

Appendix C: Equality Impact Assessment

Council Plan 2024-28

Background Information

Service area:	Council-wide
Directorate:	Council-wide
Completed by: Clare Walsha Date: 15/03/2024	Approved by: Date

Introduction

This EQIA is for the Council Plan, 2024-28, which sets out the council's strategic aims and priorities for the next four years. The Council Plan includes a Technical Appendix, which includes key deliverables for 2024-25 and a revised set of performance metrics, by which to monitor performance and progress against the Plan. The Council Plan provides a framework for all council decision-making, including resource allocation. The Strategic Aims and Priorities were shared in draft as part of the November and February Cabinet reports on the 2024-25 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy and were developed in consultation with staff, Members, parishes and key stakeholders.

The five aims of the Council Plan are:

- Aim 1: Put the council on a strong financial footing to serve the borough effectively
- Aim 2: A cleaner, greener, safer and more prosperous borough
- Aim 3: Children and young people have a great start in life and access to opportunities through to adulthood
- Aim 4: People live healthy and independent lives in supportive communities
- Aim 5: A high-performing council that delivers for the borough

The Council Plan makes it clear that setting the council on to a strong financial footing to serve the borough effectively, must be the primary focus. The current financial position constrains the organisation's ability to pursue wider priorities until it achieves a more stable financial position. However, the council remains ambitious for the borough. The council will spend almost £100m next year in delivering essential services, in addition to capital investment of £13m in the borough's critical infrastructure. The council is also undertaking an ambitious transformation programme to change the ways in which we deliver services, and to enable more efficient and effective delivery of our priorities.

The Council is committed to protecting the most vulnerable members of our community, whilst pursuing cost-effective solutions to support the enablement and empowerment of those with a lower level of need alongside a longer-term approach of prevention and early intervention. Under each of the five aims of the Council Plan there are a number of strategic priorities some of which are linked to the protected characteristics in the Equality Act. These strategic priorities are set out by the aims below.

Aim 1: Put the council on a strong financial footing to serve the borough effectively

EQIA for the budget has been carried out separately and was published as part of the papers for Budget Council Thursday 29 February, Agenda Reports Pack p.169.

Aim 2: A cleaner, greener, safer and more prosperous borough

- Ensure availability of housing, that meets our local housing needs, with a focus on social housing and tackling homelessness.

Aim 3: Children and young people have a great start in life and access to opportunities through to adulthood

- Support children and families to live safe, happy and healthy lives.
- Support children and young people in our care and meet their needs safely.
- Support all children and young people to achieve meaningful outcomes from birth into adulthood, enabling them to live, learn and thrive locally and access opportunities.
- Support young people and families to develop resilience and independence.

Aim 4: People live healthy and independent lives in supportive communities

- A council-wide focus on increasing healthy life expectancy, improving wellbeing and reducing the impact of inequalities.
- Provide access to the right support to residents at the right time, in the right place, with a focus on early help and prevention, to maintain and extend independent living.
- Deliver quality adult social care with suitable homes for those who need life-long support.

Aim 5: A high-performing council that delivers for the borough

- Strengthen how we work to serve the borough better - placing the borough at the heart of communities; listening to people and involving them in decision-making.
- Strengthen partnerships with charities, the voluntary sector, businesses, parishes, health and education partners, statutory bodies, faith groups and others to enable better outcomes for residents.

The EQIA sets out the deliverables under the priorities which will impact on the key groups.

Consultation

The Council Plan has been informed by engagement sessions with key stakeholder groups including: young people, older people, people with disabilities, the voluntary and community sector, Members, parishes and staff. A total of 224 people participated in the sessions, with more contributing to responses submitted via email or the online survey. There was support for the general direction of the council's emerging aims and priorities, with feedback contributing to their shaping and definition in a number of key areas, such as partnership working. The early community engagement highlighted priority concerns for residents and the VCS and the later sessions fed into the definition of the aims and priorities.

