

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	Mental Health Recovery Pathway Procurement
Reference number (if applicable)	2324-0120
Service Area	Adult Social Care – Strategic Commissioning and Investment
Date assessment completed	25 January 2024

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

Context on how the service currently operates

The current Mental Health Recovery Pathway (MHRP) contract is commissioned to support Islington residents to maintain or prevent deterioration in their mental health. It includes four main elements:

- Day opportunities - delivered across three sites in Islington.
- An out of hours recovery service (Crisis Café) offering a safe, welcoming place where people can go outside of normal working hours, instead of A&E or other urgent services, if they are feeling emotionally distressed or are in a mental health crisis.
- Intensive psycho-social support offering structured, time-limited support, addressing psychological and social needs through more intensive one-to-one key working, group work, counselling and therapeutic interventions.
- A reablement service providing short term, intensive support (up to 8 weeks) to people within their own home following discharge from hospital. The service supports people to make connections in their local area, to develop support networks, and to develop or re-establish the practical skills they need to help them maintain their independence in their own home.

The current contract for the MHRP ends on 31 October 2024. The council intends to competitively procure a new service from 1 November 2024.

Review of mental health early intervention and prevention provision

Officers completed a review of the current MHRP service, and wider voluntary and community sector (VCS) mental health early intervention and prevention services, to inform commissioning intentions.

The purpose of the review was to ensure that Islington has a high quality mental health and wellbeing support offer in place for residents, available at the right time, delivered in the most effective way and offering excellent value for money.

The review highlighted opportunities to create a more integrated and holistic offer of support for residents which delivers the best possible outcomes and value for money.

To inform the review there was engagement with a broad range of stakeholders and 170 people who draw on services. Feedback from this engagement is being used to develop an outcomes-focused specification with Adult Social Care principles and i-statements underpinning these outcomes.

Scope of suggested changes

The new Mental Health Recovery Pathway contract will provide a comprehensive proactive mental health early intervention and prevention offer for adults in Islington. Through a range

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of community interventions, the service will deliver recovery-focused practical and emotional wellbeing support to build resilience and achieve positive outcomes with residents.

Defining Islington's approach to mental health reablement and out of hours crisis café services, and any associated commissioning activity, is outside of the scope of the new contract.

The Council currently separately commissions a Music Engagement and Recovery Service and these arrangements will end on 31 October 2024. The outcomes achieved by the Music Engagement and Recovery Service will be integrated into the new specification for the MHRP service, as part of delivering overarching mental health recovery outcomes through a range of community interventions.

Broad outcomes for the new MHRP service will be that people accessing the service:

- live well in community with access to recovery-focused support
- are confident to seek early help and know how to access it
- are more resilient with an increased sense of wellbeing
- have increased access to wider wellbeing support to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities

'Mental Health Recovery Pathway' is the terminology currently in use in the borough. It is our intention to work with residents and the market, prior to tender publication, to review the name of the service to ensure it accurately reflects the offer and is meaningful to residents.

The service will create safe, welcoming spaces for residents with mental health needs, with specific provision for some protected characteristic groups including LGBTQ+, women and young people, whilst also improving equity of access for all. The procurement strategy includes further details of what will be included in the specification for the new service.

To avoid risks of overlap and duplication, the service is being designed with consideration of other areas of council investment in early intervention and prevention provision and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), including Bright Lives Alliance, Islington Access Hubs and VCS Partnership Grants Programme 2024-2028.

The ambition is for the new offer to be delivered through a strengthened partnership approach with a lead provider or consortium, and expectation of specialist elements being delivered in partnership with smaller VCS organisations, including via sub-contract arrangements. It is anticipated there will be a range of provision within the service to meet a range of needs and to offer opportunities for smaller VCS providers to deliver elements that they specialise in. Smaller VCS providers have unique access to diverse community groups and are well placed to deliver specific early intervention and prevention interventions tailored to meet the specific needs of different communities, reaching the broadest range of people possible.

Over the course of the initial 2-year period of the contract, it is proposed to undertake work to codesign, with residents and the successful provider, the longer-term vision for the MHRP service and the associated model of delivery.

