



## Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report: Alison Higgins,  
Strategic Commissioning Manager for  
Domestic and Sexual Abuse**

**Tel: 0114 2053671**

**Report of:** Director of Public Health

**Report to:** Finance Sub Committee

**Date of Decision:** 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023

**Subject:** **Local Authority Domestic Abuse Duty: 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025. Acceptance of funding allocation for Sheffield**

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 1498 and 975				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i>				

**Purpose of Report:**  
Sheffield City Council has been awarded £1,356,134 for 2023/24 and £1,381,721 for 2024/25 by the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities in order to provide support for people living in safe accommodation because of domestic abuse. This is the third and fourth year of new burdens funding relating to Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

The purpose of the report is to approve the commissioning of services and support and used to fund existing contracts and grants for the purposes of meeting our statutory duties under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act – which requires local authorities to provide support to people living in safe accommodation due to domestic abuse (as laid out in the statutory guidance).

**Recommendations:**

1. Note the Council being awarded a grant of £1,356,134 for 2023/24 and £1,381,721 for 2024/25 by the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities £1,329,538 from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to meet its new statutory duties under Domestic Abuse Act 2021 as outlined in this report.
2. Approve the commission strategy relating to this funding via the contracts and grant variations as outlined in this report, in respect of the grant funding being awarded to the Council.
3. To the extent not covered by existing delegations, delegates authority to the Director of Integrated Commissioning in consultation with the Director of Finance and Commercial Services and the Director of Health and Social Care to approve a commissioning strategy regarding any funds as yet unallocated in order to provide specialist support services to domestic abuse victims / survivors in safe accommodation, in line with this report.
4. Where no such authority exists, delegates authority to the Director of Integrated Commissioning in consultation with the Director of Finance and Commercial Services, the Director of Health and Social Care and the Director of Legal and Governance to take such other steps as may be necessary to meet the outcomes and objectives of this report.

**Background Papers:**

*(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)*

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Sonya Oates
		Legal: Haroon Iqbal
		Equalities & Consultation: Ed Sexton
		Climate: <i>(Insert name of officer consulted)</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	<b>SLB member who approved submission:</b>	Greg Fell

3	<b>Committee Chair consulted:</b>	<i>(Insert name of relevant Member)</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> Alison Higgins		<b>Job Title:</b> <i>Strategic Commissioning Manager Domestic and Sexual Abuse</i>
<b>Date: 07/03/2023</b>		

## 1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This funding relates to the statutory duty which is included in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 that had cross party support and received Royal Assent on the 29 April 2021. Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced a statutory duty for Local Authorities to ensure all victims of domestic abuse have access to the right support within safe accommodation when they need it.
- 1.2 Tier one Local Authorities (such as Sheffield) have a duty to assess the need for support and prepare strategies to provide specialist support for victims who need to reside in the relevant safe accommodation.
- 1.3 The Council is required to meet the needs of all domestic abuse victims, including those who present from outside of the locality and to provide such support as therapy, advocacy and counselling in safe accommodation, including refuges, to victims of domestic abuse and their children.
- 1.4 The Government provided £125 million to cover the costs of the new duty in 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 to Councils across England to make sure safe accommodation spaces, such as refuges and dispersed accommodation, can provide victims with vital support services. Approvals were given by the Cooperative Executive on June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2021 and 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022 to accept the funding and commission relevant services.
- 1.5 This year the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has allocated £1,356,134 for 2023/24 and £1,381,721 for 2024/25 by the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities to support the Council with regard to the additional costs to ensure sufficient provision of specialist support within domestic abuse safe accommodation (see Appendix for definitions) and support the Council to meet their statutory duty. These uplifts from the government are below inflation and therefore providers will have below inflation uplifts passed on.
- 1.6 It is proposed that this funding is drawn down into the Domestic Abuse budget in Strategy and Commissioning and that the spending plans for 2022-2023 (appendix 1) and as outlined in this report are approved.
- 1.7 As the funding is related to Domestic Abuse it is proposed that the funding is managed in the Domestic Abuse / Drug and Alcohol Coordination Team (under Head of Commissioning Sam Martin) who will work closely with Housing Independence Service and colleagues in Housing on implementing the proposals.
- 1.8 The proposed spending with the rest of the anticipated allocation breaks

down as follows – all including 2% uplift from 2022/23 awards in 2023/24 and 1.89% uplift in 2024/25:

- Contract for the city's women's refuges and dispersed safe accommodation scheme: 23/24 = £686,421 and 24/25 = £699,394, with IDAS and Sheffield Women's Aid
- contribution to contract for support for children affected by domestic abuse: 23/24 = £88,934 and for 24/25 = £90,614, with Haven
- Contribution to contract for support for young women in safe accommodation: 23/24 = £61,390 and for 24/25 = £62,550, with Young Women's Housing Project
- Contract variation with IDAS *in order to provide support to people in properties with Sanctuary Scheme measures* for 23/24 = £220,320 and contribution to recommissioned contract in 24/25 of £224,484
- Counselling for children and young people in safe accommodation: *Sheffield Futures – Door 43* for 23/24 = £71,400 and for 24/25 = £72,749)
- Therapeutic support for adults in safe accommodation: contract with Mind for 23/24 = £61,200 and 24/25 = £62,357. *Contract variation with Paradigm – counselling for women in refuges* £6134 in 23/24 and £6250 in 24/25
- Prevention, advice and casework £135,000: *grant contribution with CAB* 23/24 = £72,420 and for 24/25 = £73,789, *contract variation with Shelter* for 23/24 = £65,280 and for 24/25 = £66514
- Service user liaison and engagement: this was procured from South Yorkshire Housing Association in 2022/23 via a contract variation however an opportunity to work with national charity SafeLives has arisen who are bidding for external funding. If this is not successful a solution will be sought locally for a survivor liaison role with projected spending of £22600 in 2023/24 and £2302 in 24/25. If the external funding bid is successful then these remaining funds will be reallocated based on identified needs with the agreement of the Director of Integrated Commissioning in consultation with the Director of Adult Social Care.

## 2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

The funding is for specialist support to be provided to victims of domestic abuse residing in safe accommodation. This will contribute to reducing victimisation and keeping people safe in Sheffield and enable the Council to meet its statutory duties.

2.1 The Domestic Abuse Act funding acceptance and expenditure was previously approved by Cooperative Executive in 2021 and 2022.

### **3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?**

There was extensive consultation in 2021 with providers, stakeholders and service users including a public citizenspace consultation. These informed the needs assessment and strategy required by the DLUHC (formerly the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) which was published at the end of 2021.<sup>1</sup> The proposals this year are continuations of the projects that were commissioned in 2021 and 2022 with some reductions due to the whole of the refuge / dispersed safe accommodation commission budget coming from the Domestic Abuse Act funding rather than a contribution as was the case when the new burdens fundings was first allocated in 2021.

3.1 Consultation with stakeholders continues via the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategic Board and the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Joint Commissioning Group and the Provider Consultation Group which all meet quarterly.

## **4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

### 4.1 Equality Implications

4.1.1 Domestic Abuse is a gendered issue: some of the funding will be used to enhance support offered in our young women's provision, and the majority of the recipients of the other adult provision are anticipated to be female. However the funding will enable increased support to male victims, including GBT+ victims being supported in dispersed accommodation and via our Sanctuary Scheme provision (target hardening for domestic abuse victims to enable them to stay safe in their own homes). The needs assessment and strategy produced in 2021 and currently being refreshed, considers all people with protected characteristics in relation to domestic abuse and is designed to help us ensure that services are accessible to all sections of local communities.

4.1.2 The proposal supports the Council's general duties to promote equality as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Sections 149 and 158). Specifically the proposal contributes to obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty, which in summary, requires having due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity; and
- foster good relations.

4.1.3 The funding is an enabling proposal to support the substantive aim of providing accommodation and support. EIA 975, *Domestic Abuse safe*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sheffielddact.org.uk/domestic-abuse/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2022/02/Sheffield-Domestic-Abuse-and-Safe-Accommodation-Strategy-2021-2024.pdf>

*accommodation and support services re-commissioning*, provides a full assessment and context.

## 4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has allocated £1,356,134 for 2023/24 and £1,381,721 for 2024/25. This is as a result of 'new burdens' for local authorities under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act. New burdens 'will arise where new powers/duties/expectations could lead to authorities having to increase spending.'<sup>2</sup>

It is proposed that decision making is delegated to the Director of Integrated Commissioning in case of any amendments to this spend plan being required so that they can be agreed by the Director in line with the overall direction outlined in the Safe Accommodation and Domestic Abuse Strategy.

### 4.2.2 External Funding review:

The grant offer letter and terms and conditions for grant funding in 2023-25 has not yet been issued and so cannot be reviewed. Previous years' grant funding was subject to the conditions as highlighted below and it is expected that 2023-25's funding offer will be similar. The new offer will be subject to review by External Funding, and if the terms and conditions differ significantly from prior years then further approvals may be required.

#### *MoU Financial implications:*

The MoU has been issued by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and is determined by Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003. The MoU is not a legally binding document; however, there is an expectation that the obligations within it will be honoured. Key points and obligations to note are highlighted below.

