

Appendix C (iv): Cumulative Equalities Assessment – Budget Proposals 2020/21 – 2021/22 and 2021/22 – 2022/23

1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Equality Impact Assessment is to provide an analysis of the likely impact of the budget savings proposals on residents and community groups with ‘protected characteristics’ as defined by the Equality Act 2010. The nine protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership¹, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity. Section 149, Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council in the exercise of its functions to have regard to the need to:

1. eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the act;
2. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
3. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Whilst not a statutory requirement, it is our policy that where relevant an equality analysis should also cover human rights and socio-economic equality implications.

The Council is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. It seeks to ensure that all residents, employees and stakeholders are treated fairly and receive appropriate, accessible services and fair and equal opportunities. This commitment requires that equality considerations play a key role in our decision making processes; and in understanding the effect of our policies and practices.

Approach to Considering Equalities

All the budget savings proposals have been subject to an initial Equality Impact Analysis (EIA) screening which helps to establish the relevance to the Council’s equalities duties and whether or not a full EIA is required. Guidance is issued to all officers on how to undertake an EIA and provides that full EIA’s will not be required if, through the initial screening, it is clearly demonstrated, for example that there will be no negative equality impacts. However, the council’s approach is that EIAs are living documents. Accordingly, even after

¹ Bullet point 2 and 3 does not apply to marriage and civil partnerships.

a screening has been undertaken as projects/proposals develop and further evidence of impacts becomes available, and any unforeseen impacts emerge, they should be reviewed and updated to reflect any changes.

A cumulative EIA was published on the equality implications of the 2019/2020 budget proposals, which were agreed at Full Council in February 2019.

Full Council agreed its business plans for 2020/21 in February 2019, and section 4 of the main budget report highlights key changes.

This document highlights the equality impacts for the budget proposals for 2020/21 and 2021/22 to 2022/23. Individual EIA screenings for each proposal and full Equality Analyses are attached.

10 saving proposals for 2020/21 and 20 saving proposals for 2021/22 to 2022/23 were identified as requiring full EIA's. The equality impacts for the budget proposals are summarised in this report.

The Council must carefully consider and have regard to the impact of its savings proposals on the PSED; and take a reasonable and proportionate view regarding the overall impact and seek to mitigate negative impacts where possible.

Overall Assessment

- A proportion of the savings:
 - may have a negative impact on equality of opportunity;
 - have the potential to result in indirect discrimination for some people with protected characteristics;
 - may have a negative impact on opportunities to promote good relations.
- The full EIA's have identified potential compounded impacts for the protected characteristics of age, disability, race, sex and to a lesser extent pregnancy and maternity.

However, these impacts will be kept under review and where possible mitigations have been identified to reduce the effect as set out below and in the individual savings descriptions.

In light of the above, the proposed budget saving proposals are considered reasonable and have shown due regard to the PSED.

2 Demography overview

Key facts about Brent's demographic profile are taken from the data sources [Population change in Brent](#) and the [Equality profile of Brent](#). They show how the borough is made up, helps us to identify potential impacts; and identifies the increasing pressures and demand for council services.

- Brent is home to around 335,300 residents and is the seventh largest borough in London.
- The borough has a population density of 7,652 people per square kilometre – the 14th highest density in England, and the highest in Outer London.
- Brent has high levels of population churn: in 2017-18, 32,600 people moved into the borough and 34,000 moved out – a turnover rate of 201 per 1000 population – 24th highest out of 317 areas in England, and second highest across Outer London.
- The Brent population increased by 27% between 1998-2018. In recent years, the borough's population change has been driven, primarily, by natural change (more births than deaths) as opposed to net migration. The birth rate has fallen over the year but remains well above the national average.
- Projections indicate that this pace of growth is set to continue: the population is expected to rise by a further 25% by 2041, faster than the London average (22%) and more than double the England average (10%). If realised, this would equate to an additional 84,800 residents by 2041.
- In line with national trends, the population is ageing: by 2041, the number of Brent residents aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 85% – an additional 34,900 older residents by 2041. The child population is also expected to grow, albeit more slowly, by 12% by 2041 (+8,600 children).
- Population growth will be concentrated in the areas where significant housing development is planned. The wards of Tokyngton and Alperton are expected to see the fastest growth: considered together, they are projected to accommodate an additional 47,600 residents by 2041.

A summary of the key protected characteristics in Brent are as follows:

Age

- Brent has a relatively young population. In 2018, the median age of the population was 35 in Brent, the same as in London, but five years lower than the national average (40 years, England). In Brent, 29% of the population is aged over 50 compared with 37% across England. Conversely, 39% of the borough's population is aged 25-49 compared with 33% in England. Brent has a higher proportion of children aged under ten compared with England (14% vs. 12%). The population has been ageing in recent years and this is expected to continue.

Disability

- Around one in seven Brent residents have a long-term health problem or disability that limits their day-to-day-activities in some way. The prevalence of disability rises sharply with age: more than half of all residents aged 65 and over had a long-term health problem or disability.

Gender reassignment

- The Government Equalities Office tentatively estimates that around 0.3-0.8% of the UK population are transgender. In Brent, this would equate to between 1,000 to 2,500 people. Since the Gender Recognition Act came into force, only a small minority have obtained a Gender Recognition Certificate: 0.007% of the UK population (4,910 people across the UK since 2005).

Marriage and civil partnership

- In 2015, 960 marriages or civil partnerships took place in Brent – of these, 29 (3%) were same sex marriages or civil partnerships, the same as the percentage nationally but lower than the percentage in London (5%).

Pregnancy and maternity

- Brent has relatively high birth rates. In 2018, there were 4,705 births in Brent – which equates to 68.1 births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44 – well above the national rate (59.2). Three quarters of all births in Brent were to women born outside the UK (75%) – this is the highest rate in England and Wales, reflecting the diversity of the borough's population.

Race

- Almost two thirds (65%) of the Brent population are from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups. Brent's largest single ethnic group is the Indian population – who comprise 17% of residents – the fourth largest in London. Brent is the second most ethnically diverse borough in London, after Newham (according to the Simpson's Diversity Index).

Religion or belief

- The borough's three largest religious groups are Christian (41%), Muslim (19%) and Hindu (18%). Overall, 82% of residents had a religion – the fourth highest rate in England and Wales. The borough has the second largest Hindu population in England and Wales, and the 10th largest Muslim population (as a percentage of the population).

Sex

- The gender split in the population is 51% male and 49% female. The proportion of men is highest in the 20-34 age group where they comprise 54% of the population. In contrast, women make up a higher proportion of the Borough's elderly population: 62% of those aged 85 and over are female.

Sexual orientation

- Statistics about the size of the LGB population vary considerably and there is no single widely accepted measure. The 2017 GP Patient Survey found that 4.6% of Brent residents surveyed identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or 'Other' – below the London average (5.4%) but above the national rate (3.3%). Figures from the 2017 Annual Population Survey provide lower estimates for both London and England (3.2% and 2.6%).

3 IMPACT OF SAVING PROPOSALS

2020/21 budget proposals

A number of the proposed savings generate an income for the Council, or have other positive impacts on residents and communities, for example the Shared Fostering Services and Homecare re procurement , set out in further detail below.

