

Budget 2021/22 Equalities Impact Assessment

Overview and summary

The Council is obliged to set a balanced budget and Council Tax charge in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The purpose of this EIA is to assess the main items in the budget that will be proposed to Full Council on 25th February 2021.

For 2021/22, a balanced budget is proposed based on investment in key priorities, efficiency savings and strengthening financial resilience. On the basis of that budget, the Council proposes, in line with the increases modelled by government in their spending power calculations, a 1.99% rise in Council Tax and the application of a 3% adult social care precept. Further information is set out in the accompanying Report.

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and in particular section 149 the Public Sector Equality Duty ("PSED"). This Equalities Impact Assessment ("EIA") is intended to assist the Council in demonstrating its fulfilment of its PSED. It assesses, as far as is possible on the information currently available, the equality impact of the budget through individual equality impact assessments of each the proposals. The requirements of the PSED and case law principles are explained in the Legal Implications section of the report to Full Council. The Equality Implications section of that report is informed by this analysis.

Methodology

The analysis looks at the impact of Council Tax and Social Care Precept proposals and, secondly, at the budget on which that decision is based. Initial equality impact assessments have been undertaken of all the proposals at this stage, with a full Equality Impact Assessment undertaken for those where potential adverse impact has been identified. Equality Impact Assessment is an ongoing process and further assessment will be undertaken of policy decisions as appropriate. This will happen throughout 2021/22 as part of the Council's decision-making process and changes will be made where appropriate.

The aim in this document is to identify the elements of the budget that may have an adverse or positive impact on any protected group so that these can be taken into account by the Council when taking a final decision on the budget and the level of Council Tax. Where this is possible, mitigating measures are identified at the appropriate point in this document.

Summary of impact of the proposed budget

Council Tax increase and applying social care precept

A 1.99% increase in Council Tax is proposed and the application of a 3% adult social care precept. These increases are modelled by the government in their spending power calculations for local government. This will take Band D Council Tax from £792.42 to £831.96.

By increasing Council tax, the Council can prevent reductions in services to local residents and in so doing can continue to mitigate against adverse impacts facing individual households.

The percentage increase will be applied to all bands of council tax, as required by law. This will impact on all residents who are eligible to pay Council Tax. The average increase in cost per week on a Band D property is £0.76. Since Council Tax is applicable to all properties it is not considered that the increase targets any one particular group; rather it is an increase that is applied across the board. At the same time because the increase is applied to all properties it is not possible to exempt any particular group.

The impact of Council Tax is mitigated through the Local Council Tax Support scheme and other exemptions and discounts.

Council Tax Exemptions and Discounts

Some properties are exempt, or qualify for a discount, from council tax. The different classes of exemptions/discounts are listed below.

Occupied Properties with only the following residents:

- a) full time students (they must complete an application form and return it to us with a council tax certificate from their place of study);
- b) severely mentally impaired people;
- c) a foreign diplomat who would normally have to pay council tax;
- d) people who are under 18;
- e) members of a visiting force who would normally have to pay council tax;
- f) elderly or disabled relatives of a family who live in the main property, in certain annexes and self-contained accommodation.

If there is only one other resident in the property who does not fall into one of the above categories, then the property will receive a 25% discount rather than be exempt. If there are more than two such residents, then the property will neither be exempt nor receive a discount.

Unoccupied properties

- g) owned by a charity are exempt for up to six months;
- h) empty due to resident receiving care in a hospital or home elsewhere;
- i) empty as resident has been sent to prison;
- j) empty as resident has moved to care for someone else;
- k) empty awaiting probate and for six months after probate is granted;
- l) has been repossessed;
- m) is the responsibility of a bankrupt's trustee;
- n) is waiting for a minister of religion to move in,

- o) empty by a student whose term-time address is elsewhere,
- p) empty because it is against the law to live there, including from 1st April 2007 where a planning condition prevents occupation;
- q) empty as it forms part of another property and may not be let separately.

Pitch or mooring

- r) that doesn't have a caravan or boat on it is also exempt.

From 2017/18 the council has also provided discounts for care leavers up to the age of 25.

Those who feel they are entitled to an exemption are encouraged to contact the Council and information on how to do that is provided by the Council when Council Tax Bills are issued. Support for people struggling with their Council Tax Bill is also offered through Advice Centres.