The grant is to enable the provision of support to victims of domestic abuse and their children who are residing in safe accommodation as per the statutory duty within the Domestic Abuse Bill.

Grant funding only covers revenue expenditure related to the functions of the statutory duty.

The grant funding period is 01/04/2023-31/03/2025.

All public sector procurement is governed by and must be compliant with the Grant Agreement and UK National Law. In addition, all procurement in SCC must comply with its own Procurement Policy, and internal regulations known as 'Contracts Standing Orders' (CSOs).

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-burdens-doctrine-guidance-for-government-departments>

Contracts Standing Orders requirements will apply in full to the procurement of services, goods or works utilising grants. All grant monies must be treated in the same way as any other Council monies and any requirement to purchase/acquire services, goods or works must go via a competitive process. ***The Portfolio / Service Grant Manager will need to contact the Commercial Services Team for detailed guidance on adherence to these rules when spending grant monies.***

The Project Manager will need to read, understand and comply with all of the grant terms and conditions, guidance and the [Code of Conduct for Grant Recipients](#).

#### 4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 As set out in the main body of the report the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 created a new statutory duty on local authorities to ensure the needs of victims of domestic abuse in safe accommodation are met in a consistent way. A local authority is required to meet the needs of all domestic abuse victims including those who present from outside of the locality and to provide such support as therapy, advocacy and counselling in safe accommodation, including refuges, to victims of domestic abuse and their children; local authorities are also required to report back to central government.

The Council is receiving this grant from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities ('DLUHC') under s.31 of the Local Government Act 2003. The offer of Section 31 Grant carries with it certain terms and conditions which the Council has to accept before any grant will be paid. The MOU has not yet been issued by DLUHC in respect of this grant and so cannot be reviewed. Legal will review the MoU once it has been issued.

This report seeks to secure authority to utilise that grant funding to best meet the new statutory obligation. Acceptance of the grant funding will help facilitate compliance with the duties imposed by Domestic Abuse Act 2021. It will not have any direct legal implications beyond that, but the implementation of any of the actions set out in the report will be subject to further decision making in accordance with the constitution, and the legal implications will be considered fully at that time.

#### 4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 Providers are all encouraged to be energy efficient in their service provision through the tender processes and through contract management processes.

#### 4.4 Other Implications

- 4.4.1 Domestic abuse is considered one of the wider determinants of health.



This proposal is to ensure appropriate support for the recovery from the impacts of domestic abuse (including in relation to mental and physical health) for both victims and their children.

**5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The Council could decide to not accept the funding however this would mean that it would be unlikely to be able to meet the statutory duties in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

- 5.1 The contracts, grants and variations are all working well and alleviating hardship, promoting recovery and supporting children and young people impacted by domestic abuse.

**6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

Sheffield has been allocated £1,356,134 for 2023/24 and £1,381,721 for 2024/25 to enable the Council to meet the statutory duties introduced by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and outlined within this report.

Commissioning the services and support as outlined within this report will support the Council to meet those statutory duties.

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## Part A

### Initial Impact Assessment

**Proposal name**

Acceptance and spending of Domestic Act Funding for support in Safe Accommodation

**Brief aim(s) of the proposal and the outcome(s) you want to achieve**

Sheffield City Council has been awarded £1,356,134 for 2023/24 and £1,381,721 for 2024/25 by the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities in order to provide support for people living in safe accommodation because of domestic abuse. This is the third and fourth year of new burdens funding relating to Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

This EIA covers the proposal that this funding is accepted by Sheffield City Council and used to fund existing contracts and grants for the purposes of meeting our statutory duties under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act – which requires local authorities to provide support to people living in safe accommodation due to domestic abuse (as laid out in the statutory guidance).

Acceptance of the funding is an enabling proposal to support the substantive aim of providing accommodation and support. EIA 975, *Domestic Abuse safe accommodation and support services re-commissioning*, provides a full assessment and context.

**Proposal type**

**Budget**

**non-Budget**

If Budget, entered on Q Tier?  Yes  No

Q Tier reference

0014032000000

**Year of proposal (s)**

21/22  22/23  23/24  24/25  other

**Decision Type**

- Committee (select below)**
- Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee
- Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee
- Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee
- Education, Children and Families Policy Committee
- Housing Policy Committee
- Strategy and Resources Policy Committee
- Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee
- Waste and Street Scene Policy Committee
- Regulatory Committees (e.g. Licensing Committee)
- Other Policy Committee or sub-Committee
- Local Area Committees
- Leader**
- Executive Director/Director**
- Officer Decisions (Non-Key)**
- Council (e.g. Budget and Housing Revenue Account)**

**Lead Committee Member** Bryan Lodge / Zahira Naz

**Lead Director for Proposal** Greg Fell

**Person filling in this EIA form** Alison Higgins

**Equality Lead Officer** Ed Sexton

**Lead Equality Objective**

- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Understanding Communities | <input type="radio"/> Workforce Diversity | <input type="radio"/> Leading the city in celebrating & promoting inclusion | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Break the cycle and improve life chances |
|---|---|---|---|

**Portfolio, Service and Team**

**Lead Portfolio** People

**Is this Cross-Portfolio?**

- Yes  No

**Is the EIA joint with another organisation (eg NHS)?**

- Yes  No Please specify

**Consultation**

**Is consultation required?**

- Yes  No

**If consultation is not required please state why**

This proposal is to accept government funding in order to continue current contract and grant arrangements. Consultation took place in 2021 on the Safe Accommodation Needs Assessment and Strategy that this funding relates to.

**Are Staff who may be affected by these proposals aware of them?**

- Yes  No

**Are Customers who may be affected by these proposals aware of them?**

- Yes  No

**If you have said no to either please say why**

Customers have not been informed as they will be unaffected as services will continue.

## Initial Impact

Under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) we have to pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

For a range of people who share protected characteristics, more information is available on the [Council website](#) including the [Community Knowledge Profiles](#).

## Identify Impacts

**Identify which characteristic the proposal has an impact on tick all that apply**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transgender
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy/Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partners
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Cohesion
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poverty & Financial Inclusion
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Armed Forces
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

## Cumulative Impact

**Does the proposal have a cumulative impact?**

- Yes       No

<input type="checkbox"/> Year on Year	<input type="checkbox"/> Across a Community of Identity/Interest
<input type="checkbox"/> Geographical Area	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

*If yes, details of impact*

**Does the proposal have a geographical impact across Sheffield?**

- Yes       No

*If Yes, details of geographical impact across Sheffield*

City wide

**Local Area Committee Area(s) impacted**

- All       Specific

*If Specific, name of Local Committee Area(s) impacted*

## Initial Impact Overview

**Based on the information about the proposal what will the overall equality impact?**

Domestic Abuse is a gendered issue: the funding will be spent as required under the statutory guidance for support in safe accommodation for people affected by domestic abuse.

Some of the funding will be used to enhance support offered in our young women's provision, and the majority of the recipients of the other adult provision are anticipated to be female. However the funding will enable increased support to male victims, including GBT+ victims being supported in dispersed accommodation and via our Sanctuary Scheme provision (target hardening for domestic abuse victims to enable them to stay safe in their own homes).

The needs assessment and strategy produced in 2021 and currently being refreshed, considers all people with protected characteristics in relation to domestic abuse and is designed to help us ensure that services are accessible to all sections of local communities.

The funding will be used to continue existing contracts and grants in order to ensure Sheffield has good quality refuges and dispersed accommodation, and that victims and their children (from all protected groups in the city and those that aren't protected) are able to access support to enable them to recover from the impact of domestic abuse and move on with their lives.

EIA 975, *Domestic Abuse safe accommodation and support services re-commissioning*, provides a full assessment and context.

**Is a Full impact Assessment required at this stage?**  Yes  No

**If the impact is more than minor, in that it will impact on a particular protected characteristic you must complete a full impact assessment below.**

## Initial Impact Sign Off

**EIAs must be agreed and signed off by an Equality lead Officer. Has this been signed off?**

Yes  No

Date agreed

Name of EIA lead officer

**Review Date**

# Equality Impact Assessment

## Introductory Information

### Budget/Project name

Domestic Abuse safe accommodation and support services re-commissioning

### Proposal type

- Budget  
 Project

Reference number **975**

### Decision Type

- Cabinet  
 Cabinet Committee (e.g. Cabinet Highways Committee)  
 Leader  
 Individual Cabinet Member  
 Executive Director/Director  
 Officer Decisions (Non-Key)  
 Council (e.g. Budget and Housing Revenue Account)  
 Regulatory Committees (e.g. Licensing Committee)

### Lead Cabinet Member

Cllr George Lindars-Hammond

### Entered on Q Tier

- Yes  No

### Year(s)

<input type="radio"/> 14/15	<input type="radio"/> 15/16	<input type="radio"/> 16/17	<input type="radio"/> 17/18	<input type="radio"/> 18/19	<input type="radio"/> 19/20	<input type="radio"/> 20/21	<input type="radio"/> 21/22
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### EIA date

15/10/2021

### EIA Lead

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Adele Robinson     | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Ed Sexton |
| <input type="radio"/> Annemarie Johnston | <input type="radio"/> Louise Nunn          |
| <input type="radio"/> Bashir Khan        | <input type="radio"/> Michael Bowles       |
| <input type="radio"/> Beth Storm         | <input type="radio"/> Michelle Hawley      |
| <input type="radio"/> Diane Owens        | <input type="radio"/> Rosie May            |

### Person filling in this EIA form

Jackie Ainsworth

### Lead officer

Sam Martin

### Lead Corporate Plan priority

<input type="radio"/> An In-Touch Organisation	<input type="radio"/> Strong Economy	<input type="radio"/> Thriving Neighbourhoods and Communities	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Better Health and Wellbeing	<input type="radio"/> Tackling Inequalities
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## Portfolio, Service and Team

### Cross-Portfolio

- Yes       No

### Portfolio

Is the EIA joint with another organisation (eg NHS)?