Development of Shared Fostering Service (CYP004)

There is a national shortage of foster carers for children in care. The proposal is to continue to develop a joint fostering service in partnership with Ealing and Hounslow Council's and the voluntary sector. The aim is to recruit and retain a wider selection of in-house foster carers who can provide a stable family environment to looked after children with complex needs and those who are in high cost placements in the respective boroughs. Brent Council has been successful in receiving funding from the Department for Education to start a feasibility study. The future aim will be to roll this out to other members of the West London Alliance.

A positive impact is anticipated on protected groups, as through joint working and wider recruitment campaigns, there may be an increase in prospective foster carers from protected groups.

Adult Social Care re-commissioning - Homecare (CWB015)

Cabinet agreed on 11 November 2019 to retender homecare services in Brent, following a period of extensive consultation. Currently the council spends in excess of £18m per year on homecare, commissioning homecare services from 68 providers for adults and 32 providers for children.

The council is moving to a patch-based model for older people and physical disabilities homecare, meaning that providers would work over a smaller area. The borough is to be divided into 13 patches with a lead provider for each. For specialist homecare services (Learning Disabilities, Children and Young People with Disabilities and Mental Health) there would be two patches due to the smaller number of service users, with four lead providers for children with disabilities service, two lead providers for learning disabilities and two lead providers for mental health services. Lead providers in each patch would be required to deliver at least 80% of all hours in the patch. The aim is to end the practice of large numbers of providers delivering very low numbers of packages.

Homecare services are disproportionately accessed by older people and people with disabilities, including children. Equality implications have been considered throughout the review of homecare in Brent and have been a key focus in the development of the new service model and service specification, alongside quality of care.

The proposal should have positive impacts for all protected groups, but particularly for age and disability. Possible negative impacts have been addressed within the service model and specification. Positive impacts of the proposed model have been enhanced where possible. For example, specialist providers are being maintained to work with specific client groups, and zones have been developed to support providers understanding of local issues and relationship building with key partners, including a smaller number of GP practices. A patch based model should reduce travel distance for care workers. Securing hours should help providers with workforce planning, including

staff training and support, and improve the quality of care provided. Social workers would continue to assess service user's needs and be involved in support planning, and providers would state whether or not they could deliver the service to meet the individual's needs.

The proposed new service model will not remove services, but it will change the way services are delivered and will place greater emphasis on a personalised outcomes based approach. The new service model is expected to deliver improved quality of service provision, improved service user experience, and establish more productive working relationships with providers.

The proposal to re-tender homecare services includes paying care workers at the London Living Wage and minimising the use of zero-hours contracts. Paying the London Living Wage should help to improve staff retention. It is anticipated that the quality of homecare provision in the borough would be enhanced.

The re-tender is designed to ensure compliance with the Unison Ethical Care Charter, which includes regular training and visits of more than 15 minutes.

Consistency of care worker is something that the council and care providers are committed to, and it will be included as an element in performance and contract monitoring schedules. Service users would continue to be matched to care workers based on their needs, however the aim will be for a consistent care worker to provide care for each individual during the course of the contract (where possible). This will positively impact service users, as they may wish to have the same care workers. It should improve communication between the council and the provider and between the provider and the service user also.

Electronic Call Monitoring will be mandatory and will be built into the procurement process. This will allow for better real time monitoring of consistency of care worker and timeliness of calls, and will also allow contract monitoring to be evidence based.

Small Brent based providers may not have the ability to deliver the number of hours expected from the patch based approach. Smaller providers could still continue to deliver up to 20% of remaining hours from a framework. Approximately 10 additional providers will still be able to provide services for Brent by becoming part of a framework. Officers will provide capacity building support to local Brent providers to support them to join. Individuals may also choose to remain with them via a direct payment, however this would not be quality monitored by the council unless they were on a framework. Safeguarding concerns would continue to be investigated by the council however, and the council retains this responsibility. Smaller providers would still be able to deliver hours, reducing the risk of market failure also.

Impacts will be monitored throughout the implementation period and beyond via ongoing service user and provider engagement and the Quality Assurance Framework, the Outcomes Framework and Performance Management Framework that are included in the service specification and associated schedules. A Quality Assurance Policy is also being developed to minimise any negative impacts. A fewer number of providers will also ensure that quality can be better monitored.

Commissioners would attempt to limit disruption during the transition phase and ensure continuity of care where possible. However, if it is not possible to ensure continuity of care, the council and provider would work with service users to explain why, and help to build relationships with new carers as quickly as possible. Furthermore, service users could switch to a direct payment (DP) to give them more choice and control over their care.

Below is a summary of the full EIA's where a mixture of positive, neutral and negative impacts have been identified. Also attached to this report are the supporting EIA screenings for each savings proposal and full EIA's where implications on the PSED have been identified.

Community Wellbeing

Public Health recommissioning – substance misuse (CWB001)

The proposal is to achieve savings from the redesign and re procurement of the substance misuse service. A contract is already in place to deliver these savings.

No negative impacts are anticipated on protected groups. Service users were closely involved in the redesign of the service and the evaluation of tenders, and have been kept informed and involved in the process. Close attention will be paid to maintaining outcomes, and any impacts will be mitigated through contract management.

Public Health recommissioning - Stop Smoking Services (CWB003)

The proposal is to make the service more efficient by stopping the general untargeted smoking cessation services; but maintaining the focussed stop smoking service for mental health service users and pregnant women.

There is a general impact on smokers who would like to quit but do not fall within the focussed groups and would consequentially lose access to free nicotine replacement therapy and face to face support. The revised approach will have a positive effect on the protected characteristics, in particular by advancing equality of opportunity.

The service will focus on more vulnerable users where, for example, the health data supports a greater dependency on smoking, or significant health implications for example on foetal health. Non-eligible service users can access the free online and telephone support provided by the London Smoking Cessation Transformation Project and stop smoking medication such as Champix/Zyban as a GP prescription.

Adult Social Care re-commissioning - Placement review (CWB016)

This proposal is to reduce individual care package costs as part of annual placement reviews by moving people from high cost packages to supported living or extra care accommodation where appropriate and based on evidence as part of the New Accommodation Independent Living (NAIL) programme. Where this is not appropriate, the saving could be achieved by negotiating placement costs to achieve value for money instead. Placement costs are reviewed annually within the Residential and Nursing Commissioning teams.

Adult Social Care re-commissioning - Day care (CWB017)

This proposal is to work with providers to redesign and develop a new model of external day care provision. The aim of this proposal is to create efficiency savings whilst also supporting more choice and control for individuals in receipt of Adult Social Care services. It is proposed that the current model is transformed to less building based provision. It is anticipated that the overall level of service should stay the same in most cases, however some groups may find it challenging. Engagement would be undertaken with service users affected to minimise any negative impacts.

Adult Social Care re-commissioning - Prevention contracts (CWB018)

This proposal is to move non statutory Adult Social Care services to Public Health and include broader outcomes. The services would be re-specified and recommissioned through the Public Health grant. The number and level of services provided is not expected to change. No equality impacts are anticipated.

Housing Association Lease Scheme (CWB021)

The proposal is to create a new model to increase the supply of affordable accommodation to help meet the demand for homeless households. The contraction of affordable temporary accommodation in the borough is resulting in more homeless households being housed into emergency Bed and Breakfast and/or other forms of temporary accommodation outside of Brent. The Reasonable Rents model will enable Registered Providers (RP) to lease properties (at a more competitive rate) from the private sector and let them to our accepted homeless households.

