

Notification of Call-in

Decision title and reference number: FP/221/08/15 Changes to Funding for Housing Related Support Funded Older People's Services	
Cabinet Member responsible Cllr Dick Madden	Date decision published 20 October 2015
Last day of call in period 23 October 2015	Last day of 10-day period to resolve the call-in 3 November 2015
Reasons for Making the Call in 1.The decision does not clearly identify the way in which additional costs are apportioned to individuals 2.It states categorically that it is not possible for ECC to decide the impact of the reduction of funding will be 3. It falls disproportionately on certain districts and in particular Harlow District which sees its funding cut by over half 4. It was stated at the meeting by the Portfolio holder that there can be no account for indirect costs of people going to hospital or being taken into care because of this policy.	
Signed: Councillor Michael Danvers	Dated: 20 October 2015
For completion by the Governance Officer	
Date call in Notice Received 20 October 2015	Date of informal meeting 28 October 2015
Does the call in relate to a Schools issue No	If yes, date when Parent Governor Reps and Diocesan Reps invited to the meeting N/A
Date of People & Families Scrutiny Committee Meeting (if applicable) 2November 2015	Date call in withdrawn / resolved

Report to Cabinet on behalf of Councillor Dick Madden – Cabinet Member for Adults and Children	Forward Plan reference number FP/221/08/15
Date of report: 20 October 2015	County Divisions affected by the decision: All Divisions
Report Title: Changes to funding for Housing Related Support-funded Older Peoples' services.	
Report by Helen Taylor, Integrated Commissioning Director	
Enquiries to Simon Harniess, Head of Commissioning for Vulnerable People Tel: 07917 651 699 Email: simon.harniess@essex.gov.uk	

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The Council has a number of Housing Related Support (HRS) contracts in place with a range of providers (including district councils, housing associations and charitable trusts) to contribute to the costs of older peoples' services – sheltered schemes and community alarms. This report asks Cabinet to agree funding changes from April 2016 which will reduce our revenue spend by £1.445m per annum.
- 1.2. These contracts expire in March 2016 and in September 2014 the Cabinet agreed that the Director for Integrated Commissioning could invoke the extension provisions in the contracts and extend them for a further year
- 1.3. Linked to this, we will open discussions with providers about the future range of services and funding from April 2017. Procurement of the new services will be the subject of a future report to the Cabinet Member.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Agree to give notice to extend the following contracts for housing related support to older people's services for a year from April 2016 but with a reduced overall financial contribution, based on the following terms:
 - 2.1..1. Reduce the HRS financial support to sheltered housing by £2/person/week (reducing revenue spend by £800,000)
 - 2.1..2. Cap the HRS financial support to Community Alarms in sheltered housing at £2/unit/week (or less if sub-contracted at a lower rate) (reducing revenue spend by £350,000).
- 2.2. Agree not to extend any contract for the provision of funding for 'dispersed' Community Alarms (reducing revenue spend by £295,000)

3. Background and proposal

Background

- 3.1. ECC currently contributes towards the support costs for tenants in Sheltered Housing (wardens and sheltered scheme managers). Other costs are met through rent and service charges which the providers collect separately.
- 3.2. ECC contributes to the costs of monitoring alarms in sheltered accommodation. In some cases the monitoring service is delivered in-house (e.g. Epping Forest); in other cases it is sub-contracted (e.g. Uttlesford).
- 3.3. In six districts (Basildon, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Harlow, Tendring and Uttlesford) ECC also contributes to the costs of monitoring alarms for older people in social housing outside of sheltered schemes. In some cases, this is provided in schemes close to (but not part of) sheltered schemes.
- 3.4. There are currently fifty-three providers of these services, with just under 10,000 supported units at a total cost of £4.04M.

What are the issues?