The liability for Council Tax is summarised below:

Total dwellings in the borough	91,550
Reductions:	
Exemptions (mainly students, includes care leavers)	(4,161)
Council tax support claimants (elderly & working age on low income)	(12,009)
Single person discount (25% discount)	(28,180)
Dwellings liable for 100% of Council tax (52%)	47,200

Data on the Local Council Tax Support Scheme identifies that approximately 55% are female (higher than the proportion of females in the borough population as a whole, which was 51.3% according to the 2011 Census). Pensioners are also disproportionately represented (35% of LCTS claimants, but only 9% of Borough residents). Based on ONS data on low-income groups, it is also likely that disabled residents, ethnic minority groups, women on maternity leave, single parents (who are normally women) and families with young children are likely to be disproportionately represented.

Social Care & Public Health Savings Proposals

Social Care Savings Proposals

1 Reviewing community care packages and ensuring the right support is provided- £1,000,000

This business case is focused on reviewing community care packages and ensuring the right support is provided by reviewing much earlier and more effectively the arrangements on discharge from acute hospitals and making the right choices in relation to the next steps for older people, for people with mental health issues and with learning disabilities. Additionally reviewing care needs to determine if they meet NHS Continuing Health Care (CHC) funding, reviewing community care packages, increasing direct payments and a reduction in placement numbers.

The business case builds on work undertaken in 2020/21 when in the context of Covid-19 and associated Discharge to Assess model, we have made significant improvements in our collaborative approach. Also in the associated coordination of reviewing residents sooner after discharge, to reduce unnecessary dependency on long term care.

The associated planning required in Phase 1 and 2 of Covid-19 necessitated a differentiated approach to the support needs of our residents returning home post hospital or for those who moved into a care home or supported living. Underpinning this the timely reviews and focus on independent living (utilising direct payments and pooled budgets as appropriate) enables Social Care to focus resources on those who most need it and reablement models inform more choice and control for our residents and better use of public funds for the Council.

The business case also relates to making better use of NHS and other funding streams where appropriate, including NHS CHC and Funded Nursing Care (FNC). This work is embedded in Social Care but requires significant resources to ensure fair and equitable apportionment of funding from CHC. The work also needs to be extended to residents leaving hospital with mental health needs and to those residents with learning disabilities who are (often) in out of borough expensive care support.

This proposal has neutral impact on those with protected characteristics as the proposal focuses on reviewing community care packages and ensuring the right support is provided and this builds on work undertaken in 2020/21.

2. Workforce including social care front door contribution to a Council front-door service - £200,000

The workforce efficiency programme will work to improve workforce efficiency by taking a whole-Council view and approach to support Social Care through different projects. An increase in population places an increased demand and dependence on the Social Care system. The additional financial costs and flow of work is unsustainable. We need to find alternative ways of meeting needs whilst delivering statutory duties.

The 'conversation at the one front door' will focus on outcomes that draw on the resident's strengths and assets to achieve the lives they want for themselves - reducing unnecessary referrals where appropriate. Greater co-produced independent living solutions will provide the new model of reablement. This also involves working collaboratively and creatively with the community and voluntary organisations for stronger, sustainable, independent communities.

The pandemic has really shown how we can deliver improved outcomes for H&F's residents by working together. We will encourage residents to self-serve wherever possible and statutory support will be provided via direct payments as the default option, reducing unnecessary dependency on longer-term support.

During the pandemic we have learned so much about new and more agile ways of working and we hope to capitalise on this. The 'one front door' programme will drive culture change within services, provision of equipment for smarter working, maximising use of property portfolio and reducing unproductive time for staff.

Staff and managers are supported to adopt agile working by digitising procedures and services constrained by location. Information and knowledge management so staff are supported to adopt smarter working through greater amounts of information being available electronically with the ability to collaborate with colleagues in virtual spaces.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

3. Re-commissioning and contract management- £250,000

We have identified more efficient and effective value for money approaches to delivering the same service. We will achieve this through negotiations with existing providers and redesigned recommissioned services.

The business case focuses on achieving £0.250m in savings from Social Care commissioning and contracts. At least £0.100m will be achieved through floating support services. For the remainder, we are looking at independent living contracts. It is anticipated that some may be secured through robust contract management.

We will review services and identify appropriate contract variations as well as taking the opportunity to redesign services that are due for recommission. Key areas to be looked at include floating support and carers' service models.

