

Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) 2022/23

Overview and summary

The purpose of this EIA is to assess the main items in the budget proposed to Full Council on 24th February 2022.

For 2022/23, a balanced budget is proposed based on various growth areas, savings, grants, fees and reserves. As part of the budget, the Council proposes to freeze Council Tax and not apply the government modelled 1% increase in the Adult Social Care Precept. Further information is set out in the main budget 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 of 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 Adult Social Care precept proposals and, secondly, at the budget on which that decision is based. Initial EIAs have been undertaken of all the proposals at this stage, with a full EIA undertaken for those where potential adverse impact on groups that share protected characteristics have been identified. EIA is an ongoing process and further assessment will be undertaken of policy decisions as appropriate. This will happen throughout 2022/23 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 considered 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

Analysis of the impact of Council Tax remaining at current level

It is proposed that Council Tax remains at its current level for 2022/23 which means that there is no new impact resulting from the setting of Council Tax for this budgetary year, either positive or negative. The maximum amount the Council could increase Council Tax, before requiring a compulsory referenda on a Council Tax increase is 2% as modelled by the government in its core spending power calculation. Were the maximum increase of 2% applied this would raise income of £1.37m for Hammersmith & Fulham.

In addition, the government has modelled setting a precept to fund Social Care for Adults of 1% in 2022/23. Hammersmith & Fulham do not propose to apply an increase in relation to this precept in 2022/23. Were the maximum increase of 1% applied this would raise income of £0.685m for Hammersmith & Fulham.

People who use Adult Social Care (ASC) services comprise of individuals with physical support, learning disability and mental health needs and their carers. Based on the latest population data, 20% of the Borough population have a long-term health condition or disability and 10% of the population are aged 65 or over.

Data from Short- and Long-Term Care (SALT) returns shows that 39% of those receiving long term services at end of March 2019 were in the 18-64 age range and 61% were aged 65 or over. The corresponding figures for those receiving short term services were 21% and 79%. Across both long-term and short-term services, 37% of customers were aged 18-64 and 63% aged 65+.

70% of carers assessed by the Council are female carers (compared to 51% of the population as a whole), so carers are disproportionately more likely to be female. For ASC residential and nursing placements and for community-based services, 37% of customers are from Black, Asian, mixed or other ethnic groups, 53% of customers are White and 10% remain unclassified. This is based on published information in the SALT return. In contrast, data from the 2011 Census indicates that the proportion of Black, Asian, mixed or other ethnic groups in the Borough population as a whole was 32%, so these groups are marginally over-represented among service users (as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups tend to have poorer health than those from White groups, after accounting for age differences). Given that the provision of ASC services in general promotes equity of opportunity for these groups, a decision not to use the social care precept is potentially a decision to forego a chance to promote equality of opportunity for these groups and/or a decision not to avoid a negative impact on these groups.

However, the equality impact assessment of the currently proposed ASC budget, later in this document, shows that the savings that it is proposed to make from the social care services budget are unlikely to have any significant adverse impact on any individual service user or carer and the Council will continue to meet its statutory duties on the basis of the current budget. The additional £0.685m which could be raised through the social care precept is not therefore necessary to address any significant adverse impact of the present ASC budget since no such impact has been identified. ASC's proposed budget also incorporates growth totalling £5.204m. which is assessed, below, to have positive impacts, and is achievable without the need to use the social care precept.

An additional £0.685m income could, though, be used for: (i) providing further additional discretionary ASC services; and/or (ii) meeting any non-anticipated ASC budget pressures and managing risks arising from the Covid-19 pandemic e.g., if demand for social care services is greater than expected in any area. Of those, option (i) would be capable of contributing further to the promotion of equality of opportunity for some users of ASC services and their carers. Option (ii) might also have such an effect, though if there were a shortfall in the Council's provision of services to meet its statutory duties, the Council would in any event need to find that

money from reserves or savings elsewhere if there were insufficient money in the social care budget.

The Council must give due weight to these impacts when determining Council Tax and the budget for 2022/23. The Council will need to balance the impact of not using the funds raised through the Adult Social Care Precept against the wider benefits of not raising Council Tax or implementing the Adult Social Care Precept this year.

In considering this decision, the Council will also need to consider what the equalities impact would be before introducing any Adult Social Care Precept of 1%. Previous analysis¹ concluded: those who are eligible for full Local Council Tax Support ("LCTS") would not be affected:

- those who are not eligible for LCTS would bear the bulk of the increase (likely to amount to about £8.32 per year for a Band D Council Taxpayer).
- those who are eligible for partial LCTS would bear a smaller increase.