- 3.5. Sheltered Schemes:
 - Our funding is not well-targeted. The ECC payments support older people in sheltered accommodation whilst there is increasing evidence that there are more vulnerable older people living in general needs social housing or in their own homes.
 - The preferred ECC model for accommodation with support for older people is now 'Independent Living' (previously called 'Extra Care'). Capital Programme Board has recently approved a significant capital fund of £27.7M over the next 3-5 years to support the development of 1,880 new units of accommodation
 - The amounts we pay are based on legacy arrangements rather than on assessed needs and the amount we pay to providers for similar services varies widely from provider to provider.
 - There are issues with the current provision of sheltered housing. For example, condition of the Housing stock is poor in some areas; the aspiration of older people is rising –bedsit-type accommodation is no longer wanted and voids are an issue in some areas.
 - In some districts, some Sheltered Accommodation is now used as a housing option for the over-55s who do not have a support need.
- 3.6. Community Alarms in Sheltered Schemes:
 - The amounts we pay for similar services vary widely.
 - We are not benefiting from market rates. In some cases we pay organisations that then sub-contract the monitoring service. If a lower price is obtained, this is not passed onto ECC.
 - Tenants are required to pay whether or not they require the service.
- 3.7. Dispersed Community Alarms:
 - This arrangement duplicates what is already available through Social Care and individuals who have eligible Social Care need will continue to be able to access the service.
 - This arrangement is in place in six of the twelve districts and is therefore not consistent or equitable. Community alarm arrangements funded through HRS are based on where somebody lives rather than need. They are not consistent with the offer through Adult Social Care, so depending on where you live you may or may not get a subsidised alarm.

- As above, there are also concerns about sub-contracting and the variation in the amount we pay.

What will be the impact of these changes on the individual tenants?

- 3.8. The ECC contract is with the districts, Housing Associations and charities. It is therefore not possible for ECC to decide what the impact of the reduction of funding will be. The provider will need to decide a response to the reduction in funding. This could be for example:
- Tenants may be required to make payments to make up some or all of any shortfall
 - The provider reduces or withdraws the service.
 - The provider may be able to absorb the additional cost or is incentivised to seek better value arrangements
 - Other funding sources (such as housing benefit) could be explored by the provider, although most of the services are outside the scope of housing benefit. Not all tenants will be eligible for housing benefit.
- 3.9. ECC will recommend to providers that if they propose to introduce a charge or reduce services then they should consult those affected, but we are not in a position to require this.
- 3.10. A further complication in assessing the impact is that the payments to services vary considerably across the seventy-seven services that are funded, so the impact of the proposed funding changes will vary similarly.
- Current payments towards support vary from £0.37 per week to £14.47. Where a provider receives less than £2 per occupier per week, the change will mean that no funding is provided by ECC. The highest HRS payment will become £12.47 per person per week.
 - Current payments towards Community Alarms vary from £0.34 to £4.81. The proposals would effectively remove any HRS contribution below £2/unit/week and reduce the highest rate to £2.81/unit/week.

What are the views of providers?

- 3.11. Although it was not possible to consult tenants (because we do not know the way in which providers will respond to the reduced financial envelope for these services, the initial proposals were developed with the Housing, Health & Social Care Partnership Group, mindful of the challenging financial situation faced by the Council and the need to reach a fairer allocation of resources. This group includes Housing Strategy leads for all districts as well as representatives from large Housing Associations.
- 3.12. All providers were contacted and invited to submit any views about the proposals. Fifty-three providers were contacted and twenty of these responded. Some key points are included below:
- There were concerns about the timeliness of the proposals which it was felt did not give sufficient time for meaningful consultation with tenants. It should be borne in mind that the key determinant of the timeline was because providers had previously asked for an early decision to assist their budget setting processes.
 - Providers were asked if they agreed with the proposals. 16 providers responded of whom 3 strongly disagreed, 6 disagreed, 1 was in agreement and 6 were neutral.

- Nearly all respondents stated that either the shortfall in funding would be recuperated from the service user and / or the provider would implement a reduction in the support service. (The majority indicated the service would reduce).
- Some Providers expressed concerns about the anticipated year on year impact/increase that these cuts will have as there is a need for stability. Some were opposed to a cost cutting approach and favoured a strategic approach to realising savings. To address this, we will begin discussions on funding for 2017-18 and beyond in October 15.
- Some Providers did also raise concerns that this 'cost saving' may lead to an increase in the number of social care users going into residential care and hospitals due to vulnerability increasing as service offer reduces. Whilst sheltered services have a key role in identifying those with emerging needs and making referrals to Social Care, previous, larger, funding reductions in this area did not lead to a noticeable impact on demand for Social Care services. However, earlier intervention in the social care system generally may mean that support needs can be met at an earlier stage and escalation to higher levels of support avoided or delayed, regardless of a reduction in provision of housing related support.
- The main theme arising from additional comments was an overall desire to see ECC working jointly with Health. That is beyond the scope of this report. We will continue to seek engagement from health partners although it has traditionally been difficult to get them engaged.

