

**Policy/Strategy/project/service
E&D Risk Assessment**

Date: 08.12.15

Lead Manager/Officer: Sue Dean

Briefly outline aims of the policy/strategy/project or service:

The Supporting People programme of investment in housing support services (£9.8M) is facing potential cuts of around £4.9m from 2016/17 as a result of cuts to public sector funding. The scale of financial reduction is such that it cannot be achieved without removing all funding from some services and reducing funding to others. Unless alternative funding streams are found, these cuts are likely to result in service closures.

A proposal on how to achieve the required reduction has been presented to DMT and they have determined which cuts should progress in the event that no mitigation funding is achieved from elsewhere e.g. from within the ESBT programme.

The proposed cuts include a cut to the refuge service for women and their children escaping domestic violence. The proposed cut is £80k which is around 20% of the total budget. Some other services are facing reductions of 50-100%. In these cases full EQiA's are being completed.

The initial proposal from Supporting People indicated that this reduction in funding may require a service closure reducing available units from 47 to 41 however the provider has worked constructively to find a solution to the reduction that does not involve closure of a building. (see below)

To assess the risk level of your service and the need for an EqlA, please answer the questions below.

When doing so, please keep in mind all equality characteristics (gender including transgender, religion or belief, age, disability, ethnicity and race, sexual orientation, marital status/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity)

Think about the barriers that people may experience when getting to know about, accessing or receiving a service.

	Question	Yes	No	Don't know
1	Is there evidence of different needs, experiences, issues or priorities in relation to the service or policy/strategy area?		x	
2	Are there any proposed changes in this service that may affect how services are run and/or delivered?	x		
3	Are there any proposed changes in this service that may affect service users directly?	x		
4	Is there potential for, or evidence that, this service may adversely affect inclusiveness or harm good relations between different groups of people?		x	
5	Is there any potential for or evidence that any part of service could discriminate, directly or indirectly?		x	
6	Is there any stakeholder (staff, public, unions) concern in the service area about actual, perceived or potential discrimination/loss that may result in a legal challenge?		x	
7	Is there any evidence or indication of higher or lower uptake by people in connection with protected characteristics?	x		

Share the results of your risk assessment with the Equality Lead for your department to agree the next steps.

If you have answered yes or don't know to any of the questions above, then the completion of an EIA is necessary.

The risk level of a policy low/medium/high will depend on:

- how many questions you have answered yes or don't know to;
- the likeliness of the council facing a legal challenge in relation to the effects the policy may have on various stakeholders; and
- the likeliness of adverse publicity for the authority

Low risk	x	Medium risk		High risk		
Although there are some 'yes' answers above we do not consider the situation requires a full EQiA. These services do have a higher take up of people with the protected characteristic of gender as they are women only services. However the provider's decision to avoid a service closure if the funding reduction is decided by Cabinet in February means that the impact will be limited.						

The provider has proposed to reduce the service by 1FTE of a post from onsite staffing and to remove the 1.5 peripatetic staff who are currently working across the services. These peripatetic posts are not essential to the core service delivery within the onsite staff team.

Refuge, the service provider, have advised that they can and will manage the funding cut without a service closure and with a minimal reduction to onsite staffing so the impact of this cut on the client group will be comparatively small. They will still be able to deliver the core service as specified in their contract however it should be noted that the loss of the peripatetic worker will reduce the overall service received by these vulnerable women.

Having agreed this approach with the provider we consider the level of impact and risk to be small and therefore not necessary to complete a full EQiA. The provider has confirmed that this approach has been agreed with their Senior Management Team. If a decision is made to progress this cut to Refuge funding commissioners will need to work with the provider to establish a staffing schedule and budget to meet contractual requirements.