

Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment

Service:	Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services
Directorate:	Chief Operating Office
Title of proposal:	Extension of Contract with Northgate for the Management of the Haringey Support Fund
Lead Officer (author of the proposal):	Carla Segel Assistant Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services
Names of other Officers involved:	Jim Brady, Zakir Chaudhry

Statement of purpose

In making this proposal, we have been mindful of our public sector equality duty to have due regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between different groups and;
- c) foster good relations between groups in Haringey.

In addition we are committed to ensuring that we promote social inclusion in all council services making sure that they address the needs of those vulnerable residents who rely most heavily on them. The most socially excluded residents predominantly have the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.

The purpose of this assessment is to:

- a) Identify whether and to what extent this proposal: could produce disadvantage or enhance opportunity for any groups with the protected characteristic defined in the Equality Act 2010;
- b) Establish whether the potential disadvantage is significant enough to call for special measures to remove or reduce the disadvantage;
- c) Identify and set out the measures that will be taken to remove or reduce the disadvantage;
- d) Where mitigation measures are not possible, to set out and explain why;
- e) To ensure that Members are fully aware of the implications the proposal may have for the Council's public sector equality duty before they decide on the proposal.

Step One: Identify the aims of the proposal

1) Please state:

- **What problems the proposal is intended to address**
- **What effects it is intended to achieve**
- **Which group(s) it is intended to benefit and how**

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 required Local Authorities to implement a scheme of Local Welfare provision from 01 April 2013. The scheme, previously administered by JobCentre Plus, transferred the DWP responsibility for discretionary payments under the former "Social Fund" to Local Authority control.

At Cabinet in October 2013, it was agreed to award the contract to manage Haringey's Support Fund (the local name for the original Social Fund) to Northgate Information Systems UK Limited (Northgate) for a 17 month period ending on 31st March 2015. Central Government have confirmed that funding for the Support Fund will cease from 01 April 2015. Haringey currently has an under-spend and it is proposed that these funds are used to continue the provision of a Support Fund Scheme for the next 12 months. The long-term plans for the Scheme and funding for it will be considered during these 12 months. In order to maintain consistency and provide the best value service to those customers in need for assistance, it is proposed that the contract with Northgate is extended to 31st March 2016.

The policy agreed initially by Cabinet has not changed and the eligibility criteria remains the same. As such all people currently entitled to apply for an award under the current Scheme will continue to receive the same level of service - where applicants are not given an award due to not meeting the set eligibility criteria they will be sign posted elsewhere and given other options for support.

Step Two: Consideration of available data, research and information

Instruction: You should gather all relevant quantitative and qualitative data that will help you assess whether at present, there are differential outcomes for the different equalities target groups – diverse ethnic groups, women, men, older people, young people, disabled people, gay men, lesbians and transgender people and faith groups, etc. Identify where there are gaps in data and say how you plug these gaps.

In order to establish whether a group is experiencing disproportionate effects, you should relate the data for each group to its population size. The Haringey Borough Profile of Protected Characteristics (can be found on the Website) will help you to make comparisons against Haringey's population size. The most up to date information can be found in the [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#).

1) Using data from equalities monitoring, recent surveys, research, consultation etc. are there group(s) in the community who:

- are significantly under/over represented in the use of the service, when compared to their population size?
- have raised concerns about access to services or quality of services?

The original scheme was administered by the DWP and they were unable to provide detailed analysis of claimants and therefore projections of impact on future claimants.

Whilst the Support Fund was managed by Northgate (November 2013 to date) equalities information has been collected. It is worth noting that the equalities questions are not a mandatory part of the application process so we do not hold full data for all applicants.

	2013/14 Data	Borough Demographic / Census Information
Gender		
Male	50%	48%
Female	50%	52%
Household Make-up		
Couple	2%	14%
Family	4%	37%
Lone Parent	20%	20%
Pensioner	6%	8%
Single	67%	24%
Disability		
Yes	53%	14%
No / not answered	47%	86%
Ethnicity		
White British	32%	35%
White Other	12%	23%
Other Non White	56%	42%
Religion		
Christian	44%	45%
Muslim	17%	14%
Other	12%	7%

None / not answered	28%	34%
Age		
Under 24	12%	9%
25-44	51%	39%
45-59	29%	17%
60-64	4%	4%
65+	4%	9%

2) What factors / barriers might account for this under/over representation?

