

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	Testing and Maintenance of Fire Protection Equipment (Lot 1), and Testing and Maintenance of Fire Detection Equipment (Lot 2)
Reference number (if applicable)	2324-0028
Service Area	Housing Property Services
Date assessment completed	07/08/23

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 service is seeking to secure a new contract for the provision of regular safety checks and inspections and any associated remediation works to a broad range of fire safety equipment located in council housing blocks. The contract will also enable the same for equipment located in council buildings and council workplaces. The total estimated value for this procurement is £2.44 million on Fire Detection and £1.962 million on Fire Protection, based on a maximum contract term of 120 months.

The service currently has an existing contract for the provisions outlined above and is currently up for renewal. The contract is managed by the Cyclical Testing Manager. The clerk of works team within the Repairs structure conducts post inspections of any works as well as highlighting any outstanding works that are required to be carried out following an inspection.

The council is a landlord to around 35,000 council tenants and leaseholders living in homes located across the borough. As a landlord the council is responsible for ensuring the provision of safe and fully operational fire safety and firefighting equipment located on council housing estates and blocks. In addition, the council manages 4,500 public buildings including offices, depots and school buildings.

This responsibility includes fire protection equipment which covers, for example

- passenger lifts, which are designed for use by fire fighters or for evacuation in the event of a fire;
- portable firefighting equipment; dry and wet rising mains, which are used by the fire service in the event of a fire in a building;
- and sprinkler systems.
- It also includes fire detection equipment, including fire alarm systems, smoke control and venting systems and emergency lighting systems.

Many of these types of equipment are already present in our existing council housing stock and across the public building estate. More equipment is due to be installed over the coming

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years, particularly in existing housing blocks through the council's capital improvement programme, and within new homes being built by the council.

The current contract for Fire protection and detection covers, for example,

- passenger lifts which are designed for use by fire fighters or for evacuation in the event of a fire, portable fire-fighting equipment,
- dry and wet rising mains which are used by the fire service in the event of a fire in a building and sprinkler systems.
- It also includes fire detection equipment including fire alarm systems, smoke control and venting systems and emergency lighting systems.

While a fire protection and fire detection contract already exists, the new proposed contract will separate these into two contracts, with different contractors delivering each. Both contractors will ensure paperwork reflects incoming changes in legislation.

The reason why we propose to split the contract into 2 separate contracts for the first time is in response to challenges that face a single supplier having to specialise in both fire protection and fire detection works as these are two specialist areas that are different in skill. In the past this has resulted in issues around the use of sub-contractors and challenges with ensuring consistent quality of service, and delays whilst the one contractor finds a team to assist them.

A contract with two lots for each specialism will ensure the quality of service is consistent and will deliver confidence for both the council and residents that all aspects of the contract are delivered to a high standard.

The oversight of the contracts for Fire protection and detection will be designated to a Contract Officer within the Repairs structure that will conduct monthly operational meetings with the two separate suppliers. The Cyclical Testing Manager will also be present in both of these meetings to ensure the suppliers are aligned in delivering the best service delivery possible.

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 contract will have a tangible impact in two key ways:

The first is that the contract itself will ensure residents in the council's housing stock are safe in the event of a fire. We will ensure that the contract is delivered effectively with full consideration of all residents, and ensure that all groups are protected as a result of having their individual needs considered and met.

The second is the manner in which the contract is delivered. The successful contractors' operatives will be key in ensuring residents' individual needs are met, acting as a mechanism for collecting information on the needs of residents, and developing strong product knowledge so effective fire detection and protection solutions can be put in place. Similarly, by having strong training programmes in place, operatives will be able to work effectively in occupied premises with a strong understanding of residents and their individual needs, ranging from cultural and language considerations to an awareness of different impairment groups to ensure those residents' needs are met in the best and most cost-effective way.

The contract itself will have a more noticeable impact on residents – particularly those living in council housing – however, when the contract is working well, this will have a clear reputational impact and will improve relations between the council and then with the residents if these contracts are delivered well and managed effectively there is potential to continue to improving council and resident relations.