Equality Impact Analysis

	<p>How do the protected characteristics influence the needs of individuals within this proposal?</p> <p>How might these characteristics affect the impact of the proposal?</p> <p>(If no influence on impact, state 'N/A')</p>	<p>Overall impact</p> <p>(Tick where relevant)</p>
<p>Age</p>	<p><u>Older people</u> A deliverable under aim 4 focuses on improving accessibility and inclusivity for older people (amongst under groups) Aim 4: Priority: provide access to the right support to residents at the right time Deliverable: Develop effective service pathways to improve accessibility and inclusivity.</p> <p><u>Children and younger people</u> Aim 3 focuses on children and young people and a number of deliverables will positively impact the experience of children and young people including through targeted out-reach, new 'Think Families' approach, development of services for children in need and those with mental health difficulties. Priority: Support children and families to live safe, happy and healthy lives Deliverable: Build on our multi-disciplinary teams to provide early support to children and young people as part of a "Think Families" approach, so that their needs do not escalate to requiring statutory support. Deliverable: Build on our targeted outreach support for young people and their families so that their needs can be safely met at home or in their communities, when appropriate. Deliverable: Provide effective early help support to children and young people experiencing difficulties with their wellbeing and/or mental health.</p> <p>Priority: Support young people and families Deliverable: Develop a Participation Strategy to strengthen engagement with children and young people and ensure their</p>	<p>The overall approach of the Council Plan is designed to improve outcomes in the medium term, to mitigate impacts to the most vulnerable and to strengthen preventative services, and will therefore have an ultimately positive impact. Due to budget constraints, priorities and deliverables under Aim 1 in some cases have a negative impact which is covered by a separate EQIA.</p>

	<p>views are heard and included in decisions that impact their lives. Deliverable: Create a new child and family help service that supports children in need (CIN) and families needing targeted support.</p> <p>A deliverable under Aim 4 specifically references intervention with regards to weight for children. Priority: A Council-wide focus on increasing healthy life expectancy, improving wellbeing Develop and deliver a whole systems approach to healthy weight for children and families, focusing in areas with higher rates of overweight and obesity, including steps to improve the food environment.</p> <p>A deliverable under Aim 5 specifically references improving engagement with young people. Priority: strengthen how we work to serve the borough better Deliverable: Continue to embed the council's engagement framework, including development of specific guidance to better engage with young people, and strengthen our approach to public consultation to better promote engagement with any under-represented groups.</p>	
<p>Disability</p>	<p>Two deliverables under Aim 3 are focused on improving care and interventions for children with mental health and SEND. Priority: support children and families to live safe, happy and healthy lives Deliverable: Provide effective early help support to children and young people experiencing difficulties with their wellbeing and/or mental health. Priority: support all children and young people to achieve meaningful outcomes Deliverable: Work with Adult Social Care and housing providers to improve pathway and transition planning for young people with SEND.</p> <p>Two deliverables under Aim 4 specifically refer to those with disability and improving support for those living in their own homes and also increasing provision for those unable to live independently. Priority: provide access to the right support to residents at the right time</p>	

	<p>Review and revise the Disabled Facilities Grant Policy to enable wider use of the funding in supporting residents to live a safe and full life in their own homes.</p> <p>Priority: Deliver quality adult social care Deliverable: Develop more “lifetime homes” in Windsor and up to 18 “Shared Lives” arrangements across the borough to enable more people with learning disabilities to live in their own homes or with families, reducing the number of out-of-borough residential placements and further increasing service value for money.</p> <p>A deliverable under aim 4 includes a focus on improving pathways and access to services for those with disability.</p> <p>Priority: provide access to the right support to residents at the right time Deliverable: Develop effective service pathways to improve accessibility and inclusivity.</p> <p>A deliverable under Aim 5 includes a reference to under-represented groups which includes people with disability.</p> <p>Priority: strengthen how we work to serve the borough better Deliverable: Continue to embed the council’s engagement framework, including development of specific guidance to better engage with young people, and strengthen our approach to public consultation to better promote engagement with any under-represented groups.</p>	
Sex	The Council Plan is not anticipated to disproportionately or differentially impact individuals based upon this protected characteristic.	
Race, Ethnicity and Religion/Belief	<p>A deliverable under Aim 5 includes reference to improving engagement with under-represented groups which includes minority ethnic groups and religious groups.</p> <p>Priority: strengthen how we work to serve the borough better Deliverable: Continue to embed the council’s engagement framework, including development of specific guidance to better engage with young people, and strengthen our approach to public consultation to better promote engagement with any under-represented groups.</p>	