This is a neutral equalities impact as it is a contract negotiation exercise and the service will not be reduced.

4 – Digitisation to improve communications with people and access to information - £200,000

Adopting the processes, culture and technology and introducing new digital capabilities to deliver a new, modern digitally capable Social Care system. This will enable service enhancements, cost reduction and improved demand management.

We will establish cross-cutting digital solutions for staff, residents and partners. Implement technical solutions identified and co-designed with services which support the realisation of benefits for whole-system change. Exploit opportunities to join-up data, scale solutions and improve sustainability of services. This will be enabled by developing a number of the capabilities and dimensions of a digital Council, online/web, automation/Artificial Intelligence/Robotics including Care-bots, information and insights from data and analytics, tech/app enabled new business, tech-enabled services for residents, social media platforms and content.

Digital access and training programmes available for residents including digital hubs supporting community access and innovation. This will provide a range of benefits such as giving residents a seamless public service digital experience. There will be a Social Care benefit from improved demand management and increased capacity (time to focus on task). Real time data insights will mean social care can manage demand and support residents most at risk. It will also allow operating cost reduction from demand management and automation across services.

Efficiencies will include reduced demand from resident's unnecessarily re-entering system. It will make it easier for resident's support to be reviewed regularly. There will be a possible reduction in unit cost of care (peer/market comparison) as well as a reduction in the Social Care workforce as a result of a leaner system.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

5 – Redesign of day care service - £100,000

This business case focuses on the transformation of both internal and externally commissioned day opportunities.

The transformation of in-house day opportunities in Phase 1, commenced pre-Covid-19 and was focused on Options Day Services. Over forty residents who utilised this support were involved in co-producing the future 'offer' one where the building would be open seven days a week offering a range of short courses and opportunities to promote independence rather than a 'one size fits all' offer.

The new model for Day Services will utilise direct payments and pooled budgets to support engaging a range of tutors and specialists to deliver small-group sessions for our residents which support them in being fully active participants in Hammersmith and Fulham and would be underpinned by a less expensive and dated model of 'day care' where residents are transported on a mini bus first thing in the morning and dropped off back at home at the end of the afternoon.

The model aligns to transformation elsewhere in Social Care, (Front Door, Reablement, Conversations Matters, Mental Health Integrated Teams around Primary Care Networks) and there are other synergies with the Community Aid Network and Mutual Aid Groups.

In the context of Covid-19 we have re-visited what the transformation of both in-house and commissioned Day Services could look like, mindful of Public Health England guidance and associated restrictions around numbers. It is clear that a peripatetic model of support provided in the community/in people's homes/using digital communication platforms is one key strand of the model going forward.

Another could be targeting those residents (and their families) most isolated and in need of support and re-purposing our buildings to meet their needs (within PHE support bubbles). Either way, the new model of Day Services provides opportunities

for efficiencies in staffing and in transport and going forward, a co-produced model will inform a more significant saving in 2022/23.

This proposal is neutral as the day service is proposed to be remodelled and provided in a different way.

6 - Management and agency staff workforce re-design - £200,000

The proposal will be to further streamline the management in Social Care and reduce the agency staff bill. Covid-19 has provided a focused level of detail use of the agency staff employed in the department and this review is proposed to reduce the agency staff numbers by 50% by April 2021.

This proposal relates to better resourcing and deployment of staff. The department will continue to be measured by the same resident-focused performance measures and residents will not experience a decline in service.

This proposal has a nil/neutral equalities impact.

EIA – Social Care Investment and Covid-19

1 – Demographic pressures in Social Care – £471,000

The Social Care budget is under severe pressure due to an ageing population, increasingly complex needs resulting from learning disabilities and mental health issues. As people age their needs become more complex or their informal care arrangements often break down, as unpaid carers can no longer support their relatives and friends. These demographic pressures need to be factored into Social Care service plans, as they represent a clear cost pressure that will impact on services. Whilst the numbers receiving support from Council may not increase significantly, the cost of care packages will increase reflecting more complex needs, including supporting individual in their own homes. For H&F demographic pressures relating to the increased numbers of older and disabled people requiring Social Care is forecasted to be an average of 3.4% increase over the period 2020 to 2024 which equates in monetary terms to a cumulative total of £2.978m over this period.

2 – Learning disability (LD) transitions – £889,000

Additional funding is required for the LD budgets to fund the increasing number of disabled children transitioning into adult services.