4. Policy context

- 4.1. HRS services are non-statutory, but help to increase or maintain independence. ECC have general duties around Prevention and Early Intervention imposed by the Care Act, but the Act does not stipulate specific services to fulfil this requirement.
- 4.2. These services contribute to the following Corporate Outcomes:
 - People in Essex enjoy good health and wellbeing
 - People in Essex live in safe communities and are protected from harm
 - People in Essex can live independently and exercise control over their lives.
- 4.3. In Vision for Essex 2013-2017¹, ECC recognises some key challenges which this activity supports. Including, 'The money we receive from central government will continue to reduce as demand for our services increases', and as a result, 'We will need to target resources where they can have most impact'

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. The total budget saving for 2016/17 from this initiative is £1.445m
- 5.2. This represents a shortfall of £155,000 against the £1.60m saving currently reflected within the Medium Term Resourcing Strategy, which arises as a consequence of the exclusion of Leaseholder and Intensive Housing Management payments from this initiative. Additional opportunities have been identified to mitigate this budget shortfall. These will be brought forward separately for agreement.

¹ Vision for Essex 2013-17, *Where innovation brings prosperity*, June 2013

- 5.3. It is not believed that this initiative would create pressure on any other ECC budget.
- 5.4. Appendix 1 shows the anticipated financial impacts by District

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1. The Council is able to extend these contracts until 31 March 2017 and it is able to vary the terms of the contracts in the way proposed. Consultation has been undertaken with providers and this feedback and the equality impact assessment must be taken into account when making a decision.
- 6.2. If the services are to continue after 1 April 2017 then new contracts will need to be put in place. The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 now require competition in the award of contracts for most services and the commissioners will need to take account of this when planning their timetable.

7. Staffing and other resource implications

- 7.1. ECC officers may be required to negotiate with providers depending on the responses to consultation and implementation.

8. Equality and Diversity implications

- 8.1. The provision of HRS services meets the needs of a range of vulnerable people and groups, many of whom are at risk of social exclusion and may not have recourse to other funding. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when ECC makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:
 - (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act
 - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 8.2. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.
- 8.3. There is no absolute duty to achieve these outcomes. The decision maker must balance equalities with all other relevant factors.
- 8.4. Whilst this proposal impacts on Older People, other proposals that have been implemented have reduced spend on Mental Health and Learning Disability services. Activity is also underway to recommission HRS services for Younger People which will also be within a reduced budget. Funding reductions are impacting across the range of HRS services and do not fall disproportionately on one group. The proposals are also centred around improving equality of service offer and funding levels across all older people funded HRS schemes.

9. List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Financial Impact of Proposed Changes by District

10. Background papers

Equalities Impact Assessment

Role	Date
Executive Director for Corporate Services and Customer Operations (S151 Officer) Nicole Wood for Margaret Lee	4 th September 2015
Director for Corporate Law and Assurance (Monitoring Officer) Paul Turner for Terry Osborne	1 st September 2015
Director Integrated Commissioning Director Helen Taylor	25 th September 2015
I agree the recommendations in this report for the reasons set out in the report. Cllr Dick Madden - Cabinet Member for Children and Families	25 th September 2015

Appendix 1 – Financial Impact of Proposed Changes by District

District	2014/15 spend	proposed spend 16/17	difference	% difference
Basildon	£ 885,763	£ 560,262	-£ 325,501	-37%
Braintree	£ 235,645	£ 157,448	-£ 78,197	-33%
Brentwood	£ 186,351	£ 116,667	-£ 69,684	-37%
Castle Point	£ 118,175	£ 93,425	-£ 24,750	-21%
Chelmsford	£ 345,235	£ 253,857	-£ 91,378	-26%
Colchester	£ 324,742	£ 215,104	-£ 109,638	-34%
Epping Forest	£ 328,597	£ 190,528	-£ 138,069	-42%
Harlow	£ 349,710	£ 168,222	-£ 181,487	-52%
Maldon	£ 235,601	£ 180,017	-£ 55,584	-24%
Multiple	£ 437,341	£ 286,612	-£ 150,729	-34%
Rochford	£ 204,664	£ 158,775	-£ 45,889	-22%
Tendring	£ 173,738	£ 99,911	-£ 73,827	-42%
Uttlesford	£ 215,080	£ 114,375	-£ 100,705	-47%
Grand Total	£ 4,040,642	£ 2,595,205	-£ 1,445,437	-36%

