

Equalities Analysis Assessment

1. Proposal Summary Information

EAA Title	Covid 19 Local Support Grant
Please describe your proposal?	<p>To seek Cabinet agreement for a programme of activity to be funded from the Covid 19 Local Support Grant.</p> <p>The Government has extended the C19 Local Support scheme until 30 September 2021 and allocated additional funding to local authorities to distribute the funding . Ealing Council's allocation under the most recent extension is £1,006,100.79</p> <p>The scheme is to ensure that vulnerable households, children and families get extra support thorough summer with food, utilites, essential clothing and other essentials.</p>
Is it HR Related?	No
Corporate Purpose	Cabinet Report Decision

1. What is the Scheme looking to achieve? Who will be affected?
<p>The objective of the Covid19 Local Support Grant Scheme is to provide support to vulnerable households and families with children particularly affected by the pandemic. The scheme was originally set up by the Government in winter and has since been extended a number of times. The latest extension covers period from 21 June to 30 September 2021.</p> <p>Any unspent funds will have to be paid back to Department Work & Pensions.</p> <p>The scheme and aims to help thousands of households with children eligible for free school meals as well as other vulnerable families and individuals using existing Local Welfare assistance scheme.</p> <p>The scheme is broken down into three elements.</p> <p><u>Element 1:</u> Targeting families eligible for FSMs where eligibility is based on low income (excludes universal support).</p> <p>The Council will automatically issue awards to parents of children eligible to free school meals where their eligibility is based on low income and not on universal support.</p> <p>The Council will then automatically issue food vouchers to families identified as entitled to free school meals to cover the 6-week period of school holidays through summer - £15 per week per child per week (12,949 children, c 8,336 households) in one off payment</p> <p><u>Element 2:</u> Targeting families with children under the age of 5:</p>

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Provide support to the value of £65 in one off payment to families with children under 5 as identified through Council Tax Reduction (CTR), Housing Benefit (HB) and Temporary Accommodation (TA) databases (circa 1,460 families).

Element 3: Targeting vulnerable households without children, households who do not qualify for automatic vouchers and those who need additional support other essential items.

Local Welfare Assistance (LWA) will provide support to other vulnerable households in the borough and will support for families with other essentials including sanitary products, warm clothing, soap, blankets, boiler/service repair; purchase of equipment including fridges, freezers, ovens, etc.

The customer will be required to make an application for local welfare assistance and the application will be decided in accordance with the existing eligibility criteria for LWA.

2. What will the impact of your proposal be?

(i.e. Please provide a before and after picture of the service that will be affected by your proposal e.g. how does it currently operate and then how it will operate after your proposal has been implemented. Where possible please be clear on the number of people or size of the community affected)

This funding will allow the Council to support households with children and other households in the borough experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, poverty during the pandemic. This may include households not currently in receipt of DWP welfare benefits.

Element 1 & 2 will support more than 14,000 children & young people in the borough who receive means-tested free school meals and families with children under 5. The scheme will also support other vulnerable adults through existing local welfare assistance scheme with food, utilities and other essentials. Each family will receive food vouchers per child which will provide additional support during Christmas and February half term holidays.

Around 12,949 children (c 8,336 households) eligible for free school meals and additional 1,460 households with children under 5 as identified through CTR and HB records will receive support automatically.

Element 3: additional funding of around £44,000 will be allocated to the existing Local Welfare Assistance scheme which will allow all households in the borough to make an application if they are facing an immediate financial crisis or there is an immediate danger to there or their family's health and safety. Each application will be assessed on its individual merits and according to the current Local Welfare eligibility criteria.

2. Impact on Groups having a Protected Characteristic

AGE: *A person of an age or being within an age group.*

State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:

Describe the Impact

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(Please be as specific and clear as possible when describing the impact and include any local data i.e. service usage. If this is lacking please include regional or national data or research. Please identify any differential impact on different age groups. Please note if there is no differential impact on people with this characteristic, please state this)

The proposed scheme will potentially affect more working age customers than pensioners as the purpose of the grant is to mainly support families with children (DWP advice is that 80% of funding should be spend to support families with children).