There are several factors causing cost pressures in LD which include:

- Increasing volumes of disabled children transitioning into adult services reflecting the fact that more children with significant disabilities live to become adults.
- Increasing acuity of need.

- People with LD now have a life expectancy which is not particularly shorter than the general population.
- As people with LD age, so does the age of parents who can no longer provide the care and support they used to, which results in increased demand for social care services.
- Increasing numbers of care packages/direct payments against LD budget for those not meeting LD but having assessed needs relating to their autism.
- Lack of in borough provision resulting in high cost of Out of Borough (OoB) placements.

For one-year £889,000 will be needed to fund 28 new customers.

3 – Hospital discharges – £1,035,000

The Government has issued guidance that any patients discharged from hospital between 19 March 2020 and 31 August 2020, whose discharge support package has been paid for by the NHS, will need to be assessed and moved to core NHS, social care or self-funding arrangements. Therefore, there is a high expectation that discharges made from hospital into health settings will be reassessed into the Social Care market. The financial consequences are likely to be more significant in 2021/22 with a full year impact estimated at £1.035m

These investments will have a positive impact due to additional funding of £2.395m that will result in additional resources for Social Care services.

Public Health Savings Proposals

Three savings are proposed for public health, each relating to better procurement and contract management. In each case savings will result in the same or better services, and funds released will be reinvested in public health outcomes.

1 Savings and procurement for health visiting and school nursing – £600,000

The proposal is to procure the 0-19 healthy child programme including health visiting and school nursing with improvements to outcomes through a refreshed model for a competitive price, with savings reinvested in public health outcomes.

The savings proposed are contractual. Through benchmarking it has been identified that the Council is currently paying over the London average for services of this kind and a reduction in contract price will generate efficiencies without reducing outcomes.

Elements of the service are required by law and outcomes are reported and monitored by Public Health England through the public health outcomes framework.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

2 Cardiovascular disease prevention re-procurement - £160,000

There are proposals to re-procure stop smoking services and bring adult weight management services in house, with savings reinvested in public health outcomes. There will be discussions with Sports and Leisure to ensure access to programmes and activities for those who do not want to access gyms.

It has been identified that there is currently duplication with the Environment Department in the services that are accessible to residents in relation to weight management i.e. physical activity, wellbeing, nutrition and cook and eat sessions.

Health and Social Care commission will work with Sports and Leisure to ensure that services are accessible through current referrals routes and provision is enhanced through Sports and Leisure.

Savings will be made through efficiencies and reductions in duplications rather than reductions in services accessible to residents.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

3 Contract variation for Support and Advice on Sexual Health - £122,000

The proposal will review the model, reduce the focus on general activities to enhance the approach to targeted activities and associated outcomes, with savings reinvested in public health outcomes.

Mitigations to the reduction in contract price will be to reduce the promotional advice and information services in the community and offer less professional training, have greater presence online and maintain targeted work with those in greatest need.

Costed plans and service remodelling will need to be agreed and commissioners will work with the provider to minimise the effect on service users.

As services are in their fourth year, SASH has a footprint in the borough, so promotion of services can be refined.

The proposal to reconfigure this service will have a neutral equalities impact. The contract variation proposals will be limited to universal services and training and do not affect targeted work. Advice and information will be available online.

Children's Services Savings Proposals

1 – Care Leavers Accommodation Programme - £400,000

This programme aims to increase supply of local quality housing provision for care leavers. This proposal will enable H&F's care leavers to be placed locally with

greater access to local services and opportunities. This includes allocated social workers, family and support networks. It is therefore believed that this proposal will have a neutral impact as the savings proposals will not see a reduction in services levels and support will continue to be provided to vulnerable children.

2 – Disabled Children Care packages, direct payments and residential placements - £268,000

Savings will be delivered from the overall Disabled Children's Team Short Breaks budget which funds a combination of care packages, direct payments and residential placements for disabled children in Hammersmith & Fulham who are assessed as eligible for support either through assessment under the Children Act 1989 as Children in Need or through assessment under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 as being eligible for short breaks. The proposals will deliver savings through:

- Co-production with parents and carers of a transparent resource allocation process
- Recouping of unused direct payment balances in line with Direct Payment Policy
- Direct payments and care packages increased where necessary to prevent children becoming Looked After Children
- A new community behaviour outreach service
- Improved joint funding CCG and across High Needs Block expenditure

Service developments will deliver improved services which will ensure that support is available for disabled children and their families as required, further improved use of local services and development of new services such as the behaviour outreach service will see improved outcomes.