EQUALITY IMPACT ANALYSIS

Guide for Initial Screening and Analysis

Policy, practice, function or project analysed	
Lead Officer : Simon Harniess	Email: simon.harniess@essex.gov.uk
Those undertaking the analysis :	
Simon Harniess	Email: simon.harniess@essex.gov.uk
Start date of analysis: 28 th July 2015	Completion of analysis:
Reference Number:	

- In making decisions ECC must have regard to the public sector equality duty (PSED) under s.149 of the Equalities Act 2010, i.e. have due regard to the need to: A. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act. B. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. C. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding
- This initial Equalities Impact Analysis (EQIA) screening document should be used as a tool to test and analyse the nature and impact of either what we do or are planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for review of existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
- Please use this series of questions to guide thought processes and record your findings in relation to the analysis of the level of impact of a proposed or existing policy, function, service or practice. **All high or medium impacts will require a full analysis.**
- For public sector purposes if the policy or function is subject to a Scrutiny presentation or business case development this evidenced EQIA screening process will be required as a minimum for supporting documentation.

This initial screening EQIA will be published on the ECC Website stating the outcome and providing links to further documents where appropriate and other contact details for enquiries.

A.	POLICY, PRACTICE, FUNCTION OR PROJECT TO BE ANALYSED
A1	Is this a new or change to an existing policy, practice, function or project? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CheckBox1 No <input type="checkbox"/> CheckBox2

A2	<p>Is this policy or function associated with any other Council policy or priority? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CheckBox3 No <input type="checkbox"/> CheckBox4</p> <p>How does it support the meeting of any priority?</p> <p>Housing Related Support (HRS) funding for Older Peoples' services. ECC currently contributes towards the support costs for tenants in Sheltered Housing (wardens and sheltered scheme managers). Other costs are met through rent and service charges which the providers collect separately. 3.2.</p> <p>ECC also contributes to the costs of monitoring alarms in sheltered accommodation. In six districts (Basildon, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Harlow, Tendring and Uttlesford) ECC also contributes to the costs of monitoring alarms for older people in Social Housing outside of sheltered schemes.</p> <p>These are preventative services which contribute to the following ECC Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People in Essex enjoy good health and wellbeing • People in Essex can live independently and exercise control over their lives • People in Essex live in safe communities and are protected from harm
A3	<p>If statutory please refer to relevant statute.</p> <p>N/A</p>
A4	<p>Does or will it affect: -service users, employees, the wider community or particular groups of people particularly where there are areas of known inequalities.</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CheckBox5 No <input type="checkbox"/> CheckBox6</p> <p>Will the policy or function influence how organisations operate and /or involve substantial changes in resources? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CheckBox7 No <input type="checkbox"/> CheckBox8</p> <p>(Particular groups protected under the act are people who share one or more protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.)</p> <p>If yes to any of these questions, then it is relevant to achieving fair equal outcomes and will require further screening as to nature and level of impact. Please continue answering the questions from A5</p> <p>If no- please record your comments here. No further action is required other than sign off at end of document</p>

A5	<p>Please describe what are the main aims, objectives, purpose and intended outcomes of the policy or function?</p> <p>The provision of Housing Related Support services meets the needs of a range of vulnerable people and groups, many of whom are at risk of social exclusion and may not have recourse to other funding.</p> <p>The funding contribution to Older Peoples' services is intended to assist in the provision of support for vulnerable older people across the county. However, there are concerns as to whether current arrangements represent Best Value and whether the support is well-targeted. Specifically:</p> <p>Sheltered Schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our funding is not well-targeted. The ECC payments support older people in sheltered accommodation whilst there is increasing evidence that there are more vulnerable older people living in general needs social housing or in their own homes. • The preferred ECC model for accommodation with support for older people is now 'Independent Living' (previously called 'Extra Care'). Capital Programme Board has recently approved a significant capital fund of £27.7M over the next 3-5 years to support the development of 1,880 new units of accommodation • The amounts we pay are based on legacy arrangements rather than on assessed needs and the amount we pay to providers for similar services varies widely from provider to provider. • There are issues with the current provision of sheltered housing. For example, condition of the Housing stock is poor in some areas; the aspiration of older people is rising –bedsit-type accommodation is no longer wanted and voids are an issue in some areas. • In some districts, some Sheltered Accommodation is now used as a housing option for the over-55s who do not have a support need. <p>Community Alarms in Sheltered Schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amounts we pay for similar services vary widely. • We are not benefiting from market rates. In some cases we pay organisations that then sub-contract the monitoring service. If a lower price is obtained, this is not passed onto ECC. • Tenants are required to pay whether or not they require the service. <p>Dispersed Community Alarms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This arrangement duplicates what is already available through Social Care and individuals who have eligible Social Care need will continue to be able to access the service. • This arrangement is in place in six of the twelve districts and is therefore not consistent or equitable. Community alarm arrangements funded through HRS are based on where somebody lives rather than need. They are not consistent with the offer through Adult Social Care, so depending on where you live you may or may not get a subsidised alarm.
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² Please refer to the Essex Compact to determine how to involve voluntary sector organisations that will be