Pensioners experiencing hardship will still have access to support through current Local Welfare Assistance scheme and will be able to receive support with food, utilities and other essential items.

The impact will be positive for all irrespective of age.

Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:

The alternative to the scheme is to reduce support for children eligible for free school meals and increase local welfare assistance funding or create a separate scheme accessible by application only. Both options would increase administration costs and reduce level of support available to residents. Under such proposals, some of the families would also be at risk of missing out on the support available.

Describe the Mitigating Action

(Please describe any actions you will take to limit the impact of your proposal on this group. Please be open and forthright, decision makers need to be provided with as clear a picture as possible.)

Local Welfare Assistance will continue to be available irrespective of whether the proposed scheme is chosen. By increasing the funding Ealing Local Welfare Assistance Fund, it is anticipated that people with protected characteristics will not be negatively impacted by the changes

In order to realise this potential positive impact it is important that service users with protected characteristics (as well as front line workers and volunteers who work with service users who have protected characteristics) are aware of the scheme, who may benefit and how to apply.

DISABILITY: A person has a disability if s/he has a physical, mental or sensory impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities¹.

State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:

Describe the Impact

(Please be as specific and clear as possible when describing the impact and include any local data i.e. service usage. If this is lacking please include regional or national data or research. Please identify any differential impact on people with different types of disabilities. Please note if there is no differential impact on people with this characteristic, please state this)

¹ Due regard to meeting the needs of people with disabilities involves taking steps to take account of their disabilities and may involve making reasonable adjustments and prioritizing certain groups of disabled people on the basis that they are particularly affected by the proposal.

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The definition of disability is based on whether a benefit recipient has a disability marker on their administrative datasets which is added by officer when a customer states they have a disability and provided appropriate evidence.

It is difficult to identify households with disabilities amongst the families eligible for free school meals as data on disability is not collected for this cohort. CTR and HB data available suggests 1460 eligible for automatic support under element 2 are households in receipt of a disability benefit. The impact will be the positive for all irrespective of disability.

Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect: The alternative to the scheme is to reduce support for children eligible for free school meals and increase local welfare assistance funding or create a separate scheme accessible by application only. Both options would increase administration costs and reduce level of support available to residents. Under such proposals, some of the families would also be at risk of missing out on the support available.

Describe the Mitigating Action

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GENDER REASSIGNMENT: *This is the process of transitioning from one sex to another. This includes persons who consider themselves to be trans, transgender and transsexual.*

State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:

Describe the Impact

No data is currently available on the numbers of people with this protected characteristic who are receiving welfare support.

Any three of the elements will affect people with this protected characteristic positively. The impact will be positive for all irrespective of gender reassignment.

Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:

The alternative to the scheme is to reduce support for children eligible for free school meals and increase local welfare assistance funding or create a separate scheme accessible by application only. Both options would increase administration costs and reduce level of support available to residents. Under such proposals, some of the families would also be at risk of missing out on the support available.

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RACE: A group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins or race.

State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:

Describe the Impact

There is no data relating to how the proposed scheme will impact those falling under the protected characteristic of race. The impact will be positive for all irrespective of race.

Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect: The alternative to the scheme is to reduce support for children eligible for free school meals and increase local welfare assistance funding or create a separate scheme accessible by application only. Both options would increase administration costs and reduce level of support available to residents. Under such proposals, some of the families would also be at risk of missing out on the support available.

Describe the Mitigating Action

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RELIGION & BELIEF: Religion means any religion. Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (for example, Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect a person's life choices or the way you live for it to be included.

State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:

Describe the Impact

The proposed scheme will potentially affect all customers irrespective of religious beliefs or none. The changes are not targeted at anyone holding a specific belief.

There is no data relating to how the proposed scheme will impact those falling under the protected characteristic of race. The impact will be positive for all irrespective of religion and belief.

