

Subject: Budget 2022/23 and Capital Programme 2022/23 to 2026/27

Reason for Addendum: This Addendum provides an update to the Executive Report to reflect that final equality impact assessments have now been published as a background paper.

Addendum:

Delete para 123 of the covering report in the section 'Equalities Implications' and replace with the following:

123.1 Equality impact assessments for the specific proposals identified as having the potential for a negative equalities impact have now been finalised and have been published as a background paper to this report at <https://reigate-banstead.moderngov.co.uk/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD1528&ID=1528&R PID=2472204>.

123.2 Where these have concluded that proposed changes could have a potential negative impact on service provision or on resident with protected characteristics or other vulnerabilities, impact avoidance and mitigation measures have been identified along with proposals for how the impact of the service changes will be monitored and (as necessary) reviewed.

123.3 In summary:

- a) **Proposed Council Tax increase:** Any potential negative impact on residents facing financial hardship (including those in protected characteristic groups) will be avoided by continuing to operate the Local Council Tax Support Scheme and the provision of discretionary support as appropriate
- b) **Savings via introduction of E-Billing for Council Tax and Business rates:** Any potential negative impact on residents facing digital exclusion issues (including those in protected characteristic groups) will be avoided by enabling residents and businesses to opt out of E-Billing and therefore continue to receive bills by post
- c) **Reduction in budget reducing the frequency of Borough News publication to once per year rather than twice per year:** Potential negative impact on residents facing digital exclusion issues will be mitigated by exploring alternative sources of funding for hard copy communications material; monitoring any increase in frequency for requests for hard copy information; incorporating consideration of resident needs and digital exclusion issues as part of the planned review of communications strategy and new customer contact strategy; and seeking to advance equality of opportunity by working with partners to address digital exclusion locally.
- d) **Pause on small and medium grants to the voluntary and community sector (VCS):** Any potential negative impact on residents in protected characteristic groups will be mitigated by seeking to strengthen and

support routes to other funding sources for VCS organisations and identify opportunities to provide other Council expertise to assist VCS organisations; developing a VSC strategy with partners to identify other forms of in-kind support or resource to sustain and develop their offer to vulnerable groups; reviewing resources and monitoring information to explore options for creation of a separate grant budget and if there are specific groups where future financial or other support needs to be targeted. Given the uncertainty around the precise implications of the proposal a higher level of monitoring and oversight will be implemented in support of this proposal.

- e) **Deletion of Community Development Worker (CDW) post:** Potential negative impact on residents in protected characteristic groups will be mitigated in the immediate term by using other members of the team to progress the delivery of existing projects within the Woodhatch and Whitebushes area, in conjunction with ongoing community centre activities; and engaging with local partners to consider other measures to support the sustaining of community development work in that area. Meanwhile a review of priorities for community development support within the borough will be undertaken to inform the targeting of remaining team resources in the future to deliver maximum benefit for local communities and advance equality of opportunity; as well as exploring opportunities to secure resources from other organisations to complement, fund or otherwise support the Council's community development activity.

123.4 The potential impact identified in the equality impact assessments, and the avoidance and mitigation measures proposed, must be taken into account by decision-makers in considering the proposed budget recommendations, alongside other relevant factors set out in the main Executive report.