

*****Islington Fairness Commission: Response by Islington Council**

Introduction

Islington Council and its partners have examined the recommendations of the Islington Fairness Commission (IFC). Islington Council welcomes the IFC's findings which address how to narrow the gap in outcomes and opportunities for the borough's residents and communities.

Islington Council believes that a fairer Islington is better for everyone. The council is determined to reduce the gap between rich and poor and to make a difference to the lives of those in our community who most need a helping hand.

Fairness is the core principle under-pinning the priorities that the council has chosen to focus on over the next four years. A summary of the actions which will be taken in response to the IFC recommendations has therefore been embedded in the council's Corporate Plan which is published alongside this delivery plan. The success of the measures taken to implement the actions will be monitored as part of the council's performance framework.

A report on progress towards implementation of the IFC's recommendations should come to Full Council annually thereafter and to the council's Communities Review Committee on a six-monthly basis.

The council's detailed response to each recommendation is summarised in the sections that follow. Where appropriate the actions listed here are reflected in the Corporate Plan 2011-2015. More detailed actions will be included in the Fairness Commission delivery plans which will be circulated to members shortly.

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 1 - Wages

Employers in Islington should pay all their directly employed staff as a minimum the London Living Wage (currently £8.30/hr). Employers should also review their procurement, contract and best value policies to ensure that, as far as possible within UK and EU law, the London Living Wage is the minimum paid to all their contracted staff as well.

Council Response

Islington Council agrees the recommendation. We aim to ensure that by March 2014, all employers in Islington will be aware that the London Living Wage is considered the minimum fair pay and there will be a significant increase in the number of employees that are paid at least London Living Wage in the public sector, private sector and voluntary and community sector.

The fact the London Living Wage as the acceptable minimum in Islington will be embedded in core practices of the council, its partners and contractors via the use of the Islington Fairness and Equality Charter, procurement policies and CSR 'kitemark'.

Key Actions in year 1

- Achieve London Living Wage (LLW) accreditation from London Citizens, which includes confirming payment of LLW to all directly employed staff and having a plan in place to work towards payment of LLW to all contractors. The Council will encourage all its partners to do the same
- Ensure that the council and all public sector organisations pay all their directly employed staff the London Living Wage, and that it becomes the acceptable minimum among other partners and contractors

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Cycle of Poverty broken

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 2 – Pay differentials

All major employers in the borough should publish their pay differentials to enable them to be scrutinised and challenged where appropriate. In the case of Islington Council, this should mean establishing a formal sub-committee, including officer, member and union representation, to review pay differentials within the organisation with a view to reducing income inequality where possible.

Council's Response

Islington Council agrees the recommendation. By March 2013 there will be greater transparency and openness about pay and pay differentials in Islington, with more and more employers narrowing the pay gap between their highest and lowest paid staff.

Key Actions in Year 1

- Review pay differentials within the council, with the aim of reducing income inequality where possible and working towards a 1:10 ratio of highest to lowest paid, through a working group with member, officer and trade union representatives. Encourage all its partners to work on reducing income inequality in their organisations
- Meet with the 100 largest employers in Islington and encourage them to reduce pay differentials if these are at an unacceptably high level and publish them in a new website, facilitated by the council

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Cycle of Poverty broken

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 3 – Debt

Islington Council should explore the possibility of passing a by-law to prevent payday loan companies from operating in the borough. And it should vigorously use its enforcement powers and those of its partners to take action against illegal activity by loan sharks who prey on vulnerable Islington residents.

Council Response

Islington Council partially accepts this recommendation. Legal advice confirms that LBI does not have the power to pass a bylaw prohibiting payday loan companies from operating in the borough. Nor does it have any powers to supplement existing regulations over the way in which these companies operate. This part of the recommendation cannot therefore be taken forward.

However, Trading Standards will have a renewed focus to ensure that providers in Islington are fully compliant with regulations governing their practice such as how they advertise their services and the information they give customers. There will also be an increase in the number of reported instances of loan-sharking through improved detection.

The council recognises that residents often experience problems with debt and seek loans from payday loan companies or loan sharks because they are unaware of or unable to access other sources of credit. Over the next three years we want there to be a reduction in the number of people accessing high cost credit and developing unmanageable problems with debt. The Council will work towards this by improving the financial competence of Islington residents with targeted support for those at greatest risk of acquiring problem debt, in particular young people.