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Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect: The alternative to the scheme is to reduce support for children eligible for free school meals and increase local welfare assistance funding or create a separate scheme accessible by application only. Both options would increase administration costs and reduce level of support available to residents. Under such proposals, some of the families would also be at risk of missing out on the support available.

Describe the Mitigating Action

Local Welfare Assistance will continue to be available irrespective of whether the proposed scheme is chosen. By increasing the funding Ealing Local Welfare funding, it is anticipated that people with protected characteristics will not be negatively impacted by the changes

In order to realise this potential positive impact it is important that service users with protected characteristics (as well as front line workers and volunteers who work with service users who have protected characteristics) are aware of the scheme, who may benefit and how to apply.

SEX: Someone being a man or a woman.

State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:

Describe the Impact

(Please be as specific and clear as possible when describing the impact and include any local data i.e. service usage. If this is lacking please include regional or national data or research. Please note if there is no differential impact on a persons gender, please state this)

The proposed scheme will positively affect all customers irrespective of sex. The impact will be the same for all irrespective of sex.

Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect: The alternative to the scheme is to reduce support for children eligible for free school meals and increase local welfare assistance funding or create a separate scheme accessible by application only. Both options would increase administration costs and reduce level of support available to residents. Under such proposals, some of the families would also be at risk of missing out on the support available.

Describe the Mitigating Action

(Please describe any actions you will take to limit the impact of your proposal on this group. Please be open and forthright, decision makers need to be provided with as clear a picture as possible.)

Local Welfare Assistance will continue to be available irrespective of whether the proposed scheme is chosen. By increasing the funding Ealing Local Welfare Assistance Fund, it is anticipated that people with protected characteristics will not be negatively impacted by the changes

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SEXUAL ORIENTATION: <i>A person's sexual attraction towards his or her own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes, covering including all LGBTQ+ groups.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:
Describe the Impact
No data is currently available on the numbers of people with this protected characteristic who are receiving welfare support. Therefore, all the proposed elements could affect people with this protected characteristic positively. The impact will be the same for all irrespective of sexual orientation.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:
The alternative to the scheme is to reduce support for children eligible for free school meals and increase local welfare assistance funding or create a separate scheme accessible by application only. Both options would increase administration costs and reduce level of support available to residents. Under such proposals, some of the families would also be at risk of missing out on the support available.
Describe the Mitigating Action
Local Welfare Assistance will continue to be available irrespective of whether the proposed scheme is chosen. By increasing the funding Ealing Local Welfare Provision Fund, it is anticipated that people with protected characteristics will not be negatively impacted by the changes In order to realise this potential positive impact it is important that service users with protected characteristics (as well as front line workers and volunteers who work with service users who have protected characteristics) are aware of the scheme, who may benefit and how to apply.

PREGNANCY & MATERNITY: <i>Description: Pregnancy: Being pregnant. Maternity: The period after giving birth - linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, including as a result of breastfeeding.</i>
State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:
Describe the Impact
<i>(Please be as specific and clear as possible when describing the impact and include any local data i.e. service usage. If this is lacking please include regional or national data or research. Please note if there is no differential impact on people with this characteristic, please state this)</i>
The benefit service holds information on pregnancy and maternity on its administrative systems where it is the primary reason for the incapacity. It cannot therefore be used to accurately assess the equality impacts. According to our records, 9 of the households in element 2 are in receipt of a maternity benefit.
The impact will be the same for all irrespective of pregnancy or maternity, as the criteria is related to children of school age and children under 5 and providing additional financial support.
Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect:

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MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP: *Marriage: A union between a man and a woman, or of the same sex, which is legally recognised in the UK as a marriage*
Civil partnership: Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a range of legal matters.

State whether the impact is positive, negative, a combination of both, or neutral:

Describe the Impact

The proposed scheme will potentially affect all customers irrespective of marriage. The impact will be the same for all irrespective of marriage or civil partnership. There will be a positive impact to all households as the scheme provide additional financial support to vulnerable families.