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 service collates data on service users as part of general service provision. This includes data on protected characteristics and any other relevant information that will be beneficial to contractors and those delivering services on behalf of the council. This might include any preferences expressed by residents, such as cultural considerations or language needs, or any vulnerability issues – both in terms of protecting the resident(s), but also contractors and their operatives, enabling the contractor to make decisions regarding how to access occupied premises and whether lone working is appropriate. GDPR is standard as part of any contract that is provided to contractors and operational meetings that take place go through this as a regular agenda item to remind contractors of their requirements.

It is a contractual requirement for service providers to work to Islington Council's policies and procedures, where equality, diversity and an accessible service for all is factored into service delivery procedures. Contractors will also be expected to follow Islington Council's safeguarding procedures reporting back any concerns directly to Islington to go through their internal processes.

All of the service providers appointed by Repairs are required to have DBS checks for all of their staff working on an Islington contract, including any subcontractors they may use and this must be evidenced. This information is checked and updated on a quarterly basis to ensure any service provider's staff changes are taken into consideration. Service providers are not allowed to enter a property unless an adult over the age of 18 is present. Service providers are given leaflets and information regarding safeguarding and reporting any safeguarding concerns back to Islington Council. They also have to attend mandatory safeguarding training delivered by Islington Council. These are all contractual requirements irrespective of whether the service provider works within occupied or communal areas.

All prospective contractors are required to provide information as part of the procurement process that outline their approach to equality and how they ensure operatives are able to meet the needs of residents and to consider these as part of providing excellent services. In

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

order to be awarded the contract, suppliers must evidence ways in which they have considered the needs of residents and ensured their needs are met in previous, similar contracts, as well as outlining how they will ensure needs are considered and met as part of this contract's delivery. It is not possible for a supplier to be awarded the contract without this information, as there are minimum standards that must be met in order for the contract to be awarded.

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?
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Age	Neutral	<p>The contract will deliver positive benefits for residents of different age groups. The successful supplier will be required to have due consideration of both the legislative requirements of the Equality Act 2010, but also more practical considerations that might impact residents in the course of the contract's delivery.</p> <p>There is a requirement to ensure any solutions, such as the equipment installed on a site, meet the needs of a diverse range of residents, such as those with loss of hearing as a result of old age, mobility issues, as well as the conduct of the supplier themselves, where</p>	<p>Effective contract management and supervision will ensure contractors are aware of the demographic makeup of different sites on which they will be working, and as such will be in a stronger position to identify and respond to the needs of residents.</p> <p>Good contract management will play an integral part of information sharing – particularly in view of any legislative changes or council initiatives that can have a positive impact on how the contract is delivered. As outlined, contractors will be expected to work to Islington Council's safeguarding policies ensuring they follow these at all times.</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?
		<p>works might take place in occupied residences, taking account of vulnerability issues and residents who may refuse access for this reason.</p> <p>The successful supplier will be required to outline their approach to working with diverse groups as part of the procurement process</p>	

<p>Disability (include carers)</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>It is anticipated that the contract itself will have an overall positive impact on different impairment groups, however this will come as a by-product of the contract's effective delivery as opposed to the contract itself. Suppliers will be required to outline their understanding of the diverse needs of leaseholders, taking account of the borough's demographic makeup and more localised equality information wherever this is possible and practical, and this will inform effective delivery of the contract.</p> <p>As for older leaseholders, the supplier will be required to demonstrate an understanding of different impairment</p>	<p>As part of effective contract management, the supplier will be required to account for legislative change in the way in which they deliver the contract, as well as respond to new developments in the market, such as new or improved technologies, that will better support people with a wide range of impairments in the event of a fire.</p>
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		<p>groups, both in their specific needs in terms of supply of equipment, but also in terms of how operatives work in occupied sites and the individual needs of residents, including communicating with the leaseholder.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the nature of the contract will have a greater requirement to consider the needs of blind and visually-impaired leaseholders, deaf and hearing-impaired leaseholders, and those with mobility impairments. As a result, potential suppliers will be required to provide insights into how they take account of the needs of these groups as part of the procurement application process, with those suppliers</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?
		<p>evidencing a greater awareness of the diverse needs of such groups likely to receive higher scores for their application as a result of this, and as such are more likely to be awarded the contract. Suppliers will also be subject to regular contract review meetings that will identify projects that require greater input from the supplier, as well as responding to any concerns the contract manager might have regarding the supplier's approach.</p>	