The Council and its partners will assist people to learn about and to make use of lower cost alternatives of credit available, which meet the needs of those who are vulnerable to problem debt. This will include, for example, improving operating processes to provide similar services to payday loan companies. We will work with the Islington Credit Union to increase its lending capacity by increasing the number of people who save with the Credit Union by setting up payroll saving facilities with businesses.

We will support more people in Islington who have unmanageable debt. They will be supported to enable them to address their problems and will resolve their debt problems more quickly.

Key Actions in Year 1

- Develop the debt brokerage service which assists residents in debt to consolidate any indebtedness to the council into one payment
- Continue to provide support to people in debt through, for example, offering payment plans for residents in council tax arrears
- Increase the number of people saving with the Islington Credit Union to 2,700 so that it has more money available to lend. Develop a model for providing short term loans and offer same day money transfer option to

its customers which will provide an alternative form of credit to that of payday loan companies

- Conduct a regulatory compliance investigation into all businesses that offer pawn broking, gold buying and pay day loans

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: cycle of poverty broken

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 4 – Employment

Employers in Islington should, by means of legitimate positive action (such as advertising job opportunities in local media before national media) increase the proportion of local people they employ, especially among currently under-represented groups, such as disabled people. In the case of Islington Council this should mean increasing the proportion of Islington residents in its workforce from 23 per cent to 30 per cent by 2014.

Council Response

Islington Council agrees the recommendation. By March 2012 a new *Single Employer Face* service will be operational which will provide employers with a 'one-stop shop' that makes it easier for them to contribute to social regeneration and provide local people with access to local jobs in the short and long term. There will be a greater understanding of employment amongst Islington's residents and the needs of local employers, including the council itself. This will increase the overall level of employment amongst Islington residents.

Key Actions in Year 1

- Set up a "single employer face" in Islington to help businesses to support local people into work, through apprenticeships, work experience and mentoring
- Implement new recruitment guidance to support the employment of local people
- Provide 750 parents with support to move into work. Support will be tailored to the needs of parents and available in local community settings
- Develop a linked offer around skills and training in the borough to ensure prospective learners attend the most appropriate institution to meet their needs
- Ensure courses provided by Adult and Community Learning (ACL) are taken up by those who need it the most
- Proactively target those with no or low skills and education, or with no or limited ability to communicate in English, with support to improve their employability
- Implement clear progression routes for learners:
 - Capture information on 'intended progression' of learners at start of course in the Learner's assessment and end of course in the Learner's evaluation
 - Review individual learning plans to ensure that individual's employment goals and aspirations are considered

- Identify repeat learners who would benefit from a progression plan

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Cycle of Poverty broken.

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 5 – Jobs for Young People

Employers in Islington should do more to support young people who are at risk of falling into the cycle of poverty. In particular, they should support the new initiatives being developed by Islington Business Board, including their programme of mentoring and work experience which will support young people into employment or training or help them start a business of their own.

Council Response

Islington Council accepts this recommendation. By 2015 there will be improved progress for young people to appropriate education, training or employment post-16 (Level 3). As part of this, there will be improved support for young people so that fewer drop out of the process of obtaining qualifications in their first year. There will also be a borough-wide apprenticeship strategy to maximise the number of apprenticeship places on offer in the borough and improved mechanisms for young people to access opportunities that suit them best.

By 2015 the new *Single Employer Face* service will see a significant number of businesses engaging in mentoring, work experience and other activities to help prepare young people for employment. Mentoring will be targeted at the young people who will benefit most from this type of support. This will include young people looked after by the local authority, those at risk of dropping out of further education, young offenders and young parents.

