

## Budget Proposals 2014/15 and 2015/16: Equality Impact Assessment (EIA): Housing Link Workers

<b>Business Unit:</b>	<b>Supporting People</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Adults &amp; Resources</b>
<b>Date Started :</b>	<b>9 September 2013</b>	<b>Date of current version:</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> February 2014</b>

The council and its partners are facing a significant challenge in the savings it needs to make over the next couple of years. This Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been developed as a tool to enable business units to fully consider the impact of their proposals on the community. As a council we need to ensure that we are able to deliver the savings that we need to make while mitigating against any negative or adverse impacts on particular groups across our communities.

This EIA will evidence that the Council have fully considered the impact of the proposed changes and has carried out appropriate consultation on those changes with the key stakeholders. This EIA and the evidence provided within it will allow Councillors to make informed decisions as part of the decision-making process regarding the council's budget.

### Executive Lead / Head Sign off :

<b>Executive Lead(s)</b>	<b>Cllr Christine Scouler</b>	<b>Executive Head:</b>	<b>Fran Mason</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> February 2014</b>		<b>6<sup>th</sup> February 2014</b>

**Summary from Overall Budget Proposals:**

Proposals – Outline	Savings for 2014/15 and 2015/16		Implementation Cost <i>Include brief outline + year incurred</i>	Delivery <i>When will this proposal realise income / savings</i>	Risks / impact of proposals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Potential risks</i></li> <li>• <i>Impact on community</i></li> <li>• <i>Knock on impact to other agencies</i></li> <li>• <b><i>If statutory service please state relevant legislation section and Act together with any statutory guidance issued.</i></b></li> </ul>	Type of decision		
	Income £ 000's	Budget reduction £ 000's				Internal	Minor	Major
<p><b>Link workers:</b> Supporting the take up and monitoring of personal budgets</p> <p>Reduce by 100%</p> <p><b>Annual contract value: £39,400</b></p>		Reduce by 100%: £39,400			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff employed by TSDHCT and DPT, this funding is only a proportion of the cost</li> <li>• Potential cost pressure on adult social care budget.</li> <li>• Consultation and Equality Impact Assessment undertaken to assess the impact of the proposal.</li> </ul>			X

## Section 1: Purpose of the proposal/strategy/decision

No	Question	Details
1.	<b>Clearly set out the proposal and what is the intended outcome.</b>	<p>The proposal is to withdraw the Supporting People funding for the 2 housing link worker posts. Supporting People part funds both posts . The balance of funding is paid by Torbay Care Trust and Devon Partnership Trust.</p> <p>The overall objective of the role is: “to improve housing outcomes for vulnerable clients who need to secure and maintain appropriate housing and housing related support.” The link workers support Torbay Care Trust social care teams and Devon Partnership Trust mental health teams to identify housing issues and solutions for clients using statutory services. The support solutions are often in Supporting People funded services. Further budget savings proposals mean that these solutions will no longer be available.</p> <p>The link workers also support the decommissioning of services by identifying appropriate move on options and packages of support.</p> <p>The link workers have coordinated the personal budgets programme, where individual support packages have been negotiated with service providers to meet specific outcomes identified by clients. Further budget savings proposals include a 100% reduction to the personal budget programme.</p>
2.	<b>Who is intended to benefit / who will be affected?</b>	<p>The proposal will impact on clients engaged in adult social care and mental health services who require specialist housing support information. These are the client groups specifically supported by the link workers.</p> <p>The effect will impact on statutory staff managing clients’ care plans who will need to identify housing and support solutions without input from the link workers.</p> <p>Key stakeholders include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service users</li> <li>• Housing Link Workers</li> <li>• Housing Services who will be required to provide prevention information and liaise directly with social care staff in mitigating risk of homelessness. Increase in work activity.</li> <li>• Mental Health Teams who will be required to liaise directly with Housing Options team in mitigating risk of homelessness. Increase in work activity.</li> <li>• Health and social care zone teams who will be required to liaise directly with Housing Options team in mitigating risk of homelessness. Increase in work activity.</li> <li>• Health – Hospital through delayed discharges</li> </ul>

## Section 2: Equalities, Consultation and Engagement

Torbay Council has a moral obligation as well as a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, promote good relations and advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.

