

## **Draft Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) 2023/24**

### **Children's Services Savings Proposals**

**Early Intervention Services Review - A single commissioning process to ensure families receive the right service at the right time; to intervene early and prevent escalation - £0.700m**

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

- This procurement embeds the principle of the Early Intervention strategy to ensure every child, young person and family is happy, healthy and can thrive, supported by an effective community network.
- The approach adopts inclusion in its widest sense, including children and young people with SEND.
- The procurement aims to support families from pre-birth through the Child and Family support contract. There is also an expectation within the contract to support integration with health services including pre-natal support.

The procurement aims to address disproportionality and for services to be fully inclusive. Services commit to value and demonstrate respect for diversity, and to reach into communities to deliver support in the right way for all families to encourage greater engagement.

### **Children's Services Investment Proposals**

**Investment in Disabled Children's care packages - £0.350m**

A neutral equalities impact is expected as proposed budget growth ensures budget to meet assessed need and does not represent any change in service offered to young people.

**Investment in SEND quality assurance, data infrastructure, Education and Health Care Assessment functions and school improvement - £0.250m**

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

The proposal will enable better analysis of data in relation to SEND including the associated quality assurance monitoring of services and provision to ensure the continued delivery of high-quality services to children and young people with SEND, including those that share protected characteristics.

The proposal will improve the layers of support that we can provide within the education service and will benefit all children and young people with SEND, including those that share protected characteristics.

The proposal will improve access to services by strengthening the coordination of referrals and information that is available to parents/carers and education, health and social care partners across the local area in regard to what is expected to be ordinarily available.

### **Care leavers Hub - £0.077m**

The hub will act as a space where our care experienced young people can seek advice, support and guidance and be somewhere where they choose to spend time. It is believed that this proposal has a neutral impact on groups that share protected characteristics for the following reasons:

It is anticipated that there would be no impact in relation to the protected characteristics as the services will remain in place and under management by the Children's Social Work department.

Social workers will operate within the service and facilitate actions to support hard to reach groups.

### **Family Hubs - £0.060m**

Investment in Family Hubs to make it simpler for families to access a wide range of council services. It is believed that this proposal has a positive impact on groups that share protected characteristics for the following reasons:

Family Hubs are an integrated service model. Beyond being just a physical space, Family Hubs refer to a way of working which centres around service integration and inclusion in its widest sense. The aim is to support all children and young people from pre-birth to adulthood, and their families, through earlier intervention. Family Hubs act as a single point of access to help families navigate and receive the support they need when they need it, which may be wider than their initially presenting need.

### **Twinned municipalities - £0.060m**

Investment to act with our twinned municipalities to enrich and improve the lives of our residents by: Developing programmes for children and young people to share in sport competitions and artistic and cultural projects, and cooperating around youth mayors, youth parliaments and other democratic initiatives.

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**Investment into tackling education inequalities and digital exclusion in partnership with schools - £0.050m**

It is believed that this proposal has a positive impact on groups that share protected characteristics by supporting our schools to reduce education inequality which arose during the pandemic to narrow and erase the gap through a range of interventions, including additional tutoring and digital learning programmes as well as the coproduction and delivery of a Digital Inclusion Strategy with schools that will increase accessibility for those most impacted.

**Investment with respect to supporting young people with food - £1.750m**

The proposals focus on £1.200m of investment will ensure work can continue to feed children who need support outside of school term time, making sure they get two good, nutritious meals a day. Further investment of £0.550m in the free breakfast offer in primary Schools and free lunch offer in schools where this currently operates.

It is believed that this proposal has a neutral impact on groups that share protected characteristics as it represents a continuation of the offer provided over recent years.

**Summary on impact on the budget**

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 impact on groups that share protected characteristics.

The requests for growth funding are primarily to protect the borough's free school meals and 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 impact for these children and young people.