The scheme will enable reasonable/more attractive rates to be paid to landlords, allow properties to be retained and the housing portfolio expanded at a reduced cost to the Council. This model will also enable the council to discharge its full housing duty to accepted homeless households. The proposal would only apply to newly accepted homeless applications.

Some protected groups are over – represented among homeless households. This is partly due to the criteria through which priority need is established, e.g. age, physical disability, mental health and or pregnancy.

Positive impacts are anticipated in relation to a reduction in the loss of properties available and an increase in the supply of affordable accommodation to help meet the homeless demand. The scheme would advance equality of opportunity in the way that it is a fair and transparent means of allocating homes, based on the needs to the applicant.

Positive and negative/neutral impacts have been identified for residents with a disability. Data analysis shows a higher proportion of households with disability or vulnerability indicators placed in temporary accommodation. This may be because of limitations in procuring accommodation in the private rented sector that can meet the needs of people with a disability. In order for the council to end its homelessness duty, an offer of suitable and affordable accommodation must be provided. This may mean that social housing is the only option for some households and they will continue to be placed in temporary accommodation while waiting for an offer. Applicants with a disability would continue to be placed in accommodation that is suited to their needs.

Regeneration

Dimming street lights (R&E001)

The proposal is to review highly localised lighting levels across all residential streets in the borough.

Negative impacts are not anticipated. Residents may notice lower lighting levels than expected at certain locations, however sufficient lighting levels would be maintained to meet the British Lighting Standard, as well as road safety and community safety expectations. Resident and visitor feedback on lighting levels via the council's Parking and Lighting Service would be acted on quickly. Consideration of any relevant risk factors and consultation with the residents most affected would take place, and we are working with our Community Safety colleagues to minimise any risks.

Building control (R&E004)

This proposal is increase the service area income from out-of-borough work and provide additional services through associates. There is a risk that the proposal might not be achieved if there is a downturn in the economy. No equality impacts are however anticipated.

Wembley licensing (R&E008)

This proposal is based on a potential increase in revenue arising from greater event activity in Wembley, subject to work on Olympic Way being complete. Equality Analysis was recently conducted for the Council's new Statement of Licensing Policy. When applications are received the Licensing Authority considers these on their individual merits and ensures that the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is applied where appropriate. The Licensing Authority applies the PSED in the implementation of the 28 specific policies outlined in the Licensing Policy. The proposal would consider the PSED in licensing decisions where appropriate. No equality impacts are anticipated.

Regeneration & Environment staffing efficiencies (R&E018)

The proposal is to achieve savings through a reduction in staff salary costs. No equality impacts are anticipated.

Children & Young People

Development of Family Hubs (CYP008)

It is proposed to replace the 17 Children's Centres with 8 family hubs. Children's Centre hubs currently cater for children aged 0-5, whereas the family hubs cater for the entire family aged 0-19 (and 25 with SEND). Services provided by the Children's Centres will still be accessible through the family hub.

The impact will be more significant on vulnerable families that live close to the Children's Centres which are closed. They will not be able to access those support services and may experience longer /additional traveling in order to access the service. This will particularly impact those on low incomes and with disabilities or SEND. There will also be an impact on services provided by the midwifery team around ante-natal and postnatal support and health visiting service, as new mothers/parents will have greater difficulty accessing the support. There could be an increase in isolated young parents and postnatal depression.

Part of the mitigation is to ensure that the family hubs continue to deliver the service which were available at the Children's Centre. Hubs will be targeted in areas that have the highest usage and deprivation levels as well as considering the size and locality of the individual centres. Research based assessments will make the best use of resources and ensure that these are broadened to cover school age children. This will enable a greater reach for targeted services into families. With respect to isolation and additional travelling difficulties,

consideration will be given to sourcing assistance with travelling. The service will also undertake a further EIA as part of the consultation service redesign process.

Chief Executive

Reducing voluntary sector grants (PPP001)

The proposal is to:

- reduce the voluntary and community sector assistance budget by £80 000 over two years. This budget is used to fund Brent CVS who provide capacity development support to Voluntary Sector and Community organisations (VSCOs) within the borough;
- reduce the Brent Advice Partnership Funding by £127 000 over two years. This fund is used to develop the capacity of local advice services;
 - reduce the generalist advice contract held by the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) by £35 000; and
 - reduce the specialist advice contract by £18 000 over two years . This contract is also held by the CAB.

The first year savings were successfully implemented from April 2019 onwards.

It is not anticipated that the reduction to the voluntary and community sector assistance budget and Brent Advice Partnership Fund would negatively impact protected groups. The funding does not impact directly on service provision. In addition, the organisations affected are either able to access funding from other sources or did not use all their allocated funding 2018/9, so the current funding level is more in line with their apparent needs.

The savings proposals to the CAB could negatively impact on the following protected groups who disproportionately access the service:

- older people (around 18% of CAB clients are over 65);
- disabled people (around 40% of CAB clients are disabled or long-term sick);
- BAME groups (around 70% of CAB clients were BAME in 2018);
- women (around 55% of CAB clients were female in 2018).

Given the disproportionate number of BAME groups and women accessing the service, it is possible that a reduction in service will have an impact on some faith groups and on the protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity, although this data is not available.

Some protected groups may be more likely to be in need of benefits and other advice – for example, women and BAME groups who are likely to be on lower incomes.

Specialist advice services also provide support to vulnerable people for example home visits for older people and people with disabilities who are not able easily leave the house to access benefits and other vital advice.

The data also highlights increased demand for CAB services. 3049 people were seen during Quarter 2 for 2019/20 against an average of 2706 a quarter in 2018. There was also an increase in the proportion of clients from some protected groups; the proportion of BAME people increased to 90% from 70% in 2018/9 and there was an increase of people with disabilities and long term conditions to 45% from around 40%.

Mitigating actions include regular monitoring meetings with providers to assess impact and provide support in reconfiguring services to meet the needs of service users. Furthermore, Brent voluntary and community sector organisations would still be able to bid for money from the council's comprehensive grant funding programme. Council officers are enhancing the grants policy and procedures to make it easier for organisations to bid for funds. All information relating to grants is readily available on the Council website.

The Brent Advice Service Partnership would be enhanced to increase the use of alternative services able to provide advice to targeted groups in particular. In addition, Brent Council will continue to build the capacity of smaller and specialist advice services within the borough through training and development so that they are able to support service users that the CAB are not able to support. The online advice service would further be funded to provide advice to appropriate service users. The use of online information would be promoted, including Brent Advice Matters. Additional funding for advice by Children and Young People would also be available, and should be able to provide a service to some children, young people and families. The most vulnerable older and disabled people would also be targeted as part of the specialist advice service to ensure that they receive the best service possible.

There is a longer term plan for Brent Council to review and redevelop its relationship with the voluntary and community sector, including its contracted provision. Any proposals will be developed in consultation with the affected stakeholders.

Restructure of communications, conference & events department (PPP003)

This proposal is to carry out a staffing restructure to realign the service to maximise commercial income generated from the Conference and Events and income generation sections of the communications service while protecting core communications team activity which is required to support the priorities as identified in the Borough Plan 2023.

There are no equality impacts anticipated on protected groups. Equality implications will continue to be considered as the proposal develops.