The **Equalities, Consultation and Engagement** section ensures that, as a council, we take into account the Public Sector Equality Duty at an early stage and provide evidence to ensure that we fully consider the impact of our decisions/proposals on the Torbay community.

### Evidence, Consultation and Engagement

No	Question	Details
3.	<b>Have you considered the available evidence?</b>	<p>The posts were initiated as a pilot project in 2008 to improve working relationships between health and social care teams and housing options service, with the aim to improve housing and support outcomes for vulnerable people engaged in health and social care (statutory) services. The posts have evolved over the past 5 years and the link worker posts have been utilised to roll out the personal budget programme and support the decommissioning of some Supporting People services. The posts support the statutory services to reduce the use of bed based care by pro-actively supporting move on from residential care and hospital. With the budget proposals including a 100% reduction to the personal budget programme and a significant reduction to Supporting People services, there is a reduction in the workload from the Supporting People team.</p> <p>Further detail on the number of clients worked with to date by the postholders will be added as part of the formal consultation process.</p>
4.	<b>How have you consulted on the proposal</b>	<p><b>Providers of Supporting People funded services</b></p> <p>The consultation period ran from Thursday 21 November 2013 to 16 January 2014</p> <p>On 21<sup>st</sup> November Providers were sent written details outlining the proposal(s) for their service(s) and given the Consultation Summary document detailing the overall proposals for the Supporting People (SP) programme, Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) for their services and access to view the EIAs of other services online.</p> <p>Initial provider meetings/conversations were set up with SP Contract Managers in the week prior to the formal draft budget announcement. This was to explain the proposals and consultation process to providers and to allow the providers time to arrange meetings with their staff to take place on the day of the budget announcement (as for many services the proposals will affect staff)</p> <p>A client profile template was developed and sent to Providers to complete to identify clients in support services who were also in receipt of a statutory service. This information was used to inform the service EIAs and evidence where there might be an impact on the expenditure in other parts of the Authority.</p> <p>The Consultation Summary document and questionnaire were available on the Supporting People page of the Council's website.</p>

No	Question	Details
		<p>A follow up email was sent to Providers on 8<sup>th</sup> January asking if they were responding collectively, individually or both; and asking them to encourage referral agencies to respond to the consultation.</p> <p><b>Current and previous users of Supporting People funded services, and their carers, relatives and advocates.</b>  A standard letter outlining the specific proposals for each service was sent to the service provider to distribute to their service users. The letter outlined where service users could access and complete the client consultation questionnaire and explained the consultation process including the opportunity to attend focus groups or face to face interviews.</p> <p>Posters were sent to Providers to insert the details of the consultation events and promote these to service users. A number of focus groups proportionate to size of service were held for each of the affected services. Where services had more than 20 clients then 2 focus groups were offered, with the option for more if required, subject to the availability of resources to facilitate them. Focus groups used the same questions as the client questionnaire. However 1 focus group for clients in the supported employment service used different questions, chosen by the external agency that facilitated this particular group.</p> <p>Focus groups were facilitated by representatives from Torbay Voice with a member of the SP team present to record comments. Where a focus group was organised but there were no attendees, the focus group has not been counted.</p> <p>Face to face interviews (with Torbay Voice representatives) or telephone interviews were offered to those choosing not to or unable to attend focus groups using the same questions.</p> <p>There may be a small duplication of respondents as some may have completed a questionnaire as well as attended a focus group</p> <p>Providers were encouraged to undertake their own consultations using the same questions, and some providers issued the questionnaires to their clients.</p> <p>The client questionnaire was available on the SP page of the Council's website and providers advised of this so that they could direct service users to it, or support service users to complete it themselves.</p> <p>Individual written submissions (email and letter) were received from service users, relatives, and family members.</p> <p><b>Stakeholders including statutory partners, referral agencies, local and national partner organisations</b>  An email was sent to all stakeholders attaching the SP Consultation Summary document and stakeholder questionnaire, a summary of SP services and a link to the EIAs for each service. Stakeholders were also encouraged to respond to the overall Council budget proposals and a link to the wider Council budget consultation was included in the email.</p>

