

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for Policies, Procedures and Services

Proposal name	Young Persons Housing Provision		
Directorate	Money Home Job and Children's Services (Joint)		
Service	Money Home Job and Children's Services (Joint)		
Responsible Officer	Vicki Mann		
Proposal planning start	July 2022	Proposal start date (due or actual date)	January 2023

1	What is the purpose of the proposal?	Yes / No	New / revision
	Show which category the proposal is and whether it is new or a revision.		
	Policy	Yes	Revision for MHJ but new for Children's Services
	Procedure		
	Guidance		
	Is this a service to customers/staff/public?		
	If yes, is it contracted or commissioned?		
	Other - give details		
2	What is the business case for this proposal? Please provide the main purpose of the service, intended outcomes and reasons for change?		
	<p>The Council wants to provide housing choice and opportunity for young people in Walsall. The number of young people aged 16-29 experiencing homelessness has increased and the complexities of the issues faced by young people have also changed. The Council wants to provide a series of housing options which can be available to young people based on what their needs are and help them transition into more stable independent living. A procurement exercise in partnership with Money Home Job (MHJ) and Children's services targets to provide, reinforce, deliver the agreed Housing Pathway and subsequent Housing Protocol for young people and appreciates the importance of being able to deliver flexible and tailored services for young people. The Council has retendered Lots 1 and 2 of these current services, and, formulated a third lot covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lot 1 –Supported Lodgings; Night Stop and Day Stop for Young People • Lot 2 – Accommodation and Intensive Housing Management for Young People • Lot 3 – Training Flat for Young People leaving care and care leavers <p>The council aims to provide young people in Walsall with access to a range of accommodation to meet their individual needs. The Council understand the importance of ensuring the right</p>		

accommodation is available to young people at the right time to ensure they are able to transition to independent living and avoid disruption. MHJ and Childrens Services currently have 2 contracts with different providers which help different young people depending on what their needs are to secure accommodation in the future. Children's Services currently uses a mixture of local and regional providers and seek accommodation for young people through the West Midlands Regional Supported Accommodation Framework agreement and also use the MHJ provision.

The Council has duties under the Children Act 1989 and Children Leaving Care Act 2000 to prepare and support children leaving care and care leavers to provide a range of suitable accommodation. In addition, the Children and Social Work Act 2017 sets out 7 Corporate Parenting Principles to achieve the best possible outcomes for Looked after Children and Care Leavers. Also referred to as care experienced, which refers to a person who has spent any amount of time in local authority care.

In providing accommodation for care leavers, local authorities should:

- avoid moving and disrupting young people who are settled
- assess young people's needs and prepare them for any move
- offer a choice of accommodation (where practicable)
- provide a support package to go with the accommodation
- have a contingency plan in case accommodation arrangements break down

The Housing Act 1996 sets out requirements on local authorities to assist people who are homeless. Part 7 requires that local authorities secure suitable accommodation for a person who meets all of the four statutory tests. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA) came into force in April 2018, and puts an important focus on the prevention of homelessness. As part of the legislation, local authorities have more responsibility to support those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Our Walsall Right for Children vision is setting out our commitment to ensure that the right young people are in the right place with the right support for as long as it needed. This means that for our most vulnerable young people, including young people leaving care, for who supported accommodation is the right place we want to ensure they can continue to live in Walsall with the quality of support available so they can acquire the skills to live independently, and make successful transition to independent living.

The intention is to provide a range of Supported Housing accommodation and support in Walsall for Young People who are aged 16-25 years for whom the LA has a statutory responsibility as children in need, children in care and young people who have left care under the Children Act 1989. This includes Children Looked After aged 16-17 years; Care Leavers aged 18-25 years; and homeless young people aged 16-29 years. Children's Services and the MHJ Team joint working arrangements are underpinned by a Young Persons Housing Protocol. Children Services and MHJ has carried out a procurement exercise to contract for services jointly across 3 Lots.

