

Proposal for a new model of Domestic Abuse Supportive Accommodation In Cheshire West and Chester.

Evidence based equality analysis –

The Altogether Better programme is a new approach to providing better, more efficient and effective public services in Cheshire West and Chester. As part of this programme the Council have reviewed how they respond to the serious issue of domestic abuse.

An extensive programme of consultation has taken place with current service users, survivors and community and voluntary groups to fully understand their views on, and issues with, the current service, which has informed a new vision for the provision of refuges for women and their children fleeing domestic abuse. This new vision was published as part of the Altogether Better business case in October 2012.

Consultation included workshops and questionnaires with service users in Northwich and Ellesmere Port and Officer visits to current refuges to gather views on the new vision for the service from staff and current service users in Chester, Ellesmere Port and the Vale Royal area.

Following the consultation issues and problems with the current service model were identified. This has provided the basis for the new proposals for Domestic Abuse Supportive Accommodation

Current Issues	New Proposals for Domestic Abuse Supportive Accommodation
There is no provision for male survivors	A resource for male survivors
Two of the three refuges cannot accommodate families with teenage male children	A resource for families with children of any age or gender

<p>The refuges currently accommodate about 60% of their tenants from outside the borough</p>	<p>The emphasis will be on delivering this outcome to survivors who are resident in the Cheshire West and Chester area, although there will be some provision for survivors who need to escape abuse from other authorities</p>
<p>All three refuges have significant degrees of shared facilities, including kitchens and bathrooms. Feedback from service providers shows that significant support time is spent on managing the conflicting interests and expectation of people sharing kitchen and communal spaces</p>	<p>An end to shared kitchens and bathrooms</p>
<p>Feedback from consultation with survivors indicates that they do not value shared accommodation</p>	<p>The new Domestic Abuse Supportive Accommodation provision is likely consist of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A central building with approximately five self contained flats for individual women and their children, whatever the age or gender of their children 2. A number of dispersed flats and houses in the community. Services to any male survivors would be in the community setting, rather than in the central building <p>No decision has been made about the location of the central building or the dispersed units, and locations will be regarded as sensitive to protect survivors throughout this approach and will not be generally disclosed.</p>

<p>That there were risks of building dependence on services</p>	<p>Support survivors to retain (and where required, regain) their independence and move into secure, appropriate tenancies within twelve weeks of accessing the service</p> <p>Six weeks support following move-on</p>
<p>Access to a support worker within the building is focused mainly on Monday-Friday during office hours</p>	<p>Some office and staff space with an open access room for resident meetings, peer support and group work, so support is not focussed on Monday- Friday office hours</p>

Lead officer: Gavin Butler CWAC Safeguarding

Stakeholders: Service Users, Police, local Councillors, Vale Royal Women’s Aid, Cheshire Probation Service, Citizens Advice Bureau, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Chester Sexual Violence Support Service and Catch 22

Equality analysis is a valuable tool to help embed equality into everything we do

While process is important, equality analysis is essentially about **outcomes**.

Lack of evidence of discrimination is not evidence of a lack of discrimination.

It is not acceptable to say that a policy is applied uniformly to all groups and is therefore fair and equal. Applying a policy or procedure consistently may result in differential outcomes for different groups.

	Neutral	Positive	Negative
Target group / area			
Race and Ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers, asylum seekers etc.)		The new provision will move from shared kitchen and bathrooms to self-contained flats. This will allow cultural and faith based restrictions on diet, food storage and cleaning methods to be observed, contributing to a feeling of home.	Medium: Gypsies and travellers may be unused to the accommodation style and type offered, which could provide a barrier to people entering the service. To mitigate this, Refuge staff will be liaising with Dawn Taylor the Gypsies and traveller Co-ordinator and liaise with Cheshire Gypsy and Travellers Voice the Gypsy and Traveller Support Organisation in the North West providing an advocacy and advisory service to Gypsies and Irish Travellers.
Disability (as defined by the Equality Act - a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)		The new provision will ensure that at least one of the self-contained flats in the central unit is appropriately accessible.	Medium: If the location of the central unit isn't near transport links including bus or rail, and a service user has a disability impacting upon their ability to walk this could impact on a person's ability to travel. Assessment and mitigating measures would include the use of accessible taxis to enable disabled service users to connect to transport links.