Even without detailed data, there are likely to be certain groups who are over-represented among claimants who are likely to make applications under the scheme. The reasons for this over representation are multiple and complex and are extensively described in the Council's various key strategic documents and summarised in the Corporate Equality Objectives 2012 – 16. The key factors are:

- **Unemployment** – especially in the east of the borough and within some groups including women, especially lone female parents and minority ethnic communities.
- **Deprivation** – with a disproportionately high concentration in the east and within minority ethnic communities.
- **Child poverty** –with disproportionate incidence in the east and within minority ethnic communities and lone female parents.
- **Disability** –A range of benefits and allowances (e.g. Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance) are claimed by a large number of disabled people of working age. It is recognised that people claiming these benefits are effectively economically inactive.
- **Homelessness** – This may prevent people from working. The homeless register shows an over representation of lone female parents; young people aged 16-24; and; Black or Black British people – three times their size in the local population.

3) What other evidence or data will you need to support your conclusions and how do you propose to fill the gap?

We continue to monitor data relating to applicants and to amend the application process as appropriate to ensure we are gathering as much data as possible.

We commissioned a specific piece of research with the Centre of Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) to understand more about the people impacted by the Support Fund and how we could target it more appropriately.

Step Three: Assessment of Impact

Instruction: Using the information you have gathered and analysed in step 2, you should assess whether and how the proposal you are putting forward will affect any of the existing barriers facing people who have any of the characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010. State what actions you will take to address any potential negative effects your proposal may have on them.

1) How will your proposal affect existing barriers? (Please tick below as appropriate and use the space to explain why)

Increase barriers? X

Reduce barriers?

No change?

For explanation of the impact see table below.

2) What specific actions are you proposing in order to reduce the existing barriers and imbalances you have identified in Step 2?

In transferring the Social Fund scheme to local control, the DWP gave Local Authorities the power to amend eligibility criteria and other key aspects of the scheme. Haringey made a positive choice to keep the scheme open to many people as we were able to and mirrored much of the original scheme principles. The proposal for 2015/16 is to continue the scheme as is without any changes to the existing criteria.

It is recognised that there will be areas of the community who were impacted by the original Support Fund changes and who will continue to be impacted going forward. All applicants are given signposting to additional areas of support in order to mitigate hardship. Information on this is provided below.

Summary of impact and mitigations by protected characteristics

Impact	Mitigation
Age	
<p><u>Older People</u> Older people are under- represented in using the Support Fund at present. Reasons for under usage could be lack of knowledge of the fund and cultural/historical reluctance to apply for grants. It was envisaged that older people moving out of hospital or supported accommodation could need assistance with replacing some household goods or need specific items which are not medical equipment but which could make independent living easier following a all or exacerbation of impairment related needs however this has not materialised.</p> <p><u>Young people</u> Young people are over represented in their usage of the Support Fund. This is due to the high proportion of young offenders / those leaving care / long parents falling into this category.</p>	<p>Under the eligibility of the current scheme, individual circumstances are considered so those in financial need are prioritised irrespective of age.</p> <p>It is noted that there is under-representation from the older persons group and families. Targeted publicity in appropriate forums / user groups may be useful.</p> <p>Young people leaving care and struggling to manage their budgets will continue to be prioritised as vulnerable for Emergency payments.</p> <p>Young parents and lone parents with additional needs will continue to be prioritised as vulnerable for Emergency payments.</p> <p>In terms of additional signposting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is recognised that certain people may find

Impact	Mitigation
	<p>it difficult to find work due to their age; they will continue to be signposted to employment and re-skilling programmes that provide targeted support to find work. These include focused training provided by Haringey Adult Learning Services, CONEL and other Haringey based providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where people have been affected by multiple welfare reform changes (such as the CAP and the Size Criteria changes) they will continue to receive individual assistance including 121 interviews with colleagues from Housing Services and JobCentrePlus and direct referrals to support providers such as Money Advice Service or the Quaker Social Action Group.
Sex (formerly gender)	
<p>Data held shows broadly an equal split between claims from both sexes.</p> <p>There is a high level of claims from single men. This is potentially a result of men over the age of 30 being more likely to sustain an unsettled way of life compared to women and many have difficulty in managing their money if they have been in a homelessness hostel or lived in temporary accommodation for a long period.</p> <p>People leaving prison and young offenders institutions and presenting for assistance are more likely to be men.</p> <p>Lone and young parents are likely to be women.</p> <p>People fleeing domestic violence who present for assistance are more likely to be women.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> London Boroughs continue with a previous agreement to support people leaving prison with funding coming from the individual's home borough rather than where they are being placed in. Additional support will be given via signposting to other appropriate agencies. People leaving prison and young offenders institutions continue to be seen as a priority group. Lone and young parents with children and people fleeing domestic violence continue to be considered as a priority group. <p>In terms of additional signposting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female applicants will be signposted to the various appropriate women specific employment and skills development initiatives in the borough, in addition to generic programmes to help people into work e.g. Haringey Adult Learning Services (HALS) and the College of North East London (CONEL) Where appropriate there will continue to be targeted signposting in place for local groups offering support that is gender specific such as Missionaries of Charity which have separate groups for women (Home of Peace) and men (The Gift of Love) All groups impacted by the various Welfare Reform initiatives will continue to have targeted support offered to them in terms of housing, childcare and training