Race or ethnicity	Neutral	<p>It is not anticipated that the contract will have any identifiable impact on different racial or ethnic groups if the contract is being delivered as per the council's requirements. Overall, the impact of the contract is considered to be positive.</p> <p>As part of the procurement process, the successful suppliers will be required to outline how they will communicate with leaseholders and residents, as well as take account of local demographics in the way in which they deliver the contract. This might include taking account of specific language needs where needed, Islington council will make it known that translators or additional material is</p>	<p>As per previous sections, effective contract management will be integral to the continued positive impact of the contract's delivery, with the contract manager working closely with the suppliers to ensure they are aware of any specific considerations that might affect delivery of the contract, while also ensuring demographic data is kept up to date and shared accordingly. The internal clerk of works team attend site and carry out post inspections of works, they also ask for feedback from residents with regards to the works carried out. This feedback is raised within the operational meetings and if there are any issues around performance these are addressed and followed up in the subsequent meetings.</p>
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		<p>needed as part of the information that is provided when the works are handed over to the contractor. As this contract is mainly for works within communal areas this is minimal. As well as ensuring operatives are aware of any cultural sensitivity matters where appropriate, this includes ensuring shoe covers are worn if contractors are entering properties. further ensuring cultural sensitivity is maintained with regards to respecting social boundaries and by taking time and demonstrating extra care and patience with residents' who are elderly or have mobility impairments.</p>	
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<p>Religion or belief (include no faith)</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>The contract is not anticipated to have any impact on different religious groups, however, if delivered in line with the contract's specification, there will be a positive benefit to residents.</p> <p>As above, suppliers will be required to evidence understanding of the diverse needs of the borough's residents, including cultural sensitivity, making use of local demographic data and intelligence to improve service delivery. Contractors will be required to make good use of the council's demographic data in order to ensure any potential issues that will impact on the way the service is delivered are accounted for and</p>	<p>As per previous sections, effective contract management will be integral to the continued positive impact of the contract's delivery, with the contract manager working closely with the suppliers to ensure they are aware of any specific considerations that might affect delivery of the contract, while also ensuring demographic data is kept up to date and shared accordingly.</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?
		operatives are able to meet these needs.	

<p>Gender and gender reassignment (male, female, or non-binary)</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>The contract is not anticipated to have any tangible impacts with regard to gender and gender reassignment.</p> <p>All operatives will be required to adhere to the council's customer care standards in the delivery of the contract and as a result, this requires that operatives consider the sensitivities of working in occupied premises where there are lone or vulnerable women. Contractors would be expected to follow Islington Council's safeguarding procedure. It is anticipated that were such considerations are required, these will be notified to the operative and arrangements made where appropriate.</p>	<p>As per previous sections, effective contract management will be integral to the continued positive impact of the contract's delivery, with the contract manager working closely with the suppliers to ensure they are aware of any specific considerations that might affect delivery of the contract, while also ensuring demographic data is kept up to date and shared accordingly.</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?
Maternity or pregnancy	Neutral	Sensitivity around potential noise disturbances caused by construction workers and ensuring there is clear communication to residents around when these works are taking place is outlined within the term briefs around the times intrusive works can start and finish.	As per previous sections, effective contract management will be integral to the continued positive impact of the contract's delivery, with the contract manager working closely with the suppliers to ensure they are aware of any specific considerations that might affect delivery of the contract, while also ensuring demographic data is kept up to date and shared accordingly.

<p>Gender and gender reassignment (male, female or non-binary)</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the contract will have any impact with regard to gender and gender reassignment.</p> <p>The supplier and its operatives will be required to outline their approach to equality and diversity in their tender application, and this will be reviewed where appropriate when not in line with Islington Council's expectations. It is expected that the supplier will have training in place to ensure any sensitivities, such as working in occupied premises, are considered and that the suppliers' operatives do not assume gender and ensure they refer to the council's data on residents, in order to provide the most</p>	<p>As per previous sections, effective contract management will be integral to the continued positive impact of the contract's delivery, with the contract manager working closely with the suppliers to ensure they are aware of any specific considerations that might affect delivery of the contract, while also ensuring demographic data is kept up to date and shared accordingly.</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?
		appropriate and sensitive service.	

