

Budget Savings Proposals Full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Section 1: General Information

1a) Name of the savings proposal

Redesign and integration of Early Years and Children's Centres Management

1b) Service area

Learning and Achievement

1c) Service Head

Anne Canning – Service Head, Learning and Achievement

1d) Name and role of the officer/s completing the EQIA

Harriet Potemkin, Policy Officer

Section 2: Information about changes to services

2a) In brief please explain the savings proposals and the reasons for this change

This proposal will streamline the management of early years provision, taking a holistic locality-based approach. This includes a single management structure to oversee services provided through Children's Centres, day care settings, one o'clock clubs and crèche provision to ensure that services are integrated and effectively meeting need across locality areas.

The Council inherited the management of Children's Centres from the PCT in 2006, and has invested significantly in their development over the last 4 years. We are now in a strong position to review and consolidate provision ensuring that resources are focussed on the provision that we know meets need in relation to improved outcomes for young children.

Efficiencies will be gained by reviewing management structures and reviewing underused services that are not effective in meeting the needs of children and parents. Better use of assets (eg hiring of Children's Centres/ one o'clock club buildings when not in use by early years services) is also being explored.

Children's Centres are currently funded by the Sure Start grant but other early years provision in day nurseries and one o'clock clubs has been funded historically through core budgets. This review will consider moving all funding of provision into the early years funding, which it is understood will in future be provided as part of the Early Intervention Grant, replacing the Sure Start grant. This will achieve a saving to the General Fund and is in line with current grant conditions.

This proposal is already well developed as provision has been comprehensively mapped and options considered by a steering group. It is proposed to move to a new locality-based model, with existing Children's Centres and other premises being used as community service hubs for young children and their parents. The savings will be made from management structures with little impact on front line service provision. The intention is that existing Children's Centre premises will remain in use for community and under 5 provision. Alongside this is a review of management and administration (back office) functions in Early Years to remove duplication and consolidate back office functions in line with corporate reviews. This review is underway and will be implemented from April 2011.

2b) What are the equality implications of your proposal?

In relation to the test of relevance questions, we know that this savings proposal will involve a reduction in staff. The borough will accommodate these changes in a positive way, wherever possible providing development for employees' careers and without threat to job security. The impact of a reduction in posts in Early Years is considered in the staff section below.

In terms of impact on the community, the overarching aims of the saving proposals are to remove duplication and consolidate back office functions, thereby ensuring the service continues to meet the needs of the community with reduced funding. There should not therefore be any adverse impact on any groups within the community currently using Children's Centres.

In coming to this conclusion, it is necessary to consider the saving proposals in two parts:

- The first part of the savings proposal is related only to a reduction in back office staff. This is designed to limit the impact on the community and avoid any potential for negative equality implications.
- The second part of the saving proposal is the plan to consolidate some services in locality hubs. It is envisaged that all services currently provided will continue to be available in each locality:
 - Information is being gathered which will be used to help make decisions on which services may be consolidated. Information to be considered includes evaluation and monitoring to determine the effectiveness of current services and assessment of the accessibility of services (including the timing of sessions and the suitability of venues) when making decisions on service replacement and will aim for minimal changes. We will use the responses to our consultation with parents carried out in June 2010 to help make decisions on service consolidation, which is attached as an appendix.
 - The views of the community, accessibility of services to the community, and the aim is to provide services which have a positive impact on children and families, are therefore central to any decision-making. This will help test and address any negative impact on any groups within the community.

In addition, we are increasing family support through increasing the number of family support officer posts, as well as increasing play and learning sessions. Family support will be focused at the most vulnerable groups, and should therefore have a positive

impact on families within protected groups who are identified as being in need – including families where the child or parent has a disability, or where the family is living in poverty for example.

The vast majority of the Children’s Centre budget savings will be in the management structure. The family support and early learning and care for under 5s will remain the same or increase in some areas. This means that as a whole, the community are not expected to be adversely affected by the savings and indeed vulnerable children and families should benefit from increased targeted family support.

Recommendation

Although no adverse impact on any group has been identified, equalities data of families accessing different services and programmes in Children’s Centres is limited, and is not currently routinely evaluated to help determine decisions. The recommendation is that we aim to improve collection and use of data in future, to more rigorously assess impact of services on different groups.

Section 3: Equality Impact Assessment

With reference to the analysis above, for each of the equality strands in the table below please record and evidence your conclusions around equality impact in relation to the savings proposal.

<p>Race</p> <p><i>Identify the effect of the policy on different racial groups.</i></p>	<p>Will the change in your policy/service have an adverse impact on specific ethnic groups? yes/no Please describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion.</p> <p>The vast majority of the Children's Centre budget savings will be in the management structure. The family support and early learning and care for under 5s will remain the same or increase in some areas. This means that as a whole, the community are not expected to be adversely affected by the savings, and indeed vulnerable children and families should benefit from increased targeted family support.</p> <p>This should apply to all racial groups.</p>
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Disability

Identify the effect of the policy on different disability groups

Will the change in your policy/service have an adverse impact on disabled people? yes/**no**
Please describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion.

The vast majority of the Children's Centre budget savings will be in the management structure. The family support and early learning and care for under 5s will remain the same or increase in some areas. This means that as a whole, the community are not expected to be adversely affected by the savings, and indeed vulnerable children and families should benefit from increased targeted family support.

This should apply to all disability groups.

