

## **Appendix G: Budget 2025/26 Cumulative Equalities Impact Assessment**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

This report assesses the equalities impacts of the savings proposals set out in the Council's Budget for 2025/26.

It provides an assessment of the likely impacts of the budget savings on residents and employees with 'protected characteristics' as defined by the Equality Act 2010. It also considers the impacts on those who could be considered at a disadvantage in accessing opportunities or services (such as people with language difficulties or from low-income households), which is also a consideration in Islington's Equality Impact Assessment process.

The report assesses the overall impacts of the suite of savings proposals (cumulative impact) set out in the 2025/26 budget on residents and staff. It also provides a more detailed review – by specific groups and by directorate – of the cumulative impacts of previously agreed savings set out last year, and in this new budget, on specific groups, and the actions to reduce or mitigate these impacts.

### **2. Context**

#### **Our commitment to fairness and equality**

Our [Islington Together 2030](#) strategy sets out the Council's vision to make Islington a more equal place – to create a place where everyone, whatever their background, has the same opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life.

Challenging inequality, racism and injustice is mission critical for Islington. We cannot realise our vision of creating a more equal borough for all our residents without tackling the inequality that continues to hold back some communities. Our 'Challenging Inequality Programme' sets out our long-term ambition for challenging inequality, inequity, racism and promoting inclusion. We are determined to improve life chances for our residents and staff.

We want to challenge inequality in every capacity available to us, taking advantage of our position as an employer, strategic leader and as a service provider/commissioner.

## Our EQIA Process

Equality impact assessments are an important part of ensuring our services are responsive to the needs of our diverse communities and help tackle inequality, creating a fairer more equal borough for all.

In Autumn 2021, we introduced a new EQIA process to improve efficiency and quality assurance. Each of the savings' proposals set out in this budget have been considered through an equality lens, with initial screening of all proposals completed via our EQIA Screening Tool. Where the screening tool identified significant potential (or perceived) negative impacts, a full Equalities Impact Assessment was completed to mitigate any risks. The Equalities Team was closely involved in all aspects of this process, working with services to identify potential or perceived impacts.

These individual assessments have been used to inform this overall cumulative assessment of the impacts of our budget savings proposals on residents and staff and on any specific group.

## Our priorities

In the coming years, we will maintain a relentless focus on tackling inequality and eradicating poverty in our borough. To bring this vision to life, we have five clear missions outlined in our Islington Together 2030 Plan:

**Child Friendly Islington:** Islington is a place where all children and young people are rooted in a community where they feel safe, can thrive and are able to be part of and lead change.

**Empowering People :** everyone in Islington who needs extra help can access the right support for them at the right time and in the right place.

**Safe Place to Call Home:** everyone in Islington has a safe, decent affordable place to call home.

**Community Wealth Building:** there is a sustainable inclusive, and locally rooted economy in Islington, where wealth is fairly-shared and residents and businesses feel they have a stake in their community.

**Greener, Healthier Islington:** people in Islington can live healthy and enjoy London's greenest, cleanest and healthiest neighbourhoods.

## Our legal duties

Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a legal duty to have "due regard" to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity and

- foster good relations between different groups.

The precise wording of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), together with a list of the 'protected characteristics' defined in the Act, is set out at Annex A.

We are required to demonstrate fulfilment of our duty to pay 'due regard' in the decision-making process and, as such, we need to understand the effect our policies and practices have on equality. Although the Council is not legally obligated to reject savings or growth proposals that could have negative impacts on any particular groups, it must carefully and with rigour consider the impact of its proposals on the PSED, take a reasonable and proportionate view about the overall impact on particular groups, and seek to mitigate negative impacts where possible.

In addition, at Islington we go above and beyond our legal duties to consider impacts on those who could be considered at a disadvantage in accessing opportunities or services. This includes people from low-income households, carers, migrants, refugees and people with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF), and those with low literacy levels.

### Our diverse population

Islington is an Inner London borough with a diverse population. Data from our 2023, [State of Equalities in Islington 2023](#) report paints a profile of Islington as a place and of our diverse communities:

- **Population:** The population of Islington is estimated to be 225, 000 in 2024 (GLA population estimates, 2022). It is estimated that the population of Islington will grow by 5.8% (14,362 people) between 2023 and 2033.
- Islington is the second most densely populated local authority area in London, with 14,575 people per square km, in 2021.
- **Age:** People aged 65 and over living in Islington make up 10% of Islington's resident population in 2024. This means the borough has a relatively young population: 13% of the population of London and 19% of England are aged 65 and over. In 2022/23, 44.8% (5,821) of primary school pupils in Islington's schools are eligible for the deprivation Pupil Premium - a grant aimed at raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. The proportion is even higher for secondary school pupils where 52.4% (4,085) are eligible for the deprivation Pupil Premium
- **Ethnicity:** Islington is a diverse borough 40% of residents were White English British, compared to 48% in 2011. There has also been an increase in residents describing their ethnicity as Other White, 19% of residents were in "Other White" in 2021, compared to 16% in 2011. "Other White" consists of Caucasian people from Europe, America, Africa and Asia and Oceania. White Gypsy and Traveller

and Roma groups were also included in the “Other White” category. Roma wasn’t a category in the 2011. Black African and Caribbean communities now make up 13% of the population, Asian 9% and mixed 8%, any other and Arab 7%.