- Yes       No

## Brief aim(s) of the proposal and the outcome(s) you want to achieve

To re-commission Domestic Abuse safe accommodation and support services

## Impact

Under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) we have to pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

More information is available on the [Council website](#) including the [Community Knowledge Profiles](#).

Note the EIA should describe impact before any action/mitigation. If there are both negatives and positives, please outline these – positives will be part of any mitigation. The action plan should detail any mitigation.

### Overview

#### Briefly describe how the proposal helps to meet the Public Sector Duty outlined above

- On the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act was enacted and new duties were placed on local authorities to

- *‘Assess or make arrangements for the assessment of, the need for, accommodation-based support in its area,*
- *Prepare and publish a strategy for the provision of such support in its area, and*
- *Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy’*

Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (England). Section 57

and as part of this Act to provide accommodation-based support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation.

The Domestic Abuse Act has a broad definition of safe accommodation in recognition of the diversity of housing in which victims/survivors and their children may live. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), in the Domestic Abuse Act and Draft Statutory Guidance<sup>5</sup>, defined supported accommodation to include:

- refuge accommodation;
- specialist safe accommodation;
- dispersed accommodation;
- sanctuary schemes (target hardening equipment to enable people to stay safe in their own homes)
- and move-on or second stage accommodation.



The Statutory Guidance has defined 'support' as, advocacy, domestic abuse prevention advice, specialist support for victims/survivors (including those with relevant protected characteristics and additional and/or complex needs), children's support, housing related support, financial, employment and benefits advice and counselling and therapy for both victims/survivors and their children.

The Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment 2021 uses the Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) which provides a national estimate of the prevalence of domestic abuse. We can use these findings to apply them to the Sheffield population of 16-74 year olds to estimate the prevalence of domestic abuse in Sheffield. We estimate that in the last year, there were almost 20,000 people who experienced domestic abuse, which amounts to almost 15,784 women and 3914 men. We also estimate that there were 988 victims/survivors of domestic abuse in Sheffield who did not leave their abuser because they believed they had nowhere to go and that there was not enough support for them. The anticipation is that domestic abuse will increase in line with population growth.

Current provision in Sheffield comprises:

- refuge provision of 36 self-contained units of various sizes, plus one room for emergency provision. Twenty of the units are based in a purpose-built, 'core' refuge (plus a unit for emergency access with direct out of hours access) and a minimum of 16 sourced by the service provider. There are a number of communal facilities and indoor/outdoor play areas at each refuge.
- Safe Zones dispersed accommodation of 25 units, of 1 2 and 3 bedroom properties in Sheffield with specialist domestic abuse support offered by IDAS and properties provided by a Registered Housing Provider; this provision is for all victims of abuse but the original commissioning intentions were that priority should be given to male victims and those for whom refuge accommodation may be unsuitable.

Accommodation is allocated via the Housing Support Pathway, administered by the Council's Housing Solutions team.

This proposal is re-commission a minimum of 37 units of specialist domestic abuse refuge and a minimum of 25 units of Safe Zones accommodation and support.

It is expected that the demographics of the clients will be broadly similar to those who have used or who are currently in the service; however, we anticipate that the number of LGBTQ+ victims/survivors accessing safe accommodation will increase. As now, the recommissioned service will link into the Homeless Strategy and the Domestic Abuse Co-ordination Team's (DACT's) Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2018-2022 .

If agreed, the proposal will ensure the provision of refuge accommodation in the city for the next three years from 1 October 2022, with the potential to extend for a further two years.

## Impacts

### Proposal has an impact on

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transgender
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Carers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy/Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cohesion
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partners
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poverty & Financial Inclusion
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Armed Forces
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Give details in sections below.

## Health

**Does the Proposal have a significant impact on health and well-being (including effects on the wider determinants of health)?**

Yes       No      *if Yes, complete section below*

### Staff

Yes       No

### Impact

Positive       Neutral       Negative

### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

### Customers

Yes       No

### Impact

Positive       Neutral       Negative

### Level

None       Low       Medium       High

### Details of impact

People often associate Domestic Abuse with physical assault – a black eye, bruises, pulled hair, up to serious injuries - but there is increasing recognition that emotional abuse and controlling behaviour are the daily realities of living with domestic abuse. Survivors describe this as making them feel they are ‘walking on eggshells’. It happens alongside physical attacks and can go on for years and can be even more damaging to physical and mental health and wellbeing, especially living with the fear of what might happen if the abuser isn’t obeyed. Sexual abuse and rape also occur as part of the domestic abuse in a relationship, or the perpetrator can be an acquaintance – a colleague, a friend, a neighbour – but it is rare that they are complete strangers. For many adults getting support, the abuse may have taken place when they were children. Whether the perpetrator is well known to the victim or not, the violation, shame and stigma will have a terrible impact on health and wellbeing, and feeling able to seek support for the after effects may be a process that takes many months or years. Culturally harmful practices such as forced marriages, so called 'honour' based violence, trafficking, female genital mutilation, breast flattening also have a major effect on their victims.

By re-commissioning these services, it will continue to allow people respite from the abusive situation, allowing any physical wounds to heal. Mental and emotional trauma, particularly from Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) which many of the women suffer from take far longer to heal and may never do so at all, but women may be supported to be better able to manage the feelings that arise from the trauma. The safe accommodation provides a psychologically informed environment that enables people to talk about what has happened to them in a safe, comfortable space with others, who will not judge them. Assisting them to access appropriate services, such as those for mental health or substance misuse, it provides people with opportunities to look at what led to the abusive relationship, how to avoid those situations again and how to keep themselves safe, starting and helping with the healing

process. This has a fundamental impact on the individuals, but also on any children and the wider family. The support given to children helps them to understand what is happening and why and to break the cycle of abuse that can continue from generation to generation. Even if a person returns to the perpetrator, the services provide them with the knowledge and comfort that there are services, support and help available when they need it.

**Comprehensive Health Impact Assessment being completed**

Yes       No

*Please attach health impact assessment as a supporting document below.*

**Public Health Leads has signed off the health impact(s) of this EIA**

Yes       No

**Health Lead**

## Age

### Staff

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

### Details of impact

### Customers

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

### Details of impact

The CSEW found that prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year was highest among the younger age groups, with 14% of females aged 16-19 reporting experiencing domestic abuse. However, Sheffield has a specific pathway with Children's Social care relating to 16 and 17 year olds. This data suggests many of the people accessing accommodation are likely to be younger and either in need of single properties or have small children and need family units.

Although this is a clear indication that accommodation and support needs be suitable for younger people it does also tell us that there are barriers for those aged over 60 to both reporting domestic abuse, accessing safe accommodation and benefiting from support.

There is a lack of data nationally on the prevalence of domestic abuse in older adults and a risk that this group may be 'hidden' from services and their needs overlooked in Sheffield. In Sheffield in 2020, the average age of a refuge resident was 34, the youngest aged 20 and the oldest aged 64. In Safe Zones, the average age was 32, the youngest being 20 and the oldest 52.

The proposed specifications for the safe accommodation ensure that the provider/s take a whole household approach, so the needs of the children are also met through various means, from linking them into Council and other agency provision relevant for their needs, to appropriate age activity provision within the refuge, which under the new contract will include some weekend provision. Sessional activities will also provide opportunities for the children to be looked after while the service user engages with support. There will be more limited provision in Safe Zones because the accommodation is dispersed but families will be signposted to relevant groups/activities. As under the current contracts, the provider/s will be required to have had relevant training.

## Disability

### Staff

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

## Details of impact

### Customers

Yes     No

### Impact

Positive     Neutral     Negative

### Level

None     Low     Medium     High

## Details of impact

The 2019/20 CSEW estimates that 14.7% of disabled women and 7.5% disabled men have been a victim/survivor of domestic abuse in the last year, rates are more than twice as high as rates amongst people who are not disabled<sup>1</sup>.