Development of the co-produced eligibility and resource allocation system is ongoing and will not be launched until parents are satisfied that it is fair and equitable, this system will be reviewed from a legal perspective to ensure that the process is appropriate. It is not the intention of this proposal to reduce services to any child, rather it will provide a clear guide to eligibility.

These proposals will have a neutral impact on those with protected characteristics because while the services in question are delivered for disabled children who clearly have protected characteristics, none of the actions will deliver cuts in services to either the group as a whole or to any individual child.

3 – Children & adolescent mental health services (CAHMS) and Wrap around - £80,000

This proposal will bring inhouse the Parental Therapy Programme service to be provided from within Children and Young People's Services by Hammersmith & Fulham's Clinical Team.

The service offers brief or time limited systemic psychotherapy to parents, carers and their families to address safeguarding concerns and reduce the impact of parental mental health on children and young people.

Based on the low number of referrals to the service there is an opportunity to absorb this function effectively within Hammersmith & Fulham's Clinical Team.

Benefits of this change to an in-house model include:

- Improved and increased direct therapeutic work with parents of children and young people in need of support to manage safeguarding related risk.
- Increased system wide understanding of effective approaches to engaging vulnerable families with the aim of supporting families to stay together.
- Increased engagement of parents in specialist treatment and support services which is more likely to lead to reduced number of children on a child protection plan due to parental mental health, domestic violence or substance misuse.
- Improved support to professionals to understand parental mental health and plan effectively to reduce safeguarding concerns.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

Children's Services Investment Proposals

4 - Travel care and support – expenditure in education and health care plans (EHCPs) travel related costs £700,000

Budget growth is requested to reflect the increased demand of children and young people accessing travel care and support services. It is believed that this proposal has a neutral impact on those with protected characteristics because the budget provides investment to ensure the needs of Hammersmith and Fulham children and young people are met to the same high standards of service provision in line with statutory requirements.

5 - The Haven £310,000

The investment in The Haven consolidates and supports a change in the business model which has enabled children with complex disabilities who need to be accommodated (Looked After) to remain living in Hammersmith and Fulham, having regular contact with families and remaining at their local special schools. This forms an expansion of the Local Offer for Disabled Children in Hammersmith and Fulham.

This proposal has a positive equalities impact.

6 - Client related non placement costs - £305,000

Costs related to sections 17 and 23 support for children and families have exceeded budget for the past two years due to increased demand. Section 17 expenditure is cost related to supporting children and families to remain safely living together in the

community. It includes support for subsistence, essential items, living costs, family support workers, etc. to support children's wellbeing, keep them safe and reduce escalation of need and likely entry into care. Section 23 expenditure is cost related to supporting children looked after. This includes transport to school and appointments, contact escorts, setting up home allowances, subsistence payments etc. Transport related cost constitute the biggest spend.

It is believed that the proposal to increase this budget has a positive impact on those with protected characteristics as the proposals are in line with the business as usual functions of the department to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within the area who are in need; and to promote their upbringing by their families, by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs. The proposals will continue to ensure that the financial or cost related support given to children and families are purposeful and meet an identified need. An assessment will determine the need for support and the particular support identified as essential to meet the needs of the child and/or prevent the child from suffering significant harm. The assessment will take into account any protected characteristics of a child or family to ensure that they are not negatively affected, and an allocated worker will usually be involved with the family to ensure that the support is based on assessed need and its effectiveness is reviewed.

It is believed that this proposal has a positive impact

7 - Legal Services Investment £300k

Investment in legal support to continue to fulfil statutory responsibilities in the delivery of services. A high proportion of care proceedings resulted in Supervision Orders in 2019/20. Legal expenditure ensures that those children most at risk are protected in the long term through court orders which provide them with security and stability.

There is a neutral equalities impact because the decision to take court action is led by need; court action will be taken for any child suffering or likely to suffer significant harm where no other intervention can provide the necessary protection.

Resources savings and change proposals

1 - Digital services operational costs review - £100,000

This proposal aims to identify additional operational savings from reducing further demand for support/reduction in devices.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact as it focusses on managing service demand relating to back office staff and functions and has no impact on residents.