- The number of Islington residents who were born outside of the UK is higher than the national average, 40% of Islington residents were born outside of the United Kingdom compared to 17% in England and Wales. The most common countries of birth for Islington residents outside of the UK are Italy, France and Turkey.
- **Sex:** The proportion of men in Islington is slightly lower compared to women 47% versus 53%. A man born in Islington can expect to live for 78 years on average and a woman 82.6 years on average. These figures are slightly lower to London (male life expectancy in London 79.1 years and women 83.6 years).
- There is a variance between employment rates between men and women and men in the borough. More men are in employment in Islington relative to females. Around 76% of males in Islington are in employment. Whereas 73% of females in Islington are in employment.
- **Disability:** The Census 2021 shows that approximately 16% of residents stated that they are living with a disability.
- In May 2022, there were 5,168 Disability Living Allowance claimants in Islington. One in five of the working-age population are classified as disabled, with 33% reporting a long-term health condition, 20% report having a disability and 8% report having a severe disability.
- In the 12 months leading to March 2024 just under 50% of people identifying as having a disability were in employment, compared to 80% of non-disabled people. There are 4,280 (2%) people in Islington living with a serious mental illness.
- **Socio-economic: Islington is the 2nd most deprived borough in London for income deprivation affecting children, and fourth highest for income deprivation affecting older people, based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD 2019)**
- There are 27.5% of residents facing income deprivation in comparison to London overall which is 21.3%.
- **Housing:** Islington Council manage approximately 25,000 tenanted properties and 10,000 leasehold properties. Approximately there are 56,800 people living in the tenanted properties and approximately 12,700 leaseholders (who are named on the lease). There are approximately 15,700 people on the council’s waiting list to be housed in Islington. Demonstrating high levels of unmet need for homes or alternative homes within the borough.

- The majority of council tenanted homes are general needs housing, although we do have a significant number of homes and reception centres used for temporary housing for homeless households (just over 500), plus some homes that are provided to ex-rough sleeper under GLA funded acquisitions, as well as a hostel for the same purpose and a small learning disabilities supported housing scheme (figure).
- Those in social housing are more likely to be on low income, though increasingly we are seeing households in the private rented sector struggling. Both social and private sector tenants who have moved to Universal Credit have seen increased levels of debt, which may put their tenancies at risk.
- Islington Council has seen a sustained increase of 20% in homelessness over the last financial year. As of March 2024, there were 1313 households in temporary accommodation, in contrast to 1029 households in May 2023, which equates to an increase of 27% in households in temporary accommodation.

### The impact of the cost-of-living crisis

The cost-of-living crisis has put further pressure on households who were already struggling. In Islington there are more than 11,500 families living in fuel poverty, and 27,400 people in households receiving housing benefit or council tax support.

In September 2022, the Council declared a “cost of living emergency” and pledged to do all it can to help the tens of thousands of residents likely to be hit hardest by spiralling energy and food costs and soften the blow for local small and medium-sized businesses.

Despite ongoing pressures on local authority funding, the Council continues to provide a comprehensive range of support for vulnerable and low-income households and to support local businesses and communities. 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.

### The scale of the challenge

This year, as in previous years, we have made every endeavour to protect those in greatest need and at most risk. Where possible, savings focus on optimising efficiencies in service delivery. However, some reductions in services have been unavoidable. Where this is the case, we have assessed the potential impact on groups with protected characteristics. In Islington, with high levels of poverty and deprivation, we also consider socio-economic disadvantage when assessing the impacts of changes to policies and services.

### 3. Equalities Impacts: overall cumulative impact

The overall assessment is that there is a **potential negative impact**, because of the budget savings proposals for 2025/26. Much of this is due to the current climate we find ourselves in with the cost-of-living crisis impacting the lives of our residents. The impact of the savings to universal services may only be felt by those residents who use or are affected by some environmental services. The impact of the savings proposals to residents with protected characteristics is likely to be much greater, especially for residents with low incomes, parents, children and young people, older people and disabled people. Some proposals also impact negatively on staff who may be at risk of redundancy because of the proposals. Whilst many of these decisions are taken nationally by government, it is the council that feels the brunt of them with even less funding to support those most in need.

The Chancellor's Autumn Budget was presented on the 30 October 2024, with measures that will impact citizens throughout the United Kingdom; however, the nature of these impacts are yet to be determined. The savings proposed as part of this budget are essential to be able to continue to deliver services to the most vulnerable. But within this challenging context any savings impacting residents with the protected characteristics outlined in the report are likely to exacerbate their difficult circumstances.

The budget sets out **33** new proposals, which will deliver savings of around **£9.785m** in 2025/26. This is in addition to **£4.396m** savings for 2025/26 agreed in last year's budget.

Most savings for this year will come from efficiencies that the Council has access to. Although some residents with protected characteristics may be significantly impacted and there could also be staff redundancies because of the proposals.