Key Actions in Year 1

- Launch a pilot mentoring programme through the Islington Business Board for 20 young people aged 18-24, including priority groups such as care leavers
- Develop a borough-wide apprenticeship strategy
- Pilot a 'Junior Work Induction Programme' pilot offering 100 young people aged 14-16 paid local work experience

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: cycle of poverty broken

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 6 – Corporate Social Responsibility

Islington Chamber of Commerce and its partners should develop a plan to promote the following important activities among businesses and charities in the borough, for example through a Fair Islington ‘kitemark’ scheme:

- *Pay at least the London Living Wage to all staff*
- *Have a pay differential of less than 1:20*
- *Ensure access to both premises and opportunities for disabled people*
- *Offer apprenticeships and/or paid internships*
- *Offer work experience placements*
- *Have employee representation on remuneration panels*
- *Recognise trade unions*
- *Offer family-friendly employment practices, including flexible and part-time working and job-sharing opportunities*
- *Offer support for childcare, including childcare loans*
- *Support workless people to prepare for the world of employment*

Council Response

Islington Council agrees the recommendation. The aim is to ensure that by March 2014 at least 1000 businesses will have done an on-line self assessment and at least 500 will be accredited. This will demonstrate local employers’ commitment to supporting local residents into employment as well as promoting fairness in the workplace.

Key Actions in Year 1

- Develop and launch a prototype Islington Fair Business kite mark that will include a range of criteria for supporting the local community and fair employment, including the London Living Wage
- By March 2012 the Islington Chamber of Commerce will launch the Fair Islington Business ‘kitemark’ following a series of events to consult businesses and finalise the criteria.

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Cycle of Poverty broken.

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 7 – First 21 Months

There should be a major review, convened by the new Health and Wellbeing Board, of all public, private and voluntary sector activity in Islington to support parents, and parents-to-be, from the point of a child's conception to his or her first birthday. In particular, this should look at significantly improving the coordination of services, especially those delivered by GPs, Midwives, Health Visitors and the council.

Council Response

Islington Council accepts this recommendation subject to the agreement of the Health and Wellbeing Board which will meet for the first time in October 2011. Preliminary work has begun which shows that Islington is already quite well advanced in some of the areas considered by the Commission such as co-location of services. The review will need to identify those indicators and services where improvement is needed; and where change will help to generate greatest value or benefit within the resources available, whether these are universal or targeted, and how these are measured.

Key Actions in Year 1

- Review current provision and produce an action plan to deliver more support for parents, and parents-to-be from a child's conception to his or her first birthday

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Best start in life for children

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 8 – Affordable Childcare

Islington Council and its partners should establish a local ‘Childcare Coalition’, involving schools, public sector organisations, the voluntary sector (for example Islington Childcare Trust) and employers to increase the amount of affordable childcare available in the borough, especially during school holidays. This should include protecting the extended schools offer despite cuts to its funding. The ‘Childcare Coalition’ should also work to persuade employers to support parents in working flexibly around childcare provision.

Council Response

Islington Council accepts this recommendation. Potential contributions that childcare can make to the reduction of child poverty will be maximised through coordinated action. The Childcare Coalition will ensure that the priorities for Islington’s childcare system are well understood by all childcare providers.

This could include:

- a) Developing a service advising local businesses on opportunities to support their staff with childcare
- b) Developing a bespoke service aimed at local schools which will review their childcare activities and recommend developments. This could be systematically offered to local schools where school-based childcare would be of strategic importance
- c) Exploring new business models and services, for example a childcare co-operative
- d) A pilot to offer free childcare for parents in training by working with early years childcare providers and training providers to match the free entitlement to available provision.
- e) Similar pilot to offer support to parents with children in need around their employability and, as appropriate, help them use their free entitlement as part of this
- f) Developing a childcare volunteering scheme to up-skill parents and to increase the childcare workforce

Key Actions in Year 1

- Set up an Islington ‘Childcare Coalition’ with a range of local partners to address the need for affordable childcare in the borough

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Best start in life for children.

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 9 – Islington Reads

A new community collaboration should be set up, organised by a partnership of public sector and voluntary sector organisations, to share reading skills across communities in Islington. This will help both children and adults to improve their literacy.

Council Response

Islington Council agrees the recommendation. The Islington Reads community collaboration will encourage residents to share their reading skills. The programme will be designed to add value, through community participation, to the existing services and initiatives run by the Council and its Partners.