2, 3,4 & 6 - Digital services contracts review - £275,000

This proposal focusses on managing and procuring contracts more effectively and realising efficiencies relating to back office staff and functions.

A systematic review of all line of business application contracts used throughout the council with the aim of reducing cost through renegotiation (£100,000), decommissioning data centres (£75,000), plus a reduction in printing volumes (£40,000) and re-procurement of the printing contract in line with the new ways of working and corporate accommodation strategy (£60,000).

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact as it focuses on managing and procuring contracts more effectively and efficiencies relating to back office staff and functions. As such there are no adverse equality implications for any particular groups, residents and employees alike, with protected characteristics.

45- Restructure of procurement service - £82,000

Savings will be secured using vacancies arising from staff turnover where posts have been deleted.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact as there are no direct impact on residents or employees as a result of the proposals.

Finance – savings and change proposals

1 - Departmental restructure and review - £400,000

Savings will be generated from the use of vacancies arising from staff turnover, reviewing functions and processes to improve productivity and automation.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact as it is not expected that there will be any compulsory redundancies or any direct impact on any residents or employees. Where there are staff changes leading to savings, Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out as part of the reorganisation process.

2 – Reduction in internal audit contract costs - £50,000

Better use of current contract provision for internal audit.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact as the reduction of audit budgets has no direct impact on residents or employees.

Finance Investment Proposal

3 – Corporate Business Intelligence

Investment of £100,000 in the business Intelligence service to deliver further savings by correctly identifying residents in receipt of single person discounts and other savings initiatives.

The investment will have a positive impact through the generation of additional income that supports council services.

Economy savings

1 - Business Rates challenge (Growth service) - £36,000

A number of properties where the Council owns the lease are no longer occupied by the Council and therefore no National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) is payable. This proposal is a one-off saving as these properties may come back to the Council next year.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

2 – Review of Senior Management (Economic Development) - £104,000

This proposal is a staffing change that is part of a wider refocusing of Economic Development which will have a positive equalities impact. Activity will support Hammersmith & Fulham's inclusive economy objectives and offers help for residents that are furthest from the labour market. Specific measures will be delivered supporting disabled residents, Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) residents, Special Education Needs (SEND) and those with learning disabilities. Targeted interventions are also planned for young people and older residents. Alongside this, there will be specific activity to support local businesses in the borough.

3 – Reduction in the use of temporary accommodation - £196,000

The proposal will increase access to longer term accommodation in the private rented sector and reduce temporary accommodation use.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

4 – Consolidation of management & workforce and reduction in the use of agency staff (Housing Management) - £100,000

This proposal and subsequent restructure will reduce agency staff and enable overall staffing. This is the beginning of a phased savings delivery programme.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

5 - Review of senior management and business support (Direct Delivery) - £9,000

This proposal delivers staffing efficiencies.

This proposal has neutral equalities impact.

6 - Income/Debt avoidance: deposit system on all new leases (Growth service) – £25,000

This proposal will reduce the likelihood of irrecoverable debt through better debt management.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

7 - Commercialisation of Planning Fees (Planning) - £350,000

This proposal refers to a review of planning fees and charges which focusses on developing a commercial approach to charging developers and includes a proposal to implement charging for the duty planner service.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

8 – Expansion of Design Review Panel (Planning) - £20,000

This proposal refers to an increased scope of service and fee for that expertise realised in our Design & Review Panel.

The proposal is expected to have a neutral impact on those with protected characteristics.

9 Service restructure and review (Facilities Management) - £263,000

This proposal refers to a restructure which includes a reduction in senior management costs. Savings will be generated from vacancies and reviewing functions and processes to improve productivity. It is not expected that there will be a direct impact on any residents or employees. Where there are staff changes leading to savings, Equality Impact Assessments are carried out as part of the reorganisation process.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

Environment Savings

1 – Re-alignment of the Reactive Footway Repair Service - £150,000

This proposal will use the capital budget to complete more focused planned maintenance by resurfacing on the worst section of footways.

This would mean increased capital investment, which could be funded through borrowing (low interest rates currently) and proper phasing for reducing revenue spend, as it will take time to undertake the required works.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

2 – Special Projects & Highways Service Structure Review - £150,000

This is a new integrated proposed team structure.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

3 - New Leisure Contract - £101,000

This is an uplift in an existing saving from 2020/21 in respect of increased management fee income from the new Leisure Contract. Capital investment in the sports facilities at Lillie Road Fitness Centre and Phoenix Leisure Centre is expected to increase use of the facilities and therefore increase the amount of income generated by the contractor (of which the council gets a share).