The data for families eligible for free school meals in respect of household composition is not available as such data is not collected. The data collected through CTR and HB records available suggests that element 2, 60% claims are made up off lone parents and 40% are couples.

Alternatives and mitigating actions which have been considered in order to reduce negative effect: The alternative to the scheme is to reduce support for children eligible for free school meals and increase local welfare assistance funding or create a separate scheme accessible by application only. Both options would increase administration costs and reduce level of support available to residents. Under such proposals, some of the families would also be at risk of missing out on the support available.

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3. Human Rights²
4a. Does your proposal impact on Human Rights as defined by the Human Rights Act 1998?
No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>(If yes, please describe the effect and any mitigating action you have considered.)</i>
4b. Does your proposal impact on the rights of children as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?
No
<i>(If yes, please describe the effect and any mitigating action you have considered.)</i>
4c. Does your proposal impact on the rights of persons with disabilities as defined by the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities?
No
<i>(If yes, please describe the effect and any mitigating action you have considered.)</i>

4. Conclusion
<i>(Please provide a brief overview/summary of your analysis in light of the protected characteristics. Please describe the overall impact of your proposal where possible and mitigating actions undertaken by other areas of the Council or by local partners)</i>
<p>The impact will be the same for all groups having a Protected Characteristic. This C19 Local Support Grant scheme builds on support provided to vulnerable households in the borough. Element 1 and 2 are in line with the criteria for free school meals and eligibility for Housing & or Council Tax Support.</p> <p>We will continue to build on local Welfare Assistance Scheme which is already operating in the Borough and encourage applications from vulnerable households.</p>
4a. What evidence, data sources and intelligence did you use to assess the potential impact/effect of your proposal? Please note the systems/processes you used to collect the data that has helped inform your proposal. Please list the file paths and/or relevant web links to the information you have described.
<i>(Please list all sources here: i.e. local consultation, residents' survey, census etc.)</i> Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reduction data extracted from Northgate system. November 2020.

² For further guidance please refer to the Human Rights & URNC Guidance on the Council Equalities [web page](#).

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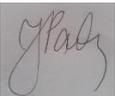
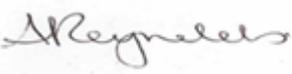
5. Action Planning: *(What are the next steps for the proposal please list i.e. when it comes into effect, when mitigating actions linked to the protected characteristics above will take place, how you will measure impact etc.)*

Action	Outcomes	Success Measures	Timescales/ Milestones	Lead Officer <i>(Contact Details)</i>
Awareness of Local Welfare Assistance Scheme	Easing financial hardship	Cases will be reviewed on a case to case basis.	Local Welfare Assistance will be available through 2020/21.	Alan Topping 020 8825 6786

Additional Comments:

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6. Sign off: *(All EAA's must be signed off once completed)*

Completing Officer Sign Off:	Service Director Sign Off:	HR related proposal <i>(Signed off by directorate HR officer)</i>
Signed: J. Pavlides  Name (Block Capitals): Joanna Pavlides Date: 29.06.21	Signed:  Name (Block Capitals): Alison Reynolds Date: 2.07.21	Signed: Name (Block Capitals): Date:

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For EAA's relating to Cabinet decisions: received by Committee Section for publication by (date):		

Appendix 1: *Legal obligations under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010:*

- As a public authority we must have due regard to the need to:
 - a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- The protected characteristics are: AGE, DISABILITY, GENDER REASSIGNMENT, RACE, RELIGION & BELIEF, SEX, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, PREGNANCY & MATERNITY, MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP
- Having due regard to advancing equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, involves considering the need to:
 - a) Remove or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
 - b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant characteristic that are different from the needs of the persons who do not share it.
 - c) Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- Having due regard to fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not, involves showing that you are tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- Complying with the duties may involve treating some people more favourably than others; but this should not be taken as permitting conduct that would be otherwise prohibited under the Act.