In Sheffield out of 54 respondents to a survey 18.5% considered themselves to be a disabled person with the largest proportion of these stating that they had mental ill health (e.g. depression, bipolar disorders, schizophrenia)

Two units in the 'core' refuge building are designed to wheelchair standard and the development allows for wheelchair accessibility in accordance with planning and design guidelines. The 'core' refuge is located in a part of the city where wheelchair and buggy users experience relatively fewer barriers in accessing the locality. Wheelchair accessibility in accommodation units outside the 'core' refuge will be evaluated as part of the tender process. but more work needs to be done to understand if this is sufficient to meet demand. And also whether people who are disabled in other ways have enough support to access safe accommodation e.g. re. Visual or hearing impairment. Safe Zones accommodation is not currently accessible therefore there are gaps in relation to accessibility for the cohort of male GBT+ victims/survivors that may need to use this provision. We will be addressing this through the recommissioning of the safe accommodation.

There is a commissioned Psychology Service which works with clients in the refuge and Safe Zones to support those with mental ill health, by offering a short period of appropriate therapy. This will continue to be offered to those in re-commissioned units.

We recognise that there is much about disability and domestic abuse that we don't fully understand and therefore, a key priority will be to improve our data collection and analysis and undertake further consultation with disabled victims/survivors to ensure that we are prioritising meeting the needs of our disabled population.

## Pregnancy/Maternity

### Staff

Yes     No

### Impact

Positive     Neutral     Negative

### Level

None     Low     Medium     High

<sup>1</sup> The definition of disability used in the CSEW is consistent with the core definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010. A person is considered to have a disability if they have a long-standing physical, mental, or intellectual disability or impairment which causes difficulty with day-to-day activities.

## Details of impact

### Customers

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

## Details of impact

We do not collect data on pregnancy; however the re-commissioning of this service will mean that pregnant women will be supported to keep themselves and their child/children safe and that they will receive support with parenting e.g. breast feeding, weaning etc. Within the core refuge a lift and a buggy store are provided. Children's play areas and appropriate toys for all ages are also available for residents' children.

## Race

### Staff

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

## Details of impact

### Customers

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

## Details of impact

We recognise the additional issues and barriers to accessing support faced by people from non white ethnicities who are experiencing domestic abuse and acknowledge that we need to do better as an authority to meet the needs of those who are marginalised due to race in our city, including improving our data collection, consultation and analysis.

A consultation survey with service users told us that overwhelmingly, those who responded from the BAMER community would prefer to have the choice of receiving support from a specialist BAMER worker.

Of people accessing refuge accommodation in 2020/21, 33% were from a BAMER background and in Safe Zones accommodation, it was 40%.

It is essential that those experiencing domestic abuse are supported by workers who may have clear understanding and experience of the additional barriers that people of colour can often face and can understand a victim/survivor's cultural and/or religious needs and values and how they impact on or support their recovery from domestic abuse. We are fortunate in having a high proportion of BAMER staff in refuge services at present and in the specification for the re-commissioned safe accommodation, we have said that we expect that the provider/s will provide staff from a BAMER background, who are able to speak community languages to be able to meet the needs of people they are supporting. Interpreting services

will also be available. The recommissioned services specifications will ensure that staff are able legal, cultural and immigration needs. The impact will be monitored in contract management and in discussions with providers and stakeholders.

## Religion/Belief

### Staff

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

### Details of impact

### Customers

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

### Details of impact

Data from the Oasis case management system which is used in Sheffield refuges tell us that 31% of victims at the refuge during 2020 stated they had no religion, 36% said they were Muslim, 18% were Christian, 10% did not have this information recorded and the remaining 5% were 'Other Religion'.

We know there are issues such as forced marriage and so called 'honour' based abuse that disproportionately affect certain faith groups in the city. Safe accommodation providers, the police and social care work closely together to protect people affected by these issues. However, we know that data collection on prevalence needs improving.

A service user survey told us that the large majority of those accessing domestic abuse support feel as though support offered was respectful of their religion and met their cultural needs.

The re-commissioned service will allow those people with religious beliefs to continue to practice them within a safe environment. Participation in faith activity is one of the required outcomes of the service and will be monitored as part of contract management.

**Staff** Yes  No**Impact** Positive  Neutral  Negative**Level** None  Low  Medium  High**Details of impact****Customers** Yes  No**Impact** Positive  Neutral  Negative**Level** None  Low  Medium  High**Details of impact**

The national CSEW estimates show that domestic abuse prevalence is proportionally higher amongst gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual people. In contrast to this, the Sheffield data on people accessing safe accommodation shows that LGB people are underrepresented.

We also know that the wider LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and trans +) communities are underrepresented in other domestic abuse services in the city, supporting the view that there are barriers to LGBT+ people in accessing support.

Sheffield's Call It Out project<sup>17</sup> has helped us understand more about the how 'the public story on domestic abuse', has usually focused on cis<sup>18</sup>-heterosexual couples and can lead to LGBT+ people believing that what is happening to them does not count as domestic abuse. Existing services appear to be designed with the needs of cis-heterosexual women in mind, and LGBT+ people are wary of services that are not explicitly LGBT+ inclusive due to a fear of discrimination and/or a belief that their experiences will not be understood. This leads to a distrust of services because of a perceived or experienced instances of homophobia and transphobia.

Prevalence of domestic abuse amongst LGBT+ people is at least as high as they are for cis-gender heterosexual women. It is therefore imperative that services are inclusive (in line with current legislation) to all people and that the promotion of services informs the public that anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse and that support available for domestic abuse is for everyone.

The re-commissioning of the safe accommodation and support services will mean that LGBT+ people will be able to be accommodated safely and receive support in a non-discriminatory way.

**Transgender****Staff** Yes  No**Impact** Positive  Neutral  Negative**Level** None  Low  Medium  High



### Details of impact

#### Customers

Yes     No

#### Impact

Positive     Neutral     Negative

#### Level

None     Low     Medium     High

### Details of impact

In 2018-19, of the 103 leavers, one person (1%) identified as being a transgender woman. Among service users in 2020-21, no-one has identified as being transgender.

The service will ensure that there is private space and access will be open to all who have suffered domestic abuse for whatever reason. Support will ensure that all residents are made to feel welcome and supported.

The re-commissioning of the safe accommodation and support services will mean that LGBT+ people will be able to be accommodated safely and receive support in a non-discriminatory way. Access will continue to be monitored in the contract monitoring of client record data.

### Carers

#### Staff

Yes     No

#### Impact

Positive     Neutral     Negative

#### Level

None     Low     Medium     High

### Details of impact

#### Customers

Yes     No

#### Impact

Positive     Neutral     Negative

#### Level

None     Low     Medium     High

### Details of impact

## Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors

### Staff

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

### Details of impact

The services are currently provided by the VCF sector, the proposal to recommission supports the possibility of continuation of work with the current provider, if they are successful in the tender, or potentially another organisation from the VCF. If the current providers do not win the tender, their staff may be TUPE'd across to the successful bidder, which may, or may not, be within the VCF sector; however, the staff will continue to work with and retain their knowledge of, other VCF services.

### Customers

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

### Details of impact

The services are currently provided by the VCF sector, the proposal to recommission supports the possibility of continuation of work with the current providers, if they are successful in the tender, or potentially another VCF provider. Many of the services in the city which support women and families affected by domestic abuse were founded and remain within the voluntary and community sectors and their expertise underpins this service. The specifications require the provider to work in partnership with the VCF sector organisations and to ensure that the service users are linked into cultural /faith organisations where they have expressed a wish to be so. Space is available in the 'core' refuge and bidders are asked in the tender documents to ensure that this will be available in any other accommodation.

## Cohesion

### Staff

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

### Details of impact

### Customers

Yes  No

### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

### Details of impact

The services will support victims/survivors and their children from a wide range of diverse backgrounds. Access to English language lessons, cultural support and empowerment towards independent living will be emphasised in the service specifications. The services will provide for all backgrounds will ensure diversity, better meeting the needs of the widening diversity of communities in Sheffield and will promote a respectful and tolerant culture. The support to gain/ increase independent living skills will enable service users to understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens and tenants and to be part of their local communities.

### Partners

#### Staff

Yes  No

#### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

#### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

### Details of impact

#### Customers

Yes  No

#### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

#### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

### Details of impact

The re-commissioning of the safe accommodation and support service will enable the working relationships with other partner agencies to be maintained and to continue to be built, ensuring effective, responsive services for victims/survivors and children requiring support.

### Poverty & Financial Inclusion

#### Staff

Yes  No

#### Impact

Positive  Neutral  Negative

#### Level

None  Low  Medium  High

### Details of impact

#### Customers

Yes     No

#### Impact

Positive     Neutral     Negative

#### Level

None     Low     Medium     High

### Details of impact

As currently, the services will be available for victims/survivors and their children in need of emergency, or refuge accommodation. It is most likely to be used by households, who do not have financial resources to find and pay for their own solutions to move out of an abusive relationship. The service will support women and their families to move onto independent living through income maximisation and providing opportunities to access education, training and employment. Achieving economic well-being is one of the outcomes monitored by contract management.

