

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.

<b>Name or Brief Description of Proposal</b>	Housing Related Support Review (single adults)
<b>Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)</b>	<p>Housing Related Support (HRS) is a bracket term used for all services provided to vulnerable people or people in a housing crisis who need additional support to either obtain or sustain their housing.</p> <p>The activities covered under the bracket term of HRS cover a variety of skills required to live independently and range from managing own tenancy and understanding rights and responsibilities of a good tenant to developing personal qualities such as confidence in living independently and managing daily tasks with no (or some) support in order to sustain accommodation. HRS also plays an important role in joining up and building on community cohesion as it seeks to establish or improve good links with the local community and combat isolation. Its exact focus will vary depending on the client group and clients’ needs which will vary across age groups and primary need.</p> <p>It is proposed that Housing Related Support provided to people living in Southampton will be delivered through a number of different service elements and contracts.</p> <p>Each service element will operate as part of a wide range of services in the city which contribute to supporting service users to maximise their independence and enable access to appropriate housing with support. Services have a key role in helping service users to gain the skills and confidence to gain, manage and sustain their housing.</p> <p>The service will work with a variety of service users, most of whom will have a vulnerability around mental health, substance misuse, disability and/or homelessness.</p> <p>The future provision of housing related support, as set out in this service specification will seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide a flexible and responsive crisis intervention and prevention service to vulnerable people with support needs relating to gaining or maintaining a tenancy, including support to those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for vulnerable adults, including those who are street homeless or at risk of street homelessness, to receive the support they require, in order to enable them to develop the skills to live as independently as possible and sustain their accommodation in the longer term.</li> <li>• provide a service that improves health and wellbeing, supports social inclusion and reduces the likelihood of them needing adult social care or other key services.</li> <li>• provide holistic support that helps prevents the breakdown, and repeat breakdown of tenancy, homelessness, hospital admission, custody or other forms of institutionalised care.</li> <li>• target individuals at an early stage and provide interventions which helps prevent escalation of need and helps sustain an individual's current housing situation where it is safe to do so.</li> <li>• enable service users to develop their capacity, at the earliest appropriate opportunity, to live independently so as to be able to maintain independent accommodation without the need for ongoing unnecessary intensive support.</li> <li>• support vulnerable people who are in crisis during a period of change in their life/ condition/ circumstances with the express aim of increasing the individual's level of independence</li> <li>• develop a culture of community cohesion around the provision of housing related support that enables individuals to build links within their communities and supports landlords to offer accommodation to adults with vulnerabilities.</li> </ul> <p>The service will be provided through one community based flexible support contract and four homeless contracts covering assessment, intensive support and life skills development.</p> <p>There will be continuity between support services. Where the service user agrees, their support plan and information will follow them into a new service.</p> <p>Elements of the service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment and intensive service</li> <li>• Homeless intensive support service</li> <li>• Homeless life skills support service 1</li> <li>• Homeless life skills support service 2</li> <li>• Flexible support service</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summary of Impact and Issues</b></p>	<p>The future housing related support will reconfigure the present provision to better respond to the needs of the individuals and of the City; it will streamline the move on process and improve support planning to reflect person centred support and contingency planning across services.</p> <p>The number of units of accommodation will stay the same, however, the way the support is distributed will change slightly. High needs accommodation will have allocated staff times and direct support hours. Accommodation covered within the flexible support service will cover a variety of accommodation, including designated and private rented accommodation. This will enable the support to respond more flexibly to the needs of the individuals by increasing or decreasing the number of hours of support (especially when in crisis). This will allow for the better use of the staff resource and support hours available. The merging of several small contracts should yield efficiencies within</p>

	<p>management structures, while having no impact on the level of face to face service offered.</p> <p>A dedicated gateway approach will be adopted to ensure fair access to all elements of the service and to streamline the move on pathway. It will also support in void reduction and ensure effective use of resources.</p> <p>The new provision will move away from designating accommodation based on clients' primary need and diagnosis (such as mental health, LD etc.) and move towards assessing needs based on vulnerability and complexity of the individual and their individual needs. The introduction of the gateway will support this process.</p> <p>The new provision places strong focus on person centred planning and multi-agency working. This will help individuals moving within the services to continue to work on the desired outcomes and support agencies in building a joint response to service users' needs, especially in crisis.</p> <p>Street homelessness and rough sleeping have been on the rise in Southampton. The proposals seek to maximise the usage and effectiveness of the homelessness provision with a strong drive for the preventative interventions and helping individuals to self-manage and avoid tenancy breakdown.</p> <p>The changes in the provision will help Southampton City Council in achieving its savings targets, and allow for greater efficiencies within the provision.</p> <p>This review has identified issues which are outside of SCC control which pose a risk to the way the support is delivered in the future; these impacts may also impact on the number of people accessing the provision. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The introduction of the universal credit – it is estimated that more people will need help with budgeting and managing their rent arrears due to the change in the way the benefits are administered</li> <li>- Introduction of local housing allowance to social housing – this change will come into place for all tenancies signed after April 2017, and it will affect benefit entitlement from April 2018. This is a serious risk as the shortfall between LHA and the rents level in supported accommodation is significant, it will also make move on accommodation less affordable</li> <li>- Removal of automatic HB entitlement for people 18 – 21, although people who cannot return home are likely to be exempt</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential Positive Impacts</b></p>	<p>1. Stress on preventative nature of the services to include strong information and advice narrative.</p> <p>Under the Care Act 2014 local authorities have a duty to provide universal services offering information and advice. Although I&amp;A provision is not directly a part of this review, a separate review is taking place to ensure SCC meets its statutory duty. Within HRS, flexible support element will be able to respond to people who are in a housing crisis and prevent evictions/ find alternative appropriate accommodation. This service will be able to equip people with the right</p>

