnancy
	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		The area of furniture has a neutral impact on Sex and sexual orientation
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral		The area of furniture has a neutral impact on Marriage or civil partnerships.

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?
<p>Other: (e.g. people living in poverty, looked after children, people who are homeless or refugees)</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>The area of furniture has a neutral impact on people living in poverty and looked after</p>

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

No negative impacts were identified.

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)

The FutureWork programme carried out two redesigned office space pilots in existing council buildings. They worked with staff groups, a network of 120 FutureWork change agents and specialist design organisations to deliver and assess the impact of these pilots. Prior to and following completion of the pilots the programme team ran a number of consultation and engagement exercises including:

- Detailed survey of staff working in the pilot spaces
- Focus Groups
- Occupancy studies
- Reviews with external office design specialists
- Independent Accessibility Audit of the pilot offices

The feedback received identified furniture selected for the pilot that was functional and popular. It also noted items which were under-utilised and unpopular. As a result of the evaluation, items which worked well have been included in the rollout as part of the programme.

Office design specialists reviewed designs of the office spaces in line the feedback from the surveys, focus groups and the Accessibility Audit. This supported how the furniture would align with aims for greater collaboration and more flexible meeting zones.


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
Consider the impact of the furniture provided	FutureWork Programme Team	Following period of use of new furniture

Please send the completed EQIA to 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	Trevor Campbell		28/07/2023

Member	Name	Signed	Date
Fairness and Equality Team	Hezi Yaacov-Hai	<i>Hezi Yaacov-Hai</i>	09/08/2023
Head of Service	Glenn McCorkindale	<i>G McCorkindale</i>	10/08/23