<p>Gender</p> <p><i>Identify the effect of the policy on different gender groups (inc Trans) groups</i></p>	<p>Will the change in your policy/service have an adverse impact on men or women? yes/no Please describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion.</p> <p>The vast majority of the Children’s Centre budget savings will be in the management structure. The family support and early learning and care for under 5s will remain the same or increase in some areas. This means that as a whole, the community are not expected to be adversely affected by the savings, and indeed vulnerable children and families should benefit from increased targeted family support.</p> <p>This should apply to all gender groups.</p>
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<p>Sexual Orientation</p> <p><i>Identify the effect of the policy on members of the LGB community</i></p>	<p>Will the change in your policy/service have an adverse impact on lesbian, gay or bisexual people? yes/no Please describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion.</p> <p>The vast majority of the Children's Centre budget savings will be in the management structure. The family support and early learning and care for under 5s will remain the same or increase in some areas. This means that as a whole, the community are not expected to be adversely affected by the savings, and indeed vulnerable children and families should benefit from increased targeted family support.</p> <p>This should apply to LGB members of the community.</p>
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**Religion
and Belief**

*Identify the
effect of the
policy on
different
**religious
and faith
groups***

Will the change in your policy/service have an adverse impact on people who practice a religion or belief? yes/**no**
Please describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion.

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This should apply to all religious and faith groups.

<p>Age</p> <p><i>Identify the effect of the policy on different age groups using the prompts above</i></p>	<p>Will the change in your policy/service have an adverse impact on specific age groups? yes/no Please describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion.</p> <p>The vast majority of the Children’s Centre budget savings will be in the management structure. The family support and early learning and care for under 5s will remain the same or increase in some areas. This means that as a whole, the community are not expected to be adversely affected by the savings, and indeed vulnerable children and families should benefit from increased targeted family support.</p> <p>This will particularly benefit the 0-5 age group, which is the main service user group of Children’s Centres.</p>
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<p>Socio-economic</p> <p><i>Identify the effect of the policy in relation to socio-economic inequalities</i></p>	<p>Will the change in your policy/service have an adverse impact on people with low incomes? yes/no Please describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion.</p> <p>The vast majority of the Children’s Centre budget savings will be in the management structure. The family support and early learning and care for under 5s will remain the same or increase in some areas. This means that as a whole, the community are not expected to be adversely affected by the savings, and indeed vulnerable children and families should benefit from increased targeted family support.</p> <p>This should particularly benefit families living in poverty, as family support targeted at these families is increasing.</p>
<p>Other</p> <p><i>Identify if there are groups, other than those already considered, that may be adversely affected by the policy?</i></p>	<p>Will the change in your policy/service have an adverse impact on any other people (e.g. carers)? yes/no Please describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion.</p> <p>No</p>

<p>Staff</p> <p><i>Identify if there are any staff groups, , that may be adversely affected by the policy?</i></p>	<p>Will the change in your policy/service have an adverse impact on staff?</p> <p>There will be a reduction of 30 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) posts out of a total of 249 FTE posts. These reductions will be focused on back office and management posts:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Grade</th> <th>% of posts being deleted</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Scale 1 – 6 (lowest income bracket)</td> <td>There will be an increase of 13.2 posts at this grade.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SO 1-2 (Middle income bracket)</td> <td>67%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P01-P05 (Middle to highest income bracket)</td> <td>17%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Senior manager posts</td> <td>16%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Those in the lowest income bracket are seeing an increase in posts, which means that staff in this group are not adversely affected by the changes.</p> <p>An EQIA of the staffing restructure will be carried out to ensure any equality issues are identified and addressed in line with the Council's Organisational Change Policy.</p>	Grade	% of posts being deleted	Scale 1 – 6 (lowest income bracket)	There will be an increase of 13.2 posts at this grade.	SO 1-2 (Middle income bracket)	67%	P01-P05 (Middle to highest income bracket)	17%	Senior manager posts	16%
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Section 4: Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Please list in the table below any adverse impact identified and, where appropriate, steps that could be taken to mitigate this impact.

If you consider it likely that your proposal will have an adverse impact on a particular group (s) and you cannot identify steps which would mitigate or reduce this impact, you will need to demonstrate that you have considered at least one alternative way of delivering the change which has less of an adverse impact.

Adverse impact	Please describe the actions that will be taken to mitigate this impact
No adverse impacts identified.	

If an adverse impact cannot be mitigated please describe an alternative option, its costs and the equality impact.

Section 5: Future Review and Monitoring

Please explain how and when the actual equality impact of these changes will be reviewed and monitored.

Analysis of impact on staff across the whole council needs to take place.

Although no adverse impact on any group within the community has been identified, equalities data on families accessing different services and programmes in Children’s Centres is limited, and is not currently routinely evaluated to help determine decisions. The

recommendation is that we aim to improve collection and use of data in future, to more rigorously assess impact of services on different groups.

APPENDIX A: Equality Impact Assessment Test of Relevance

TRIGGER QUESTIONS	YES / NO	IF YES PLEASE BRIEFLY EXPLAIN.....
Does the change reduce resources available to address inequality?	No	
CHANGES TO A SERVICE		
Does the change alter access to the service?	No	
Does the change involve revenue raising?	Yes	We are considering raising revenue by hiring premises to groups when not in use by early years services. This change appears to have no immediate impact, but this will need to be evaluated as the practice develops. Access to services free of charge will continue for children and parents.
Does the change alter who is eligible for the service?	No	
Does the change involve a reduction or removal of income transfers to service users?	No	

Does the change involve a contracting out of a service currently provided in house?	No	
CHANGES TO STAFFING		
Does the change involve a reduction in staff?	Yes	<p>All staff affected will be subject to the councils' Handling Organisational change procedure. Tower Hamlets aims to provide best value services to the community, and regards its staff as its most important asset to do this.</p> <p>Changes to service delivery and within the organisation inevitably take place, and the Borough will accommodate these changes in a positive way, wherever possible providing development for employees' careers and without threat to job security.</p>
Does the change involve a redesign of the roles of staff?	Yes	Staff roles will change, however this will not affect pay levels or flexible working.