The majority of these impacts were not deemed significant enough to progress to a full EQIA or had robust enough mitigation in place to mitigate fully against any negative impacts. However, 10 of the new savings proposals submitted for 2025/26 progressed to a full EQIA.

The 10 full EQIAs identified potential negative impacts on:

- Residents
- Service users
- Staff

#### Impacts on residents

There are a small number of changes to some universal services that have the potential to affect all residents. The key proposals are:

- Restructure the Environment and Commercial Operations Division to achieve savings within the service
- Parks Service Budget Reduction

#### Impacts on specific service users

Changes to some universal services such as parks and environmental services, will largely impact on residents who use parks and are affected by other environmental services.

However, nine proposals could impact specific groups of service users. The proposals are:

- Procurement of the reablement service externally to deliver the current output of the in-house service.
- Reduce the general fund subsidy for vacant places in Council managed Children's Centres with nurseries
- Reduce the amount of grants to vol sector nurseries & play groups annually.
- Review expenditure on commissioned Youth Services
- Remove remainder of childcare subsidy budget
- Scale back the council's investment in festive lighting in the borough
- Review of welfare advice provision to optimise investment across in-house and externally commissioned services
- Restructure the Environment and Commercial Operations Division to achieve savings within the service.
- Reduce Bright Lives service by 20%

The procurement of the reablement service, is likely to have a negligible negative impact on adult social care users. There is also a possibility of a positive impact for residents because of this proposal.

The proposal to reduce the general fund subsidy for vacant places in Council managed Children's Centres with nurseries could have a negative impact on availability or parental choice for service users at Children's centres.

The reduction of grants to voluntary sector nurseries, may have a negative impact through an increase in fees and reduced choice for parents.

The proposal to review expenditure on commissioned Youth Services will impact negatively on children and young people who use the service.

The proposal to remove the remainder of childcare subsidy budget will have a negative impact on parents and children.

The proposal to scale back the council's investment in festive lighting in the borough is likely to have a negative impact on some religious groups and women and girls.

Review of welfare advice provision is likely to have a negative impact on older people, children and families and residents with disabilities, residents from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority communities and low-income households.

The restructure of the Environment and Commercial Operations Division could potentially have a negative impact on the transportation of vulnerable adults and children

The proposal to reduce Bright Lives coaching service by 20% could have a negative impact on adults in the borough, particularly those needing to access adult social care, including older residents, disabled residents and vulnerable adults. This proposal will also impact on staff.

### Impacts on staff

Where proposals impact on staff, we aim to reduce redundancies, potential impacts are mitigated by seeking to redeploy staff or offer voluntary redundancies where possible as part of any staff reduction. Further mitigation to avoid redundancy such as redeployment and initiatives such as ceasing acting up arrangements, changes in work patterns and team responsibilities are also utilised where possible.

The proposal to procure the reablement service externally to deliver the current output of the in-house service potentially puts 40 FTE staff at risk of redundancy. There are potentially multiple impacts given the demographics of the group. The staff in question are largely aged 60+, female, from the African and Caribbean communities, several staff are also impacted by managed health conditions. The cohort in question are identified as low paid workers.

The proposal to reduce in-house services management structure to deliver a 5% cost reduction in the overall revenue budget for In-House Provider Services will impact negatively on staff. The proposal would mean a potential reduction of 5 FTE posts.

The proposal to reduce the amount of grants to Voluntary Section nurseries & play groups annually could have a negative impact on staff within the nursery providers.

The proposal to review expenditure on commissioned Youth Services could potentially have a negative impact on service delivery and could also lead to staffing reductions in the commissioned services.

The removal of the remainder of childcare subsidy budget in addition to reduction of subsidy in 2526-28 may mean the redundancy of one member of staff.

The proposal to scale back the council's investment in festive lighting in the borough would not lead to redundancies but would have an impact on the service and staffing.

The proposal to review welfare advice provision could result in reducing the number of posts in the IMAX team, with a potential of 1 or 2 redundancies.

Restructuring the Environment and Commercial Operations Division could lead to a negative impact through redundancies.



The proposal to reduce the parks service budget could lead to a withdrawal of hours for one role.

The proposal to reduce Bright Lives service by 20% is likely to have a negative impact on staff and could result in the reduction of 2 staff members.

The Resident Experience Programme - digital investment and organisational change is likely to have a positive impact on staff.

Services have tried to ensure that most staff savings and efficiencies will come from redeployment and initiatives such as ceasing acting up arrangements, changes in work patterns and team responsibilities. Where proposals could lead to redundancy, where possible these will be voluntarily agreed with staff.

### Overall equalities impact assessment

Looking at the totality of the savings to be delivered in 2025/26, the impacts on Islington residents and service users are assessed as follows:

- Restructure the Environment and Commercial Operations Division to achieve savings within the service
- Parks Service Budget Reduction
- The Resident Experience Programme
- Procurement of the reablement service externally to deliver the current output of the in-house service.
- Reduce the general fund subsidy for vacant places in Council managed Children's Centres with nurseries
- Reduce the amount of grants to vol sector nurseries & play groups annually.
- Review expenditure on commissioned Youth Services
- Remove remainder of childcare subsidy budget
- Scale back the council's investment in festive lighting in the borough
- Review of welfare advice provision to optimise investment across in-house and externally commissioned services
- Restructure the Environment and Commercial Operations Division to achieve savings within the service.
- Reduce Bright Lives service by 20%

Considering the extremely challenging fiscal situation and the need for services to remain financially sustainable, the conclusion is that the Council's proposals for achieving savings are reasonable under the financial constraints that the council finds itself in. Although some residents with protected characteristics have been affected and staff facing redundancy have also been affected the council has shown due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty and outlined mitigation to minimise potential impact.

