



## EQUALITY/COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

<b>1.What is the name of the savings proposal and its current status?</b>
CC109 Review of Voluntary Sector Grants - Housing
<b>2. Which Service is responsible for this proposal?</b>
Customers and Communities
<b>3. Does this proposal impact on other services or other service savings proposals and if so, have you discussed this proposal with the Service Directors from those other services?</b>
There may be some indirect impact upon on other services such as a potential increase in vulnerable Adults seeking critical services. We have discussed this with Adult Care services and they are aware that demand for services currently provided for people at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping may increase.
<b>4.Please state the name of the officer leading the EIA</b>
<b>5. Who has been involved in undertaking this assessment e.g. list the stakeholder groups which have been involved?</b>
<p>At this stage we have not consulted widely upon this proposal. As the report states, as part of our Financial Agreement with                      and                      , they have agreed to work with us to develop an Equality Impact Assessment and Exit Strategy.</p> <p>As part of the agreements with both organisations we would have to give them 6 months notice by the end of September 2012.</p> <p>Consultation on this proposal will be undertaken with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rochdale Homelessness forum including representatives from Service User group</li><li>• Service users</li><li>• Stakeholders including representatives of DAAT.</li><li>• Voluntary sector organisations including representatives of the wider community.</li><li>• Adult Services</li></ul>
<b>6.What is the scope of this assessment?</b>

- **-what is included in this assessment**
- **-does this proposal link to any other proposals (i.e. previous or current). If so, please state**

Services delivered for Homeless people, people at risk of homelessness and people at risk of sleeping rough.

provides a range of services for vulnerable adults in the Borough including people at risk of homelessness. This includes at that provides vocational and non-vocational training, welfare support, health improvement activities, and access to social enterprise opportunities. In addition, they provide preventative and intervention support for people at risk of sleeping rough and are excluded from other services. They provide a range of accommodation based services including accommodation for people with Mental Health part funded through Adult Care Contract.

provides a range of services for vulnerable adults based at .The service provides a range of services including crisis intervention and mediation, advice and benefits. The service provides access and support to vocational and non-vocational activities including volunteering opportunities. The funding supports the Centre at that is provided at a peppercorn rent and provides a venue for complimentary services and activities to be provided. is funded almost exclusively from voluntary sector grant.

were previously funded through Supporting People contract to provide accommodation based services for single homeless households. Funding for those services ceased at the end of March 2012.

**7 a).What does the function currently do?  
b).Describe the needs which this service meets?**

- a. is commissioned to provide a range of services to assist the council in achieving corporate aims. These are listed below.
- Homelessness Prevention - crisis intervention and emergency services for people at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping. They provide support to people excluded from Adult Care funded services.
  - Promote and enable healthy lifestyles and achieve good health and well being – as well as enabling excluded people to access primary health care including dental services, the service provides a range of healthier living activities supported by a Life Trainer. Through onsite and off site training, social and volunteering opportunities the service engages people in positive social activity and promotes improvement in personal well being.
  - Prevent harm caused by Alcohol/drugs – excluded people often have complex needs including drug and alcohol abuse. The service will undertake brief interventions and works in partnership with colleagues such as DOT to engage and maintain people in treatment.
  - Assist with the transition from unemployment to jobs – socially excluded people often require additional support in order for them to realistically enter the jobs market. The service will provide basic skills training and confidence building and will link with complimentary services that provide literacy and numeric skills training. There are a range of vocational training opportunities provided both on and off site including the development of social enterprises that will provide employment opportunities. This includes catering services, volunteering and peer mentoring.
- b. is commissioned to provide a range of services to assist the council in achieving corporate aims. These are listed below:
- Homelessness Prevention - crisis intervention and emergency services for people at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping. They provide support to people excluded from Adult Care funded services.
  - Promote and enable healthy lifestyles and achieve good health and well being - as well as enabling excluded people to access primary health care including dental services, the service provides a range of healthier living activities as well as onsite facilities that enable people to

address issues regarding personal welfare. A proportion of people that access the service do so at a time of crisis and the service will play a pivotal role in re-engaging people into healthcare services.

