

EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)

POLICY/PROPOSAL:	Advocacy and Advice Commissioning Programme
DEPARTMENT:	Chief Executives Department
TEAM:	Partnerships and Engagement Team
LEAD OFFICER:	Julia Mlambo
DATE:	29 th of September

NB: Please ensure you have read the accompanying EA guidance and instructions in full.

SECTION A – INITIAL SCREENING

1. Please provide a description of the policy, proposal, change or initiative, and a summary its objectives and the intended results.

The proposal is a commissioning programme that will result in the recommissioning of all advice and advocacy contracts within the Partnerships and Engagement Team. The contracts are listed out below.

The aim of this programme is to enable the Council to take a strategic overview of what it commissions from the voluntary sector, and consider options for commissioning new advice capacity development and advocacy services in the context of gaps in service, the developing civic society agenda and the changing needs of Brent residents.

It also provides the opportunity to review the overall Strategy and Partnerships service commissioning budget and consider where efficiency savings might be made. It is planned for these savings to be minimal and should not have an impact on overall service provision.

The services which are being recommissioned include

- **Healthwatch Service** – a contract worth £150k a year which is currently held by Communitybarnet. Healthwatch is a statutory service which enables local residents to have an influence on health and social care services in their local area. This service will be recommissioned with an increased emphasis on engaging with underrepresented groups and supporting statutory partners to address health related racial and social inequalities in the borough.
- **Brent Advisory Partnership** - a contract worth £170,000 a year which is currently held by Brent CAB. This contract funds capacity building within the advice sector and also funds a specialist home based advice service. The plan is to discontinue this contract and reconfigure the spend to refocus investment on specialist service delivery and targeted capacity development to the organisations who most need it. No service provision will end as a result of this contract being discontinued.
- **Voluntary Infrastructure Contract** - which is worth £80,000 a year. This contract currently is held by Brent CVS, and provides capacity building support to voluntary and community sector organisations in the borough. It is planned to increase the

funding for this service from the reconfigured spend from the Brent Advice Partnership above. The aim is to tender out a contract worth £145,000.

- **Specialist and Generalist Advice** - is a contract that worth £440,000 a year. It is currently held by Citizen's Advice Brent. It provides a generalist and specialist advice service to Brent residents. The Children and Young People's Service funds £120k of that contract. This plan is to continue this service, with a refocus on targeted service provision directed at individuals who have the most need. There is a plan to make some small efficiency savings on this contract, however it will not make a difference to overall service delivery.
- **NHS Independent Complaints Advocacy Service** - £50,000 currently held by an organisation called Pohwer. This funds a service that provides advocacy for people who want to make a complaint about the NHS. This service is currently being commissioned in a consortia led by Southwark Council which comes to an end in March 2021. The aim is for the contract to be brought in house and aligned with the other adult advocacy services as part of the Gateway Service which includes three key adult advocacy **Independent Care Act Advocacy Service**, **Independent Mental Health Act Advocacy Service** and **Independent Mental Capacity Act Advocacy Service**

Therefore the proposed commissioning process will have five key objectives:

- i. Ensure that providers are facilitated to deliver their services in an outcome focussed way.
- ii. Develop new evidence based impact measures that clearly demonstrate the effectiveness of services.
- iii. Ensure that the new services are fit for purpose and able to address emerging needs e.g. the impact of COVID-19 and the need to address racial and other inequalities.
- iv. Implement efficiency savings in response to budget pressures.
- v. Work with stakeholders to ensure they have input into the development of the new service specifications.

2. Who may be affected by this policy or proposal?

The commissioning programme will potentially have an impact on all Brent residents but particularly those who access the services listed above – this is likely to be the more vulnerable residents in the borough who need to access services, such as the Advice Services provided by the CAB under the Specialist and General Advice Contract

Other stakeholders include statutory services such as NHS and Adult Social Care.

- Patients and users of Health and Social Care Services championed by the Healthwatch Service, people needing to make complaints to the NHS. Both these groups have include a higher proportion of people with disabilities.
- Older and disabled people could be disproportionately affected as they access these services in higher numbers.
- There may be some additional effects on women, some Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups and faith groups who are more likely to be in need of benefits and other advice. BAME groups and women access CAB services in disproportionate numbers.
- The CVS supports voluntary sector who often provide targeted support to smaller VCSE organisations work with Brent residents from protected groups.
- The Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy Service sees a higher proportion of people with disabilities and long term conditions.

3. Is there relevance to equality and the council's public sector equality duty? Please explain why. If your answer is no, you must still provide an explanation.

As a public sector body Brent Council has to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The contracts outlined in this paper are all designed to provide services for the most vulnerable residents in Brent therefore it is particularly important the Council ensures that people accessing them are treated fairly and services are fully inclusive.

4. Please indicate with an “X” the potential impact of the policy or proposal on groups with each protected characteristic. Carefully consider if the proposal will impact on people in different ways as a result of their characteristics.

Characteristic	IMPACT		
	Positive	Neutral/None	Negative
Age	X		
Sex	X		
Race	X		
Disability	X		
Sexual orientation	X		
Gender reassignment	X		
Religion or belief		X	
Pregnancy or maternity	X		
Marriage		X	

5. Please complete **each row** of the checklist with an “X”.

SCREENING CHECKLIST		
	YES	NO
Have you established that the policy or proposal <i>is</i> relevant to the council’s public sector equality duty?	X	
Does the policy or proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?	X	
Would the policy or proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?		x
Has the potential for negative or positive equality impacts been identified with this policy or proposal?	X	
If you have answered YES to ANY of the above, then proceed to section B. If you have answered NO to ALL of the above, then proceed straight to section D.		