The health and wellbeing prospects for young people will be improved by obtaining and maintaining more stable accommodation. National research through Homeless Link (April 2020), shows a high proportion of young people who are homeless, have mental health needs,

	including diagnosed psychiatric disorders, and undiagnosed needs that are either self-reported by young people, or identified by the homeless services that are supporting them. Therefore the support for these young people will need to ensure pathways are in place into health services and appropriate outcomes are achieved.		
3	Who is the proposal likely to affect?		
	People in Walsall	Yes / No	Detail
	All		The provision is aimed at young people primarily 16-29.
	Specific group/s	Yes	
	Council employees		Walsall Council receives requests for assistance from approximately 2,500 households per annum. People affected by debt, low incomes households, care leavers, or people receiving out of work benefits covering all protected characteristics are at greater risk of homelessness.
	Other (identify)		
4	Please provide service data relating to this proposal on your customer's protected characteristics.		
	<p>Age</p> <p>Youth homelessness has risen by 47% over the 5 year period of the homeless review 2018. Where it identified that almost half of all homeless applicants to whom a duty is accepted, are aged 25 – 44 years of age, just over one-third being aged 16-24, just over one-tenth are aged 45-59. Those aged 60 years and older equal about 4%.</p> <p>Over the five years to the 2018 review applications from those aged 25-44 have increased by 6% and those aged 16-24 have increased by 47% (falling in the past 12 months by 16%).</p> <p>When compared to population data the age profile of homeless applicants suggests that young people are disproportionately impacted by homelessness compared to other age groups. (A new updated review is due 2022).</p> <p>The 2021 census shows that Walsall has a population of 284,100 of which there are 51500 (18%) are young people aged 15-29.</p> <p>Aged 4-14 - 57,400 (20%) Aged 15-29 – 51,500 (18%) Aged 30-64 -125,900 (44%) Aged 65+ - 49,300 (17%)</p> <p>In 2021/22 824 Households assessed and duty owed – (835 assessed) Prevention duty owed 41% Relief duty owed 58% Of those that were owed a relief duty, Just over half (59%) were aged 18-34.</p> <p>Walsall has substantially larger service demands from younger age groups: 18-25 year olds and</p>		

young people leaving care - accounted for 21% of service demand, almost 4x that of England (6%).

Disability

28% of all customers in poverty have a disability (report commissioned JR Foundation 2016)

Race, Religion or Belief

Walsall's Homelessness review identified that people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds are more likely to experience domestic abuse than other groups; (Just over three-quarters (77%) of people accepted by the local authority as being owed the main housing (homelessness) duty, were of a white ethnic origin. The remaining one-quarter (23%), were from black or other minority ethnic origins. Compared to the overall population of Walsall, for which 81% are of a white ethnic origin and 19% are from black or other minority ethnic origins, the persons of the latter type of ethnic origin have a disproportionately higher likelihood of becoming homeless).

Persons of a white and Asian or Asian British ethnic origin being homeless have increased (by 10% and 36% respectively) during the past five years, where persons from black or black British, mixed, or other ethnic origin have reduced (by 17%, 18% and 100%) during the same time-period.

Statutorily homeless young people are very unlikely to have an ethnic minority background in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland but are significantly over-represented in England, most particularly London. [Youth homelessness in the UK | JRF](#)

Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment

The homelessness review did not specifically review sexual orientation or gender reassignment of homeless applicants. There is no reason to consider that the proposed actions held within the homelessness strategy would have a negative impact upon individuals with these protected characteristics. However, nationally there does seem to be a risk to homelessness for LGBT+ people and trans people in particular. Following from these significant national statistics, I expect we can assume some increased risk for LGBT+ young people on the basis of family/cultural/religious attitudes in particular. This was also made worse during the pandemic due to individuals often needing to return to the family home to live, which has been reflected internationally. One in four trans people (25 per cent) have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives. ([lgbt_in_britain_-_trans_report_final.pdf](#) (stonewall.org.uk)). The commissioning of these services for young people, may have a positive impact, giving LGBT+ a safe place to live.