	<p>The following priority includes specific reference to strengthening partnerships with faith groups.</p> <p>Priority: Strengthen partnerships with charities, the voluntary sector, businesses, and parishes, health and education partners, statutory bodies, faith groups and others to enable better outcomes for residents</p>	
Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment	<p>Under Aim 4, there are plans to improve the provision of services to the LBTQ+ community through partner working.</p> <p>Priority: A Council-wide focus on increasing healthy life expectancy, improving wellbeing</p> <p>Deliverable: Develop effective pathways to improve accessibility and inclusivity to drug and alcohol services.</p>	
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>The Council Plan is not anticipated to disproportionately or differentially impact individuals based upon this protected characteristic.</p>	
Care experience (children in care and care leavers)	<p>A number of deliverables under Aim 3 are focused on improving the experience of children in care and care leavers.</p> <p>Priority: support children and families to live safe, happy and healthy lives</p> <p>Deliverable: Improve the timeliness of initial and annual health assessments for children in care and care leavers.</p> <p>Priority: support children and young people in our care</p> <p>Deliverables: Develop an in-house registered children's home provision and supported accommodation model for Care Leavers to meet care needs safely and locally.</p> <p>Deliverable: Develop a Care Leavers' guarantor scheme and improve the range of support available to Care Leavers to enable them to move into their own housing with appropriate support.</p>	
Socio-economic disadvantage (e.g., low income, poverty)	<p>A deliverable under Aim 2 will benefit areas of high deprivation who are more likely to have higher levels of anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Priority: Keep our neighbourhoods green and safe' sets out a deliverable</p> <p>Deliverable: Work in partnership to deliver key priorities for public protection in the reduction of serious violence, crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour and enabling community resilience through community warden engagement.</p>	

	<p>Two deliverables under the Aim 2 are focused on improving people with socio-economic disadvantage who are homeless or at the risk of becoming homeless.</p> <p>Priority: Ensure availability of housing that meets our local housing needs, with a focus on social housing and tackling homelessness</p> <p>Deliverable: Review and revise Housing policies, practice and procurement to provide improved service and accommodation solutions to those who are homeless or seeking provision of social housing.</p> <p>Deliverable: Identify opportunities and explore partnerships to increase availability of permanent housing/temporary accommodation and reduce the cost of temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Multiple priorities and deliverables under Aim 3 are focused on improving outcomes of those in poverty and/or socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Priority: support children and families to live safe, happy and healthy lives.</p> <p>Deliverable: Build on our multi-disciplinary teams to provide early support to children and young people as part of a "Think Families" approach, so that their needs do not escalate to requiring statutory support.</p> <p>Priority: Support all children and young people to achieve meaningful outcomes</p> <p>Deliverable: Work to reduce gaps in attainment in reading, writing and mathematics between children in receipt of the Pupil Premium grant and their peers.</p> <p>Priority: Support young people and families</p> <p>Deliverable: Create a new child and family help service that supports children in need (CIN) and families needing targeted support.</p> <p>Multiple deliverables under Aim 4 will benefit those with socio-economic disadvantage because children who in poverty are more likely to be obese, people with socio-economic disadvantage are more likely to require access to drug and alcohol treatment services, people with socio-economic disadvantage are more likely to be adversely affected and more profoundly affected by increasing cost-of-living and</p>	
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	<p>therefore more likely to benefit from these interventions</p> <p>Priority: A Council-wide focus on increasing healthy life expectancy, improving wellbeing</p> <p>Deliverable: Develop and deliver a whole systems approach to healthy weight for children and families, focusing in areas with higher rates of overweight and obesity, including steps to improve the food environment.</p> <p>Develop effective pathways to improve accessibility and inclusivity to drug and alcohol services.</p> <p>Priority: Provide access to the right support to residents at the right time</p> <p>Deliverable: Help to reduce the impact of cost of living rises on our residents, with a focus on those most at risk, through targeted financial and practical support e.g. Here to Help, Household Support Fund, Warm Spaces, Multiply.</p> <p>Deliverable: Develop effective service pathways to improve accessibility and inclusivity.</p>	
Marriage and Civil Partnership (in respect of employment discrimination only)	The Council Plan is not anticipated to disproportionately or differentially impact individuals based upon this protected characteristic.	
Armed Forces Community (in respect of access to public services)	The Council Plan is not anticipated to disproportionately or differentially impact individuals based upon this protected characteristic.	

Where a potential negative impact has been identified, what measures would be put in place to mitigate or minimise it?

The Council Plan is not anticipated to have a negative impact on any of the groups within the EQIA, excluding those groups already identified through the Budget 2024/25. The Council Plan aims at explicitly improving services including accessibility and inclusivity for those who have protected characteristics.