The group that will be most significantly affected by any increase in Council Tax and/or the introduction of the Adult Social Care Precept will be those with low incomes that are just above the threshold for LCTS or who qualify for partial LCTS for whom the increase will represent a larger proportion of their disposable income. No specific data is held for this group, but the profile is likely to be similar to that of those who are eligible for LCTS. Of the 14,014 LCTS claimants, approximately 61% are female (higher than the proportion of females in the borough population, which was 51.3% according to the 2011 Census). Pensioners are also disproportionately represented (34% of LCTS claimants, but only 10% 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 will be disproportionately represented in the affected group. Any children present in such households may be indirectly affected by the decrease in household income. Further, in line with social trends, there is likely to be a group of pensioners who are asset rich but cash poor who occupy some of the more expensive properties in the borough and will thus be subject to a greater negative financial impact as a proportion of their disposable income. For example, a 1% increase on a property banded at G would result in an increase of £13.87 per year.

As such, introducing the social care precept by 1% would likely have a disproportionate negative impact on older people, women, disabled people, ethnic minority groups and (indirectly) on children. The Council will need to weigh this negative impact against the potential positive impact of raising an additional £0.685m.

¹ 2015/16 Budget

Social Care Savings Proposals

1. Continuous improvement of support - savings proposals of £0.8m

This proposal will have a positive impact on those with protected characteristics as the proposal focuses on reviewing community support and ensuring the right support is provided and building on work undertaken in this financial year.

Improvement of support will be achieved by enhancing access to the appropriate care at the right time, as well as challenging and reassessing NHS Continuing Health Care to ensure that where residents need health care it is provided by the NHS. Residents will be supported in regaining or maintaining independence by redesigning reablement services and making use of digital technology to assist in accessing our range of services. Additionally, we will procure quality, good value for money, care and support.

Finally, we will ensure engagement with residents effectively by developing a Health and Wellbeing Strategy and by continuing to co-produce our Living Independently webpage.

This proposal has various EIA characteristics:

Hospital discharge characteristics will ensure health services are provided where needed through NHS Continuing Health Care funding. This will improve the rehabilitation and reablement provided following hospital discharge, so people regain their independence as soon as possible.

Value for Money characteristics will ensure negotiation across markets.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Independent Living webpage will identify and mitigate any wider inequalities and learning from Covid-19. This will be co-produced with residents.

2. Improve access to and support provided from our front door- savings proposal of £0.7m

This proposal will have a positive impact on those with protected characteristics.

We will improve access to, and support provided from our front of house by building on the success of the work of Conversation Matters (preventative support). Additionally, we will improve access to services/support and information for residents and make better use of digital technology. Through a review with NHS colleagues we will improve the hospital discharge pathway into the community. Finally, we will ensure the inclusion of specialist services in the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) via the co-location of agencies (the police and mental health to begin with) to respond to safeguarding concerns in a more informed and responsive way by sharing information quickly.

This proposal has the following EIA characteristics:

The Conversation Matters programme has seen early positive engagement with residents from all protected characteristics, picking areas for improvement feeding into ongoing engagement and coproduction activity.

The Council's use of digital technology to enhance independent living/widen access for residents through use of the web based digital portal alongside other channels leads to greater empowerment of residents.

Improvement of the hospital discharge pathway will help to ensure those with protected characteristics have equal access at the right time to health care.

The MASH inclusion of specialist services will improve the timely response to safeguarding concerns by all agencies involved.

The earlier involvement of occupational therapists and skilled practitioners will avoid more intensive interventions later.

Social Care investment and Covid-19

3. Demographic pressures in social care – £1.326m

The Social Care budget is under severe pressure due to an ageing population and 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 the Council may not increase significantly, the cost of care packages will increase reflecting more complex needs, including supporting individual in their own homes. For Hammersmith & Fulham demographic pressures relating to the increased numbers of older and disabled people requiring Social Care are forecast to be an average of 1.79% increase over the period 2021 to 2025 which equates in monetary terms to a cumulative total of £5.558m over this period.

4. People with Learning Disabilities (LD) transitioning to adult social care - £0.411m

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
- 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
- Increasing numbers of care packages/direct payments against LD budget for those not meeting LD but having assessed needs relating to their autism.

For one-year £0.411m will have to fund 11 new residents.