A6	<p>Referring to A4 above do you know how many people are affected or will be affected either as existing and/or intended beneficiaries/stakeholders of the policy or functions and from what sections of the community? Describe what you know.</p> <p>The Council has a number of Housing Related Support (HRS) contracts in place with a range of providers (including district councils, Housing Associations and charitable trusts). There are around 10,000 supported units but an additional 2,500 that we do not support may also be affected.</p> <p>Although these schemes are intended for vulnerable older people, we know that in some areas they are now being used as housing options for over-55's who may be active and even still in employment.</p> <p>We believe that there are more vulnerable older people living in other social housing and in their own homes who cannot access this support. Making reductions to funding in these contracts allows us to prioritise other services which may be our statutory duty and/or are more accessible to citizens regardless of their tenure.</p>
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B.	Evidence/Data and Consultation³ In determining whether the policy or function could have a different impact it is expected that all information that is available is considered. In addition through this process identify what gaps in information exist.
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³ Essex Insight [Public Engagement guidance](#)

B1	<p>What monitoring or other information do you have about relevant groups (who share a protected and /or unprotected characteristic⁴), which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy or function? E.g. service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys. performance data, research information (national, regional and local).</p> <p>All providers are required to submit performance data for their services on a quarterly basis. Originally set up under the Supporting People Programme, this performance framework provides data on areas such as numbers being supported; % of people where independence is being maintained, etc.</p> <p>In addition, a programme of service reviews was carried out under the SP Programme which looked at all schemes. There were subsequent Strategic Reviews of all SP Older Peoples Services and of all 'Small Providers' the bulk of which were OP providers.</p> <p>From this activity we know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main reasons for residents moving into sheltered housing. • What are the key parts of the scheme manager role that residents value/see as the most important. • What are the main tasks that residents receive support for. • What social activities are provided in schemes. • What percentage of the scheme manager's time is spent on housing management. • Whether there is a dedicated scheme manager for the service or do scheme managers cover a number of services. • What % of service users are self funders (i.e. pay their own HRS costs). • Whether the HB/HRS eligible residents have to pay a contribution towards /top up the support charge over and above the HRS contribution. • Whether, apart from HB and self funder contributions are there any other funding sources for the support provision within sheltered services. • When the provider last reviewed the housing benefit eligibility criteria for housing management?
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⁴ An unprotected characteristic are those not covered by the Equality Act such as people on lower income or

B2	<p>What does the information tell you about those groups identified in A6 above? Are they likely to have different access points, needs, experiences or outcomes as a result of this policy?</p> <p>The most likely outcome of the proposed changes is that some individuals will be asked by their landlord to contribute to the costs of their support service. This is consistent with access to Social Care where a Financial Assessment is carried out for all those with eligible Social Care needs.</p> <p>3.8. The ECC contract is with the districts, Housing Associations and charities not directly with the tenants so we cannot dictate what should happen. It is suggested that providers consult with their tenants about what happens, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants may be willing to make up the shortfall • Tenants may be willing to contribute a smaller amount for a reduced service • Tenants do not contribute and the service is reduced • The provider may choose to absorb the additional cost • Other funding sources (such as HB) could be explored by the provider.
B3	<p>Have you compared the data you have with comparative data, such as national statistics or the equality profile of the local population? What does it show?⁵</p> <p>Yes, as discussed in B1 ECC have undertaken a comprehensive needs assessment to ensure a clear understanding of current data and trends relating to Domestic Abuse both nationally and locally.</p>
B4	<p>Have you identified any improvements or other changes that could be made from analysing the data? eg improving access to services/ opportunities , customers' experience or outcomes.</p> <p>Increase in Home Safety Services enabling people to remain and feel safe in their own home and not having to access refuge / alternative accommodation.</p> <p>Future monitoring of Community Services – Work has been undertaken with the current providers and through the Joint Commissioning Coordination Group to agree a set of outcomes that services will deliver. We are currently developing the indicators and measures that will provide evidence that the outcomes are being met.</p> <p>ECC has recognised that there is a need to provide a broader range of accommodation and support choices than those currently provided via Women's Refuge, that will lead to more families being safe and secure in their own home or similar type accommodation. The Service Specifications reflect this requirement.</p> <p>Provision in Essex has mainly been women only focused services with some sporadic services for men available in the West Essex area. ECC recognises the need to ensure appropriate support to any person experiencing domestic abuse including female, male, LGBT groups and men with or without children that is based on individual needs and this has been detailed in the service Specification.</p> <p>In order to ensure that the services are culturally sensitive, we will ensure that this area is properly evaluated at the bid stage and that performance is monitored in implementation. The evaluation will make reference to the requirement to consider different access points, needs, experiences or outcomes for different groups.</p>