- Prevent harm caused by Alcohol/drugs – excluded people often have complex needs including drug and alcohol abuse. The service will undertake brief interventions and works in partnership with colleagues such as DOT to engage and maintain people in treatment.
- Assist with the transition from unemployment to jobs – socially excluded people often require additional support in order for them to realistically enter the jobs market. The service will provide basic skills training and confidence building and will link with complimentary services that provide literacy and numeric skills training. There are a range of vocational training opportunities provided both on and off site. The service has linked in with local volunteering opportunities that enable people previously excluded from the local community to contribute positively whilst at the same time building skills.

#### **8. What changes do you propose to make?**

The proposal is to reduce the Voluntary Sector funding to both organisations by 25% in 2013-14 and 75% in 2014-2015. A substantive review of the services provided by \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ will be carried out in 2013-14.

#### **9. Who are the key stakeholders who may be affected by the changes proposed?**

Service Users  
Healthcare services including Drug and Alcohol services  
Registered Social Landlords including RBH  
GMP

#### **10. What impact will this proposal have on all the protected groups**

##### **Race Equality**

\_\_\_\_\_ operated by \_\_\_\_\_ has an open door policy which tends to break down barriers, this also allows for frequently hard to engage service users an access to advice, advocacy and support without the need for an appointment. People accessing this service are sometimes excluded from other services or do not access services until in crisis. During the last 12 months the service has been used by members of the local Asian, Afro caribbean, Irish and East European communities (26).

Ethnic minority groups, \_\_\_\_\_ staff are active in engaging with ethnic communities in order to promote the ethos that \_\_\_\_\_ provides a service that is open to all regardless of race, ethnicity, religious belief etc. This has been pursued via a public relations campaign in which \_\_\_\_\_ staff have promoted the service on local Asian radio and produced presentations for local magistrates and community leaders. The open door policy that the service has in place means that they are able to work with service user groups who are wary of fully engaging and being assessed by statutory services. This includes members of the Asian community who otherwise may be left without any form of support network due to cultural

concerns.

## Disabled People

Both services support people that present with a range health related issues including in some cases disabilities, mental ill health, mobility issues and general poor health.

Mental Ill health both diagnosed and undiagnosed is prevalent amongst services users using both services.

advocates, advises and supports numerous individuals often with multiple mental health issue. is often the only agency service users are not excluded from due to the nature of their challenging behaviour. staff members take the lead in supporting these individuals directly with housing, benefits, legal and personal safety issues. This initial support can be the difference between maintaining mental wellbeing or individuals slipping through the socio economic net and into further despair. This can manifest itself in varying ways, depression, anxiety, self-harm, suicide attempts etc. The number of people who presented at in the last 12 months with mental health issues was **(107 males & 34 females)** and the service has seen a **50%** increase in people presenting with severe enduring mental health needs within the last 12 months.

A number of service users **(28)** have learning difficulties and often have minimal support in the community. provides them with advice, structured activities, signposting and advice and support on a wide range of subjects.

## Carers

provide group activities which assist service users with learning disabilities. This indirectly provides carers with mini respite sessions and a chance to have some time to themselves. and also assist individuals with support and advocacy surrounding benefits, housing, legal issues and accessing care agencies. This can help to provide support and reduce the stress and workload of full time carers. As well as assisting the service users directly can provide emotional support to the carers themselves and help them to be referred to their own support services including Carer break and Respite North West and link them in with various counselling organisations.

## Gender

Women Offenders- provides specifically tailored holistic groups for female offenders in conjunction with the probation service; this is aimed at reducing crime in the borough while often offering an alternative to a custodial sentence. (The number of women who have attended this group in the last 12 months is **63**) The removal of the service may result in an increase on offending behaviour within the borough of Rochdale and increased pressure on courts, police and statutory services

Both services offer appropriate staffing for gender specific issues and run structured workshops based around health and wellbeing.

provides support for street workers and offers support and advice regarding risk, sexual health, substance misuse and harm minimisation. has also worked with these individuals when they have been physically attacked and can offer crisis intervention and a place of safety. (The number of street workers that have accessed the service for support in the last twelve months was **15**) The removal of the service could see an increase in violence and sexually transmitted diseases. People requiring this service would have to be signposted to alternative services.

offer support where both males and females can come and speak to us about domestic violence issues, we work closely with a number of different agencies and can help support service users through this process. (The number of people that presented needing support in the last 12 months was **2 males and 14 females**)

provide services for both males and females. It is recognised that single females at risk of homelessness or sleeping rough are more likely to have complex needs and be excluded from other services. provides a place of safety for females at risk of homelessness and are excluded from other services to receive targeted advice and support. staff advocate and liaise on behalf of women at risk and enable them to access services that will enable them to maintain safe accommodation and live independently.