Customer and Digital Services

Customer services staff rationalisation (RES005)

This proposal is to undertake a restructure in this area following the transfer of Council Tax to in house provision in May 2019. Consultation has taken place on the restructure of the service. Residents would be encouraged to access services online. Reductions in staffing may negatively impact residents who are not online. Older people are less likely to be confident in using digital service facilities. People with learning disabilities and people living with mental health issues may find it more difficult to use the digital service and require assistance or provision in another way. Users whose first language is not English may also find it more difficult to use digital self-service channels.

Support would continue be available for residents to resolve queries, including providing access to self-service facilities, training and assistance with accessing services through community hubs or provision of assistance in people's homes. A further EIA would be undertaken in relation to proposal as the new offer is developed.

Service Modernisation, More Digital (RES003/004)

There are two parts to this proposal (1) increasing the digital self-service provision by reducing/migrating face to face and telephone enquires (003). This will include utilising Robotic Processing Automation which will improve the current customer offer and address feedback arising out of the consultation process; and (2) launching a universal offer to all residents which will set an expectation to self-serve using digital channels (004) and a more tailored offer to vulnerable residents to ensure they have access to appropriate assistance.

No direct impact is envisioned by the first proposal as the robotic processing changes the way in which data is processed (thereby improving the service delivered).

In relation to proposal 2, there may be an impact on vulnerable users although the aim of the change is to better target assistance to those who most need it. Consequently, residents who can use self-service will be diverted to self-serve to enable the prioritisation of those service users that require additional support and or assistance. Older people are less likely to be confident in using digital service facilities, people with learning disabilities and people living with mental health issues may find it more difficult to use the digital service

and require assistance or provision in another way. Users whose first language is not English may also find it more difficult to use digital self-service channels.

Service users who need additional assistance will be identified through a broad framework which will help to determine the type of assistance they need and where this can be accessed. This may include providing access to self-service facilities, training and assistance with accessing services through community hubs or provision of assistance in people's homes. A further EIA may be undertaken in relation to proposal 2 as the new universal offer is developed.

Legal savings - Demand management (RES001)

This proposal is to achieve savings through demand management and income generation through raising new and existing fees and charges. Support would be reduced for contract and procurement activity on contracts which do not require formal tendering. A suite of basic contract and advice documents would be provided to support staff with this change. It is not anticipated that there would be any impacts on protected groups.

Council Tax Increase

It is proposed to increase Council Tax by 3.99% (2% ring fenced for Adult Social Care and 1.99% general increase). This will generate an additional 4.9m of recurring income for the council and avoid further savings having to be made to key council services.

This proposal will impact on all residents in the borough who are liable to pay Council Tax. As the increase has universal application no one particular group with protected characteristics is targeted.

In terms of mitigation, the Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme provides some assistance for vulnerable residents and households on low incomes. The CTS scheme is due to change in April 2020. Equality Analysis for the new scheme identified both positive and negative impacts for the protected groups of age, disability, sex and race. Overall, the impacts of the proposed scheme are broadly proportionate across groups with protected characteristics, and / or reflect the higher relative incomes of certain demographic groups. Mitigating actions include staff training to equip officers with the awareness to identify where a discretionary payment may be appropriate, and how such requests should be assessed, and opportunities to improve equality monitoring data. The impacts of the new scheme on claimants are being closely monitored.

The impact of the council tax increase would be reviewed alongside the implementation of the new council tax support scheme. The existing powers under Section 13A of the Local Government Act 1992 also allow the Council to reduce Council Tax by up to 100%. The process for applying is detailed on the Council's website.

2021/22 to 2022/23 budget proposals

Attached to this report are the supporting EIA screenings and full EIA's where implications on the PSED have been identified.

A number of the proposed savings generate an income for the Council, or have other positive impacts on residents and communities, for example proposals to increase in-house Temporary Accommodation, reduce damage to footways and to become a Registered Apprenticeship Training provider set out in further detail below.

Properties to relieve Temporary Accommodation (2021-23 CWB 006)

This proposal is to create social housing as part of the Council's new build programme. The proposal would involve redeveloping a former care home (Knowles House) into council-owned in-house temporary accommodation.

Recent years have seen the contraction of affordable Temporary Accommodation in the borough resulting in more homeless households being housed into emergency Bed & Breakfast and/or other forms of temporary accommodation outside of Brent. The proposal will increase the in-house supply of temporary accommodation for homeless households, reducing the costs of obtaining accommodation externally.

Some protected groups are over – represented among homeless households. This is partly due to the criteria through which priority need is established, e.g. age, physical disability, mental health and or pregnancy. Positive impacts are anticipated from this proposal in relation to increasing the supply of accommodation to help meet the homeless demand, providing permanent properties for a number of homeless households currently in temporary accommodation. The proposal would support the council to discharge its full housing duty to accepted homeless households. It is also anticipated that the proposal would increase the supply of accommodation suitable for disabled households.

Damage Cost Recovery (2021-23 R&E 004)

The proposal is to deploy a dedicated officer to proactively recover the cost of repairs from developers and builders causing damage to the public highway. Contractors undertaking works will be charged and held accountable for the damage they may cause to footways in Brent.

It is anticipated that there would be more frequent footway repairs as a consequence of this proposal. Hazards may be removed, and footways be in better condition generally reducing the likelihood of accidents. This could positively impact residents, particularly those with protected characteristic of age, disability and pregnancy/maternity.

To develop a commercial training arm that can utilise the apprenticeship levy to deliver Apprenticeship Standards (2021-23 R&E 009)
The proposal is to become an Approved Training Provider of apprenticeship training, and therefore increase teaching capacity and the number and range of apprenticeship training offered.

The proposal is believed to have a neutral impact on protected groups overall. Existing apprentices would not be affected. Work would be undertaken with employers to ensure that there is equality in apprenticeship recruitment. Applicants would receive 1-2-1 support in completing applications if required and continued support through the duration of the apprenticeship.

The proposal would give the council greater flexibility to ensure reasonable adjustments can be made for applicants with disabilities, as opposed to more restrictive policies for independent training providers. This would allow us to offer a more inclusive and quality service. The proposal may therefore positively impact residents with the protected characteristic of disability.

Below is a summary of the full EIA's where a mixture of neutral and negative impacts have been identified.

Community Wellbeing

Reablement (2021-23 CWB 001)

The proposal is to deliver a more effective and comprehensive reablement offer that supports higher needs residents, discharges residents sooner, improves links with hospital and community social care teams to improve the resident journey and reduces or not requires ongoing homecare packages. Further savings have been identified through reducing the contribution Brent makes to the rehab (health) element of the service.

The aim of the reablement intervention is that residents will be able to live more independently. This allows the ongoing traditional community care package to be reduced or removed, depending on the ongoing care needs. The improvements in the service will be across the universal offer and it is not anticipated that protected groups would be affected disproportionately.

The council will continue to spot-purchase reablement homecare packages if the project of bringing the provision is unsuccessful. Residents with disabilities with reablement potential will continue to be offered a service. As part of the project plan, a

Project Board would be also developed. Equalities analysis would continue to be undertaken as the proposal developed, with updates brought to the Project Board.

Placement Review (2021-23 CWB 003)

Placements are to be reviewed as part of the New Accommodation Independent Living (NAIL) programme to determine whether people could be moved to less restrictive placements, or whether there is any scope for fee reduction based on need and care provided.