#### 4. Equalities groups impacted by savings proposals

This section looks in more detail at the impacts of specific proposals on protected characteristics and on socio-economic disadvantage. It includes proposals from this year's budget that have a potential equalities impact.

Based on individual Equalities Impact Assessments the following protected characteristics are **potentially negatively impacted** by one or more of the savings proposals for 2025/26:

Characteristic	Proposal	Directorate
<b>Age</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procurement of the reablement service externally to deliver the current output of the in-house service. <u>OR</u> remodel the reablement service to meet current delivery with reduced staffing levels.</li> <li>• Reduce the general fund subsidy for vacant places in Council managed Children's Centres with nurseries</li> <li>• Reduce the amount of grants to vol sector nurseries &amp; play groups annually.</li> <li>• Remove remainder of childcare subsidy budget</li> <li>• Review expenditure on commissioned Youth Services</li> <li>• Review of welfare advice provision to optimise investment across in-house and externally commissioned services</li> </ul>	<p>Adult Social Care</p> <p>Children and Young People</p> <p>Children and Young People</p> <p>Community Wealth Building</p> <p>Children and Young People</p> <p>Community Wealth Building</p>
<b>Disability</b>	<p>Procurement of the reablement service externally to deliver the current output of the in-house service or remodel the reablement service to meet current delivery with reduced staffing levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the number of Council managed Children's Centres with nurseries if the nurseries don't increase their occupancy levels/number of</li> </ul>	<p>Adult Social Care</p> <p>Children and Young People</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the amount of grants to vol sector nurseries &amp; play groups annually.</li> <li>• Review expenditure on commissioned Youth Services</li> <li>• Review of welfare advice provision to optimise investment across in-house and externally commissioned services</li> </ul>	<p>Children and Young People</p> <p>Children and Young People</p> <p>Community Wealth Building</p>
<b>Socio-economic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procurement of the reablement service externally to deliver the current output of the in-house service or remodel the reablement service to meet current delivery with reduced staffing levels.</li> <li>• Review expenditure on commissioned Youth Services</li> <li>• Review of welfare advice provision to optimise investment across in-house and externally commissioned services</li> </ul>	<p>Adult Social Care</p> <p>Children and Young People</p> <p>Community Wealth Building</p>
<b>Race</b>	<p>Procurement of the reablement service externally to deliver the current output of the in-house service. <u>OR</u> remodel the reablement service to meet current delivery with reduced staffing levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the amount of grants to vol sector nurseries &amp; play groups annually.</li> <li>• Remove remainder of childcare subsidy budget</li> <li>• Review expenditure on commissioned Youth Services</li> </ul>	<p>Adult Social Care</p> <p>Children and Young People</p> <p>Community Wealth Building</p> <p>Children and Young People</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of welfare advice provision to optimise investment across in-house and externally commissioned services</li> </ul>	Community Wealth Building
<b>Sex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the amount of grants to vol sector nurseries &amp; play groups annually.</li> <li>Remove remainder of childcare subsidy budget</li> <li>Review expenditure on commissioned Youth Services</li> <li>Scale back the council's investment in festive lighting in the borough</li> </ul>	Children and Young People  Community Wealth Building Children and Young People  Environment and Climate Change
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the amount of grants to vol sector nurseries &amp; play groups annually.</li> <li>Remove remainder of childcare subsidy budget</li> </ul>	Children and Young People  Community Wealth Building
<b>Religion or belief (including no belief)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scale back the council's investment in festive lighting in the borough</li> </ul>	Environment and Climate Change

There are no disproportionate impacts relating to:

- Marriage and civil partnership
- Gender Reassignment and Identity

## 5. Savings proposals and impacts – by directorate

This section provides a detailed assessment by Directorate of those savings proposals – both new and existing - that will potentially impact specific groups. This includes proposals that necessitated full EQIAs as well as proposals that only necessitated completion of an EQIA screening tool – i.e. the proposal did not demonstrate a significant (negative or positive) equalities impact.

## **a) Council wide**

*New savings:*

Two cross-cutting proposals were submitted, none of which progressed to a full EQIA.

### **Reduction in the workforce budgets across the council as a result of vacancy and agency management.**

The proposal aims to reduce impact overall by focusing on turnover generated by resignations which include senior management roles. This process will involve assessing vacancies on a case-by-case basis. Though this proposal was assessed as having a neutral impact, it is impossible to predict the true nature of the impact as affected roles cannot be predicted at this time. The mitigation for the proposal is work redesign, however absorbing a senior management vacancy could have repercussions for all affected staff in the service. Potential impacts may be on workload, roles and responsibilities or timely supervision of staff. These issues may also impact on employee's wellbeing. Services have agreed to monitor the impact, in doing so due regard should be given to the wellbeing of staff affected. Appropriate consultation with staff and unions will be undertaken where necessary.