### Armed Forces

#### Staff

Yes     No

#### Impact

Positive     Neutral     Negative

#### Level

None     Low     Medium     High

### Details of impact

#### Customers

Yes     No

#### Impact

Positive     Neutral     Negative

#### Level

None     Low     Medium     High

### Details of impact

### Other

#### Staff

Yes     No

Please specify **Page 28**

**Impact**

- Positive     Neutral     Negative

**Level**

- None     Low     Medium     High

**Details of impact**

**Customers**

- Yes     No

*Please specify*

**Impact**

- Positive     Neutral     Negative

**Level**

- None     Low     Medium     High

**Details of impact**

## Cumulative Impact

**Proposal has a cumulative impact**

- Yes     No

<input type="radio"/> Year on Year	<input type="radio"/> Across a Community of Identity/Interest
<input type="radio"/> Geographical Area	<input type="radio"/> Other

*If yes, details of impact*

**Proposal has geographical impact across Sheffield**

- Yes     No

*If Yes, details of geographical impact across Sheffield*

**Local Partnership Area(s) impacted**

- All     Specific

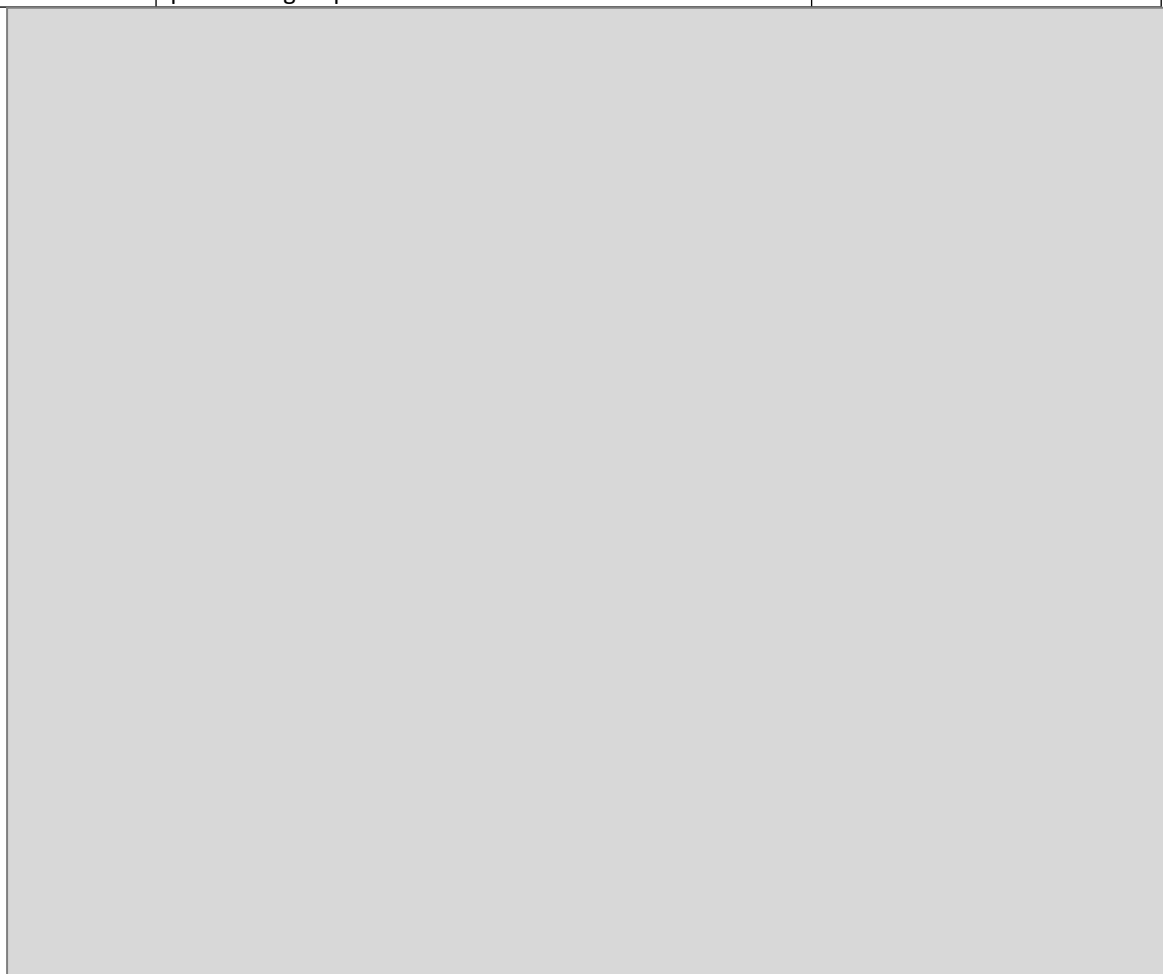
*If Specific, name of Local Partnership Area(s) impacted*

## Action Plan and Supporting Evidence

### Action Plan

Area	Action and Mitigation	Lead, Timescale and how it will be monitored and reviewed
<b>Age</b>	<p>Work to develop our understanding of the barriers faced by older adults in reporting domestic abuse and accessing safe accommodation and support. We will consult with providers and those with lived experience to ensure that future commissioning meets the needs of this group. Ensure that families living in safe accommodation have the opportunity to discuss their children's needs, without judgement, with a support worker, who can understand the impact of DA on them and their child/ren and can help with that.</p> <p>Outside the scope of this EIA, we are maintaining specialist young people's safe accommodation to increase both the numbers of young people able to be accommodated and also increase the support offer to them.</p>	<p>Commissioner and team. Regular participation in strategic and operational groups within DA and homelessness. Use of monitoring data, consultation and demographic data to shape appropriate provision within new services</p>
<b>Race</b>	<p>Work in conjunction with partners and other networks in the city, particularly consulting BAMER communities, to better understand and monitor Sheffield demographic data in relation to DA needs and barriers to accessing services. Monitor new services to ensure that all women have equal access to services which meet their cultural and faith needs</p>	<p>Commissioner and team. Regular participation in strategic and operational groups within DA and homelessness. Use of monitoring data, consultation and demographic data to shape appropriate provision within new services</p>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<p>Work in conjunction with DACT partners and other networks in the city to understand and monitor Sheffield data in relation to DA needs and barriers to accessing services</p>	<p>Commissioner and team. Regular participation in strategic and operational groups within DA and homelessness. Use of monitoring data, consultation and demographic data to shape appropriate provision within new services</p>
<b>Transgender</b>	<p>Work in conjunction all service providers to improve the data collected locally in respect of people who are transgender and those who are non binary and we will use this data to inform our future commissioning of safe accommodation and support for both transgender and non binary victims/survivors.</p>	<p>Commissioner and team. Regular participation in strategic and operational groups within DA and homelessness. Use of monitoring data, consultation and demographic data to shape appropriate provision within new services</p>
<b>Disability</b>	<p>Work in conjunction with DACT partners and other networks in the city to understand and to monitor Sheffield data in relation to DA needs and barriers to accessing services needs</p>	<p>Commissioner and team. Regular participation in strategic and operational groups within DA and homelessness</p> <p>Use of monitoring data, consultation and demographic data to shape</p>

		appropriate provision within new service
<b>Working Group</b>	Working Group to include Method statement question(s) to ensure that the service addresses the needs of all protected groups	Procurement working group Fe/March 2022



**Supporting Evidence** (Please detail all your evidence used to support the EIA)

- Results of Domestic Abuse survey – June 2021
- Results of consultation with Service Users – September 2021
- Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment – August 2021
- Domestic Abuse draft Safe Accommodation Strategy – October 2021
- Various monitoring data from Housing Support Pathway (HSP) and Oasis, Domestic Abuse case management system
- Crime Survey of England and Wales 2019/20

## Consultation

**Consultation required**

Yes       No

**If consultation is not required please state why**

The following consultation has already been undertaken:

- A survey on the digital platform, Citizenspace, to discover the public's thoughts and ideas about domestic abuse and safe accommodation
- A survey of service users to find out their opinions of the current services
- A survey of staff to enable them to give their views about the current services
- Focus group sessions with service users in safe accommodation

**Are Staff who may be affected by these proposals aware of them**

Yes                       No

**Are Customers who may be affected by these proposals aware of them**

Yes                       No

**If you have said no to either please say why**

Residents of the refuge and Safe Zones will be made aware nearer the tender publication

## Summary of overall impact

### Summary of overall impact

The service model will help the Council meet its statutory responsibility to accommodate women and children who are homeless or at risk of homelessness as a result of domestic abuse. It is important that the service design provides good quality service provision at an efficient cost which is affordable and will be sustainable for the future.

The re-commissioned service will continue the council's aim of meeting the needs of victims/survivors and children from Sheffield, who wish to remain in Sheffield whilst still having some capacity and flexibility to support households from other areas seeking to reach a place of safety.

The impact of the proposal is positive. This proposal to re-commission the services, if agreed, will enable the continuation of refuge and Safe Zones accommodation and support for 5 years. The service will be available for all protected groups. Access to the service will, as now, be measured and monitored through data collection and performance monitoring. Outcomes achieved with service users are also monitored. In addition to this, the specification requires the provider to carry out an exit survey when a service user moves on and a regular client satisfaction survey.

As part of the tender selection process the successful tenderer will be required to produce an implementation plan to ensure the smooth transition from one service provider to another, should that be required.

The Executive Member for Health and Social Care has received briefings and information on the proposal and progress. Ongoing dialogue will be a key influence on the ongoing development of the service model and any decisions in relation to that.