It is proposed that some service users are supported to move into new placements better suited to their needs. Other placements would be subject to fee negotiation, if the client is unable to move, but where it is felt a fairer price for the service could be negotiated.

It is anticipated that there would be a positive impact on residents with a disability. The primary aim of moving someone from one placement to another is to move them to a service that better meets their needs. People would not be moved if it was not felt to be in their best interests.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) provision (2021-23 CWB 004)

The proposal is for Brent permanent staff to undertake the Best Interest Assessor (BIA) role as opposed to outsourcing at a cost of £250 per case. This would not only bring savings but also improvements for staff trained and act as an incentive for recruitment and retention.

It is not anticipated that provision would be affected by the changing of staff arrangements – the service is not expected to change as a result. The change is solely about reducing external commissioning and giving this opportunity to Brent staff. The proposal would provide more control over ensuring assessments are timely. Any risk to service provision would be mitigated by ensuring a budget allocation to still enable outsourcing in emergency situations or during staff absence.

Community Care recommissioning (2021-23 CWB 005)

The commissioning service is working with providers to redesign services into new, lower-cost models of care that support more choice and control, and promotes less building based provision. The proposal is to broaden the service offer and involve people in its design. Public Health outcomes would be built into the recommissioned service, with the aim of improving outcomes for service users and residents.

It is anticipated that the proposal would positively affect Adult Social Care service users that attend day centres. Older people, disabled people and people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds are likely to be affected.

The make-up of service users is currently being reviewed. All services are being reviewed, including services for Afro–Caribbean and Asian elders. Equality implications are being considered throughout. Services are being reviewed to establish if they could be delivered in a different way, with recommendations due to be made to the Change and Improvement Board. Some of these may include the removal of some of the services. However these services would continue to be delivered by private providers, but with less clients funded by the council or input from council staff. Service users will be offered direct payments so that they can purchase their own services if they do not believe that the service offered by the council meets their needs. Staff are working with all stakeholders including family’s and service users where they have capacity.

Any service change would be subject to the agreement of senior management and Cabinet. It may lead to the services being improved for residents by offering service users more choice and control, modern and targeted service provision based on different service users’ needs.

New Accommodation for Independent Living (CWB013)

The proposal is to increase NAIL provision to support more users and to develop provision to support higher need users and some users who have gone into nursing care. Despite successful demand management within ASC, the number of people requiring and who are eligible for services is increasing. Therefore we are proposing increasing the number of NAIL units we develop to help mitigate the cost pressure of this demand, but also developing specialist provision to cater for people who might otherwise have needed nursing care. No equality impacts are anticipated.

Children and Young People

Clawback of unused Direct Payments 2021-23 CYP 001

Direct payments are cash payments paid to an individual to give them greater choice to buy care services needed themselves. The proposal is to introduce a card system in April 2020 to reclaim unused or overpaid direct payment funds from clients immediately, matching the same approach taken in adult social care. The direct payment may no longer be required by families or it may not be used in line with the resource allocation agreement signed. It also may be paid for several months before it is amended. The card systems would allow officers to identify overpayments and claim these much more rapidly.

Consultation has taken place with residents affected by the change and with the Brent Parent Carer Forum. Children and young people with assessed needs would continue to receive support as detailed in the legislation. Some of the children and families who are not using

the direct payment in line with the service agreement would see their payment reduced or cancelled. More appropriate support would be offered to families, which could include activities in the community, play schemes or care at home depending on the review of their assessment. It is also noted that some of the parents affected may be pregnant at the time of implementation also. Impacts would be monitored during 2020/21.

Short Break Centre (2021-23 CYP 002)

The proposal is to sell existing spare capacity of respite beds/nights at the Ade Adepitan Short Breaks Centre to neighbouring authorities at market rates. The aim of the proposal is to increase income by reducing the number of empty beds through providing planned and emergency accommodation at market rates to neighbouring boroughs.

There should be a minimal impact on users of the service. The sale of extra bed nights would bring more users to the centre. There is currently surplus capacity and some bed nights are already sold to neighbouring boroughs. LB Barnet has already purchased additional bed nights and is due to sign a formal contract to regularise arrangements before the end of 2019.

There is no intention to reduce the number of opportunities for Brent resident young children and young people – the proposal is to better utilise existing capacity that is not required by the service. Consultation with service users, their families and the Brent Parent Carer Forum has taken place with positive feedback obtained. The proposal does not involve any reduction in services for Brent young people. There could be a risk of Brent young people not being able to access this service if too many bed nights are sold. The process would need to be managed sensitively in order to bring social benefits to existing users.

Adjusting resources in demand led budgets (2021-23 CYP 003)

The rate of Looked After Children (LAC) per 10,000 of population is historically low in Brent and the current rate is low compared to statistical neighbours. With the assumption that this low rate continues over the next 18 months a reduction in the budget could be implemented in line with posts that were held vacant in August 2019.

Population growth is expected to stabilise following the current primary bulge moving through the school system. A number of activities as set out in the current borough plan are intended to improve outcomes and manage risk effectively for target groups at higher risk of becoming looked after.

If the caseloads do not increase, it is not anticipated that there will be any negative impacts on protected groups. However, there is a risk that caseloads rise as the number of secondary-age children increases. 65% of current LAC are aged 13+. The proposal could have a negative impact on the young people as if there is insufficient staff resource to meet demand, issues relating to contextual safeguarding and serious youth violence may accelerate complexity of need.

To mitigate against any negative impacts, the LAC rate would be monitored quarterly within existing performance reports. Service users and staff would be kept regularly informed and their views sought through internal mechanisms. A decision would need to be made by the service by early 2021 regarding the resource required to meet demand for the subsequent two financial years. If the rate increased, this proposal would not be achieved as it would negatively impact on service delivery.

Review and zero base other service area budgets (2021-23 CYP 004)

The proposal is to review service area budgets to achieve and accumulate minor savings. Budget analyses will be carried out on non-staff and non-frontline service budgets across Children and Young People. Management will then challenge budget holders to produce updated service delivery plans, focussed on outcomes which can be costed by the Finance team.

Proposal is to concentrate on those budgets which have a historical underspend. No negative impacts have been identified for children and young people, parents/carers, schools and practitioners working with children and young people.

Increased income target for the Gordon Brown Centre (2021-23 CYP 005)

The Gordon Brown Outdoor Education Centre has benefitted from recent capital investment. The proposal is to increase access to this resource by extending the use of the centre, including by selling daytime and residential activity bookings, and thus increase income generated.

The management teams have engaged with local schools and potential customers regarding the proposal. The planned income generation will be reviewed quarterly through 2019/20 and into 20/21. Negative equality impacts have not been identified. Impacts will however be monitored through management supervision of the centre manager.

10% saving on commissioning (2021-23 CYP 006)

This proposal is to achieve a 10% commissioning saving when contracts become due for a number of commissioned services that either support children with special needs and disabilities or vulnerable children and young people.

A number of contracts have been identified which are due to go out to tender and commence in April 2021. The services affected would likely include Speech and Language Therapy, Mental Health and Wellbeing, semi-independent block contract for services, and Early Help services. The saving would be achieved by:

- retendering services to achieve competitive pricing;
- bringing any spot-purchased services into contracts where possible to achieve economies of scale;
- redesigning services to achieve efficiencies based on feedback from service users and demand analysis.