5. Hospital discharges - £1.824m

Patients discharged from hospital since 19 March 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, we have increasing costs and acuity as discharges made from hospital into health settings are reassessed into the social care market. The financial consequences are likely to be more significant in 2022/23 with a full year impact estimated at £1.824m.

6. Mental Health associated with Long Covid - £0.143m

Social Care is anticipating an increase in the demand for people with mental health issues from Long Covid. Studies have shown that about one in four people who experience Long Covid could develop a mental health and additional care needs. Long Covid might affect things like a person's quality of life or ability to work.

Public Health Savings and Investment Proposals

7. Children and Families reframe and redesign of 0-19 Public Health Nursing Services- Proposed Savings £0.12m

Savings will come from better procurement of the 0-19 healthy child programme. The savings proposed are contractual, generating efficiencies without affecting health 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 will have a positive equalities impact.

8. Behaviour change reframe and redesign support - proposed savings £0.05m

This proposal will have a neutral impact on those with protected characteristics as health checks will continue to be provided to all residents aged 40+ years meeting the mandatory requirement for this offer.

We have good take up of health checks in the borough compared to other boroughs in London. The comparative price is the only element being reviewed following benchmarking.

9. Public Health reinvestment - proposed reinvestment £0.17m

The proposal, given the ongoing pandemic, is to reinvest all the proposed savings from Public Health into supporting residents around food poverty, health inequalities and substance misuse. This proposal will have a positive impact as the resources are re-invested back into the various services.

Children's Services Savings Proposals

10. Placement sufficiency, continuation of improved processes for Semi-Independent Living through clear pathways and improved use of in borough provision - £0.341m

A. Care Leavers' Accommodation – Semi-independent living procurement

The Care Leaver Accommodation project aim is to increase the supply of local semi-independent living accommodation for young people leaving care. The key objectives of the project are to reduce expenditure pressures within Children's Services, where placements for young people through framework or spot purchasing are significantly higher than locally commissioned provision, whilst simultaneously improving outcomes for young people through quality semi-independent living provision and closer links to family and community support networks.

This proposal will have a positive impact on groups that share protected characteristics for the following reasons:

- The strategy is to recommission, by way of a competitive procurement exercise, all semi-independent living services for young people at risk of becoming homeless, at risk of entering the care system and care leavers across Hammersmith & Fulham. A tendering process will commence which will enable the Council to ensure it is receiving best value and competitive rates for this provision.
- This decision significantly contributes towards the Council's placement sufficiency program which will enable more of our vulnerable young people to be placed locally with greater access to family and local support networks including health and education services.
- The procurement will deliver efficiencies through increasing capacity of in borough placements and therefore reduce the need to place in higher cost out of borough spot purchase placements.
- The newly commissioned services will both improve the quality of services and offer a person-centered approach leading to positive outcomes for our children and young people.

B. Careplace maximisation

This proposal relates to improved use of the Commissioning Alliance dynamic purchasing procurement systems for residential, independent fostering agency and semi-independent living placements by searching and placing through the

online Careplace system where greater competition and more competitive placement rates are offered.

This proposal will have a neutral impact on groups that share protected characteristics for the following reasons:

- The proposals relate to improved use of the Careplace Placement system which is hosted by Ealing Council on behalf of the Commissioning Alliance and its membership boroughs. The system offers a range of benefits over spot purchasing or framework placements. Each placement category listed on the Careplace system are part of a dynamic purchasing procurement system which allows providers to leave or join at any point throughout the system's lifetime. The placement categories are independent fostering agencies, residential children's homes, special education needs and residential school placements.
- There is a wider selection of providers on these systems and more competitive rates. Improved use of this system will provide reassurance to wider department that providers being commissioned to look after our children have undergone a series of safeguarding and compliance checks. This will reduce the need to place with spot purchase and sometime unknown organisations.

11. Social, Emotional and Mental Health Review - joint funding arrangements with Health partners for Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for Looked After Children (LAC) - £0.092m

This relates to a proposed contribution from the Health Service with respect to the provision of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services for Looked After Children.

It is believed that this proposal has a neutral impact on groups that share protected characteristics for the following reasons:

- There is no proposal to change the overall funding envelope for the service. The saving will be achieved by increasing the contribution paid by NHS organisations, while decreasing the relative portion paid for by the Local Authority.
- Overall, the service will not be negatively financially impacted, and there will not be any loss of delivery.

The service continues to have a positive impact on looked after children, and in particular those with mental health conditions.