This could include:

- a) Raising the profile of reading through the use of Islington residents and celebrities as champions, through hosting events
- b) Families might get a library ticket when they register for admission to a school or with a GP
- c) Focusing any reward for success and achievement around reading and seek sponsorship, for example holding an 'Achievers Day'
- d) Asking schools to adopt the same approach (as c above) through awards and celebrations
- e) Ensuring that reading is actively encouraged as part of the offer in any social activity space
- f) Recycling unread books in Islington homes
- g) Engaging health and seeking the support of GPs, clinics and other health settings to encourage greater access to books
- h) Annual essay competition
- i) Annual school event reporting competition with a reading
- j) Annual book review competition with a reading
- k) Reading week in schools

Key Actions in Year 1

- Set up Islington Reads, a community collaboration organised by a partnership of public sector and voluntary sector organisations, to share.

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Best start in life for children

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 10 – Giving Time, Giving Money

Giving time and giving money is a good way of challenging poverty and inequality in our borough.

- *Islington Giving should be supported to:*
 - *champion Islington's needs and encourage residents and businesses to donate time and money to the campaign*
 - *continue its efforts to recruit, train and deploy 500+ new volunteers in the borough by 2014*
 - *establish a new 'Good Neighbours' scheme to reduce social isolation, particularly among older and disabled people, and build community spirit in the borough*
- *Islington Council should, with Voluntary Action Islington, coordinate the valuable volunteering time it affords its employees, so that such efforts are targeted at Islington recipients in greatest need.*

Council Response

Islington Council agrees the recommendation. Over the next three years levels of volunteering in the borough will be greatly increased through a package of measures that will include structural improvements to routes into volunteering, harnessing the resources of people who live and work in Islington, with schemes to combat isolation, exclusion and promote cohesion. Significantly more council officers and Members will be engaged in volunteering in the local community.

Volunteering will be focused on meeting the IFC's priorities and outcomes and will support the borough's poorest and most vulnerable residents and neighbourhoods, supported by new arrangements for volunteer brokerage from March 2012.

Key Actions in Year 1

- By December 2011 Islington Giving and Help on Your Doorstep will launch a pilot for the *Good Neighbours* scheme which will reduce social isolation and build social capital by offering peer to peer support and volunteering opportunities.
- Allocate funding and agree a contract for volunteering brokerage across Islington.
- Implement a staff corporate social responsibility programme, including volunteering, across Islington Council.

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Cycle of poverty broken

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 11 – Public Space

Islington Council and partners should identify all unused communal space in Islington, especially on estates, to free it up, make it accessible and use it, following the example of successful projects such as Edible Islington and the London Orchard Project.

Council Response

Islington Council agrees the recommendation. Islington Council will support Homes for Islington and other partners to work towards creating communal spaces which are attractive, community run, and with a high level of resident and volunteer involvement. The residents on estates and near estates should have better knowledge of the community spaces that are available to them even where they are not directly participating or utilising the spaces themselves. It is expected that there will be at least an additional 70 active resident groups running their community spaces by 2014.

Key Actions in Year 1

- Map all under-utilised public spaces and existing projects from Groundwork, Islington Council, Homes for Islington and St Luke's, and use this information to consult with residents about spending options and to encourage greater use of these areas
- Increase resident involvement, including creating more volunteering opportunities through the Homes for Islington Community Investment programme and Groundwork's Corporate Social Responsibility Programme

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Decent, suitable and affordable homes.

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 12

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 12 Antisocial behaviour

Antisocial behaviour damages communities and contributes to social isolation. A single telephone number should be established for reporting antisocial behaviour, requiring collaboration between Housing Associations, Homes for Islington, Islington Police and the council. This should improve residents' experience when reporting antisocial behaviour and simplify the route to getting concerns addressed. The resulting coordinated response should enable a more effective and efficient approach to tackling antisocial behaviour, particularly on estates.

Council Response

Islington Council agrees the recommendation. A dedicated line for reporting anti-social behaviour (ASB) is being established for all ASB reports. There will be an improved out of hours response which takes a more pro-active approach, supported by in-depth follow-up work to resolve problems earlier by identifying and tackling the underlying issues. A borough-wide ASB Response team will be in place, merging the existing noise response functions and Homes for Islington ASB response. This will provide for much improved co-ordination, support and data analysis.

Key Actions in Year 1

- Establish a single telephone number for reporting anti social behaviour to the council and other agencies. This will enable a more effective and efficient approach to tackling anti-social behaviour particularly on estates.