### **Older and Younger People**

is accessible to any individual over the age of 18. There has been an increase in the number of 18 to 25yr olds accessing the service in the last 12 months (**25**). This age group are being disproportionately affected by benefit changes, unemployment and fewer housing options and at heightened risk.

has close links with Age Concern and local sheltered housing companies and have staff members fully trained in the range of benefits available to older people (e.g. pension credit and attendance allowance). offers a range of structured activities that are accessible to older people.

service users represent the full adult age group although there has been an increase in younger people accessing the service in the last 12 months.

Welfare reform is likely to increase threat of homelessness to persons under 35 years and those older people that currently occupy housing that is deemed larger than they require.

### **People who are Socio-Economically Disadvantaged**

and provides services for excluded people that are generally socio-economically disadvantaged. This includes people with complex needs including mental ill-health, people with recent offending history and people with previously transient lifestyles. Homelessness is widely recognised as a conclusion of unmet need and/or the inability of individuals to sustain independence. Both services are pro-active in engaging and encouraging people that are excluded from mainstream services and prevent impact upon critical services through intervention and support.

The majority of individuals works with are socio-economically disadvantaged, long term unemployed, long term sick, mental health issues and other complex need issues. Due to recent changes to sickness, housing and jobseekers benefits there has been an increase in the number of individuals presenting with issues relating to benefits being stopped or temporarily sanctioned. staff have advocated for individuals with the relevant agencies in order to prevent homelessness, and economic deprivation. The service offers support and advice around a number of different areas, this can include debt, crisis intervention, housing, Support in accessing primary health care, Substance misuse, mental health, training/employment, volunteering and peer mentoring.

also carries out work with people who are homeless who often present with severe complex needs. can offer support in all relevant areas from shower facilities, clean clothing, hot food all the way through to working with the service user to obtain accommodation and getting them linked in with all relevant agencies to address the underlying issues. staff can continue to support rough sleepers as a vast majority of the time they are entrenched and need a lot of one-one support around

crisis intervention. (The number of rough sleepers and people who had no fixed abode who presented in the last 12 months **129**) Without this service Rochdale would see an increase in rough sleeping, crime, visible begging within the town centre and other associated anti social activity.

offer a range of different structured holistic workshops that address a number of different issues for service users. These include workshops around health and well-being, training and employment, healthy eating, basic literacy and numeracy, IT, domestic violence, debt, parenting, arts and crafts, confidence building, self-esteem, safeguarding, independent living skills and substance misuse and the recovery model. In the last 12 months the workshops have seen the following outcomes-

- Enjoy and Achieve 191 attendees**
- Positive Contribution 191 attendees**
- Stay Safe 136 attendees**
- Achieve Economic Well Being 136**
- Be Healthy 136**

also encourage service users to apply as volunteers and Peer Mentors within the service and other areas of . This increases their self-confidence and self-esteem and we work with them to actively enrol them on various training courses and support them to gain employment. Without the service the socially excluded would find it difficult to get the help and support they need to address their issues and get the help and support in finding suitable training and employment. Without the service it would have an impact on the so called 'benefit culture' as there would be lack of opportunities to get out of this cycle.

provides a similar range of services for homeless people and people at risk of homelessness in the Middleton Area and work closely with a number of other services and agencies to promote prevention and independence. The majority of individuals works with are socio-economically disadvantaged, long term unemployed, long term sick, mental health issues and other complex need issues. Due to recent changes to sickness, housing and jobseekers benefits there has been an increase in the number of individuals presenting with issues relating to benefits being stopped or temporarily sanctioned. staff advocate for individuals with the relevant agencies in order to prevent homelessness, and economic deprivation. The service offers support and advice around a number of different areas, this can include debt, crisis intervention, housing, Support in accessing primary health care, Substance misuse, mental health, training/employment, volunteering and peer mentoring.

The majority of people accessing this service are unemployed and socially excluded.

### **Religion or Belief**

Both services operate an open door policy and will support individuals of all religious persuasions and faiths.