12. Client and Placement Related Support - Improvement of processes to enable more effective and targeted interventions to support young people - £0.1m

Cost related to sections 17 and 23 support for children and families:

- Section 17 expenditure relates 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 relates 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.

This proposal will have a positive impact on groups that share protected characteristics for the reasons outlined above and below:

- 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 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 the support identified as essential to meet the needs of the child and/or prevent the child from suffering significant harm. The assessment will consider any protected characteristics of a child and/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 will also ensure that families make use of community provision e.g. food banks, free nursery places to meet that need where appropriate and will ensure support and guidance regarding benefits support and accessing work.

Children's Services Investment Proposals

13. Investment in Fostering and Adoption Services - £0.345m

- Shared Services Fostering Recharge – Investment following activity-based review within the Shared Service
- West London Regional Adoption – Investment following activity-based review within the agreement

This proposal will have a neutral impact on groups that share protected characteristics for the following reasons:

- In 2022/23 growth has been requested to manage activity and demand led pressures in front line service provision within the shared fostering and regional adoption services. This budget growth is to manage activity led workloads and not as a result of any proposed service change.
- Increased local provision will benefit young people in Hammersmith & Fulham to be placed in quality foster carers and more locally.

- With respect to adoption, this will enable us to recruit an increased and diverse pool of skilled adopters to meet the varied needs of children. This will also enable us to improve the quality and timeliness of permanence arrangements for young people.

14. Investment in Travel Care & Support - £0.169m

Budget growth is requested to reflect the increased demand of children and young people accessing travel assistance services.

Officers have assessed that the proposed budget growth will have a positive impact on protected groups, allowing the Council to respond to growing demands and meet its obligations under published travel care policies.

Environment Savings Proposals

15. Improved resident experience and access through increased use of technology - £0.417m

This saving will be delivered by the Resident Experience and Access Programme (REAP); a programme that will transform the way residents interact with the Council by centralising customer contact and maximising our use of technology. REAP will ensure all services are fully accessible via digital channels and introduce efficient processes. This means greater efficiency and vital financial savings are possible.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact. Additional equality impact assessments will be undertaken for REAP programmes/projects to ascertain the potential impact on groups that share protected characteristics and to ensure services are accessible and do not digitally exclude any groups.

16. Review of Environment workforce - £0.5m

A review of the Environment workforce and rationalisation of posts is expected to reduce staffing costs. This saving will be delivered through a combination of recruitment freeze and structural changes. The resulting changes to the workforce will not impact frontline services.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact. An equality impact assessment will be undertaken as part of any staff structural changes

17. Review of commercial charges - £0.2m

This saving will be delivered through a review of commercial income across the Environment department. Charges do not vary according to any particular group with protected characteristics.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

18. Increased Leisure Contract Income - £0.067m

This is a year on year increase of an existing saving carried forward from 2019/20 (cumulative budgetary saving of £500,000 to 2022/23).

The current leisure contract has secured better income terms following Council investment in improved facilities at Lillie Road Fitness Centre and Phoenix Leisure Centre. This is expected to increase use of the facilities and therefore increase the amount of income able to be generated by the contractor (of which the Council gets a share). These facilities are public leisure facilities, available for all to use (charged for at the point of use). As such, there is a neutral impact on those with protected characteristics.

This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

Environment Investment and Covid-19 Recovery**19. Reducing Violence Against Women and Girls - £0.1m**

This is increased investment in reducing violence against women and girls. This will have a positive impact on victims of such crime. It does impact on groups that share protected characteristics (mainly gender) and therefore has a positive equalities impact.

20. Ending Modern Slavery and Exploitation - £0.085m

This is increased investment in ending modern slavery and exploitation. This will have a positive impact on victims of such crime. It does impact on groups that share protected characteristics (mainly race) and therefore has a positive equalities impact.

21. Building Control Income - £0.05m

This is the alignment of budgets with actual demand for the statutory and chargeable parts of the service. Building Control is a chargeable service, available for all to use (charged for at the point of use). As such, there is a neutral impact on those with protected characteristics.

22. Public Realm Community Safety Improvements - £0.06m

This is increased investment to redesign public realm areas to reduce the potential for crime. This will have a positive impact on victims of crime as well as on groups that share protected characteristics such as disability, age, gender and pregnancy and maternity.

23. Highways Flood Management - £0.175m

This is increased investment in flood mitigation measures. This will have a positive impact on those affected by flooding in the borough and groups that share protected characteristics, in particular those living in disadvantaged areas.