This proposal requires a one-off investment of £1,500,000 which is funded through the capital programme. The facilities are public leisure facilities available for all to use (charged for at the point of use).

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

4 - Intelligent Street Lighting Energy Management - £79,000

This is an uplift from an existing saving in 2020/21. This proposal is to install sensors on street lighting (streetlamps, illuminated signs and bollards) in order to remotely control hours and levels of illumination. Requires circa £1,100,000 of one-off investment which is allowed for within the capital programme.

Levels of illumination are driven by the needs of the wider public (i.e. in accordance with levels of natural daylight).

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

5 – Cease Inform 360 Contract – Netcall Solution - £71,000

This proposal is to cease the Inform 360 contract as it is now included in Net Call requirements post insourcing. These are part of the corporate contract. The contract ended in October 2020.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact

6 New structure for Technical Support Team - £56,000

Structure change can be achieved through recruitment freeze and structural changes (including voluntary redundancies, if necessary).

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

7 – Reduction in Maintenance of Assets - £40,000

Some of our public square assets are only available for a limited time as the space is now used more for events and markets. The proposal is to reduce maintenance costs in light of this.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

8 - Maximise Pest Control Income - £35,000

This is an uplift in a saving brought forward in 2020/21. The Pest Control service is a paid for service available to the wider public and businesses. The saving relates to an additional income target. Provision of the service does not vary according to any particular group with protected characteristics.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

9 Introduce differential charges for commercially led Land search enquiries and S106 agreements - £17,000.

This proposal increases the search fee enquiries that are requested by Developers and other commercial parties to assess development opportunities or to update their investment portfolio information.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact and implications from proposals by Developers will be assessed as part of the Planning approval process.

10 Parking £400,000

This is based on changes to the target operating model and more efficient working.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

Summary on impact on the budget

Social Care & Public Health

The 2021/22 proposals are detailed in this report. The proposals generally centre around promoting independence, early intervention and bringing together contracts to reduce management costs. These will be achieved without any anticipated adverse impact on people who use the services. All of the proposals therefore have a neutral equalities impact.

Children's Services

The savings proposals for these vital services to vulnerable children and young people will be delivered through promoting greater independence, more access to support within the community and increasing the number of in-borough placements. Together with a bigger emphasis on recoupment of unused direct payment balances, these proposals will realise cost savings whilst ensuring a neutral equalities impact.

The requests for growth funding are primarily to align budgets with the demand led growth in numbers that services are experiencing. These proposals will ensure that

we continue to achieve a neutral equalities impact for these children and young people.

Resources

The efficiencies proposed are contract related or staffing. A review of all services will be conducted to inform the savings. A neutral equalities impact is anticipated.

Finance

The majority of savings from this department relate back office staff and functions and managing and procuring contracts more effectively. As such there are no adverse equality implications for any particular groups, residents and employees alike, with protected characteristics. Where proposals affect staff, more detailed impact assessment will follow in line with the HR policy and procedure.

Economy

Key elements of the savings proposals from this department are associated with the Commercialisation of Planning Fees, discharge of a main housing duty in the private rented sector and reviews of staffing and senior management in Facilities Management and Economic Development.

Environment

Savings will be realised through continued saving (identified in 2020/21): energy management via intelligent street lighting (investment to save); more income anticipated from the new Leisure contract (increase in the council's share following capital investment into facilities); and maximising income from Pest Control services.

Savings will also be realised through new initiatives: reduced revenue maintenance costs; Ceasing the inform 360 Contract to eliminate duplication; and introduction of differential Land charges (commercially led).

These proposals are expected to result in a neutral equalities impact.

Conclusion

Overall, these collective budget proposals are likely to result in a neutral impact on groups with protected characteristics, under the Equality Act 2010.

Council departments that have outlined efficiencies around staffing, these are centred around residents not experiencing any decline in services. They are anticipated to be realised through 'natural wastage' and the reduction in agency staff, avoiding compulsory redundancies. For any proposed restructure, an Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the reorganisation process.

As proposals are developed further, the assessment to date will be built upon and the impact will be assessed further and any mitigating measures identified, where appropriate, to prevent unreasonable impacts on any groups with protected characteristics.