<p>Sex and sexual orientation</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the contract will have any impact with regard to sex and sexual orientation. In terms of the delivery of the contract itself, there are no apparent considerations with regard to sex and sexual identity with regard to the fire protection and detection focus of the contract itself.</p> <p>However, the suppliers and their operatives are required to have due consideration for all residents and their individual needs, and this includes behaving with professionalism and treating residents with dignity and respect, and this will be built into the contract's delivery.</p>	<p>As per previous sections, effective contract management will be integral to the continued positive impact of the contract's delivery, with the contract manager working closely with the suppliers to ensure they are aware of any specific considerations that might affect delivery of the contract, while also ensuring demographic data is kept up to date and shared accordingly.</p>
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<p>Marriage or civil partnership</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the contract will have any impact with regard to marriage or civil partnership. In terms of the delivery of the contract itself, there are no apparent considerations with regard to marriage or civil partnership with regard to the fire protection and detection focus of the contract itself.</p> <p>However, the suppliers and their operatives are required to have due consideration for all residents and their individual needs, and this includes behaving with professionalism and treating residents with dignity and respect, and this will be built into the contract's delivery.</p>	<p>As per previous sections, effective contract management will be integral to the continued positive impact of the contract's delivery, with the contract manager working closely with the suppliers to ensure they are aware of any specific considerations that might affect delivery of the contract, while also ensuring demographic data is kept up to date and shared accordingly.</p>
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<p>Other Age (e.g. people living in poverty, looked after children, people who are homeless or refugees)</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the contract will have any tangible impact on the groups identified.</p> <p>Contractors on this contract or not necessarily working within properties however highlighting any issues where residents could be living in communal areas to Islington Council to ensure the relevant teams can deal with this efficiently.</p> <p>In terms of the delivery of the contract itself, there are no apparent considerations with regard to the identified groups with regard to the fire protection and detection focus of the contract itself.</p> <p>However, the suppliers and their operatives are</p>	<p>As per previous sections, effective contract management will be integral to the continued positive impact of the contract's delivery, with the contract manager working closely with the suppliers to ensure they are aware of any specific considerations that might affect delivery of the contract, while also ensuring demographic data is kept up to date and shared accordingly.</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?
		required to have due consideration for all residents and their individual needs, and this includes behaving with professionalism and treating residents with dignity and respect, and this will be built into the contract's delivery.	

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

There were no negative impacts identified in the course of completing this impact assessment.

However, it is essential that in spite of this, effective contract management is in place to ensure that any issues that do arise as part of the contract's delivery can be identified and responded to effectively, in order to ensure that the contract itself continues to provide services that are accessible and have an overall neutral or positive impact.

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)

Owing to the scope, length and value of the contract, section 20 consultation applies. Leaseholders will be given the opportunity to comment on the council's plans. A well-established consultation approach for section 20 is in place, and leaseholders will be consulted on the council's proposed approach.

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)

Before entering into a long-term contract, the council will serve a "Notice of Intention" to enter into a long-term agreement for works. Having appointed suppliers, the council will draw up a detailed brief that will be costed against a schedule of rates. Leaseholders will be provided with an Indicative Cost letter, which gives a broad early estimate of the scope of works and costs.

Later, when the works and costs are fully agreed, the council will write to leaseholders with a "Notice of Estimates" (Section 20 notice), giving details of the works and costs and the estimated bill.

The section 20 notice provides detailed, yet easy to understand, information about the proposed works, how the proposed costs were calculated, and contact information for the officers involved.

There are a variety of ways residents can have their say, depending on the nature of the works and the costs involved. This might include stakeholder meetings or questionnaires.

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
Regular contract management meetings to ensure supplier performance is monitored and any	Contract Manager	Ongoing

Action	Responsible team or officer	Deadline
changes to legislative framework, council initiatives etc. are accounted for and fed back.		

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	Daniel Watkins	<i>Daniel Watkins</i>	08/08/23
Fairness and Equality Team	Hezi Yaacov-Hai	<i>Hezi Yaacov-Hai</i>	26/10/23
Director or Head of Service	Mike Hall	<i>Mike Hall</i>	26/10/23