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Lower crime and Anti Social Behaviour.

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 13: Fallout from crime

Tackling crime is about more than just punishing its perpetrators. Islington Council, together with its partners in Victim Support and Islington Police's Safer Neighbourhood's Teams, should enhance the work done with individuals and communities that are victims of crime and antisocial behaviour to resolve local problems. This should include further work to implement restorative justice, acceptable behaviour contracts, community payback and reparation, and the return of the proceeds of crime.

Council Response

Islington Council agrees the recommendation. By 2014 the council will significantly improve the support it gives to people who are the victims of crime and antisocial behaviour. This will include a new Victim's Champion who will improve the experience of victims by ensuring that Islington council, the police, Victim Support and other agencies work together effectively on victims' behalf.

There will be more widespread use of restorative justice processes and victim impact statements, which will bring together victims and assailants and help promote understanding between different parts of the community to prevent problems escalating. Community payback and reparation will be improved to make sure that Islington offenders undertake work that is of value and more visible to the local community.

To prevent people, particularly young people, from falling into crime, work to disrupt gangs will be increased to include 'parent call-ins', where parents of gang members meet with local agencies and targeted work with the siblings of gang members to avoid them falling into crime. Early intervention tools such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts will continue to be used.

The integrated offender management programme introduced in 2010 will focus on the most prolific offenders in Islington and will continue its strategy for disrupting crime as well as offering support as people seek to change their lifestyles, including through employability, drug and alcohol support.

Key Actions in Year 1

- Increase capacity so 50% more victims of crime and anti-social behaviour can be helped. All vulnerable victims will be provided with additional support to encourage reporting and proactively tackling harassment and abuse
- Work with individuals and communities that are victims of crime and anti-social behaviour to resolve local problems. This includes over 60 acceptable behaviour contracts being issued plus increased use of restorative justice, and community payback and reparation
- Increase the usage of all powers available to prevent and disrupt gang activity
- Improve information sharing among neighbouring boroughs around

violent offenders and gang members

- Develop a new action plan to address incentives and support for young people aged 18-25 on the fringes of crime and antisocial behaviour to bridge the gap between existing services for youth and adult offenders

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Lower crime and Anti Social Behaviour.

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 14 – Overcrowding

Tackling overcrowding needs to be a top priority in Islington.

- *Planning policies and the council's new-build programme should prefer family-sized housing.*
- *Tenancy audits should continue to establish the potential for down-sizing.*
- *Islington Council should do even more to enhance its downsizing offer to under-occupiers. This could include three-way swaps; holding local swap meetings; ensuring a move happens within a year; getting people who have downsized to speak to people who are eligible to do so about the benefits; and offering a tailored package of support to help older people downsize from properties they can no longer manage (while making clear to those who may be concerned that evictions and forced transfers on these grounds are out of the question).*
- *Each year the council should estimate the maximum potential number of under-occupation moves, based on the supply of smaller homes, and provide incentives and support to reach this maximum.*
- *Reviews of allocation policies and lettings processes should ensure that priority for overcrowding is maintained and where possible increased.*

Council Response

Islington Council agrees the recommendation. The council will use its allocation system to prioritise moving households out of over-crowding and under-occupation.

Planning policy and the new build programme already expresses a preference for family-sized housing both for social housing and private sector housing. In the current year 80% of planned social housing completions are for family sized units.

We know that practical and social considerations are the greatest barriers to achieving down-sizing moves. We will tailor our offer to under-occupiers to suit their individual requirements and make sure that we have properties that they want.

At least 385 under-occupied properties will be re-let to overcrowded households over the next three years, by taking action such as implementing the north London 'Homeswapper' scheme for Islington tenants to do mutual exchanges with tenants of other boroughs.

The programme of tenancy audits to identify under-occupied council property will be stepped up and extended to include registered social landlord family-sized housing too.

Key Actions in year 1

- Re-let at least 150 under-occupied properties to overcrowded households through a programme of tenancy audits, focused on family-sized properties, and down-sizing moves
- Adopt a new housing allocations policy to respond to proposed national reforms and local need, including revisions of choice-based letting system designed to provide more help to overcrowded households
- Offer practical and financial support to households that wish to downsize. Support will be tailored to meet the specific needs of the individual people and ensure they are given the first choice in available properties.
- The minimum target for under-occupation moves will be reviewed towards the end of the year based on the intelligence from the tenancy audits carried out during the year.