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Savings

The anticipated annual value of the new contract is £633,196. The initial duration of the new contract will be for a period of 24 months from 1 November 2024, with the option of two further extensions of up to 48 months.

It is anticipated that the planned codesign and remodelling of the Mental Health Recovery Pathway within the first 24 months of the contract will deliver efficiencies to the pooled budget from 1 November 2026.

There are currently three council buildings available to use for the delivery of the service. The current contract includes rental costs of £191,000 for these buildings, which is due back to the Council. Under the new contract, the lease will be issued to the lead provider. However, the new contract will not include rental costs for these buildings, with financial arrangements to cover the rent costs being made directly between Council departments instead. Therefore, the new contract value is different from current contract value, but this is not a saving.

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?

External impacts to residents, service users, local communities and staff:

- There may be some changes to service delivery in order to comply with the refreshed service specification, particularly the enhanced focus on early help and prevention of the escalation of mental health needs, supporting people to self-manage conditions and live well in the community.
- The successful provider will not need to manage rent payments to the Council for the three buildings currently available.
- Depending on the outcome of the tender, there may be a change in provider from the incumbent. This may result in a change in delivery model and/or staffing. TUPE will apply.

Internal impacts:

- Council departments will need to make internal financial arrangements in relation to the rent payments for the three buildings currently available.

Further codesign activity relating to the long-term model of delivery for this service will be undertaken throughout the first two years of the contract. Any proposed changes to the service as a result of this codesign will be subject to their own EQIAs.

The contract for the new service will not include the mental health reablement and out of hours crisis cafe elements. Commissioning intentions for these service types are being considered separately and will be subject to their own EQIAs.

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 MHRP service submits quarterly reports as part of performance management which include demographic data that is combined for all the service elements. There are some differences between number of responses for these indicators, compared with total number of people accessing the service. As a result the results are not fully representative:

Demographics	2022/23	2021/22
Total people accessing the service – noting this may include duplicates where people access more than one service element	2088	1592
Disability	514 responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 88% mental health condition - 5% physical disability - 4% social / behavioural - 3% learning disability 	Not available

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

Age	449 responses - 40% aged 18-35	392 responses - 33% aged 18-35
Ethnicity	437 responses - 52% Mixed, Asian, Black and other ethnic groups	378 responses - 48% Mixed, Asian, Black and other ethnic groups
Gender	450 responses - 44% male	383 responses - 49% male
Sexual Orientation	449 responses - 27% lesbian / gay - 5% bisexual - 5% trans or trans history	394 responses - 20% lesbian / gay - 6% bisexual - 3% trans or trans history.

Analysis

- Census data showed 33% of Islington's residents were from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic group, indicating the services have good reach into diverse communities.
- The services are supporting significant numbers of young people.
- Based on available data males and females are fairly equally represented, whereas many VCS services have a disproportionate percentage of female service users
- A relatively high % of people using the MHRP service self-reported as lesbian, gay or bisexual which indicates the services have good reach into the LGBTQ+ 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	Positive	The specification for the new service will include specific requirements for young people aged 18 – 25 with mental health support needs.	Contract management will ensure the requirements of the new specification are being delivered.

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	<p>The new service will provide a comprehensive proactive mental health early intervention and prevention offer for adults in Islington who have mental health support needs.</p> <p>The service will be accessible to residents with a range of physical and mental health disabilities and proactively seek to support carers.</p>	The specification will include a requirement for the provider to implement best practice from Challenging Inequalities Toolkit.

