

## Equality and Safety Impact Assessment

The **public sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people's needs. The Council's Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the council to better understand the potential impact of the budget proposals and consider mitigating action.

<p><b>Name or Brief Description of Proposal</b></p>	<p><b>Advocacy Services for Adults</b></p> <p>Following reviews of current advocacy services for adults a recommendation has been made to re-commission a new advocacy service to include all elements of specialist, dedicated advocacy for adults currently provided across the city. This would include OP, LD, MH and statutory services.</p> <p>Within this proposal there will be a 10% budget efficiency.</p>
<p><b>Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)</b></p>	<p>Advocacy services represent the needs and interests of the most vulnerable who may not be able to do this on their own without support.</p> <p>Currently £259,000 per annum is committed to the provision of advocacy service for adults within Southampton. This covers non statutory provision as well as statutory services provided under the Mental Health Act (2007) and Mental Capacity Act (2005).</p> <p>Approximately 650 individuals received advocacy support from dedicated services within Southampton during 2013/14. Currently there is a trend of increasing demand</p>

	<p>on advocacy services which is fuelled by changes to wider national legislative changes, for example Caring for Our Future (2010) and the Welfare Reform Act 2012.</p>
<p><b>Summary of Impact and Issues</b></p>	<p>At present the majority of dedicated advocacy services in the city are provided by separate providers to meet the needs of Older People, those with Learning Disabilities and those with Mental Health issues. Statutory advocacy services are universal and accessible by all, regardless of their support needs.</p> <p>The recommendation to move towards a larger, universal service which is accessible to all fits within wider commissioning priorities and will create parity of access to services for all, regardless of their support needs. It also presents the opportunity to redesign the current service model to account for recent changes in the health and social care market.</p> <p>The completion of a tender process will achieve a budget efficiency on current spend of 10%.</p> <p><b>Potential negative impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tendering exercise could result in a degree of instability during the tender its self and during new service implementation.</li> <li>• Staff and service users could be anxious with a change to current advocacy support systems.</li> <li>• Staff and service users may view the recommendation as a reduction in support from providers who specialise in providing support to those with specific needs.</li> <li>• Potential risk to smaller voluntary sector providers of losing business if they cannot compete with pricing from larger organisations.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a risk that, while overall budgets will decrease, the unit cost of service may increase decreasing the value achieved.</li> </ul>
<b>Potential Positive Impacts</b>	<p>Commissioning a single all encompassing advocacy service will allow the council to re-design existing provision in line with service review recommendations, improving service models, quality and outcomes monitoring. It also provides the opportunity to market test services, obtaining best value at a time when local and national changes are increasing demand on advocacy services.</p> <p>Amalgamating several funding streams creates cashable savings as well as internal efficiencies with reduced resources required for contact management functions.</p> <p>The new service model will also be required to provide a single point of access for referrers and those requiring support, reducing duplication and confusion currently experienced with multiple services and access points.</p>
<b>Responsible Service Manager</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

<b>Approved by Senior Manager</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

### Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	<p>Potential perceived or actual loss of specialist support.</p> <p>Re- design of the current advocacy services could cause</p>	<p>The service design, specification and procurement processes will ensure that any newly appoint service provider,</p>

	<p>confusion and anxiousness within current user groups who are used to the current system.</p>	<p>or consortium of providers, is able to fully meet the needs of all specific user groups.</p> <p>Providers will be expected to detail previous experience and future plans for meeting the needs of all individuals who will be accessing advocacy services.</p> <p>This will include staff training and implementation plans for any new service will need to address access issues and appropriate staff training to ensure that those who require advocacy support do not experience a reduction in the quality of service which they receive.</p> <p>As part of the service design and tender process a communications and consultation plan will be put in place for existing services users and stakeholder groups.</p> <p>Clear messages for staff and service users will be agreed with existing providers as well as any new provider following the procurement.</p>
<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p>Potential perceived or actual loss of specialist support.</p> <p>Re- design of the current advocacy services could cause confusion and anxiousness within current user groups who are used to the current system.</p>	<p>The service design, specification and procurement processes will ensure that any newly appoint service provider, or consortium of providers, is able to fully meet the needs of all</p>

		<p>specific user groups.</p> <p>Providers will be expected to detail previous experience and future plans for meeting the needs of all individuals who will be accessing advocacy services.</p> <p>This will include staff training and implementation plans for any new service will need to address access issues and appropriate staff training to ensure that those individuals with disabilities who require advocacy support do not experience a reduction in the quality of service which they receive.</p> <p>As part of the service design and tender process a communications and consultation plan will be put in place for existing services users and stakeholder groups.</p> <p>Clear messages for staff and service users will be agreed with existing providers as well as any new provider following the procurement.</p>
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	No specific issues identified	
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	No specific issues identified	
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	No specific issues identified	

<b>Race</b>	No specific issues identified	
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	No specific issues identified	
<b>Sex</b>	No specific issues identified	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	No specific issues identified	
<b>Community Safety</b>	No specific issues identified	
<b>Poverty</b>	No specific issues identified	
<b>Other Significant Impacts</b>	Staff employed within advocacy services will be anxious and uncertain about what any tendering process and new service will mean for them. It is unlikely that there will be an equality issue affecting a particular grouping or that proposed changes will disproportionately affect one staff group.	As part of the service design and tender process a communications and consultation plan will be put in place for existing services users and stakeholder groups.  Clear messages for staff and service users will be agreed with existing providers as well as any new provider following the procurement.