### **Sexual Orientation**

Both services provide support to anyone at risk of homelessness or sleeping rough. has good working links with local LGBT groups. LGBT users, especially younger people are at a heightened risk of homelessness as a result of family breakdown, loss of networks and possible harassment. Both services offer a place of safety for people at risk to access support and homelessness services.

### **Gender Reassignment**

Both services provide support to anyone at risk of homelessness or sleeping rough. People undertaking gender reassignment may be at heightened risk of homelessness due to family breakdown, loss of

networks or harassment. Both services offer a place of safety for people to access support and homelessness services.

### **Pregnant Women or Those on Maternity Leave or Those who have given Birth in the Previous 26 weeks**

Both services are open to males and females and will provide support for any woman at risk of homelessness or sleeping rough irrespective of pregnancy or birth status. Both services address safeguarding issues with regards the health and welfare of any child or adult. A proportion of female service users that access both services have complex needs and these services can play a significant role in supporting pregnant females that may be reluctant to engage in statutory services.

### **Marriage or Civil Partnership**

Both services are open to males and females including single people, couples or groups. They provide support to anyone at risk of homelessness or sleeping rough.

## **11. What are the main conclusions arising from this analysis?**

Both services work with excluded client groups including those that are excluded from other provision within the Borough. Both services have contributed to our corporate aim to prevent homelessness wherever possible and to promote sustainable independence. Both services have supported the councils aim to reduce rough sleeping in the Borough and both services have proven to be successful in enabling some of our most vulnerable and excluded people to achieve productive and settle lifestyles. If all voluntary sector grant was withdrawn we believe that the following will occur

- a. – although we are aware that [redacted] does receive some additional funding from other sources, recent reductions in funding has forced the service to restructure and whilst the service is working hard on developing new sustainable funding streams through the development of a number of social enterprises, it is inevitable that the number of excluded clients that they will be able to support will be compromised. Without the additional support of the service, the Council will struggle to engage and support rough sleepers and there is likely to be a rise in numbers sleeping rough and an increase in the anti social behaviour often associated to rough sleeping. People with Complex Needs that are currently helped to engage and maintain statutory and non-statutory involvement will not be supported and are likely to impact upon critical services. There is likely to be an overall increase in the numbers of people becoming homeless.
- b. – this service relies upon voluntary sector grant almost exclusively and unless they are able to identify a new funding source, it is likely that the service would close completely. This would have the same affect as described above in relation to the likely impact upon people using the service and increased demand upon critical services. There is likely to be an overall increase in the numbers of people becoming homeless.

## **12. What measures do you propose to put in place to mitigate any adverse impacts?**

Possible Adverse Impact	Mitigation Measure
a. reduction/loss of services at  b. loss of service at	The Council will support any initiatives to seek alternative funding and will work with both services to pursue any additional funding opportunities. We will try and link in current/potential service users with alternative voluntary sector services/activities.
Increased rough sleeping	Establish accessible emergency accommodation to meet immediate need Work with currently commissioned services to ensure access into appropriate support
Loss of access to vocational/non-vocational training and employment activities.	We will work with colleagues in economic affairs as well as voluntary sector services to establish a resource of potential volunteering and training opportunities.

**What evidence do you have which demonstrates that these measures will be effective?**

None

**12. Please attach a copy of your consultation action plan.**

**Please briefly outline below who has been consulted and which consultation methods were used.**

Please see above. At this point we are only seeking consultation from elected members. Pending initial agreement for us to consult upon this we will consult with a number of stakeholders and service user representatives including people in the local community.

**13. Please complete the mitigation action plan below.**



**Mitigation Action Plan**

Mitigation Measure	Action	Responsible Officer	End Date	Status
Assist in finding alternative funding	Provide access to any specialist services within the council  Support through information sharing and providing references		March 2013	
Identify alternative services in voluntary sector	Work with PSP, CVS and local voluntary groups  Liaise with Community Champions		March 2013	
Identify Emergency accommodation options for Rough Sleepers	Work with current and newly commissioned providers  Identify alternative solutions in voluntary sector		March 2013	
Improve access and opportunity to vocational and non-vocational training	PSP, CVS and local voluntary groups. Green Volunteers		March 2103	

**14. Equality impact analysis sign off by the Director of Service, and an Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Representative**

Name	Position	Date