### Summary of evidence

- Public, staff and service user consultation;
- HSP and Oasis monitoring data
- DA Needs Assessment 2021; and
- draft Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021



**Changes made as a result of the EIA**

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**Escalation plan**

**Is there a high impact in any area?**

- Yes       No

**Overall risk rating after any mitigations have been put in place**

- High     Medium     Low     None

**Review Date**

01/10/2023

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## Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report:** Emma Dickinson

**Tel:** 0114 205 6312

**Report of:** *Director of Public Health*

**Report to:** *Finance Sub Committee*

**Date of Decision:** *22 March 2023*

**Subject:** Supporting People through the cost of living via Citizens Advice Sheffield

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>1468</i>				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i>				

### Purpose of Report:

The cost-of-living crisis is having a profound impact on the people of Sheffield. SCC and partners in the public and voluntary and community sector have developed an incident management response with an action plan to provide support and advice to those who are being most impacted.

This paper seeks to propose a one-off grant investment from the Public Health grant reserve of £300,000 in Citizens Advice Sheffield to increase capacity and support to people with their money at such a challenging time.

**Recommendations:**

1. Note the proposal as part of the Council's incident management response action plan to the Cost of Living
2. Approve a one-off grant investment from the Public Health grant reserve of £300,000 to Sheffield Citizen's Advice for the proposal as detailed in this report

**Background Papers:****May 2022**

[Sheffield City Council - Decision - Supporting Sheffielders Through the Cost-of-Living Crisis](#)

**July 2022**

[Sheffield City Council - Decision - Cost of Living Crisis Strategy and Action Plan](#)

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: <i>Anna Beeby</i>
		Legal: <i>Tarmina Saville</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: <i>Ed Sexton</i>
		Climate: <i>Jessica Rick</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	<b>SLB member who approved submission:</b>	<i>(Insert name of relevant Executive Director)</i>
3	<b>Committee Chair consulted:</b>	<i>(Insert name of relevant Member)</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> <i>Emma Dickinson</i>	<b>Job Title:</b> <i>Strategic Commissioning Manager</i>
	<b>Date:</b> <i>23 March 2023</i>	

## **Purpose of the report**

1. This report informs Committee about how Citizens Advice Sheffield are developing and evolving their model for the people of Sheffield and how the Council's core grant investment will be used to support this.
2. The report also seeks approval for a one-off grant investment Citizens Advice Sheffield to support the cost-of-living action plan.

## **Background**

3. At its meeting on the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022, Strategy and Resources Committee agreed to introduce citywide incident response-style arrangements to co-ordinate the city's response to the cost of living crisis which is having profound implications for citizens and businesses.
4. At its meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022, Strategy and Resources Committee agreed the action plan for addressing the cost-of-living crisis in Sheffield.

## **The cost-of-living crisis is bringing real hardship to Sheffielders in all communities.**

5. The cost-of-living crisis is beginning to have a significant impact on people in every part of our city.
6. Poverty was already increasing in Sheffield before Covid hit and the pandemic has exacerbated inequalities and disproportionately affected the city's poorest communities.
7. We are seeing real incomes reducing, costs increasing with inflation which is affecting energy, food, and rent. We are also seeing an increase in illegal money lending, with people increasingly using them for essentials. For further details about the impacts see Cost of Living Crisis paper from Strategy and Resources on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022:  
[Sheffield City Council - Decision - Supporting Sheffielders Through the Cost-of-Living Crisis](#)

## **Citizens Advice nationally were reporting that November 2022 was the largest number of people accessing support on record.**

8. The national CAB dashboard described the most frequent issues for people in Sheffield are: council tax arrears is still the most common form of debt people and Universal Credit is the most common benefit issue.  
[CA cost of living data dashboard | Flourish](#)

## **Citizens Advice Sheffield (CAS) changed their delivery model overnight to respond to covid and lockdown to ensure there was no gap in service / support to people.**

9. CAS continue to deliver most of their services via telephone and digital

with staff and volunteers working a hybrid model. The number of people supported has increased 35% in 3 years, from 20,049 (18/19) to over 27,000 (21/22). In 18/19 they secured an extra £6.6million income for people and in 21/22 it was more than £11million.

10. 29% of the people CAS are supporting are those neighbourhoods of greatest need, Burngreave followed by Manor, then Firth Park and Darnall wards respectively. The proportion of people who have a disability or long-term illness has remained consistent at 41-42%. The proportion from an ethnic minority background has reduced slightly from 31% to 29%.
11. Although most of the universal access to CAS is telephone and digital, there is face to face provision for specifically funded services mainly co-located within another service:
  - Howden House and Farm Road Social Club
  - Food Banks (weekly at Stocksbridge, Burngreave, Firth Park, Gleadless Valley, Darnall, Handsworth, Jordanthorpe, Grace, Hillsborough, Parson Cross, Woodhouse, Westfield, Wybourn)
  - People who are living in refuges fleeing domestic abuse
  - People who are in-patients on mental health wards
  - People who are attending health services, Weston Park, spinal injuries and cystic fibrosis
  - A service with a local building society (for their customers and open to anyone)
12. Post the pandemic it has become clear that there are the gaps in the universal offer due to changes in funding and service delivery. It is also important to recognise that CAS are still on the journey from their inception in late 2013 of 12 organisations into one. Many of the changes are positive as Advice Line (telephone support) has provided a more equitable universal access and is also more cost-effective. However, the closure of neighbourhood offices (acquired through the merger process and not selected to provide comprehensive city wide access) and the loss of some targeted provision due to funding has undoubtedly left some communities and people feeling unable to access the support despite other initiatives such as community language lines, community access points and targeted provision through a wide range of partner organisations.

**CAS will use the year ahead to really understand the needs of communities now, define and adapt the post-pandemic model.**

13. There has been face to face appointments for some time with capacity now up to 75 per week. These appointments are not open access or drop in but are pre booked at a city centre location. There are criteria for appointments: advice for deaf people, housing, immigration and Pension Wise.
14. Face to face appointments are also available at the discretion of the advisor in cases of digital exclusion, language barriers that can't be

effectively mitigated with Language Line, a protected characteristic that necessitates face to face advice as a reasonable adjustment or complexity or urgency of the case.

15. The demand and use of city centre face to face appointments will be continually reviewed and used to shape the delivery model.
16. Using the monies in this proposal, there will be a reinstating of some face-to-face provision targeting ethnic minority communities. For some groups there have seen reductions in the numbers of people that are supported and new census data will also help identify any newer groups that are not currently accessing support.
17. Insight and data will be core to establishing a delivery model that is right for the needs of the city and its diverse communities. CAS are planning community engagement work to build trust and credibility in communities and design provision that works but also fits within resourcing. We will work in partnership with CAS and public health to review and refresh the original needs analysis that was undertaken when CAS was established.

**There is an aging workforce within the advice sector and an inability to recruit trained advice workers is a national problem.**

18. CAS are mitigating the workforce issues through reshaping their roles to grow their own and developing a progression pathway from adviceline workers through to full advice workers. This is strategically the right approach but is not a quick fix.
19. There is also a lack of capacity through reduced number of volunteers as many of the 140 left during the pandemic when services moved to the phone, with only approx. 20-30 remaining.
20. The senior management team at CAS have undertaken a listening exercise with each volunteer and feedback has shown that:
  - volunteers do enjoy and successfully deliver remote advice, but many prefer to come into an office to do so
  - remote volunteering requires a different approach to supervision and support, since peer support doesn't automatically happen by virtue of co-location, time must be dedicated to it
  - volunteers actively want clear direction and regular feedback
21. Developing more and different volunteer roles will add much needed capacity to advice in Sheffield. CAS via a small amount of non-recurrent council monies is recruiting a volunteer co-ordinator post to:
  - create a portfolio of volunteer roles to match different skill sets and interests (some people want to stick to simple signposting and triage, others enjoy in-depth appeal work)
  - recruit a new intake of volunteers with a mix of motivations and from a wide range of backgrounds
  - ensure they have the right support mechanisms in place to ensure all

- volunteers have clear direction, get regular feedback, feel part of a team and have the chance to meet with other volunteers if they wish
- refine/ update volunteer training and induction
- ensure volunteers have an enjoyable and meaningful experience
- ensure volunteer roles are complementing the core service delivery

**It is important that people can get good quality support and signposting immaterial to where they may seek assistance.**

22. People will often seek support from organisations or professionals because of a variety of reasons: trust, know the organisation, cultural identity, face to face options. Rather than re-routing people, we want to ensure that wherever people turn for support they receive accurate information and effective signposting or onward referral as appropriate.
23. There is significant demand for up-to-date training and capacity building – 21 staff from community organisations recently attended a CAS workshop on disability benefits. A CAS youtube video guide to clip of using ‘entitled to’ benefits calculator has been added to the Council’s cost of living tool kit for all front line workers to access.
24. CAS have received funding for the next two years for a trainer focussing on front-line staff and volunteers supporting people affected by the cost-of-living crisis. The role will include relationship building, identifying needs and knowledge gaps as well as delivering training. The focus for this role is not training advice workers, rather training people to identify advice needs, signpost effectively and know when to refer to CAS for specialist advice

**The council is proud of the long-standing partnership with CAS.**

25. There is a strong foundation and much to build on as the partnership between CAS and SCC moves beyond pandemic delivery. The Council’s Strategy and Resources Committee approved the core service grant for CAS at the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022 until 2028.  
[Sheffield City Council - Decision - Grant Aid Programme with Voluntary and Community Strategic Partners 2023-2025](#)
26. We are reviewing the grant agreement with CAS to ensure the outcomes fit with the needs of Sheffield now. These will include face to face provision for specific communities (based on evidence) and the underpinning roles to support volunteering and capacity building of the VCS.

