

Appendix 2

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Name of EIA	Introduction of new Sheltered Housing Service Charge
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Completed By	Rhian Owen
Date of Completion	9 th December 2014

Please see link to all customer demographics – this will assist with your research into the impacts of this project/function/event.

Section One:

1) What are you trying to achieve?

In March 2014 the independent Cabinet member for Health Care and Independence made the decision that housing related support subsidy for the Council's sheltered schemes would reduce by 50% from 1st July 2014 and all subsidy would be from 1st April 2015.

It is proposed that a new sheltered housing service charge is introduced to;

- Mitigate the impact of withdrawal of Housing Related support subsidy (formerly Supporting People subsidy)
- Mitigate the impact on the HRA and enable the range of services that the Sheltered housing service currently offers to continue to be delivered
- Minimise the financial hardship and impact on tenants

In 2013/14, a decision was made to increase the Citywide Care Alarm charge by £1.66 per week; however, Supporting People funding was not increased accordingly. Therefore every tenant has been paying the first **£1.66** of the Citywide Care Alarm Charge since April 2014.

The proposal is to replace the current warden and alarm charge of £16.11 by a new set of charges totalling £14.89 per week :

- Enhanced management service - £9.42 (HB eligible)
- Warden support contribution - £1.46 (not HB eligible)
- City Wide Care Alarm - £4.01 (not HB eligible)

2) Who will be affected?

All tenants in 31 sheltered housing schemes across the city 1152 tenancies
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- Around 900 tenants (over 60yrs of age) are in receipt of Housing benefit and have been in receipt of Housing Related Support Subsidy –
- 39 tenants who were not eligible for housing benefit and therefore housing related support subsidy when supporting people programme was introduced. These individuals received transitional allowance. Of these 7 are now eligible for Housing benefit and the proposed minimum charge. 20 have capital greater than £16,000.
- The decision to end Housing related support Subsidy effectively ended the transitional allowance.
- Self payers – they are not eligible for housing benefit and have not

been eligible for Housing related support subsidy.

- If the proposal is not agreed there is a significant risk that it would not be possible to continue a sheltered warden service which would impact on a high proportion of tenants who are vulnerable and require regular support to enable them to continue to live in a safe and secure environment and which supports their independence health and well being

3. How will they be affected?

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Tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit would be expected to pay a weekly charge of **£5.47**. This will mean an increase of £3.75 pw

Tenants who have been in receipt of Transitional allowance will now have to pay the full new charge of £14.89 an increase of £13.23

Self payers - i.e. those who are not in receipt of Housing Benefit - would be expected to pay **£14.89** per week in addition to 'rent'. This is slightly less than the current Sheltered Housing support charge of £16.11 per week.

4. What measures if any are in place to address this?

Discussions have been held with all residents through scheme meetings, coffee mornings and on an individual basis to explain and consult on the proposals.

All residents have received a letter which explains the proposals and the implications of this and how to access support and the opportunity to provide feedback.

Any individual who feels they will have difficulty in paying the new charge will be referred for advice and support.

Section 2

5) Please complete the following impact table and give reasons for each impact.

Profile group	Impact N ^o	Positive impact	Negative impact	Reason
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Black and Minority Ethnic People	33	Yes	Yes	<p>The proposed charge is to ensure that the Sheltered Housing service remains viable and that a similar service that is currently delivered is maintained.</p> <p>If the warden service is no longer viable older vulnerable people will no longer receive support to enable them to live in a safe and secure environment with regular support that it is tailored to their individual needs.</p> <p>If the City Wide Care Alarm is optional, older vulnerable who need the service may opt not to have an alarm which will put them at risk.</p> <p>The proposed charge will mean a negative impact financially on around 638- 75% of tenants who are on Housing benefit and will now have to pay a minimum charge of £5.47. However this will be fairer as older people living in mainstream housing who have a community alarm already pay this charge. There is a higher ratio of staff to tenants in sheltered housing than mainstream housing.</p> <p>The ending of transitional allowance will mean that all those people who are not eligible for housing benefit will pay the full charge.</p> <p>This will have a negative impact on 29 current tenants but will be fairer for all tenants living in Sheltered Housing who are not eligible for housing benefit irrespective of how long they have lived in sheltered housing.</p> <p>The proposed service charge is less than the current sheltered housing service charge which will have a positive impact financially on 263 - 25% of tenants 25%.</p> <p>The impact is similar on all groups</p>
Disabled people	719	Yes	Yes	As above
Women	754	Yes	Yes	as above

Men	540	Yes	Yes	As above
Lesbian, Gay men, bisexuals	3	Yes	Yes	As above
Gender Re-assignment	At least 1	Yes	Yes	As above
Marriage & Civil Partnership	Not available			As above
Pregnancy & Maternity	0	Yes	Yes	As above
Older people (60+)	1200	Yes	Yes	As above
Other age groups - below age 60	94	Yes	Yes	As above
Religion/Belief	848	Yes	Yes	As above
Impact on Community Cohesion.	1194	Yes	No	The Sheltered Housing Wardens have a positive impact on community cohesion within sheltered housing schemes. If the numbers of staff are reduced or the service is no longer available this is likely to impact negatively on community cohesion
Impact on Social Inclusion	1194	Yes	No	The Sheltered Housing Wardens have a positive impact on social inclusion within sheltered housing schemes. They facilitate activities and events, and encourage and support people who may be lonely and isolated to become involved. If the numbers of staff are reduced or the service is no longer available this is likely to impact negatively on social inclusion.

Notes: Religions/belief covers a wide range of groupings the most common of which are Muslim, Buddhist, Jew, Christian, Sikh and Hindu. Consider Religion/Belief categories individually and collectively when considering positive and negative impacts.

6. What actions will be taken if there are negative impacts?

All prospective tenants are made aware of the charges before they sign up for a priority in Sheltered housing
Advice and support is provided through the support planning process
Tenants who may have difficulty in paying the new charge will be referred for specialist debt and benefit advice.

7. What communication / consultation process will be used to deal with the negative impacts identified?

All tenants have been consulted on the proposed new charge and given the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposals .85% of tenants who responded said that they agreed or strongly agreed with the introduction of the new charge. the majority of tenants value the sheltered warden service

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Please list below any recommendations for action that you plan to take as a result of this impact assessment.

Impact N°	Action required	Lead Officer	Timescale Resource	Comments
All Tenants	Ensure all tenants who may have difficulty in paying the proposed new charge are referred for specialist debt and financial advice	Rhian Owen / Mike Broom	Sheltered Housing Wardens	Through the individual support planning process.
All new tenants	Ensure that all prospective Tenants are advised of the proposed new charges	Mike Broom/Nigel Hill	Sheltered Staff	At accompanied viewing and new tenancy sign up stage
All tenants	Ensure information is communicated effectively to all residents in advance of new charge being implemented	Rhian Owen/Mike Broom	Minimum of 28 days	All tenants will receive details of implementation of new charge 28 days prior to the date that the charge is implemented.

Completed By	Rhian Owen Area Manager
Date of Completion	9/12/14

Signed off Authorised	
Project Manager	

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