SECTION B – IMPACTS ANALYSIS

1. Outline what information and evidence have you gathered and considered for this analysis. If there is little, then explain your judgements in detail and your plans to validate them with evidence. If you have monitoring information available, include it here.

The information for this EIA has come from the monitoring data provided by the services under the terms of their contracts.

We ask them to monitor the demography of the people who are accessing their services and in the case of the Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Contract, the types of organisations that they support. This is produced on a quarterly basis, and reviewed for quality at quarterly monitoring meetings.

2. For each “protected characteristic” provide details of all the potential or known impacts identified, both positive and negative, and explain how you have reached these conclusions based on the information and evidence listed above. Where appropriate state “not applicable”.

AGE	
Details of impacts identified	This proposal should have a positive effect on age in the borough. The proposed commissioning programme should mean that services will be more efficient and targeted towards those who need them most. A key part of the service specification that all bidders will have to answer is how they will provide services for underserved and hard to reach groups. In addition, the Advice and Guidance contract will include targeted provision to support people who need a home based service, which benefits older people in the borough
DISABILITY	
Details of impacts identified	The Brent Advice and Guidance contract will include targeted provision to support people who need a home based service, which benefits people with disabilities.
RACE	
Details of impacts identified	The Healthwatch Service specification includes the requirement to support statutory services in addressing the overrepresentation of BAME people in COVID-19 deaths and other racial and other health related inequalities.
SEX	

Details of impacts identified	the Advice and Guidance contract provides a service for single parents funded by the Children and Young People's Directorate. This service is disproportionately accessed by young women. It is planned to continue this service, and improve how we monitor the service
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	
Details of impacts identified	There is limited data on the number of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) people accessing each services being commissioned, however all the new service specifications include requirements to monitor the number of LGBT people accessing their services and where suitable take additional actions to engage with them.
PREGANCY AND MATERNITY	
Details of impacts identified	the Advice and Guidance contract provides a service for single parents funded by the Children and Young People's Directorate. This service is disproportionately accessed by young women. It is planned to continue this service, and improve how we monitor it and ensure that it continues to be effectively targeted towards the most it is targeted towards the most vulnerable and in need.
RELIGION OR BELIEF	
Details of impacts identified	N/A
GENDER REASSIGNMENT	
Details of impacts identified	There is limited data on the number of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) people accessing each services being commissioned, however all the new service specifications include requirements to monitor the number of LGBT people accessing their services and where suitable take additional actions to engage with them.
MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	
Details of impacts identified	N/A

3. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010?

No

4. Were the participants in any engagement initiatives representative of the people who will be affected by your proposal and is further engagement required?

Yes, I have consulted with people with disabilities, and plan to survey people with a range of protected characteristics about future plans around advice provision. We will also be speaking to ...?

5. Please detail any areas identified as requiring further data or detailed analysis.

None

6. If, following your action plan, negative impacts will or may remain, please explain how these can be justified?

There should be no negative impacts following the action plan. If any remain these will be addressed through the contract management process.

7. Outline how you will monitor the actual, ongoing impact of the policy or proposal?

Through the contract monitoring process

SECTION C - CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis above, please detail your overall conclusions. State if any mitigating actions are required to alleviate negative impacts, what these are and what the desired outcomes will be. If positive equality impacts have been identified, consider what actions you can take to enhance them. If you have decided to justify and continue with the policy despite negative equality impacts, provide your justification. If you are to stop the policy, explain why.

There should be no negative impacts on equalities due to this proposal. The aim of the commissioning process is to develop services that are more responsive to the needs on the borough in particular those centered around addressing racial and other inequalities.

SECTION D – RESULT

<i>Please select one of the following options. Mark with an “X”.</i>		
A	CONTINUE WITH THE POLICY/PROPOSAL UNCHANGED	X
B	JUSTIFY AND CONTINUE THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
C	CHANGE / ADJUST THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
D	STOP OR ABANDON THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	

SECTION E - ACTION PLAN

This will help you monitor the steps you have identified to reduce the negative impacts (or increase the positive); monitor actual or ongoing impacts; plan reviews and any further engagement or analysis required.

Action	Expected outcome	Officer	Completion Date
Undertake a survey of advice provision to all stakeholders in the borough the aim will be to establish needs, understand any gaps in provision and receive feedback about ideas for future service development.	Improved understanding of advice and guidance needs in the borough. This will inform the development of the service specification to ensure any new provision appropriately addresses the needs of underserved groups.	Julia Mlambo	February 2021
Undertake a survey of the needs of voluntary and community organisations to get an understanding of their capacity development needs – with a particular focus on meeting the needs of BAME led groups and other groups that support people with protected characteristics.	Improved understanding of voluntary and community development needs in the borough. This will inform the development of the service specification to ensure any new provision appropriately addresses the needs of underserved groups.	Julia Mlambo	December 2020

SECTION F – SIGN OFF

Please ensure this section is signed and dated.

OFFICER:	Julia Mlambo
REVIEWING OFFICER:	Richard Harrington 6/10/20
HEAD OF SERVICE:	Pascoe Sawyers