**This grant investment proposal of additional monies will add capacity at a time of hardship for Sheffielders and also provide seed corn funding for the transformation required.**

27. Face to face capacity will be added where there is evidence of gaps in the use of the current service. There will be co-design work with



communities and organisations to develop a triage and appointment process. The evolving model will not be community drop in as previously but will meet the needs and maximise the available capacity.

28. The new face to face approach will be trialled with specific ethnic minority communities where the existing data is currently showing a reduction in use of the service: Yemini, Pakistani and Chinese communities and also people with disabilities or long-term conditions and people with limited or no access to telephone or digital services.
29. Adding capacity will not happen overnight due to the recruitment issues highlighted earlier in the paper. The monies will be used to fast-track progression routes for existing advice line workers to be trained to deliver complex face to face advice casework.
30. It is important to also build / strengthen advice capacity in community organisations and there will be a specific project to explore the best way to do this to ensure sustainable provision. This could include seconding/ training staff from other VCS organisations, upskilling volunteers, developing direct referral routes exploring seconding and/or training staff from other VCS organisations to upskill generic staff or advance the skills of existing advice workers.
31. CAS have four Community Access Points (face to face provision over video link). The additional funding will allow exploration of purchasing further CAPs and cover the costs for the community settings (rent, additional opening, private space etc) and volunteer expenses to support and guide the person using it.

### **Community involvement and the importance of lived experience**

32. This proposal is within the Cost of Living (CoL) action plan. The incident management response to CoL is in partnership with VCS along with statutory partners. Community voice and lived experience is regularly highlighted via the community partners tactical group and has shaped this proposal.

### **RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

#### Equality Implications

33. The cost-of-living crisis is likely to have a more significant impact on some groups of people in the city than others. This is likely to include people who share protected characteristics under the Equality Act, including women, disabled people, people from certain ethnic minority backgrounds, and both older and younger people. People with caring responsibilities are also likely to be disproportionately impacted as their income tends to be lower than the population as a whole.
34. The council's response to the cost-of-living crisis is intended to mitigate the worst effects of the crisis on people and communities across the city,

including those who are most exposed to it. As described above this will include people who share certain protected characteristics. Therefore, the proposal set out in this report is intended to have an overall positive impact on equality within the city, although this will be within the wider negative context of the cost-of-living crisis.

#### Financial and Commercial Implications

35. The total investment outlined in this proposal is £300,000 from the ring-fenced public health grant reserve budget.

#### Legal Implications

36. The Council has a general power under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that an individual may generally do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation and the power is exercised in accordance with the limitations specified in the Act, this gives the Council the ability to provide the grant funding.
37. The proposed grant payment to Citizens Advice Sheffield will be by way of the Council's standard Grant Agreements, providing both the Council and CAS with a clear basis and purpose for the grant funding. The grant will likely fall within the criteria of a subsidy under the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and therefore an assessment will need to be carried out to ensure compliance with the subsidy control principles and with the requirements.

#### Climate Implications

38. Given the nature of the proposal a full Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) is not considered appropriate. It is however acknowledged that the activities delivered by the CAS will have an impact on emissions. Through the review of core grant aid CAS will be asked to consider the climate impact of their services.

#### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

39. Do nothing – this was rejected as communities across Sheffield are being impacted on by the cost-of-living crisis. Working with CAS, we hope we will help mitigate impacts of the cost-of-living crisis on communities and co-ordinate support and interventions around those that need it the most.

#### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

40. The recommendations build on the commitments made by the Strategy and Resources Committee on 31<sup>st</sup> May and 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022 to support Sheffielders through the cost-of-living crisis.

**Part A**

**Initial Impact Assessment**

**Proposal name**

**Citizens Advice additional face-to-face welfare**

**Brief aim(s) of the proposal and the outcome(s) you want to achieve**

Through the strategic investment of a one-off cost of £300,000, in line with the Cost-Of-Living, (COL), action plan. Citizens Advice Sheffield, (CAS), will utilise the funding to explore additional face-to-face advice provision to deliver financial welfare advice and support using Community Access Points, (CAP - face to face advice provision over secure video link), helping to mitigate the Cost-of-Living crisis effects on vulnerable people and families across Sheffield. Through increased face-to-face access to financial support, they will be better able to access additional welfare which they are eligible and entitled to, thus tackling financial and health inequality and thereby improving their wellbeing.

**Proposal type**

**Budget**

**non-Budget**

If Budget, entered on Q Tier?  Yes  No

Q Tier reference

**Year of proposal (s)**

- 21/22  22/23  23/24  24/25  other

**Decision Type**

- Committee (select below)**
- Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee
- Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee
- Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee
- Education, Children and Families Policy Committee
- Housing Policy Committee
- Strategy and Resources Policy Committee**
- Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee
- Waste and Street Scene Policy Committee
- Regulatory Committees (e.g. Licensing Committee)
- Other Policy Committee or sub-Committee
- Local Area Committees

**Leader**

- Executive Director/Director**
- Officer Decisions (Non-Key)**
- Council (e.g. Budget and Housing Revenue Account)**

**Lead Committee Member**

Greg Fell

**Lead Director for Proposal**

Joe Horobin

**Person filling in this EIA form**

Andrew Wright

**Equality Lead Officer**

Ed Sexton

**Lead Equality Objective**

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Understanding Communities	<input type="radio"/> Workforce Diversity	<input type="radio"/> Leading the city in celebrating & promoting inclusion	<input type="radio"/> Break the cycle and improve life chances
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## Portfolio, Service and Team

**Lead Portfolio**

Integrated Commissioning

**Is this Cross-Portfolio?**

Yes  No

**Is the EIA joint with another organisation (eg NHS)?**

Yes  No

Please specify

## Consultation

**Is consultation required?**

Yes  No

**If consultation is not required please state why**

Citizens Advice Sheffield is a market leader with a proven track record of delivery. Conversations have taken place to ensure that they have the necessary infrastructure and are able to scale up their existing provision of face-to-face advice. As the market leader they are in the best possible position to be able to deliver the necessary support advice that increasingly more Sheffield residents need due to the cost-of-living crisis.

There is an existing financial relationship through commissioned and grant funding departments. The outcomes sought from this additional grant award are in line with the purposes, outcomes and services of those already identified in the existing financial agreements with Citizens Advice Sheffield. These financial arrangements have gone through various consultation procedures already and to duplicate these would be unnecessary.

**Are Staff who may be affected by these proposals aware of them?**

Yes  No

**Are Customers who may be affected by these proposals aware of them?**

Yes  No

**If you have said no to either please say why**

People receive welfare support or advice through a face-to-face provision from Citizens Advice Sheffield won't be impacted by the change yet as the provision of additional face-to-face advice needs to be explored by Citizens Advice Sheffield. Once explored and the provision made available, people will be invited to make appointments, this isn't yet available, so it is not yet possible to make potential people who have not yet been identified aware of these proposals.

## Initial Impact

Under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) we have to pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

For a range of people who share protected characteristics, more information is available on the [Council website](#) including the [Community Knowledge Profiles](#).

## Identify Impacts

**Identify which characteristic the proposal has an impact on tick all that apply**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transgender
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy/Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partners
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cohesion
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poverty & Financial Inclusion
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Armed Forces
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

## Cumulative Impact

**Does the proposal have a cumulative impact?**

- Yes       No

<input checked="" type="radio"/> Year on Year	<input type="radio"/> Across a Community of Identity/Interest
<input type="radio"/> Geographical Area	<input type="radio"/> Other

*If yes, details of impact*

The proposal to provide additional grant funding to Citizens Advice Sheffield will increase the provision for face-to-face advice. The cumulative impact of this will be to continue to provide this service year on year which will greatly benefit those who need additional and or urgent support, which can only be provided through face-to-face provision of advice.

**Does the proposal have a geographical impact across Sheffield?**

- Yes       No

*If yes, details of geographical impact across Sheffield*

n/a

**Local Area Committee Area(s) impacted**

- All       Specific

*If Specific, name of Local Committee Area(s) impacted*

n/a

## Initial Impact Overview

**Based on the information about the proposal what will the overall equality impact?**

The proposal is expected to have a positive impact on Financial Inequality and Health and Wellbeing, and in terms of specific protected characteristics – see below.