Marriage, Civil Partnership, Sex, Pregnancy and Maternity

The Walsall Homelessness Review concluded that women are more likely to experience homelessness than men.

Applicant households consisting of a lone parent with dependent children, is the most common household formation, this is followed by one-person households, and then couples with children (a small number of other household formation also are recorded). It is worth noting that there are almost four-times more lone parent households with dependent children than there are couples with dependent children.

During 2016/17, 94.2% of lone parents with dependent children were female, and 5.7% were male lone parents with dependent children. 54.7% of one-person households were female, and 45.2%

were male. This confirms that, in Walsall, women are more likely to experience homelessness than men.

The number of households with dependent children being homeless or threatened with homelessness has reduced by 47% between 2012/13 – 2016/17. During the same period, lone parent households have increased by 10%, one-person households have increased by 46%, all other household groups (e.g. couple with no dependent children) have reduced by 16%. It is worth noting that the levels of one-person households becoming homeless has almost doubled during the past five years.

5 Please provide details of all engagement and consultation undertaken for this proposal. (Please use a separate box for each engagement/consultation).

Consultation was carried out with young people leaving care and those using our current young person’s provision. The results directly influenced the new service provision being procured.

Consultation on the development of the House Project and Training Flat will be undertaken with the Children in Care Council.

6 Concise overview of all evidence, engagement and consultation

Type of engagement/consultation	Questionnaire / Focus groups	Date	2022
Who attended/participated?	Young People leaving care and those using our current young persons provision.		
Protected characteristics of participants	Age group 16-29 year olds, inclusive of various gender identities, and disability related groups, all ethnic backgrounds, religions/beliefs and sexual orientation.		
Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for a Lot 1 and Lot 2 type service • A training flat would provide an excellent trial opportunity for all • Having a dedicated support who can help with navigation through various systems is important • Having intensive housing management is crucial for tenancy sustainment • Some young people need to be within a family setting • Having a menu of housing options is important which are explained, enabling informed choices to be made • Having the right property in a suitable area is key for tenancy sustainment • Access to health services and information on the procedures is vital especially when navigating through the different services • Access to employment and education is a key component of a young person being able to service in the future • Many of our service users want to be able to maximise their potential and want to integrate within communities. • Services should be easy to access and the procedures must be easy to follow 		

- Our support within the services must be tailored to individuals and be resilient to the needs of service users.

Type of engagement/consultation	Questionnaire	Date	2021
Who attended/participated?	Young People leaving care and those		
Protected characteristics of participants	Age group 16-29 year olds, inclusive of various gender identities, and disability related groups, all ethnic backgrounds, religions/beliefs and sexual orientation.		

Feedback

Lot 2:

- There is strong support for the whg service
- Young people want clarity on roles for the Intensive Housing Management
- Young people supported
- Young people want to have opportunity to access employment
- Young people have stated they are either satisfied or very satisfied with the service available to them

Lot 1

- The night stop service is very valuable
- Those in lodgings stated they felt supported
- The lodgings were a good environment for those being placed.

Type of engagement/consultation	Telephone Questionnaire	Date	2020
Who attended/participated?	Young People leaving care and those		
Protected characteristics of participants	Age group 16-29 year olds, inclusive of various gender identities, and disability related groups, all ethnic backgrounds, religions/beliefs and sexual orientation.		

Feedback

- Having a dedicated support who can help with navigation through various systems is important but there was a need for clarity on the support and IHM at times.
- There is a need for a lead key person
- Most young people were happy with their accommodation
- Having intensive housing management is crucial for tenancy sustainment and getting help with things like ASB, rent and general tenancy issues.
- The need for lodgings is very important and the support for night stop and day stop is very important for young people.

