

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

Date: 5th January 2015 **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 £3.5 to £4m 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.

One proposal is a reduction to the funding for the county wide floating support service for people aged 18 and over (SAILS).

From the consultation document:

'Remove 35% funding from the (SAILS) service (saving of £345,000). This would affect around 360 individuals with a range of needs, including mental health needs and learning disabilities. Eligible care needs will continue to be met. It is the Supporting People element that we are proposing to remove.'

DMT, in conjunction with the Head of Supporting People and Head of DPS, are considering the potential to work with one of the local authorities to develop an alternative approach to managing the rental element of the SAILS scheme which may help to mitigate the proposed reduction in funding. There may be potential to improve housing management services for landlords and tenants as well as making ongoing budgetary savings for Adult Social Care.

Current housing benefit arrangements vary considerably across the county and if an option can be identified to achieve consistency and minimise problems for landlords and tenants then this will be considered as an option for the future. Successful HB income recovery is challenging for landlords, partly as they aren't always experienced in dealing with HB and the different systems in each Local Authority.

	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

The risk level of 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		
<p>If an alternative approach can be identified there will be a positive impact for current users of the SAILS service as their support can be continued as well as a saving being made. There is also potential for a positive impact for landlords in terms of void guarantees. In addition, future tenancies and landlords will be potentially easier to source and support. The arrangement would require close joint working with the SAILS team who would retain responsibility for landlord liaison, care and support.</p> <p>There are areas of clarification needed in terms of financial and legal implications of the alternative approach and these</p>						

will be fully explored and resolved before work is started with the SAILS service. The proposed scheme is not without risk to the incumbent local authority and they have agreed to fund the required financial and legal clarification to consider these risks, including analysis of the implications of the Spending review 2016 in terms of accommodation subsidy.

To progress this work a project group would need to include the local authority, SAILS and SP manager.