No	Question	Details
		<p>Stakeholders included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Torbay and Southern Devon Health and Care NHS Trust</li> <li>• Devon Partnership Trust</li> <li>• Devon and Cornwall Probation Trust</li> <li>• South Devon Clinical Commissioning Group</li> <li>• Torbay Council Housing Services</li> <li>• Torbay Council Children’s Services</li> <li>• Police</li> <li>• Referral agencies such as: Community Mental Health Teams, Disability Information Service, Housing Options team, Torbay Hospital</li> </ul> <p>Other local and national partners such as: British Association of Supported Employment, Shelter, The Alzheimers Society, MIND and Mencap</p> <p>See Appendix 1 for consultation results.</p> <p><b>Other including members of the public/non service users</b>  A general questionnaire was placed on the Council’s website by the Council’s Policy and Performance Team asking about all of the Council budget proposals including a section on Supporting People. The SP section contained a link to the SP consultation documentation on the specific budget proposals for SP services.</p> <p>Further representations were made in writing (via letter, email and petition) by organisations and members of the public.</p> <p>A total of 285 representations were received, as well as 21 focus groups that were facilitated for clients and carers, where 160 people attended</p>
5.	<b>Outline the key findings</b>	<p>There were 7 responses received which referred to this proposal.</p> <p>The respondents felt that the link workers provide a vital part of an holistic approach to people’s support, as without the support to access suitable accommodation and housing related support, the mental health conditions of clients would deteriorate significantly.</p> <p>The resultant delay in stepping down from residential care, leaving hospital or moving from substandard or otherwise inappropriate accommodation would result in worsening health and greater need for statutory, higher level services. The costs of these services would outweigh any savings achieved through the removal of this funding.</p>

No	Question	Details
		The loss of these workers would also be a loss of knowledge and experience that cannot be replaced.
6.	<b>What amendments may be required as a result of the consultation?</b>	Provider organisation and Police, probation and health services request a delay in implementation of the proposals so that alternative sources of funding can be investigated.

### Positive and Negative Equality Impacts

No	Question	Details		
7.	<b>Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups</b>			
		Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact
	Older or younger people			No differential impact. Clients supported are aged 18-65.
	People with caring responsibilities			No differential impact.
	People with a disability		People with disabilities, sensory impairments and complex mental health problems engaged in statutory health and social care services may be affected by longer stays in hospital and residential care due to the reduction in specialist housing support from the link workers.	
	Women or men			No differential impact
	People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME)			No differential impact

No	Question	Details	
	Religion or belief (including lack of belief)		No differential impact
	People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual		No differential impact
	People who are transgendered		No differential impact
	People who are in a marriage or civil partnership		No differential impact
	Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave		No differential impact
	Socio-economic impacts (Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)		
	Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)		No differential impact
<b>8a.</b>	<b>Cumulative Impacts – Council wide</b> (proposed changes elsewhere which might worsen the impacts identified above)	There are significant reductions in the Supporting People budgets, This means the available supported housing and support options for vulnerable people will be significantly reduced. The role of the link workers has been to identify suitable housing options and as these options will be reduced, finding accommodation will be more difficult, thus there will possibly be an impact on Housing Options team and health and social care teams who have statutory responsibility for the clients.	
<b>8b.</b>	<b>Cumulative Impacts – Other public services</b> (proposed changes elsewhere which might worsen the impacts identified)	Supporting People are not aware of any other proposals in public services that will worsen the impacts identified above.	



No	Question	Details
	above)	

### Section 3: Mitigating action

No	Action	Details
9.	Summarise any negative impacts and how these will be managed?	<p><b>Negative impacts identified in section 7</b> - People with disabilities, sensory impairments and complex mental health problems engaged in statutory health and social care services may be affected by longer stays in hospital and residential care due to the reduction in specialist housing support from the link workers.</p> <p>Possibilities to minimise this impact are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Housing Options take a more active role in sourcing accommodation for people involved with Community Mental Health teams or Adult Social Care. However, this would have an impact on Housing Options workload. Care managers and Care co-ordinators could take over work to ensure prompt moves from hospital and residential care by prompt sourcing of appropriate accommodation. However, this is not their area of skill, and would impact on their workload. It will be very difficult to minimise the negative impact of the ending of the link worker posts as they perform a specialised role in finding housing solutions for complex cases.</li> </ol> <p>We will monitor for the following:</p> <p>Delayed discharge from hospital after admission for mental health issues.  Delayed discharge from residential care  Increase in homeless presentations and acceptances at Housing Options</p>