### **Centralisation of data and insights**

Current data insight capabilities are distributed unevenly amongst the organisation, with some directorates having significant support in this area and others minimum to none. The aim of this new function is to create a strong centralised insight function for the benefit of the whole organisation. There are anticipated savings attached to the proposal, as centralisation has the potential to bring efficiencies and reduce duplication of effort.

The main groups of people who will be impacted by the change directly are data analysts, performance analysts and potentially business analysts. Directorates themselves may also be impacted if analysts normally sitting in their area are centralised, resulting in a different way of accessing the support. The proposal was deemed to have a neutral impact on staff, though there may potentially be changes to the directorates that they currently support.

## **b) Adult Social Care**

*New savings:*

The budget for 2025/26 sets out two savings proposals both of which progressed to a full EQIA.

**Procurement of the reablement service externally to deliver the current output of the in-house service. OR Remodel the reablement service to meet current delivery with reduced staffing levels.**

Where proposals impact on staff, we aim to reduce redundancies, potential impacts are mitigated by seeking to redeploy staff or offer voluntary redundancies where possible as part of any staff reduction. Further mitigation to avoid redundancy such as redeployment and initiatives such as ceasing acting up arrangements, changes in work patterns and team responsibilities are also utilised where possible.

The proposal to procure the reablement service externally to deliver the current output of the in-house service potentially puts 40 FTE staff at risk of redundancy, This proposal potentially has a severe negative impact across multiple characteristics given the demographics of the group. The staff in question are largely aged 60+, female, from the African and Caribbean communities, several staff are also impacted by managed health conditions. The cohort in question are also identified as low paid workers. Therefore, the characteristics affected are age, gender, race, disabilities and socio economics which is assessed as a severe impact on protected characteristics of all the savings proposals.

The mitigations that can be offered to support those affected should the proposal go ahead include:

Access to Employee assistant programme

Consultation / Information around TUPE and redundancy.

Direct support through employment advice Interviews skills and careers support.

Workforce passport detailing any reasonable adjustments related to staff disability requirements.

Union Support

The service will support the staff in question to overcome any potential barriers which may arise in seeking new employment.

### **Reduce in-house services management structure to deliver a 5% cost reduction in the overall revenue budget for In-House Provider Services**

The proposal could lead to a potential reduction of 5 posts – 2 of which are currently filled with permanent staff, 2 have staff in acting roles and 1 is left vacant. If agreed, acting staff will go back to their substantive posts whilst it is anticipated that remaining staff will be redeployed in other posts. Though acting posts are temporary, the loss of an acting position will negatively impact on affected staff. Although ceasing acting arrangements and redeployment will be used in mitigation by the service to avoid compulsory redundancies. In addition, staff will be supported through the process and have support of the Trade Union representatives, where they wish to. They will also have access to the Employee Assistance Programme which contains support for employees in job skills to help redeployment. A full consultation will take place, prior to a decision being made.

## **c) Community Strategy and Change**

### *New savings*

The budget for 2025/26 sets out two savings proposals which required a full EQIA:

### **Resident Experience Programme - digital investment and organisational change.**

The Resident Experience Programme - digital investment and organisational change is expected to have a positive impact on residents including those who are digitally excluded. It will enable staff to be clearer on the needs of residents and provide a more targeted service. It is also expected to have a positive impact on staff by giving staff tools and training to support residents and work more effectively.

### **Reduce Bright Lives service by 20%**

The current staffing structure has 9FTE posts, the service supports residents who use Access Islington Hubs, Adult Social Care Integrated Front Door, Resident Experience and clinical support services. A reduction of 20% would leave 7 FTE posts. The deletion of 2 FTE posts or equivalent will enable us to protect this front-line service for residents and support them in achieving better outcomes. This will involve a modest allocation of funds to enhance existing management roles which would impact positively on savings both now and into the future. This proposal would have a neutral impact on residents who would not be affected by the change. The proposal may have a negative impact on staff with redundancies of 2 FTE roles. This can be absorbed more widely if merged with the Communities team.

All redundancies will be supported by the organisational change process, any employee facing redundancy will be offered appropriate support.

## **d) Environment and Climate Change**

### *New savings:*

The budget for 2025/26 sets out eleven savings proposals, 1 of which required a full EQIA. Two proposals had a negative impact on residents and one proposal also had an additional negative impact on some service users.

### **Removal of remaining park gate locking**

Islington has a total of 120 sites, following a previous saving we stopped locking 46 sites following a review of the benefits and risks. There were 45 sites that were assessed as challenging to cease locking. The review identified advantages and disadvantages of locking the parks including increased feeling of security for residents with properties backing onto parks and the loss of parks as a short cut for

residents to some shopping centres and railway stations. On balance, the proposal was considered to have a positive impact for some residents, in that it would mean that residents working shifts and later and early morning walkers could still utilise parks and there would also be savings to officer time who carry out the function.