The protected groups that could be affected are age and disability. The proposal may impact children and young people aged 0-18 and 18-25 with an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP), parents and carers, schools and practitioners working with children and young people.

The scope of non-statutory services may be reduced. Negative impacts are not anticipated. The focus will be to ensure that the most vulnerable children and young people and their families continue to be supported through commissioned services. Children who have a statutory right to services would continue to receive them. It is not anticipated that services aimed at supporting vulnerable children (e.g. Mental Health and Wellbeing services or Early Help services) will reduce in terms of scope, but that market competition will drive efficiencies. There could, however, be some redesign of services for example to increase alignment with CCG commissioned services which could drive efficiencies. Any redesign would be informed by service user feedback and detailed demand analysis.

The same age range of children and young people would continue to receive services. Statutory services for children and young people with a disability would also continue. Non-statutory services would continue to be available for children and young people regardless of whether they have a disability. All services would continue to impact equally upon all children and young people and their parents/carers regardless of their gender identity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Services are fully inclusive and aim to improve outcomes for all children and young people and their families.

Engagement would be undertaken with stakeholders and service users at the point of recommissioning any service. All commissioned services are subject to contract monitoring and evaluation. This includes regular feedback from service users, monitoring complaints and compliments, service data analysis and contract monitoring meetings. The Commissioning Team hosts a quarterly stakeholder meeting that reviews service effectiveness and informs contract monitoring meetings. Each service would be recommissioned based on an updated and detailed analysis of service need, including the views of target user groups.

The commissioning of services in scope of the budget savings proposal will be undertaken to achieve efficiencies primarily through market engagement and through improved alignment with CCG commissioned services. It is not intended that the scope of any service would reduce unless this is underpinned by analysis that indicates reduced demand. All services that are commissioned are subject to detailed analysis of demand. If a service is no longer required or if a reduced service is considered appropriate to meet need, the opportunity will be taken to realise budget savings.

Demand analysis for each service will be carried out, including evidence of impact of current services. Consultation with children and parents/carers on specifications would take place. Market testing and market development would be used to determine market likelihood to respond to tendering process in the context of the specification and available budget. Each proposal would be subject to a detailed equality impact assessment to mitigate any negative impacts.

Regeneration and Environment

General Efficiencies across R&E (2021-23 R&E 001)

The proposal relates to the removal of funds deemed to be surplus to the structural revenue requirement of the directorate. No impacts are anticipated on residents from protected groups.

Lighting Maintenance (2021-23 R&E 002)

This proposal is to make an efficiency saving of 10% on the lighting maintenance budget in March 2021. This follows a 20 year lighting maintenance contract, £5 million investment in technology and two years trouble-shooting. This 10% efficiency saving is a corporate requirement on all contract re-letting and renewals. It is not anticipated that there will be any negative impacts on protected groups.

Schemes/Drainage fees (2021-23 R&E 003)

The proposal is to increase the level of fees applied to contractors for the delivery of large-scale funded infrastructure improvement projects. No impacts are anticipated for protected groups.

Building Control Fees Review (2021-23 R&E 005)

The proposal is to increase building control fees charged to developers by 10% for schedule 2 new dwellings, up to 15 dwellings. No impacts are anticipated for protected groups. No impact on residents is anticipated.

Passenger Transport (2021-23 R&E 006)

The proposal is to relocate parking provision of buses for Special Educational Needs (SEN) children from Harrow to Brent in order to shorten routes and reduce driving times, and therefore to create efficiency savings. It is believed that efficiencies can be made on certain routes. The proposal would affect 900 SEN children who currently use the service. Equality monitoring information will be reviewed for passengers affected.

The proposal is likely to have negative impacts on the protected group of disability and age (young people) as SEN children are likely to be affected by changes to individual routines, which can cause anxiety. Carers, whilst not protected themselves under the Equality Act 2010, are protected from indirect discrimination if they are caring for someone with a disability. Parent carers of SEN children are also likely to be affected by this proposal as their children would be affected. However in the long-term it is believed that there will be a positive impact for these groups due to shorter journey times and therefore better comfort for passengers. Negative impacts from the changing of routines in the short-term are likely to be mitigated by the long-term outcome of reducing journey times.

Mitigating actions include starting any new routes from September 2020 to coincide with the new school year, thus minimising the number of changes to routine caused by service disruption during term-time. Furthermore, only those routes that would provide operational efficiencies and a saving would be re-located.

Passengers would be consulted on the proposed changes early in 2020 and the proposal is subject to the consultation findings. The consultation would be promoted amongst all service users and their families. Any changes would be communicated sensitively, thoroughly and early in advance to minimise any anxiety caused to passengers. In accordance with the NHS Accessible Information Standard, information would be communicated in a simple and clear way, for example using Easy Read, to ensure that the information and communication needs of passengers affected with a disability are met. Equality analysis would continue to be conducted and reviewed, and any impacts monitored. Equality monitoring information will continue to be reviewed for passengers affected.

Additional pre-application charges for specialists (2021-23 R&E 007)

The proposal is to increase the pre-application charge for specialist advice in the planning process/service, where it is believed an additional charge could be levied with agreement from the applicant. A wide range of applications from small householder to major urban developments are received. Equality information is monitored for planning applications but not for pre-application stage.

The proposal is not envisaged to impact protected groups as the charge would mainly affect larger commercial operators and development proposals rather than domestic residents or smaller schemes (e.g. extensions to homes or small businesses). The proposal would exclude certain categories. Disabled people would not be affected e.g. they would be able to improve their homes without a planning fee. Households would have free application so would not be negatively affected. Disabled residents (e.g. if trying to make home more accessible) would not be affected. It is not believed that residents with a protected characteristic would be negatively impacted by this proposal. Equality Analysis has been conducted for the proposal and will continue to be kept under review.

Facilities Management contract extension (2021-23 R&E 011)

The proposal is for a 12-month extension to the existing Facilities Management contract, with savings of £70k agreed at the time of extension. The proposal includes the reduction of a security post by our outsourced contractor, with duties of that officer being picked up by the remaining nine team members.

The proposal is also for the outsourced contractor to use technology to remotely open and close Brent Council buildings that fall within Facilities Management (approx. 15-20 buildings). There are many buildings which use this technology already.

The impact on residents and staff is likely to be minimal. The process will remain the same. Rather than locking and unlocking the buildings by human intervention and use of a key, the lock would be released over a network instead. There wouldn't be an announcement that the lock was about to take place as this is not possible. Members of the public would be directed to leave the premises by Brent Council staff however as currently occurs before the buildings are locked. A communications plan would be developed to increase awareness of the technology. New staff would continue to be informed as part of their site induction when they are expected to vacate the building by and lone working procedures.

They would continue to be able to use their staff card to exit the building before the locking takes place, and enter the building after the opening takes place. There have been 1-2 staff locked in the premises within approximately 4 years. The proposal is make the process more efficient and safer as in emergency situations staff would be able to release the lock and override the system (currently a key is needed to unlock the lock). This would be reported back to the control room. There isn't currently CCTV linked to the control centre, although this could be a future consideration for The Library at Willesden Green.

The proposal would be subject to a building stakeholder consultation. Lock height would be accessible for wheelchair users at waist height. No personal data is involved in the locks and therefore a data protection impact assessment is not believed to be needed.