skills to avoid crisis in the future. This provision will also play part in resettling people in move on and independent accommodation after they have been through the housing pathway, this is to prevent the 'revolving door' syndrome and help people sustain their accommodation in the long run.

2. Focus on community based provision and building up 'social capital'.

The services will be strongly encouraged to create new placements and encourage participation in the volunteering opportunities across the City. The services will be marked against outcomes relating to volunteering, take up of employment and educational opportunities, and informal learning. This is to ensure people going through the service have settled in the neighbourhoods and can actively contribute to building strong communities. Community involvement and strong social networks can reduce isolation and loneliness and this can improve someone's mental health and physical health which will further help the individuals lead a meaningful life. These objectives also support SCC priorities.

3. Stress on upskilling individuals and increasing their ability to live independently, or supporting individuals to maintain their independence levels (this could mean additional support put in place)

It is the ambition of Southampton's Better Care plan to ensure that as many people as possible can achieve their full potential. Also, SCC is committed to 'enable more people to live independently in their own homes', as per SCC Strategy 2014-2017. This is only possible when the individual has the right support or the right skills in place, and part of this review to promote this positive attitude to independence and discourage the use of institutional care, and build on the community engagement and community resilience. The provision will put a stress on educating staff and service users on self-service options in Southampton and promote access to information and guidelines services. This will help reduce future demand for the services and support people in managing their circumstances effectively, before they meet the crisis point. The provision is geared towards outcomes relating to a positive change in individuals' behaviour, situation, attitudes and circumstances. This is to ensure that at the point of leaving the housing pathway all individuals have the necessary skills such as managing their behaviour, managing tenancy, money, self-care (cooking, cleaning, healthy eating).

4. Stress on personalised approaches and interventions to meet individual needs in best accommodation/support setting

Personalised approaches are not only more effective in securing the engagement of the individual, but they also offer better outcomes in the long term. Personalisation brings the choice and empowerment to individual's support, and it allows for support to be flexible and adaptive to clients' needs. All of the HRS services support will be based on person-centred planning, the outcomes will be set up with a service user to meet their needs and aspirations. The services will be required to work together, and a single support plan will follow the individual throughout the move on pathway.

5. Introducing the gateway approach to ensure fair access to services

A unified and streamlined approach to processing referrals and deciding on appropriate accommodation will reduce the waiting times and ensure that needs are well met within the accommodation offer. A

	<p>strategic view over the provision will help in making the right accommodation choices to better suit the needs of individuals.</p> <p>6. Minimising of voids and maximizing on use of provision This proposal aims to ensure that the current stock is used as effectively as possible and accommodation waiting times are reduced to the minimum. Currently some provision has long term voids which bares costs to SCC and puts up the unit price, while other services have waiting lists. An overarching outlook on voids provided by the gateway will ensure that the waiting time and the voids are reduced to minimum. This would provide better value for money per bed space and reduce additional costs to SCC.</p> <p>7. Introduction of flexible support This provision will be able to respond quickly to the changing needs of people who are at risk of homelessness or need additional support to keep their housing. Lack of allocated hours per week means that the workers will be able to manage their case loads based on need of clients.</p>
<b>Responsible Service Manager</b>	<u>Sandra Jerrim</u>
<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
<b>Age</b>	The services are open to all 18 – 65 year olds. Older people may be considered if agreed by the gateway.	The review will not introduce the changes to the eligibility criteria based on age to 18 – 65 year olds. The new provision will allow for additional placements for people who are older than 65, based on their need and will work closely with services supporting 18 -25yr olds
<b>Disability</b>	Physical disability. Some disabled beds might be lost in the reshaping of the services.	Personalised support means that HRS will be better equipped to meet individual needs, including adaptations. Reviewers to ensure that the number of disabled beds is representative of the need – housing adaptations to be put in place when necessary.