Impact	Mitigation
	opportunities.
Disability	
<p>There is a reasonable representation of disabled people amongst applicants.</p> <p>Disabled people are more likely to be in residential care or at risk of returning to residential care than non-disabled people.</p> <p>Households identified as being vulnerable, or having priority circumstances or being less likely to be able to manage their finances would include a significant proportion of disabled people.</p>	<p>Over 50% of applicants consider themselves to have a disability, mental health being the highest category.</p> <p>We will continue to prioritise claims from disabled people, where appropriate we seek feedback from key support workers for these claimants.</p> <p>In terms of additional signposting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is recognised that this group may find it difficult to find work and as such are supported appropriately in terms of employment and re-skilling programmes.
Race /ethnicity	
<p>There is some disproportion of awards compared to the general population, however, people from ethnic minorities are generally likely to be in a lower income range and have a higher need to turn to the Support Fund for assistance.</p>	<p>The Support Fund is a universal provision and as such, we make no specific provision on the basis of race/ethnicity but will offer appropriate signposting in each case, in light of individual's circumstances.</p> <p>In terms of additional signposting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claimants will continue to be signposted to employment and skills training programmes to enhance employment opportunities, especially in the east of the Borough where there is a high concentration of BMEs and high levels of deprivation. Relationships have been built with local JobCentrePlus sites where claimants can receive information about opportunities relating to both employment and skills development. There is also access to budgeting loans to help with any work related costs (such as clothing or equipment). These will continue going forward.
Pregnancy and maternity	
<p>We do not collect information about claimants' maternity status so the full impact on this characteristic is not known. However women falling into this category would be deemed a priority group due to the potential impact on their children.</p>	<p>Households that include a pregnant women or young children will be seen as a priority group when considering eligibility.</p> <p>In terms of additional signposting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will continue to be targeted signposting in place for those needing support with children such as the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), Family Action Group and referrals to the Sure Start Maternity Grant department of the DWP.

Impact	Mitigation
	<p>In addition claimants can be signposted to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government's "Healthy Start" scheme which provides vouchers to pregnant women and those with children under four, they can be exchanged for food, fruit and formula milk. • Haringey has 17 Children Centres located across the borough bringing together a range of services such as childcare, family support, health and education and information on local services.
Religion and belief	
We do not collect information about claimants' religious beliefs so the full impact on this characteristic is not known.	We make no specific provision on the basis of religion or belief but offer appropriate signposting in each case, in light of individual's circumstances.
Sexual Orientation	
We do not collect information about claimants' sexual orientation so the full impact on this characteristic is not known.	We make no specific provision on the basis of religion or belief but offer appropriate signposting in each case, in light of individual's circumstances.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	
<p>It is noted that lone parent families are a high claimant group. Mitigation has been provided above in relation to this.</p> <p>Additional targeted signposting to the fund for families is required.</p>	<p>It is noted that lone parent families are a high claimant group. Mitigation has been provided above in relation to this.</p> <p>Additional targeted signposting to the fund for families is required.</p>
Protected characteristic: Gender Reassignment	
We do not collect information about claimants' gender reassignment status so the full impact on this characteristic is not known.	We make no specific provision on the basis of gender reassignment status but offer appropriate signposting in each case, in light of individual's circumstances.

3) If there are barriers that cannot be removed, what groups will be most affected and what Positive Actions are you proposing in order to reduce the adverse impact on those groups?

The scheme is intended to be a support for people in short term need or immediate crisis. The main barriers that cannot be removed are the limited budgets which will not be sufficient to support every applicant for assistance. In mitigation, all applicants (whether successful in receiving an award of not) will be signposted to other areas of support and assistance such as debt management (via the Money Advice Trust), food banks and childcare facilities.

Step Four: Consult on the proposal

Instruction: Consultation is an essential part of an impact assessment. If there has been

recent consultation, which has highlighted the issues you have identified in Steps 2 and 3, use it to inform your assessment. If there has been no consultation relating to the issues, then you may have to carry out consultation to assist your assessment.