The proposal is to undertake a trial with one building and review after 6 months, before rolling it out in the medium term where appropriate. Any problems or unforeseen consequences would be reviewed and the contractors would work in partnership with Brent Council to mitigate them. A notification process would be in place for late events, and in this circumstance lock times would be changed.

Customer and Digital Services

ICT Client and Applications income generation from sale of IT support services (2021-23 CDS 001 & 002)

This proposal is to increase income by raising IT support charges and potentially increasing the number of organisations supported. Any risk of adverse impact to service delivery will be mitigated by increasing staff as required, but ensuring these costs are met from the income generated. It is not believed that there will be any impact on residents from protected groups.

ICT Client and Applications reduction in support services (2021-23 CDS 003 & 005)

This proposal is to reduce printing usage across the council where there is scope to do so. It is not believed that there will be any impact on residents from protected groups. The proposal is internal to the council. Printing will still be available to all council staff.

ICT Client and Applications staffing efficiencies (2021-23 CDS 004)

The proposal relates to staff restructure and the reduction of one management post and one Database Administrator Post. It is anticipated that there will be a reduction in technical resources and ongoing support needed alongside an anticipated move to Cloud services. Risk of adverse impact to service delivery would be mitigated by gradual implementation of changes and allocation of work between other managers in the team. It is not believed that there will be any impact on residents from protected groups.

Merger of Housing and Corporate Contact Centres (2021-23 CDS 006)

The proposal is to merge the housing and corporate contact centres, rationalise management and create staff efficiencies. The aim of the proposal is to create one 'front door' and a consistent customer experience for residents with resources based on needs and resident preferences. Staff working across the contact centres would be affected as well as key partners such as repair contractors. The proposal is not believed to impact residents at this early stage. It is believed that the change would enhance service delivery by creating a consistent customer experience for residents.

A detailed project plan will be developed to highlight the scope of the project, expected benefits and anticipated impacts on customers. Segmentation analysis will be carried out to understand customer base and assess the impact of changes to staffing level. Data will be collected to understand call demands and customer profile in terms of protected groups.

Equality Analysis would continue to be conducted on an ongoing basis as the proposal develops, including the detail of the new service design. The new service design would be informed by service user engagement. The impact of the new service arrangements would be monitored through management reports post-implementation. Support for vulnerable customers would continue and would be a key feature of the new service design.

Reduction in postal costs (2021-23 CDS 007)

The proposal estimates a reduction of postage costs from increased online channels for residents and digital self-service. The council is undertaking work as part of its Digital Strategy and Customer Access Review to make it easier for residents to complete transactions online. The Brent Resident Attitudes Survey 2018 highlighted that older people, people with a disability and lower socio-economic groups are less likely to be online. It is not anticipated that residents would be negatively affected by this proposal, as residents who are not online will continue to receive support to access services. This includes face-to-face support from staff at the Brent Hubs. Equality Analysis was conducted for the overall Digital Strategy and this is being reviewed on an ongoing basis.

BCS - Savings from new Council Tax Support scheme (2021-23 CDS 008)

Please read this proposal summary in conjunction with 2021-23 CDS 011.

The proposal relates to the savings to be made from the new Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme, which was approved by Cabinet in November 2019, for which a full Equality Analysis was conducted and mitigating actions developed. It is expected that there will be no impact on protected groups. The new process for claiming CTS is expected to be simpler and easier. The proposal is also anticipated to create opportunities for greater automation. Impacts on residents affected by the proposal are being monitored closely and kept under review. Options for paying in person and/or by telephone will remain for customers.

Increased automation (2021-23 CDS 009)

The proposal is to increase the automation of council processes to improve data quality, and therefore increase processing efficiency, accuracy and consistency of decisions. Automation solutions are already being used as part of the Council's operations, including in Digital and Customer Services. Appropriate checks would be put in place to ensure the integrity of data handling. The proposal will

enable consistency and minimise the risk of adversely affecting customers from protected groups. Equality analysis has been conducted for the use of automation and equality impacts will continue to be monitored.

Replace online benefits form with a more agile solution to improve customer experience (2021-23 CDS 010)

The proposal is to replace the online benefits form used in the Benefits Service currently with a more agile solution to improve customer experience. The council already utilises an online form for claimants to make initial claims and report changes in circumstances. Equality analysis has been carried out for online claiming. The aim is to achieve a more cost effective solution.

The current form uses Risk Based Verification (RBV) software to determine how much evidence is required from a claimant to support their claim. It is anticipated that with the continued rollout of Universal Credit, the number of claims will reduce, as claimants move from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit caseload, and therefore the number of changes in circumstances to process will also reduce. The new Council Tax Support scheme to be introduced from April 2020 also uses a significantly simpler claim process, with less need for evidence from claimants as more verification from DWP and HMRC will be utilised. It is therefore anticipated that in the future there will be less or benefit to be gained from differentiating claims on a risk basis as many of the “higher risk” claims will have migrated from HB to UC.

A simpler and cheaper alternative e-claim (whether from a third party or internally developed in MS Dynamics) would therefore be developed and potentially a move away from RBV or introduction of a simpler and cheaper variation of this. Data from established management reports have provided a view of the key risk indicators to bear in mind as part of the transition to an alternative solution.

The simplified CTS scheme has the potential for robotic automation to transfer data from the e-claim directly into the Council Tax system. Savings would be achieved through cheaper alternative systems (or completely stopping use of RBV), plus 1FTE staffing saving from the potential robotic process.

There is not expected to be any impact on service users due to these changes; rather the benefits claim process and administration is expected to be improved as the proposed scheme is expected to be simpler to administer and easier to understand, with significantly fewer changes in circumstances needing to be reported and processed. The process itself is not proposed to change and the service will be no more or less accessible. The benefits claim process and administration and overall customer service is expected to be improved as a result. Additional support will continue to be offered for accessing online services to those who require it through Brent Customer

Service Centre, the Community Hubs and partners such as Citizens Advice and Housing Association welfare advisers. Equality Analysis will be continue to be carried out should the proposal be taken forward.

BCS - Staffing efficiencies (2021-23 CDS 011)

Please read in conjunction with proposal 2021-23 CDS 008.

This proposal is to achieve savings through staffing efficiencies by streamlining or simplifying processes and improving joint handling of queries between Benefits and Council Tax. As Universal Credit is rolled out, staff efficiencies are expected. The Benefits Service is currently reducing staffing costs by approximately £200k each year up to 2023/24. The CTS Scheme is expected to become easier to administer, and the council's debt recovery system is expected to become more streamlined. New technology is being considered for simple high volume activities.

The proposal would impact staff processes internally and the customer-facing part of the service would be unchanged. There is not expected to be any impact on residents. The aim of the proposal is to improve service delivery. Customer service is expected to be improved.

Equality Analysis will be conducted as the proposal develops, including the detail of the new service design. Analysis is being conducted to understand customer demand and make-up. A key feature will be to ensure that changes to staffing levels do not disproportionately negatively affect protected groups. Management reports will be developed to monitor the impact of the service post-implementation.

Transformation staffing efficiencies (2021-23 CDS 012)

The proposal is to reduce one management post following the merger of Customer and Digital Services. Workload and service demands would be redistributed across the management team. Risk of impact to delivery of transformation work programme will be mitigated by gradual implementation of changes and re-alignment of work between other managers in the team. There is not envisaged to be any impact from this proposal on residents.