24. Highways Winter Maintenance - £0.1m

This is the alignment of budgets with the actual cost of highways winter maintenance. This will allow for the continuation of existing maintenance and continue to have a positive impact on the public realm for all, but it does not impact any particular group with protected characteristics and therefore has a neutral equalities impact.

25. Waste Processing Costs - £0.06m

This is increased spend on the processing of household recyclate, due to increased processing costs. This service is provided to all residents. It does not impact any particular group with protected characteristics and therefore has a neutral equalities impact.

26. Covid Related Income Losses - £0.248m

This is to temporarily reduce income budgets for those commercial services most adversely affected by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. This does not affect the services provided or their fees and charges. The proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

The Economy Savings Proposals

27. Consolidation of management and workforce and reduction in the use of agency staff (Housing Solutions) - £0.2m

This proposal and subsequent restructure will reduce agency staff and enable overall staffing. This is the final year of a phased three-year savings delivery programme. The proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

28. Review of Section 106 funding of Economic Development workforce costs - £0.035m

This proposal relates to a change in the funding source for part of the Assistant Director post from General Fund to Section 106 in accordance with the duties carried out by this post. The proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

The Economy Investment and Covid recovery

29. Planning Fee Income - £0.35m

Funding is provided to offset an underlying shortfall in forecast planning income. This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

30. Planning Fee Income – Covid-19 Impact - £0.3m

Funding is provided to offset the potential loss of income arising from the Covid-19 pandemic and economic downturn. This proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

Corporate savings and change proposals

31. Digital Services contracts review £0.45m

The proposals focus on realising efficiencies related to back office staff and functions. Savings will be delivered through the migration of infrastructure services to cloud hosting platforms (£300k) and the re-procurement of the printing contract in line with the new ways of working and corporate accommodation strategy (£150k).

It is believed that this proposal has a neutral impact on those with protected characteristics as the proposal focuses on managing and procuring contracts more effectively and efficiencies relating to back office staff and functions. As such there is a neutral impact for any groups, residents and/or employees alike, who share protected characteristics.

32. Balance Sheet Review £0.45m

The saving will be delivered as a result of managing debt management costs and working capital neither of which directly impacts any specific services used by residents. It is expected that there will be a neutral impact on residents and employees as a result of this saving.

33. Workforce Effectiveness and Efficiency £0.329m

Savings will be secured using vacancies arising from staff turnover - with some posts being deleted whilst others are replaced with lower graded posts. There will not be any compulsory redundancies.

Where there are staff changes leading to savings, Equality Impact Assessments are carried out as part of the reorganisation process.

The proposal has a neutral equalities impact.

Corporate Investment and Covid Recovery

34. Digital Advertising Income £0.09m

This proposal relates to income receivable by the Council and has a neutral equalities impact

35. Remote Working Support Costs £0.035m

The investment requested reflects increased demand for laptop devices across the Council since February 2019, and the associated increase in 3rd party support costs for the incremental increase in devices.

It is expected that there will be a neutral equalities impact on residents and employees as a result.

36. Boundary Commission Review £0.036m

This proposal has a positive impact on those with protected characteristics as improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents; ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity and providing arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

37. Workforce – additional support costs £0.05m

This is a minor budget realignment that will have a neutral equalities impact on residents and employees.

38. Recovery from global advertising slow down £0.130m

This proposal relates to income receivable by the Council and has a neutral equalities impact.

Summary on impact on the budget

Social Care & Public Health

The 2022/23 proposals are detailed in this report. The proposals generally centre around promoting independence and early intervention. These will be achieved

without any anticipated adverse impact on people who use the services. All of the proposals therefore have a neutral and/or positive 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 positive 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 positive equalities impact for these children and young people.

Economy

Key elements of the savings proposals from this department are associated with the reduction in use of agency staff, review of section 106 funding of Economic Development workforce costs. These proposals are expected to result in a neutral equalities impact.

Environment

Savings will be realised through increased use of technology, workforce review, and review of commercial charges. These proposals are expected to result in a neutral equalities impact.

Corporate

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, residents and employees who share protected characteristics. Where proposals affect staff, more detailed equality impact assessment will follow in line with the Human Resources policy and procedure.

Conclusion

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

Where Council departments have outlined efficiencies around staffing, residents will not experience any decline in services. Efficiencies 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 will be built upon, and the impact will be assessed further. Mitigating actions will be identified and implemented, to prevent negative impacts on groups that share protected characteristics.