### Section 4: Monitoring

No	Action	Details
10.	Outline plans to monitor the actual impact of your proposals	The following impacts will be monitored and reported to Commissioning for Independence Board, Chaired by the Director of Adult Services.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring numbers of homelessness assessments - this information can be obtained from colleagues in housing and reported quarterly</li> <li>Monitoring numbers of people accepted as statutorily homeless requiring emergency accommodation– this information can be obtained from colleagues in housing and reported quarterly</li> <li>Monitoring temporary accommodation costs – this information can be obtained from colleagues in Housing Options and reported quarterly</li> <li>Monitoring delayed discharge from hospital after admission for mental health issues and delayed discharge from residential care – this information is not recorded, but anecdotal evidence from Community Mental Health teams and Adult Social Care zone teams will be sought and reported quarterly</li> </ul>
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**Section 5: Recommended course of action –**

No	Action	Outcome	Tick ✓	Reasons/justification for recommended action
11.	<b>State a recommended course of action</b>	<b>Outcome 1: No major change required - EIA</b> <i>has not identified any potential for adverse impact in relation to equalities and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken</i>		
		<b>Outcome 2: Adjustments to remove barriers –</b> <i>Action to remove the barriers identified in relation to equalities have been taken or actions identified to better promote equality</i>		
		<b>Outcome 3: Continue with proposal - Despite</b> <i>having identified some <u>potential</u> for adverse impact / missed opportunities in relation to equalities or to promote equality. Full justification required, especially in relation to equalities, in line with the duty to have ‘due regard’.</i>	x	The purpose of this proposal is not to discriminate directly or indirectly, and does not amount to unlawful discrimination. The Council has to deliver significant savings, and in doing so has to prioritise its statutory responsibilities. Whilst the consultation has highlighted the benefits derived from the service together with the impact upon those who currently receive the service, this service is not statutory. The Council will endeavour, with its partners and the community, to mitigate against any adverse impacts. If any individual affected by the decision meets the FACS criteria, they will receive a service to meet their needs from Torbay & Southern

				Devon Health & Care Trust.
		<i>Outcome 4: Stop and rethink – EIA has identified actual or potential unlawful discrimination in relation to equalities or adverse impact has been identified</i>		

## Appendix 1

### Link Workers - Reduce by 100%

There were 7 responses received which referred to this proposal.

Category	Examples of comments
<b>Impact on the Health, Wellbeing and Quality of Life of Existing and Potential Clients</b>	<p>“...service users will not get the appropriate housing support and advice at the right time which in turn will exacerbate their own mental health conditions and increase their risk of becoming homeless.”</p> <p>“...become a tremendous loss for the Carers and persons cared for.”</p>
<b>Impact on individual and ability to live independently</b>	<p>“The link workers are crucial in providing a quality holistic service to people with mental health issues and should be retained to ensure access to appropriate accommodation.”</p>

Category	Examples of comments
<b>Quality of Service</b>	<p>“I cannot praise the work ... highly enough ... directly supported hundreds of people in maintaining housing tenancies, finding emergency accommodation and supporting our service with complex legal issues around housing related matters. This has then impacted positively on service users mental health recovery.”</p>
<b>Impact on Statutory Services and National Priorities</b>	<p>“Move on for people from in-patient beds and step down for those ready to leave residential care may well become more delayed as a result of closure of these services and the loss of the SP link worker assigned to mental health.”</p> <p>“This may contribute to people staying longer in mental health in-patient units, potentially becoming homeless or their condition deteriorating as a consequence of living in unsuitable accommodation.”</p>
<b>Financial Impact of the Proposals</b>	<p>“Reducing these services will impact negatively on the clients, the service provided by our team and the community, likely to increase costs in health services, police services, children services and criminal justice. It is a false economy.”</p>