Make sure you reach all those who are likely to be affected by the proposal. Potentially these will be people who have some or all of the characteristics listed below and mentioned in the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Re-assignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race, Religion or Belief
- Sex (formerly Gender) and
- Sexual Orientation

Do not forget to give feedback to the people you have consulted, stating how you have responded to the issues and concerns they have raised.

1) Who have you consulted on your proposal and what were the main issues and concerns from the consultation?

There is no statutory requirement placed on the Council to consult on the provision of a local scheme. However Haringey continues to engage in ongoing consultation in the following ways:

- Discussions with various internal and voluntary sector organisations on fast-tracking their applications in order to ensure appropriate support
- Ongoing data sharing and best practice bench marking with other Boroughs and the DWP.
- Shared learning from Northgate operatives who are dealing with applicants
- Research taken from the Centre of Analysis of Social Exclusion

2) How, in your proposal have you responded to the issues and concerns from consultation?

As per previous information, eligibility criteria continues to largely mirroring that of the original scheme, this will allow for most claimants to continue receiving the same level of support.

3) How have you informed the public and the people you consulted about the results of the consultation and what actions you are proposing in order to address the concerns raised?

The scheme will continue to be publicised through the Council website and via referrals from trusted agencies and partners.

Step Five: Addressing Training

Instruction: The equalities issues you have identified during the assessment and consultation may be new to you or your staff, which means you will need to raise awareness of them among your staff, which may even training. You should identify those issues and plan how and when you will raise them with your staff.

1) Do you envisage the need to train staff or raise awareness of the equalities issues arising from any aspects of your proposal and as a result of the impact

assessment, and if so, what plans have you made?

The issues identified in this EqIA will be raised with relevant managers and staff through briefings and team meetings. Where specific training needs are identified, arrangements will be made for them needs to be met. The supporting documentation in relation to signposting is reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Step Six: Monitoring Arrangements

Instruction: If the proposal is adopted, there is a legal duty to monitor and publish its actual effects on people. Monitoring should cover all the protected characteristics detailed in Step 4 above. The purpose of equalities monitoring is to see how the proposal is working in practice and to identify if and where it is producing disproportionate adverse effects and to take steps to address those effects. You should use the Council's equal opportunities monitoring form which can be downloaded from Harinet. Generally, equalities monitoring data should be gathered, analysed and reported quarterly, in the first instance to your DMT and then to the Corporate Equality Board.

- 1) What arrangements do you have or will put in place to monitor, report, publish and disseminate information on how your proposal is working and whether or not it is producing the intended equalities outcomes?**
 - **Who will be responsible for monitoring?**
 - **What indicators and targets will be used to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy/service/function and its equalities impact?**
 - **Are there monitoring procedures already in place which will generate this information?**
 - **Where will this information be reported and how often?**

The scheme will continue to be reviewed and existing Council policy on equality monitoring will be followed.

Step Seven: Summary of Impact

Instruction: In the table below, summarise for each diversity strand the impacts you have identified in your assessment.

Age	Disability	Race (Ethnicity)	Sex (Gender)	Religion or Belief	Sexual Orientation	Gender Reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy and Maternity
<p>Older people are under represented in using the scheme at present.</p> <p>Young people, in particular men over the age of 30 and lone female parents are over represented in their use of the scheme at present.</p>	<p>Disabled people are reasonably represented in the scheme at the moment. It is felt more can be done in this area to ensure targeted support</p>	<p>There is some disproportion of awards compared to the general population, however, people from ethnic minorities are generally likely to be in a lower income range and have a higher need to turn to the Support Fund for assistance.</p>	<p>There is a fair balance of applicants across both genders</p>	<p>There is no mandatory requirement for claimants to provide this data, as such the data held is not sufficient to conduct any meaningful analysis</p>	<p>There is no mandatory requirement for claimants to provide this data, as such the data held is not sufficient to conduct any meaningful analysis</p>	<p>There is no mandatory requirement for claimants to provide this data, as such the data held is not sufficient to conduct any meaningful analysis</p>	<p>It is recognised that lone parent families are a high claimant group. Additional targeted signposting to the fund for families is required.</p>	<p>Claims where there is a child in the household are given a priority status.</p>

Step Eight: Summarise the actions to be implemented

Instruction: Please list below any recommendations for action that you plan to take as a result of this impact assessment.

Issue	Action required	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
All groups	Scheme eligibility will be clearly publicised and applicants informed of whether or not an award has been made.	Assistant Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services	April 2015 and ongoing	Within existing resources as set out in the contract arrangement with Northgate
Monitoring of impact of the scheme	The scheme will continue to be monitored to understand the impact on all groups. Data will be collected in relation to protected characteristics	Assistant Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services	April 2015 and ongoing	Within existing resources as set out in the contract arrangement with Northgate