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	<p>Mental health – a lot of the clients accessing HRS will have MH issues. A reconfiguration of bed provision and move away from protected beds specifically purchased for people with mental health might mean a decrease in a number of beds available.</p>	<p>The review is meant to ensure a fair access to the services regardless of the type of need. People with MH issues will be able to access generic beds provision which will cater to their needs accordingly. In addition, greater prevention and early intervention agenda will ensure that people with MH needs can access the provision before the crisis point and receive appropriate support.</p> <p>ACTION: person centred planning and improved assessment of need will reduce this risk significantly. More flexible provision and more variety of provision will ensure better match between individual needs and accommodation available.</p>
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	<p>People who have gone through the gender reassignment might struggle in large, generic needs projects.</p>	<p>A more flexible approach to support and accommodation will mean that individual needs can be met in a more flexible way and be more person-centred.</p>
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	<p>The reconfiguring of the provision might make it easier for the same sex couples to find appropriate accommodation and support.</p> <p>It can be difficult to accommodate couples in hostels due the benefit restrictions and house rules.</p>	<p>A more flexible approach to support and accommodation will mean that individual needs can be met in a more flexible way and be more person-centred.</p> <p>Same sex couples may find it easier to receive support away from large hostels.</p> <p>ACTION: to ensure that the number of beds for couples is representative of the need. ACTION: to ensure that referral and assessment criteria do not disqualify against couples.</p>
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	<p>This provision is designed for single homeless as a primary group.</p> <p>Parents can access the accommodation based provision however the provision will not be able to accommodate children.</p> <p>Family specific services are provided elsewhere.</p>	<p>Personalised support planning will support individuals in maintaining their meaningful relationships.</p>
<b>Race</b>	<p>Some people might find it difficult to cope in</p>	<p>A more flexible approach to</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	supported housing environments due to their race.	<p>support and accommodation will mean that individual needs can be met in a more flexible way and be more person-centred.</p> <p>ACTION: person centred planning and improved assessment of need will aid this risk significantly. More flexible provision and more variety of provision will ensure better match between individual needs and accommodation available.</p>
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	Some people might find it difficult to cope in supported housing environments due to their religion or belief.	<p>A more flexible approach to support and accommodation will mean that individual needs can be met in a more flexible way and be more person-centred.</p> <p>ACTION: person centred planning and improved assessment of need will aid this risk significantly. More flexible provision and more variety of provision will ensure better match between individual needs and accommodation available</p>
<b>Sex</b>	<p>Men and women might have similar needs and issues which they need support with, however, homeless men and women can choose different ways to cope. In general, men are more likely to become homeless but women are more vulnerable while living on the streets than men.</p> <p>The provision does not include priority need based on sex.</p>	<p>A more flexible approach to support and accommodation will mean that individual needs can be met in a more flexible way and be more person-centred.</p> <p>ACTION: person centred planning and improved assessment of need will aid this risk significantly. More flexible provision and more variety of provision will ensure better match between individual needs and accommodation available.</p>
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	Some people might find it difficult to cope in supported housing environments due to their sexual orientation.	<p>A more flexible approach to support and accommodation will mean that individual needs can be met in a more flexible way and be more person-centred.</p> <p>ACTION: person centred planning and improved assessment of need will aid this risk significantly. More flexible provision and more variety of provision will ensure better match between individual needs</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
<b>Community Safety</b>	Lack of appropriate housing and no access to benefits might increase street begging and increase the perceived risk to the community.	<p>and accommodation available.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> There is a misconception that people begging on streets are homeless. This issue is currently addressed by council colleagues and some housing providers.</p> <p>Improved access to prevention and intervention work streams will mean that more people can access help early enough to avoid the crisis point. Bed based provision will be available.</p>
<b>Poverty</b>	<p>Reduced number of beds can increase the number of people sleeping rough or sofa-surfing.</p> <p>Increased access to information and advice (including information on consequences of homelessness) should mitigate the risk of poverty.</p>	<p>A more flexible approach to support and accommodation will mean that individual needs can be met in a more flexible way and be more person-centred. No planned reduction in number of units.</p> <p>The review will ensure that the new provision is able to notice vulnerability earlier and avoid a crisis (as a part of the prevention and early intervention work). The provision will seek to prioritise people in high need to avoid/alleviate the crisis.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> person centred planning and improved assessment of need will aid this risk significantly. More flexible provision and more variety of provision will ensure better match between individual needs and accommodation available.</p>
<b>Other Significant Impacts</b>	<p>Introduction of Local Housing Allowance to social landlords making supported accommodation rents unaffordable for service users.</p> <p>The one identified risk relates to people who are 18 – 21 under the proposals to change HB allocation. The changes would mean that this group is excluded from the support offered by HB.</p> <p>Housing and Planning Welfare reform bill impacting on the rent levels</p>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> Consider alternative streams of funding. Engage with housing associations at the earliest stage.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> consider unit price and affordability criteria when writing contracts, explore HRS options not tied to supported accommodation (e.g. floating support).</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> monitor the market place and engage with the providers to</p>



Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	<p>Introduction of UC – research suggest that when claims are switched over to UC many claimants need additional support to open bank accounts, support with budgeting and rent payments.</p> <p>Uncertainty about changes with differing views on likely implementation of agreed changes to LHA</p>	<p>assess the impact</p> <p>Changes to the welfare and housing legislation (beyond the scope of this review) are likely to have a significant impact on different groups for different reasons, and in doing so have a direct impact on the decisions and service providers as a part of HRS provision in Southampton.</p> <p>Critical timeline informs key and critical decision points in the review and procurement process</p>