7	How may the proposal affect each protected characteristic or group? The effect may be positive, negative, neutral or not known. Give reasons and if action is needed.			
	Characteristic	Affect	Reason	Action needed Yes / No
	Age	positive	<p>The under 35's are a group which are affected by a number of welfare reforms and receive reduced levels of benefit.</p> <p>These services are targeted at young people who are homeless but also those who are leaving care.</p> <p>Quarterly monitoring of services will help deliver the right service for the individual in a timely manner. The 16-29 year cohort will be positively impacted.</p>	N
	Disability	negative	<p>28% of all customers in poverty have a disability (report commissioned JR Foundation 2016) https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/2016/august/half-people-poverty-are-disabled-or-live-disabled-person</p> <p>Disabled people are therefore more likely to become homeless than non-disabled</p>	Y

			people. Further data will be collected on need where a customer has a disability work is done to ensure their needs and aspirations are met.	
	Gender reassignment	positive	No information is available and so the impact is not currently known. According to Stonewall, 1 in 4 trans people are at risk of becoming homeless. This would have a positive impact, giving them a safe place to stay.	Y
	Marriage and civil partnership	neutral	No information specific data is available and so the impact is not currently known – The cohort of people from previous years have not been in a marriage or civil partnership and tend to be single or a lone parent household.	Y
	Pregnancy and maternity	neutral	No information specific data is available and so the impact is not currently known. Where a service user is pregnant consideration is given to the household.	Y
	Race	Positive	Statutorily homeless young people are very unlikely to have an ethnic minority background in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland but are significantly over-represented in England, most particularly London. The delivery of these services have been sought with the requirements of taking into consideration key race, religion, cultural and disability of young people by the contractor.	Y

	Religion or belief	Positive	<p>Statutorily homeless young people are very unlikely to have an ethnic minority background in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland but are significantly over-represented in England, most particularly London.</p> <p>The delivery of these services have been sought with the requirements of taking into consideration key race, religion, cultural and disability of young people by the contractor.</p>	Y
	Sex	Positive	Women are more likely to experience homelessness than men.	Y
	Sexual orientation	Positive	No information specific data is available and so the impact is not currently known locally. However across the country there is an increased risk of homelessness, with 1 in 4 trans people at risk of homelessness.	Y
8	Does your proposal link with other proposals to have a cumulative effect on particular equality groups? If yes, give details.			(Delete one) No
9	Which justifiable action does the evidence, engagement and consultation feedback suggest you take?			
	A	No major change required.		
	B	Adjustments needed to remove barriers or to better promote equality		

C	Continue despite possible adverse impact
D	Stop and rethink your proposal

Action and monitoring plan				
Action Date	Action	Responsibility	Outcome Date	Outcome
	<p>Carry out regular monitoring of servicers users – part of contract qtrly – Children’s/MHJ Continue to collect equality data on protected characteristics of those young people who access service to help to inform the development of future services.</p> <p>Key Outcomes are achieved for service user: The desired outcome for each service user is dependant on their individual support plans. However, in addition the services are required to ensure a number of outcomes to the young person including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce risk and vulnerabilities • Maintain and establish daily living skills required to live independently including knowing how to use a bank account, budget effectively, shop for food and cook it, clean and maintain a garden, undertake simple DIY tasks, use public transport and organise leisure time • Successfully engage in education and training • Feel part of their local community • Comply with statutory orders • Feel safeguarded and their physical, mental, emotional welfare and development be promoted • Be treated as individuals through full participation in planning and review process • Be aware of rights representations and to use the complaints procedure • Ensure the individual rights and needs are met in terms of religion, cultures, race and ethnicity • Have access to accredited Life Skills and Mental Skills Training, either to participate in this training or successfully have undertaken training 			

- **Have received specialist counselling support which addresses individual needs including complex mental health issues substance misuse, offending behaviour, anger management and social skills**
- **Work towards independent living or have successfully moved on and sustained their own tenancy**
- **Being able to maintain and develop positive relationships and support networks with family members, peers and the community**

Update to EqIA

Date	Detail

Contact us

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Inside Walsall: http://int.walsall.gov.uk/Service_information/Equality_and_diversity