Chief Executive's Departments

Efficiency savings proposals (2021-23 CE 001/2/3)

The proposal aims to achieve efficiency savings and income generation in the Legal team, Human Resources, Audit and Investigations, Finance and the Assistant Chief Executive department. The proposals are to:

1. Reduce external Internal Audit hours through re-procurement and utilising finance resource through rotations.
2. Full cost recovery from external.
3. Restructure of vacant posts in a Legal team.
4. Rationalise Occupational Health checks on recruitment. Checks would remain for staff with the protected characteristic of disability.
5. Re-procurement of Legal Library provider which provides document storage.
6. Review the structure of the admin support across the council and centralise core elements within the Executive & Member Services function in 2021/22.
7. Restructure the Conference and Events team to generate more income.

It is not expected that there will be impacts on residents from these changes. The changes are anticipated to affect staff only. Proposals relating to staffing restructures will be managed through the Managing Change policy. The services will also undertake further EAs as part of the service redesign process.

In relation to point six, the aim is to generate more income in the Conference and Events team, for example by increasing money generated from commercial events. Community and voluntary groups receive a reduction in the cost of hiring Brent Council spaces when compared to businesses. It is not anticipated that these groups would face increased charges.

3 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Table 1 and 2 below summarises the potential cumulative impacts on groups which have a protected characteristic.

2020/21 budget proposals

A significant number of the proposals support income generation either by way of service design or introducing new initiatives which will have a positive impact on residents, communities and service delivery.

The proposals Adult Social Care Re-Commissioning – Day care (CWB017) and Reducing Voluntary Sector Grants (PPP001) could cumulatively negative impact on people from BAME backgrounds, older people and people with disabilities. For the proposal Adult Social Care Re-Commissioning – Day care (CWB017) it is believed that the impact could be neutralised and offset by mitigating actions. For

Reducing Voluntary Sector Grants (PPP001) mitigating actions have been put in place, including enhancing our grants policies and procedures to make it easier for organisations to bid for funds.

The proposals Children’s Centres (CYP008) and Reducing Voluntary Sector Grants (PPP001) could further cumulatively impact on women, and the protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity. The proposal Reducing Voluntary Sector Grants (PPP001) could impact on the protected characteristic of religion or belief.

However, these impacts will be kept under review and where possible mitigations have been identified to reduce the effect as set out below and in the individual savings descriptions.

In light of the above, the proposed budget saving proposals are considered reasonable and have shown due regard to the PSED.

Although initial equality screenings have been undertaken to ascertain the PSED impact, many of the proposals are in their formative stages and are still to be developed and or subject to consultations. Consequently, as the proposals are developed further equality analysis will be undertaken to assess the PSED.

Table 1 - 2020/21 budget proposals - summary of equality impacts

Proposal	Age e.g. children, elderly	Disability	Gender Reassign ment	Marriage or Civil Partnership	Pregnancy or maternity	Race	Religion or Belief	Sex	Sexual Orientation	Service Area
Public Health re-commissioning (CWB001)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	CWB
Public Health re-commissioning - cease untargeted smoking cessation (CWB003)	0	+1	0	0	+1	+1	0	0	0	CWB

management (RES001)										
Overall Council Tax increase of 3.99%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Council Tax

2021/22 – 2022/23 budget proposals

Positive impacts have been identified for the protected groups of age, disability, pregnancy or maternity and religion or belief, as highlighted in Table 2 and outlined in the EIAs.

The proposals Clawback of unused Direct Payments (CYP001) and Brent Transport Services move (R&E006) could have a cumulative negative equality impact on families with disabilities. However, any impacts will be monitored and communication will be made sensitively to ensure that service users and carers are fully aware of the changes. The introduction of the new passenger service for Special Educational Needs children would also take place at the start of the new term to minimise disruption.

At this stage the impacts are considered to be medium to low as a range of mitigating actions have been and will be put in place to reduce the negative impacts and ensure the Council's commitment to making a real difference to the lives of local people is achieved.

A significant number of the proposals support income generation either by way of service design or introducing new initiatives which will have a positive impact on residents, communities and service delivery.

Although initial equality screenings have been undertaken to ascertain the PSED impact, many of the proposals are in their formative stages and are still to be developed and or subject to consultations. Consequently, as the proposals are developed further equality analysis will be undertaken to assess the PSED.

Table 2 - 2021/22 to 2022/23 budget proposals - summary of equality impacts

Proposal	Age e.g. children, elderly	Disability	Gender Reassign ment	Marriage or Civil Partnership	Pregnancy or maternity	Race	Religion or Belief	Sex	Sexual Orientation	Service Area
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Support scheme (CDS008)										
Increased automation in Customer Services (CDS009)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	CDS
Replace IEG online benefits form (CDS010)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	CDS
Staffing efficiencies in Customer Services (CDS011)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	CDS
Transformation - Staffing efficiencies (CDS012)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	CDS
Efficiency savings within Legal, HR, Audit & Investigations/Finance/ Assistant Chief Executive (CE001/2/3)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	CE

4 SOCIO – ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

According to the Brent Resident Attitude Survey 2018 (Lower income defined as residents living on household incomes below £20,000 per year, after tax and deductions); certain groups within the population are more likely than others to live in poverty. In Brent, survey

analysis shows that those living on lower incomes are more likely to be: those from Black ethnic groups; residents with a disability or long-term illness; older residents; those with no qualifications; those who are not in work; and those who live in social housing.

2020/21

The proposals regarding Children's Centres (CYP008), Reducing Voluntary Sector Grants (PPP001) and Increasing Council Tax cumulatively have the potential to negatively impact on families and residents from lower socio-economic groups. Some of the proposals will be mitigated by more effective working with partners to ensure resources are used effectively, retaining statutory parts of the service and the consideration of assistance/transitional protection where feasible. However, these risks which primarily affect women in lower socio –economic groups will need to be carefully monitored and considered across the council.

2021/22 to 2022/23

The proposals regarding Clawback of Unused Direct Payments (CYP001), Community Care recommissioning (CWB005) and Increased Automation in Customer Services (CDS009) cumulatively have the potential to negatively impact on residents from lower socio-economic groups.

Some of the proposals will be mitigated by early and accessible communication with residents affected, by continuing to offer support for vulnerable residents who are not online, for example through the Brent Hubs and digital assistance, and more effective working with partners to ensure resources are used effectively. Furthermore, the CYP003 proposal is subject to demand/the number of Looked After Children, which is being monitored. The risks, however, will need to be carefully monitored across service areas.

5 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

Of those proposals put forward, several have staffing implications arising from staff restructures or service redesign. Where there are staffing implications for a third party, the Council will work with the third party organisation to ensure that the equality implications are understood and appropriate steps taken to minimise any adverse impacts.

To mitigate against staff redundancies, a number of the proposals will achieve a reduction through giving up vacant posts or through natural turnover. In these cases, it is considered that there will be no impact on characteristic groups.

For proposals where there is a reduction in the number of posts and redundancy implications, a meaningful assessment on the equality impact is not possible at this stage as no individuals and therefore protected characteristics have been identified for assessment.

Equality Impact Assessments in these cases will be carried out closer to the time of the start of the restructure. It should also be noted that where proposals do involve a reduction in FTE posts, in all cases these are less than 5 in number.

As further proposals which impact staff are developed further equality analysis will be undertaken.