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The Council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Decent, suitable and affordable homes.

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 15 – Housing Supply

- *Islington Council should strive to bring empty space into residential use by:*
 - *Eliminating empty space above shops through writing to all shop owners to discuss the opportunities and benefits and requiring relevant staff, for example Town Centre Managers, Environmental Health officers and Trading Standards officers, to enquire about space above shops as part of their routine*
 - *Identifying empty space in commercial and office buildings for conversion for residential use, especially properties that have remained empty for some time and those that are in residential rather than commercial areas. Identifying empty space in commercial and office buildings for conversion for residential use, especially properties that have remained empty for some time and those that are in residential rather than commercial areas*
- *The council and Housing Associations should maximise their efforts to eliminate housing fraud and illegal sub-letting, so that social housing is used fairly, according to need.*
- *The council should work with Housing Associations to ensure a supply of genuinely affordable social housing and discourage rent levels that are out of reach of people on average or low incomes.*

Council Response

Islington Council accepts the recommendation. By 2014, more Islington residents will be housed in affordable, high quality homes than is currently the case, and the total stock of affordable family homes will have increased, with 1,800 new homes for social rent and shared ownership available over the next three years.

Empty spaces above shops will be brought back into residential use by contacting shop owners to discuss opportunities and benefits of allowing residents to use this as their home. Council staff such as Town Centre Managers, Trading Standards Officers and Environmental Health Officers will enquire about space above shops as part of their routine.

We will also identify empty space in commercial and office buildings for conversion for residential use and explore the potential to use Local Development Orders to achieve change of use without compromising wider planning objectives or the sustainability of new homes.

The council and Registered Social Landlord partners will use a range of methods to identify fraud and illegal subletting including using annual audits, cross-checking with other sources of data and encouraging use of a whistle blowing hot-line. Where fraud or illegal occupation is identified legal action will be taken to repossess and re-let homes.

We will use market and shared-ownership sales to cross-subsidise new homes for social rent.

Key Actions in Year 1

- Make best use of council-owned assets and financial resources to deliver new homes for social rent, including at least 1,800 new homes over the next three years
- Launch a pilot model using market and shared ownership sales to fund seven new homes for social rent at Vulcan Way. If successful, develop the model to help fund other new family homes for social rent
- Offer up to 60 one-bed council homes per year on a shared ownership basis to high priority households with receipts effectively funding new build council homes for families
- Work with landlords and provide grants to ensure that 50 empty properties (including flats over shops) are brought into use
- Repossess 140 illegally occupied properties and re-let through tenancy audits and the work of the fraud team

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The Council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Decent, suitable and affordable homes.

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 16 – Health Inequalities

The new Health and Wellbeing Board should draw up a clear plan of action to address well-documented health inequalities in the borough. This plan should include targeted responses to populations in need, including preventive programmes tailored to the needs of deprived or excluded groups, such as people with learning difficulties or serious mental health problems, homeless people and older people.

Council Response

Islington Council accepts this recommendation, subject to the Health and Wellbeing Board being set up in October 2011. Better alignment between health commissioning and the priorities identified in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment should bring about a fundamental shift in resources through pooling budgets to focus on the health and wellbeing priorities identified.

Key Actions in Year 1

- Develop and implement a range of measures to address health inequalities in the borough, through the Health and Wellbeing Board

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Healthy, active and independent lives.

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 17 – Children’s Health

Good health in childhood is essential for a fairer Islington.

- *NHS Islington and Islington Council should:*
 - *support all schools in Islington to achieve ‘enhanced healthy schools’ status and all children’s centres to achieve ‘healthy children’s centre’ status;*
 - *ensure every child has free vitamin drops up to the age of 5 years;*
 - *undertake an inequalities analysis of immunisation uptake, to ensure that effort to support this programme is adequately targeted; and*
 - *seek to reduce the number (or at least check the further proliferation) of fast food outlets near schools.*

Council Response

Islington Council partially agrees the recommendation. Currently, 60 schools in the borough have Healthy Schools status, of which one has attained Enhanced National Healthy Schools Status and efforts will need to be renewed and enhanced over the next three to four years to retain their status.