The mitigation proposed to support this proposal is detailed below:

- To use some of the saving to provide additional targeted patrols at hot spot sites.
- To ensure park patrol liaises and engages with young people in the course of their duties to ensure young people are aware of their potential impact and to manage and address any genuine anti-social behaviour they may be involved
- To support Friends and resident groups to take on the locking of parks
- To explore opportunities of where suitably located for Housing concierge to take on locking and unlocking where the park/open space is on the estate.

The mitigation proposals maximise the potential for friends and resident groups to support the function, this has been trialled elsewhere in the borough and works well in three locations. Patrols of hot spot areas by officers would help to limit potential anti-social behaviour due to visibility of council staff and continue to give officers an opportunity to engage with young people using the parks. The option to use housing concierge to deliver the service would only be feasible for the 3 parks in the borough that were already within or next to estates.

### **Restructure the Environment and Commercial Operations Division to achieve savings within the service.**

The proposal is a year 3 saving which will be worked through and could lead to redundancies which could have a negative impact on staff. The service would look to mitigate the impact of any service provisions and potential redundancies by seeking to reduce agency spend and considering voluntary redundancies first.

### **Parks Service Budget Reduction**

The park ranger service, is the conduit for all 127 parks, covering around 40 parks for each area. They consult on park developments and changes, act as liaison between the community and the council and support both community/commercial events and volunteering. The proposal to reduce the park services budget is likely to have a negative impact on residents who use the parks. Ranger teams work closely with Friends of Parks groups and deal with all complaints, enquiries, requests, including gate locking and ASB issues. With less rangers, the service would be less able to deliver these core functions. In mitigation the service has agreed to continue to reach out to the diverse community in alignment with Islington Together 2030 commitments.



The proposal would have a negative impact on staff, it would see a reduction of 2 of the 3 Area Park Managers and 2 of the 3 Rangers.

Any staff affected by redundancy would be given support via the organisational change process which includes job skills.

### **Opportunities to make changes to waste management services.**

The refuse and recycling service currently provides a five day per week service which then results in a catch-up service if there is a bank holiday, falling on a Monday, in the month. In doing so there is an associated cost to this of £30K for each bank holiday.

A proposal to move to a four-day week for refuse collection will result in a change to the day for refuse collection for some residents. However, in doing so this will not change the amount of collections. This will in turn result in a cost saving of £120K, as there are four bank holidays which fall on a Monday namely Easter Monday, early May BH, late May BH and August BH.

In making this change there will be an impact upon some staff in that there will be a cut in any overtime and in the use of agency staff. This will be managed however through conversations with HR, Trade Unions and any other relevant staff.

The second proposal is for the service to pick up commercial waste from private business customers, who have requested this service and have additional premises operating as satellite offices within neighbouring boroughs.

This initiative is expected to generate an income of £150K in the second year and in implementing it there is no adverse impact upon residents or staff.

The third proposal sets out to bring in additional staff so that more pest control services can be sold and delivered. In doing so the fees generated by this initiative will be greater than the costs and it is suggested this will bring in £100K in year 2.

This proposal does not raise any adverse impacts and will instead have a positive impact in relation to matters such as recruitment, representation and the local economy.

In relation to the Community Sports fund, the council is proposing a reduction to the community sports budget for London Youth Games (LYG), the Sport Islington grants and the Go Islington summer event.

As the London Youth games were based upon more competitive sport the council is now moving towards less competitive activities. Despite this, it will continue to invest in the community sports development programmes which include free swimming funded mainly from rental income for young people under 16 years old and older people over 60 years old and investment into school sports programmes will also continue.

There will be an adverse impact to some of the service users and residents however this impact will be low because it will be managed through Access to Sport, free swimming lessons, school sports, football development and a range of other options available to participate in sport. The Sport Islington grant also supports individuals on low incomes to access training and travel to sports competitions and the grants

support to sports clubs who offer subsidised or free activities for those on low incomes.

Engagement with relevant organisations is also being explored to increase their offer to people with disabilities.

## **Children's Services**

### New savings

The budget for 2025/26 sets out 4 savings proposals which progressed to a full EQIA. Three of the EQIAs, identified a potential negative impact.

### **Reduce the general fund subsidy for vacant places in Council managed Children's Centres with nurseries**

The proposal to reduce the number of Children's Centres with nurseries if occupancy levels are not increased could impact on availability or parental choice for service users at Children's centres. The proposal could potentially lead to parents and or carers needing to travel slightly longer to access services.

Children or parents/carers with a disability may be impacted more by having to travel further to access Children's Centres. To mitigate the impact on disabled children and parents, we would prioritise children for relocation places where either the child or primary carer has a disability.

There is little mitigation available for non-disabled services users affected by proposals, however they will proactively be given information on the nearest nursery locations to reduce the impact on those affected by the change. There are sufficient Early Years places available at school, voluntary sector and private nurseries in the borough, so it is anticipated that any proposed changes would have a minimum impact on families including those who require subsidised nursery places across the borough.

Although alternative children's centres are available, there could potentially be a negative impact on parents who have existing childcare arrangements for other children in the location of their current centre or those whose travel to work arrangements are centred around the location of their current children's centre.