Gender		<p>Self-contained flats will end shared bathrooms and promote privacy and individual wishes about gender identification.</p> <p>More support for male survivors.</p>	
Gender Reassignment		<p>Service users in transition and identifying as women will be able to access the service.</p>	<p>The Equality Act 2010 gives male to female transsexuals the right to access women only services. This could lead to issues of transphobia</p> <p>Mitigating measure: Staff working in refuges should proactively create an inclusive environment and should challenge homophobic and transphobic comments and behaviour.</p>
Religion and Belief		<p>Self contained units will facilitate religious observation and its attendant dietary, ceremonial, childcare practices and related issues.</p>	
Sexual Orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual)			<p>There is no local specialist provision for lesbian, gay and transgender clients. National support helpline Broken Rainbow is the only support available. Lesbians or gay men opting to use the new generic provision may be subject to homophobia.</p> <p>Mitigating measure: Staff working in refuges should proactively create an inclusive environment and should challenge homophobic comments and</p>

			behaviour.
Age (<i>children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults aged 25 – 50, younger older people aged 51 – 75/80; older older people 81+. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs</i>).		Current provision has very limited scope to accommodate women with teenage sons. The new provision will allow children of any age and both genders to be accommodated	
Rural communities			Low. A lack of information in rural communities could lead to residents not accessing the service. A mitigating factor of targeted advertising in rural communities such as Parish newsletters, rural pubs and Community centres.
Areas of deprivation		Anyone can be abused, no matter where they live or how much money they have. Victims come from all walks of life and are as likely to be lawyers, accountants and judges as they are milkmen, cleaners or unemployed. A traditional conception is that domestic abuse is correlated with deprivation, however there is limited evidence to support this.	Low. Information on services shouldn't just be concentrated in areas of deprivation, but should cover all areas
Human Rights		Rights to religious observation and cultural practices will be supported and self-determination increased	
Health and Wellbeing (consider both the wider determinants of health such as education, housing,		The desired outcome is increased independence and self-determination in the shortest	

employment, environment, crime and transport, as well as the possible impacts on lifestyles and the effect there may be on health and care services)		appropriate time. Access to universal services such as education, healthcare, housing, childcare and should be maintained or improved in this new service	
Procurement/Partnership (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance)		Soft market testing has taken place in order to shape this model, and the lessons learned will be included in the draft specification so that the new provider will be compliant with on-model provision and review of provision.	

Evidence The new proposals were put out to public consultation which ended on 6th August. The results will be drawn together and used to inform the final specification that will go out to potential providers of the new service. A report based on the feedback that we receive will go to the Council's Executive in September 2013, and this will inform all subsequent decisions.

The Council will communicate the new vision and the provider of the new service through its website and other media in January 2014.

Action plan:

Actions required	Key activity	Priority	Outcomes required	Officer responsible	Review date
<p>Race and Ethnicity Gypsies and Travellers may be unused to the accommodation style and type offered, which could provide a barrier to people entering the service.</p>	<p>Refuge staff will be liaising with Dawn Taylor the Gypsies and traveller Co-ordinator and liaise with Cheshire Gypsy and Travellers Voice the Gypsy and Traveller Support Organisation in the North West providing an advocacy and advisory service to Gypsies and Irish Travellers.</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>All Refuge staff will receive Equality and Diversity training to include awareness of Gypsies and Travellers issues</p>	<p>Gavin Butler</p>	<p>July 2015</p>
<p>Disability A service user with a disability may need assistance in accessing transport links such as rail and bus stops, if the service isn't near to.</p>	<p>Ensure service users are assessed on ability to access public transport if they don't have a vehicle.</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>All service users to be assessed on ability to access transport and mitigating factors to be put into place such as arranging a taxi.</p>	<p>Gavin Butler</p>	<p>July 2015</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment The Equality Act 2010 gives male to female transsexuals the right to access women only services. This could lead to issues of Transphobia in the female only</p>	<p>Staff working in refuges should proactively create an inclusive environment and should challenge homophobic and Transphobic comments and behaviour.</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>All Refuge staff receive Equality and Diversity training to include awareness Transphobia issues</p>	<p>Gavin Butler</p>	<p>July 2015</p>

accommodation.					
Rural Communities Lack of information in rural communities could lead to residents not accessing the service.	A mitigating factor of targeted advertising in rural communities such as Parish newsletters, rural pubs and Community centres.	Low	Refuge Provider and Partners to ensure all marketing and information campaigns cover all of Cheshire area	Gavin Butler	July 2015
Areas of deprivation Dispel the myth that only areas of deprivation suffer from domestic areas.	Information on services shouldn't just be concentrated in areas of deprivation, but should cover all areas	Med	Refuge Provider and Partners to ensure all marketing and information campaigns cover all of Cheshire West and Chester area	Gavin Butler	July 2015

Sign off	
Lead Officer:	Gavin Butler
Approved by Head of Service:	Alistair Jeffs
Moderation and/or Scrutiny	
Date:	
Date analysis to be reviewed based on rating (high impact – review in 1 year, medium impact - review in 2 years, low impact in 3 years)	High Impact 1 year.

Please forward the completed Equality Analysis to the Equality and Diversity Managers for publishing on the Council's website