NHS Islington will put in place a local immunisation action plan which will reduce inequalities in uptake, based on the findings of its health equity audit.

NHS Islington is not convinced of the case for implementing a programme of vitamin drops to young children locally and will therefore carry-out an evidence review and feasibility analysis to assess the expected level of need, delivery model(s), evidence of likely effectiveness and the potential benefits and costs of the recommendation.

Planning policies will seek to control the number of fast food outlets near schools.

Key Actions in Year 1

- Support Children’s Centres to complete self assessments and action plans for the ‘healthy children’s centre’ scheme
- Analyse immunisation uptake to ensure that effort to support this programme is adequately targeted
- Reduce the number (or at least check the further proliferation) of fast food outlets near schools

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: The best start in life for children.

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 18 – Mental Health

Times of economic hardship are particularly stressful, so we must increase support for mental health. NHS Islington needs to increase the number of people accessing support for depression and anxiety, particularly with levels of unemployment rising and increasing financial hardship which will increase mental ill-health in the borough.

Council Response

Islington Council and NHS Islington accept the recommendation, subject to decisions about resource allocation which will be taken by the GP Consortia at a later date.

By 2015 the council will work towards increasing local people's referral and access to mental health services and reducing inequalities between residents. Pathways to access mental Health Service will be in place with child poverty and Think Family initiatives. There will also be updated employment pathway, and well-used, complementing primary care and self-referrals and an active mental health promotion programme reducing stigma and discrimination.

This work will be taken forward by delivering an existing NHS Islington action plan that is already in place for wider mental health promotion. The programme targets key groups through mental health champions in Manor Gardens and direct action outreach through the Peel Institute. This includes key BME groups, parents of young children and young people.

Key Actions in Year 1

- Work with health partners to increase the number of people accessing support for depression and anxiety by 15%, particularly with levels of unemployment rising and increasing financial hardship which will increase mental ill-health in the borough
- Recruit 25 more people to become Mental Health Champions to promote positive mental health and well being across the borough and to help tackle stigma and discrimination
- Get 625 more people trained on the Mental Health First Aid and Youth Mental Health First Aid courses so that they can help people in a crisis
- Improve referral pathways to mental health from other services which are targeted at supporting vulnerable families with multiple needs

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Healthy, active and independent lives.

IFC Delivery Plan: Recommendation 19 – Exercise

Islington's health would improve significantly if more people exercised.

- *Islington Council should:*
 - *negotiate with the Mayor of London and Transport for London to make it easier to cycle in Islington by getting the Barclays Bikes scheme extended further north into the borough, by encouraging people from all backgrounds to use it, and by getting the Freedom Pass and/or other concessions to work on it;*
 - *explore with schools, Aqua Terra and other relevant partners how to make it easier for local residents to use the excellent school sporting facilities, including swimming pools, we now have in the borough.*
- *Islington GPs should use to the full their ability to prescribe exercise.*

Council's Response

Islington Council agrees the recommendation. The council will work towards ensuring that by 2014 many of the residents at greatest risk of poor health will have developed sustained exercise habits. NHS Islington will improve access to exercise programmes for people with underlying medical conditions in a variety of community settings. More school sports facilities will be accessible to the public and they will be used in particular by low income residents and those that can particularly benefit from exercise.

There will be increased numbers of low income residents who have access to cycling, and be confident about using cycling to get around the borough and beyond. Discussions with Transport for London about extending Barclays Bikes into the north of the borough are already under way. A new scheme will also be considered which would provide accredited training on bicycle maintenance for those who are not in education, training or employment. Users are referred into the service, complete training and commit a number of hours to the project in order to 'earn' a refurbished bike.

Key Actions in Year 1

- Work with schools and other partners to make it easier for local residents to use school and other sporting facilities in the borough
- Provide 850 short-term exercise programmes for people with underlying medical conditions
- Encourage cycling, particularly among those on low incomes, and conclude discussions with Transport for London about the Barclay Bikes scheme

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring

The council will monitor the impact of this recommendation in the Corporate Performance monitoring basket indicators: Healthy, active and independent lives.