### **Reduce the amount of grants to voluntary sector nurseries & play groups annually.**

The reduction of grants to voluntary sector nurseries, may lead to an increase in fees for groups and nurseries, and reduced choice for parents. It is hoped that this would be offset by funding from the Early Years Dedicated Schools Grant.

This proposal impacts on a range of protected characteristics, age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, sex, race and residents in lower income brackets.

Again, we will prioritise children for where either the child or primary carer has a disability to mitigate any negative impact arising from the proposals. We are unable to mitigate for all groups who may have to make longer journeys because of the proposals. Although alternative children's centres are available, there could potentially be a negative impact on parents who have existing childcare arrangements for other children in the location of their current centre.

### **Review expenditure on commissioned Youth Services**

Islington is one of the most densely populated local areas in the country and there is little green space for children and young people to go to play and take part in activities. The proposal to review expenditure on commissioned Youth Services will impact negatively on children and young people who use the service and mean that there are fewer youth-focussed places in the borough for them to visit. Potentially the impact of this could lead to detrimental issues in the community and could impact on community cohesion.

In mitigation, an offer will remain in place for young people who have SEND in view of the council recognising the significance of continuing to support this group of young people. Looked after children and those living in poverty will continue to be supported by the council though not through youth services provision. Young people who are identified by race, ethnicity or faith may also be able to access alternative provisions.

Further mitigation includes:

- Explore external funding opportunities to see if this can help mitigate the reduction in services, alternative funding is likely to be for a fixed term, funding via ongoing grants is unlikely.
- Create and establish youth provision with VCS organisations who may have access to targeted pots of funding.
- Revising and updating existing contracts so providers increase the numbers of children and young people they support along with increasing the level of service that they deliver to them. Changes to contract specifications could potentially make the contracts more expensive to the council which could reduce the level of savings.

### **e) Community Wealth Building**

#### *New savings*

The budget for 2025/26 sets out 3 savings proposals which progressed to a full EQIA:

## **Remove remainder of childcare subsidy budget**

This proposal means that we will no longer be able to offer a childcare bursary to help parents meet the costs of childcare as they move into work. There is a risk that some residents would not be able to commence employment as planned and may subsequently lose a job offer and / or their employment. Only those parents or carers that qualify for the statutory entitlement to free childcare / Council subsidised childcare in Children's Service would gain assistance.

The mitigation comes from government policy changes, from September 2024, parents of children over 9 months old are eligible for childcare support. To be eligible, parents must have taken or be due to take up an offer of work, or have increased or due to increase their hours of work.

Clients on Universal Credit can access the Universal Credit Childcare Element. The maximum amounts eligible have been significantly increased and parents also receive up to 85 per cent of their childcare costs back before their next month's bills are due – meaning they should have money to pay one month in advance going forward. The fact that they now receive their childcare funding upfront, instead of in arrears, means that one of the key premises for the councils enhanced offer has been largely addressed by statutory funding. With costs now paid upfront through UC, and available through DWP's flexible support fund, there is less need for our Bursary Scheme. In mitigation a discretionary fund will be available to support those that do not qualify under the criteria outlined above or experience challenges doing so.

The proposal would have a negative impact on staff and would result in 1 redundancy in the service. Any staff affected by redundancy would be given support via the organisational change process which includes job skills.

## **Scale back the council's investment in festive lighting in the borough**

Festive lighting is seen as a commercial advantage to local businesses that brings new visitors to the town centres and announces the seasonal trading period, and if removed could be seen to have detrimental impact to local businesses. The switch-on events bring circa 5,000 visitors to 6 town centres and almost the entire budget is spent locally. The proposal to scale back investment may negatively impact on residents with a religious or faith belief who may believe that their beliefs are not recognised or celebrated. In addition, the proposal may have a negative impact on the perception of feelings of safety for women/girls in the borough, as there will be less street lighting.

In mitigation the service will explore alternative sources of funding.

The proposal would not lead to redundancies however it would negatively impact on the service and staffing; due to changes in work patterns, costing off staff and changes to team responsibilities.

### **Review of welfare advice provision to optimise investment across in-house and externally commissioned services**

The Council spends just under **£1.9m per annum** on welfare advice provision – largely through core grants to advice partners as part of the VCS Grants Programme but also through our own inhouse Income Maximisation Team (IMAX). The team provides advice and support to residents on a range of issues including help to claim welfare benefits and other entitlements and to tackle problem debt. Welfare advice and income maximisation are key tools we can use to support people out of poverty

The proposal may negatively impact on service users and their families, the impact more broadly would affect older people, children and families and residents with disabilities and those with lower incomes.

The proposal to make savings through reduction of funding for welfare advice will look at spend across grant agreements with VCS organisations and the inhouse IMAX team. Depending on where the savings are taken from, this could have a detrimental impact on staff with redundancies of either 1 or 2 FTE roles.

In mitigation the service will:

- Aim to avoid savings that will impact direct delivery of welfare advice provision.
- Look to maximise the benefits of the funding the council provides for welfare advice, to ensure it is focused on reducing poverty and inequality, as set out in the Islington Together 2030 Plan.

### **f) Resources**

The overall focus of this proposal is to reduce the printing costs across the council, and it is divided into two parts. Part 1 highlights the removal of colour printing resulting in savings of £26k and part 2 reduces the number of Multi-Functioning Devices saving an additional £12k.