**Is a Full impact Assessment required at this stage?**  Yes  No

**If the impact is more than minor, in that it will impact on a particular protected characteristic you must complete a full impact assessment below.**

## Initial Impact Sign Off

**EIAs must be agreed and signed off by an Equality lead Officer. Has this been signed off?**

Yes  No

Date agreed

Name of EIA lead officer

## Part B

### Full Impact Assessment

#### Health

**Does the Proposal have a significant impact on health and well-being (including effects on the wider determinants of health)?**

Yes  No *if Yes, complete section below*

#### Staff

Yes  No

#### Customers

Yes  No

#### Details of impact

The proposed grant award will have a positive and beneficial impact on customers over time, as we know that poverty and health inequalities are inextricably linked. Marmot and others have set out that the lower one's social and economic status, the one's health is likely to be.

Children from deprived households have lower educational attainment, worse health outcomes and are more likely to go on to live in financial poverty as adults than their non-deprived households. This grant award will help to mitigate some of the negative impact of the Cost of Living on the people of Sheffield. The Cost-of-Living crisis is impacting those who are most vulnerable and driving those already in poverty deeper into poverty. It is also impacting those who had previously been managing. Through the additional face to face provision a positive health and wellbeing outcome can be sought. Through the improvement of financial circumstances for individuals and families you will latterly positively impact their health and wellbeing.

**Comprehensive Health Impact Assessment being completed**

Yes  No

Please attach health impact assessment as a supporting document below.

**Public Health Leads has signed off the health impact(s) of this EIA**

Yes  No

**Name of Health Lead Officer**

**Greg Fell**

**Age**

**Impact on Staff**

Yes  No

**Impact on Customers**

Yes  No

**Details of impact**

CAB Sheffield provide support and advice on issues which will affect all ages, from unborn children to the elderly as well as everyone in between. Increasing the provision of face-to-face service will not directly impact on any identifiable age group but will potentially have the net impact of being better able to provide those who would prefer face to face advice to receive that support irrespective of their age.

There may be those of a certain age who don't have the experience of using digital equipment to receive face to face advice and may need additional technical digital assistance and support, and in this event, CAB will have someone on site to provide technical support.

CAB have already been providing this service so have the necessary experience and understanding on how to provide the technical support necessary for those who need additional support to use the digital equipment.

**Disability**

**Impact on Staff**

Yes  No

**Impact on Customers**

Yes  No

**Details of impact**

The cost-of-living crisis will be impacting on the financial wellbeing of those with ongoing health conditions and disabilities. The increases in energy prices will mean additional cost to charge mobility devices as well as those who require round the clock medical equipment. Many of these people require additional care and support and are reliant on income from welfare payments for their livelihood. The positive impact of this grant award may be for them to receive additional welfare advice and support in a face-to-face capacity helping to mitigate some of the negative financial impact of the Cost-of-Living crisis.

There may also be a negative impact as it is likely that these are the individuals, who due to their limited mobility, will rely on telephone advice more than face to face and as a result of Citizens Advice Sheffield expending some additional resources towards face-to-face advice may inadvertently lead to reduced capacity on the telephones.

## Pregnancy/Maternity

### Impact on Staff

Yes       No

### Impact on Customers

Yes       No

### Details of impact

As there are areas of welfare support and law that directly relate to those women who are pregnant or who are on maternity leave any additional provision to provide support and advice in these areas of law and welfare will be a positive for this group.

## Race

### Impact on Staff

Yes       No

### Impact on Customers

Yes       No

### Details of impact

A grant award for additional face to face provision of welfare advice can only provide a positive outcome for those of a minority ethnic background as these groups are some of those most disproportionately negatively impacted by the collective combination of Covid and the Cost-of-Living crisis. There will be a positive action in the reinstating of some face-to-face provision targeting ethnic minority communities as they will benefit from the additional support possible through a face-to-face medium. As such it is anticipated that there will be a wholly positive impact on this group through the increased provision made available through this grant.

## Religion/Belief

### Impact on Staff

Yes       No

### Impact on Customers

Yes       No

### Details of impact

I would expect that certain cultures and or religious beliefs would prefer to receive face to face advice than over the telephone, this may be particularly beneficial to those who are not as experienced or familiar with the UK welfare system and the English language.

## Sex

### Impact on Staff

Yes       No

### Impact on Customers

Yes       No



### Details of impact

There is certain welfare provision which relate specifically to one sex or the other and an increase in provision of face-to-face advice will be positive irrespective of the gender/sex of those receiving the advice if they would prefer to receive their advice or support in face to face. No identifiable negative impact.

## Sexual Orientation

### Impact on Staff

Yes  No

### Impact on Customers

Yes  No

### Details of impact

As above, irrespective of sexual orientation any additional face to face advice provision by CAB Sheffield who have experience and a track record of given advice can only be beneficial to those groups who wish to receive their advice face to face.

## Gender Reassignment (Transgender)

### Impact on Staff

Yes  No

### Impact on Customers

Yes  No

### Details of impact

No identifiable risk to this group by increasing face-to-face provision of welfare advice by a service with a proven track record of providing the advice irrespective of the individuals background is a positive.

## Carers

### Impact on Staff

Yes  No

### Impact on Customers

Yes  No

### Details of impact

Certain elements of welfare advice directly relate to carers and those who they provide care for. As such increasing the provision of face-to-face advice for those individuals or groups from a provider with experience of delivering this advice to those who would prefer to receive face to face advice is a positive outcome and no identifiable risk.

## Voluntary, Community & Faith sectors

### Impact on Staff

Yes  No

### Impact on Customers

Yes  No

### Details of impact

In accordance with 'Best Value' guidance this grant award takes into consideration Social Value of Citizens Advice Sheffield who have a track record of delivering essential welfare advice and support services to the people of Sheffield. A grant award of £300,000 will empower Citizens Advice Sheffield to deliver face to face welfare advice to citizens of Sheffield struggling with their financial situation in the face of the Cost-of-Living Crisis.

The grant recipient organisation is well placed, with no other Sheffield based organisation capable of providing and delivering this service citywide. They already have the expertise and necessary knowledge to scale up and utilise the grant award to meet the additional need as a result of the Cost-of-Living crisis.

Staff may be impacted through the need of additional training and support to utilise the equipment needed for face-to-face advice work but this will be provided.

No identifiable risk or negative impact identifiable at this stage of the EIA.

## Partners

### Impact on Staff

Yes  No

### Impact on Customers

Yes  No

### Details of impact

There is a net positive benefit for partners by increasing the face-to-face welfare advice provision of the market leader in Sheffield the potential will be to reduce the pressure on their own services.

Increasing the provision of good quality welfare advice irrespective of its manner of delivery will also have the potential impact of reducing the amount of advice given from those with inexperience but who may want to support and help those. It is crucial that this pressure to give advice be removed as much as possible and an easier way of accessing accurate advice from an experienced market leader be made to professionals and Sheffield residents.

## Cohesion

### Staff

Yes  No

### Customers

Yes  No

### Details of impact

CAB Sheffield provide support and advice citywide and will increase their provision of their face-to-face advice in a central location. Face-to-face advice will be given on an appointment basis. CAB Sheffield have experience in providing this and the additional funds will go towards enhancing this provision further. This will negate the risk and negative impact of some communities benefitting more than others.

## Poverty & Financial Inclusion

### Impact on Staff

Yes  No

### Impact on Customers

Yes  No

### Please explain the impact

Through the provision of additional face to face provision more comprehensive support and advice can be given. In providing face to face advice customers and staff may benefit by being able to have greater insight into the paperwork and circumstances of the causes of the problems customers are experiencing with their benefits. This in turn will enable a more comprehensive package of support and advice for the customer simply because the advisor will be able to 'see' the

paperwork and not rely on the abilities of the individual to read the letter to them which may be difficult for a variety of reasons and negate the need for a phone call the DWP which requires a lengthy wait on hold before an advisor can be made available.

However, in providing face to face advice this may impact on the overall number of those individuals who would be assisted over the telephone. Though due to variables including the complexity of welfare cases, the amount of paperwork, the needs to visually see that paperwork and potentially having additional support from family members/friends/carers etc some of this loss will be mitigated by the quality of support and that those assisted will need less follow up support. Mention interpreters as well. So while overall stats of those customers supported may be affected the positive benefit will be that more customers receiving face to face advice will receive more comprehensive support which isn't always possible given budget constraints at present time.

Staff at Citizens Advice Sheffield will have to adapt to providing face-to-face advice.

## Armed Forces

### Impact on Staff

Yes  No

### Impact on Customers

Yes  No

### Details of impact

Members of the armed forces and ex-members of the armed forces are present in all the above categories and as such for the reasons stated above, I do not believe that there is an identifiable risk to this group by providing additional face to face welfare advice by a proven organisation.

## Other

*Please specify*

N/A

### Impact on Staff

Yes  No

### Impact on Customers

Yes  No

### Details of impact

## Action Plan and Supporting Evidence

**What actions do you need to take following this EIA?**

None

**What evidence have you used to support the info in the EIA?**

Cost of Living Action Plan Equality Impact Assessment

**Detail any changes made as a result of the EIA**

None

**Following mitigation is there still significant risk of impact on a protected characteristic.**  Yes  No

**If yes, the EIA will need corporate escalation? Please explain below**

**Sign Off**

**EIAs must be agreed and signed off by an Equality lead Officer. Has this been signed off?**

Yes  No

Date agreed 20/02/2023

Name of EIA lead officer Ed Sexton

**Review Date** 20/08/2023