

Directorate / Service	Description of Budget Amendment, Rationale and Implications						Officer Assessment	
		2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	Service Implication	Equalities Impact Assessment
People	Reduce amount allocated to legal defences of SEND appeals, prioritising those that have most chance of success	(0.184)					<p>The budget incorporates a proposal to invest an additional £200k to support the legal costs associated with the increase in the number of tribunals. This proposal would reduce the additional investment to £16k with alternative measures being proposed.</p> <p>It is not possible, however, to set a fixed budget for defence of legal claims as we have no control over the number or complexity/cost of claims that are made against the Council in any given year. The current investments reflect current trends and therefore there would have to be some flexibility should actual cost be incurred.</p>	Gov.uk April to June 2022 highlights that the SEND Tribunal registered the highest number of receipts this quarter at 3,500, 55% above the same period last year. Further data is needed to determine whether equalities groups (other than Disabled children and young people) are overly or under represented in those registering appeals so impact cannot be identified. Potential equality impact might be found on Disabled children and young people due to the nature of the SEND program.
People	Fund additional caseworker to help improve assessment times for SEND cases, and the experience of applicants	0.084					<p>There is a statutory obligation in the Code of Practice that the Local Authority is not yet able to meet.</p> <p>The budget incorporates a proposal to invest an additional £1m to support the recruitment of additional SEN staff to improve the assessment timescales. With the increased SEND cases and the need to reduce the statutory wait time of 20 weeks, further investment in caseworkers will assist in meeting the statutory need and reduce the number of complaints that relate to timeliness.</p>	GOV.uk indicates that slower rates of processing application receipts in most tribunals particularly SEND (among others) have led to a 5% increase in caseload outstanding when compared to the same period last year. Further data is needed to determine whether equalities groups (other than Disabled children and young people) are overly or under represented in those registering appeals so impact cannot be identified. Potential equality impact might be found on Disabled children and young people due to the nature of the SEND program.
People	Invest in a specialist caseworker to conduct case reviews of disputed cases and provide resolutions, in order to reduce the number of cases that require legal defence.	0.100					<p>Please note comments as above.</p> <p>It is appropriate to fund improvements to case work and how we defend claims as this should reduce the number of claims made.</p>	See comment above
Total (must be zero)		0	0	0	0	0		
<p>Sum of proposed budget amendments must net to nil in each financial year Each ringfenced fund (General Fund, HRA, DSG & PH) must be dealt with separately with no cross subsidisation. Any revenue capital financing changes aligned to revisions to the capital programme can only be considered where the net financial impact of the amendment on the budget, based on capital financing costs, is ZERO. Amendments to revenue can only be made to 2023/24 budget - future years are included to ensure future years budgets impacted by decisions on the 2023/24 budget remain balanced.</p>								
S151 Officer Sign-off								