

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	General Fund Fees and Charges Review
Reference number (if applicable)	n/a
Service Area	Cross-Cutting
Date assessment completed	12/10/2023

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

Some fees and charges are prescribed by statute and are not within the council's power to vary locally; others are discretionary and are set as part of the annual budget setting process. It is being proposed that the discretionary fees and charges be increased in-year, starting from 1 January 2024.

In setting the fees and charges policy, consideration is given to the current level of inflation in the economy as well as the level of inflation expected to prevail over the forthcoming financial year. Due to the high inflation in the economy, the cost of providing many discretionary services is not being fully recovered. Consequently, the fees and charges uplift will be more significant than some previous years, in order to enable services to operate in the high inflation economic environment.

It is recommended that fees and charges be increased by 6.7% to keep in-line with expected inflation. However, considerations have been made to protect vulnerable groups, keep prices competitive, or keep prices in-line with other London boroughs.

The fees and charges predominantly fall into the following areas:

Parking

The majority of parking related charges have been increased by 6.7%. Parking permits for Electric Vehicles have been raised by up to 120%. Whilst the environment issues caused by electric vehicles is less than that of fossil fuelled motor vehicles it still contributes to pollution in their manufacturing. It is intended that the rise in prices will allow services to recover input costs and operate in a high inflation economic environment. No change to service delivery is proposed.

Other

The majority of charges have been increased by 6.7%. It is intended that the rise in prices will allow services to recover input costs and operate in a high inflation economic environment. No changes to the services are proposed.

Other areas include:

- Cemeteries
- Tables and Chairs Licensing
- Trading Standards
- Planning
- Parks – Events
- Law and Governance
- Registrars
- Commercial Waste

An EQIA document has been populated for all service areas above and included within the schedule which is available on request. This will be a working document reviewed by the services and Equalities Team.

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?

Fees and charges generally impact external customers including residents and businesses. There may be some impact on internal staff living and working in the borough. Specific groups will be identified in the specific Full EQIA documents.

There will be an increase in many fees and charges in-line with inflation. Where fees and charges have not been increased in line with inflation, considerations have been made for vulnerable groups and local competition.

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

Various data sets and information has been used to inform the fees and charges increases. Each individual EQIA includes a full breakdown of this.

It is not possible to provide a breakdown of service user demographics across all chargeable services.

These include:

- Fees and charges have been reviewed to minimise the impact on certain residents with protected characteristics.

- Benchmarking – For example, registrars fees and charges has been benchmarked across with other authorities and there are a range of charges in relation to marriage fees depending on the size and scale of ceremony wanted.
- For cemeteries services, which is run in conjunction with Camden, the fees and charges for residents are generally set at lower value to those for non-residents. Some Fees and charges have been kept the same and others raised in line with inflation to take into account the increasing costs of managing the cemeteries services.
- Legislation has been considered to ensure legal requirements are being met.

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	Negative	The increase to resident experience charges may have a negative impact on older residents who may struggle to afford the uplift	Any existing/new residents that require the service but are unable to afford the increase will be assessed for their eligibility for council funded service provision.

Disability (include carers)	Negative	The increase to resident experience charges may have a negative impact on residents with lower mobility and disabilities who may struggle to afford the uplift	Any existing/new residents that require the service but are unable to afford the increase will be assessed for their eligibility for council funded service provision.
Race or ethnicity	Neutral		
Religion or belief (include no faith)	Neutral		
Gender and gender reassignment (male, female, or non-binary)	Neutral		
Maternity or pregnancy	Neutral		

Sex and sexual orientation	Neutral		
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral	Registrar fee increases may have a negative impact on those intending to enter into a marriage or civil partnership at the venues	Lower cost ceremony rooms will continue to be offered which provide a valuable service for residents in the cost of living crisis

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

The negative impacts of the fees & charges increase will be mitigated in part through the council's response to the cost-of-living crisis. The council's cost of living response includes:

- Ongoing delivery of the Council's core offer of financial and other support for residents and businesses.
- 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.
- Working with voluntary sectors partners to maximise the borough's collective offer, with a particular focus on a network of warm spaces.
- Measures across all directorates to monitor the impact of the crisis, to help assess if our actions are making a difference and to understand and to respond to what will inevitably be a disproportionate impact on some local communities.
- A communications campaign to maximise awareness and take up of the support available, including a Cost-of-Living Summit.
- A Cost of Living Board to coordinate this activity and ensure that the Council and partners are doing all we can to support residents and businesses Specific mitigations are referred to in the full EQIA documents.

Where fees & charges are designed in order to offer concessionary rates to groups with protected characteristics these have been considered and increases have been designed accordingly to minimise impact:

- For example, residents accessing concessionary memberships as part of the borough's leisure & sports offer are seeing rises substantially below inflation to reduce cost increases with joining fees also reduced across the board.
- For example there will be no changes to some registrar fees for hiring of some ceremony rooms and cemetery fees for young people 16 years and younger.
- For example, regarding the fees and charges for Table and Charges licenses for street trading, where any license applicants are from groups with protected characteristics, this will trigger additional business support from the Local Economies Team in the

form of bespoke contact from dedicated officers to assess need and support with advice, and where applicable, grants, to support the business.

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)

Please refer to individual EQIAs for the details of any consultations.

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	Sophie Stopyra	Sophie Stopyra	12/10/2023
Fairness and Equality Team	Hezi Yaacov-Hai	<i>Hezi Yaacov-Hai</i>	16/10/2023