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	Positive	<p>The service will improve accessibility and inclusivity for underrepresented groups within the community. It is envisaged that the successful provider will subcontract to smaller specialist organisations, who often have unique networks within diverse community groups.</p>	<p>The Service will be expected to meet a range of needs, including those of Islington’s diverse community groups and people with protected characteristics. The Provider will need to work with people to understand what support they need and provide a range of interventions to meet this.</p> <p>For example, we know that the Somali community have high incidents of untreated Mental Health issues. The service will be expected to develop provision to meet particular needs arising for 18-25 year old young men in this community group who may not currently be accessing services, focusing on asking for help and having a safe place to talk.</p> <p>Contract management will include analysis of whether the service is reaching the borough’s diverse communities and achieving equitable outcomes for all groups.</p>

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 service will engage with people from all religions with residents being supported to participate in their faith community, where that is their choice.	For the social value outcome of creating healthier communities, we will be seeking commitments such as establishing partnerships with local community organisations focusing on underrepresented groups and implementing targeted outreach campaigns tailored to diverse communities. For example reaching young Somali men aged 18 - 25 through outreach with mosques.
Gender and gender reassignment (male, female, or non-binary)	Positive	The specification for the new service will include specific requirements to support women who have mental health support needs.	Contract management will include analysis of whether the service is reaching the borough's diverse communities and achieving equitable outcomes for all groups.
Maternity or pregnancy	Neutral	The service will support women to access perinatal services for mental health.	The new service will align with care provided by primary and secondary care health services to ensure women receive more coordinated care and support.

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	Positive	The specification for the new service will include specific requirements to support people from the LGBTQ+ with mental health support needs.	The specification will include a requirement for the provider to implement best practice from Challenging Inequalities Toolkit. The next chapter of the Toolkit will focus on LGBTQ+. Contract management will include analysis of whether the service is reaching the borough's diverse communities and achieving equitable outcomes for all groups.
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral	The service will create safe, welcoming spaces for residents with mental health needs, irrespective of Marriage or civil partnership status.	
Other Age (e.g. elderly) (e.g. people living in poverty, looked after children, people who are homeless or refugees)	Neutral	The service will create safe, welcoming spaces for residents with mental health needs which may include people living in poverty, people who are homeless or refugees.	

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

To mitigate any negative impacts associated with a potential change in provider as a result of the tender and expected changes to the service offer to comply with the new service specification, officers have designed communication and engagement activities in order to:

- Provide a range of opportunities to get involved
- Engage with as many residents as possible.

Engagement activities have been developed with providers to ensure they are accessible and that people are supported.

If there is a change in provider, the transition will be carefully managed to ensure continuity of support and to manage any anxieties arising from any change. Commissioners will work with the current and new service provider (if applicable) and primary and secondary care services to ensure residents are supported leading up to and immediately following a transition to a new provider. The transition to a new service would be carried out in conjunction with residents, carers, and family members (where appropriate).

This procurement is being supported by ASC Strategic Lead for Collaborative Commissioning. Officers are working with Trauma Informed Leads in NCL to ensure engagement is undertaken with a trauma informed approach.

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)

Summary of resident engagement to date:

- 104 people attended group meetings

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)

- 9 people attended one to one meetings
- 5 written responses
- 42 survey responses
- 123 responses to Islington Mind annual survey
- Further group and one to one meetings took place in November and December 2023

Through this engagement, people told us what is important to them which has informed the design of the new service. This included:

- Access to groups and activities
- Feeling less isolated and more connected
- Peer support
- Support to meet changing needs
- More coordinated care and support
- A safe, non-clinical space

Subsequently, focus groups in December and February are focusing on:

- What residents want and need from a recovery service
- Writing tender questions
- Encouraging residents to join the tender evaluation panel

A webpage has also been published which includes a survey for residents to provide anonymous feedback on the current service and what they want from the new service. The webpage was updated in January with a new survey aimed at reaching all residents including those who are not currently accessing services.

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
Contract management to include analysis of whether the service is reaching the borough's diverse communities and	Joint Commissioning Manager – Mental Health	March 24

Action	Responsible team or officer	Deadline
<p>achieving equitable outcomes for all groups.</p> <p>Tender documents which will include details of contract management is due to be published in March 24.</p>		
<p>The specification will include specific requirements for some protected characteristic groups.</p> <p>Tender documents which will include the specification is due to be published in March 24.</p>	Joint Commissioning Manager – Mental Health	March 24

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	Kate Thomson	K.Thomson	29/1/2024
Fairness and Equality Team	Eloise Hall	E.Hall	29/01/2024
Director or Head of Service	Jodi Pilling	J. Pilling	30/01/2024