As the number of devices may be reduced and their locations changed, there may be possible adverse impact, specifically in relation to disability and accessibility. The Disability Staff Forum will be engaged to provide support and guidance in managing these as appropriate. There are also plans to engage with departments across the council on their respective printing needs which will ensure any other possible adverse impact will also be managed and mitigated.

### **g) Public Health**

There were no new savings proposals submitted for Public Health.

## **h) Homes and Neighbourhood**

The budget for 2025/26 sets out 1 savings proposal which did not progress to a full EQIA and had a neutral impact on both residents and staff.

## **6. Staffing Impacts**

As summarised in section 3, some proposals will have staffing implications. While the significant majority will come from redeployment and initiatives such as ceasing acting up arrangements, reducing agency fees, changes in work patterns and team responsibilities some proposals will have implications which may include changes to current roles or a potential risk of redundancy.

Where proposals impact on staff, we aim to reduce the likelihood of redundancies where possible or offering voluntary redundancies where possible as part of any staff reduction. However, there is a potential for redundancy for some staff because of the proposals.

The impacts of these proposals on staff with protected characteristics cannot yet be fully determined, though we have identified that race, age, gender, disability and socio economics will be negatively impacted by one proposal and other proposals identify a potential impact across the range of protected characteristics except for gender assignment and marriage and civil partnership.

Our established organisational change process ensures we support our staff through this change. Where restructures are proposed we carry out a comprehensive Staffing Impact Assessment that identifies the implications for those with protected characteristics and finds ways to mitigate accordingly.

Where a redundancy situation is possible, we will take several steps including:

- not filling vacancies in advance of a restructure so as many opportunities as possible are available to our existing staff
- using our redeployment process to help staff at risk find suitable alternative employment within the council
- considering alternative options to redundancy such as early retirement, flexible working or other 'working differently' options.
- stress management support and counselling services will be offered to staff through the Employee Assist Programme to help them cope with the additional pressures that structural change may bring.

We have an ongoing commitment to making Islington an employer of choice and are Timewise accredited, supporting flexible working opportunities available where possible, including condensed hours, flexible start and end times and part time working.

The Council is committed to a workforce that is representative of the borough at all levels and will continue to look for new ways to improve progression routes for staff and equip them to be senior managers of the future. We will continue to promote our staff equality forums as a way of engaging with staff and working together to continually improve their experience of working in Islington.

## **7. Human Rights and Safeguarding**

### **Human Rights**

It is unlawful for the council to act in a way that is incompatible with a European Convention right (unless the council could not have acted differently as a result of a statutory provision).

An interference with a qualified right (e.g. the right to respect for private and family life) is not unlawful if the council acts in accordance with the law and the interference is necessary in a democratic society.

In deciding whether the interference is necessary, the law applies a proportionality test, including whether a fair balance has been struck between the rights of the individual and the interests of the community.

### **Safeguarding**

#### **Implications for safeguarding in Adult Social Care**

Proposals outlined in this document build on the Council's work on Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP). MSP is enshrined in the Care Act (2014) and the Pan London Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures.

MSP puts the person at risk of harm or abuse at the centre of decisions and actions about them. Just like the Strengths Based Practice approach for general social work activities, MSP respects that adults often bring ideas and solutions which will work best for them and the outcomes they need support in achieving.

This means that safeguarding adults continues to be integral in the work we are undertaking to really embed strengths-based practice. Ensuring vulnerable adults are safe and focusing on wellbeing is a core element of strengths-based practice and ensures there is consistency in approach whether we are working with a vulnerable person on a support plan or a safeguarding plan.

#### **Implications for safeguarding in Children's Services**

Safeguarding children is about protecting them from maltreatment, preventing their health and development being impaired, ensuring that they grow up in environments which provide safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The mitigation identified for each proposal reduces very significantly the risk of poor safeguarding practice. The council's mitigation should include not adopting any policy where safeguarding practice is adversely affected.

The proposals put forward have been tested against effective safeguarding practice. A broad range of quality assurance measures are already in place and will continue to be monitored and responded to robustly.

## **8. Monitoring**

This year, the Equalities Team has reviewed the equalities impacts from current savings to screen for any unexpected impacts as the projects have progressed – this process will continue.

Each individual proposal will continue to be reviewed and updated as required. Consultation will be carried out where required to seek the views of residents and service users. The lead officer for each proposal will be responsible for ensuring that equality considerations remain at the forefront of decision making as each of these proposals are progressed.



## Annex A: Public Sector Equality Duty

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 provides that:

(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to —

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

(2) A person who is not a public authority but who exercises public functions must, in the exercise of those functions, have due regard to the matters mentioned in subsection (1).

(3) Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to —

- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
- (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

(4) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

(5) Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to —

- (a) tackle prejudice, and
- (b) promote understanding.

(6) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favorably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.

(7) The relevant protected characteristics are —

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment, including non-binary and gender-fluid identification
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

(8) A reference to conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act includes a reference to —

(a) a breach of an equality clause or rule;

(b) a breach of a non-discrimination rule.

(9) Schedule 18 (exceptions) has effect.