lone parents.

⁵ Data sources within ECC include [Essex Insight](#) with links to JSNA and 2011 Census

B5	<p>Have you consulted or involved external stakeholders about the policy or function? If so what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?</p>
	<p>The COG has met on a regular basis to test ideas and concepts as well as develop the work plan. Those involved include; Head of Commissioning for Vulnerable People, Commissioning Support including Insight & Analysis and Community Engagement and Commercial.</p> <p>Community Services Specification workshop Monday 27th October 2014 (Representation from Essex Police, ECC Commissioners and Housing Officer) A meeting was held to explore the proposed outcomes to support the design of the Commissioned Services.</p> <p>Incumbent Provider workshop Thursday 20th November 2014 (Basildon Women's Refuge, Safer Places, Colchester and Tendring Women's Aid) A workshop was held to engage existing service providers in the development of the specification. The outcomes of this session were then fed into a wider market soft engagement event;</p> <p>Wider market soft engagement event Thursday 27th November 2014. This event was open to any organisation interested in supporting the review of the services that are offered to support victims of domestic abuse to meet the defined outcomes.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Strategy Stakeholders Workshop Monday 2nd February gave a range of stakeholders the opportunity to shape the higher level indicators of the Essex Domestic Abuse Commissioning Strategy. The new service(s) will need to link to these indicators and appropriate supporting measures will be developed.</p>
B6	<p>Have you undertaken any consultation⁶ with staff e.g. employee forums or subject matter experts to assess their perception of any impacts of the policy or function? If so, what has been learnt from them?</p> <p>See B5 - Incumbent provider workshop and wider market soft engagement event.</p> <p>Our intention is to use current service users in formulating the questions for the tender and these will be informed by their experiences of services. We have also drawn on the needs assessment which included local research on the experience of service users and their contacts with Housing and Refuge providers.</p>
B7	<p>If you have not consulted or engaged any stakeholders in your decision making please provide details on when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary.</p> <p>N/A (see B5)</p> <p>We have considered the findings of <i>Victims' Voices</i>: A report into the experiences of victims when approaching Housing services. This was carried out under the Housing and Accommodation work stream and provides direct feedback from women who accessed housing options and refuge provision.</p>

⁶ Reutilising existing data may reduce the extend of consultation required.

C1. Impact of the Policy or Function

Use the considerations in sections A & B to assess the potential impact on each of the equality characteristics/groups. Impact could be positive, adverse, or neutral and **if adverse** for any choice then assess whether that impact is **low, medium or high**.

Characteristics can relate to residents and/or employees who are likely to be impacted by the change. Refer to the evidence you use.

Description of Impact	Nature of Impact	Extent of Impact
Identify the potential impact of the policy/function on the following groups	Positive, Neutral , Adverse	Low, medium, High
	Double click box select choice and click move to access choice	
AGE		
	Positive	Low
RACE AND CULTURE		
	Positive	Low
DISABILITY		
	Positive	Low
GENDER (Sex)		
	Positive	Low
SEXUAL ORIENTATION		
	Positive	Low
RELIGION/BELIEF		
	Positive	Low
GENDER REASSIGNMENT		
	Positive	Low
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY		
	Positive	Low
MARITAL STATUS AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP		
	Positive	Low
CROSS CUTTING THEMES :		
SOCIO-ECONOMIC		
	Positive	Low

HEALTH INEQUALITIES e.g. addressing inequalities of health outcomes		
	Positive	Low
ENVIRONMENTAL- e.g. Housing, transport links/rural isolation		
	Positive	Low

C2.	Could you minimise or remove any adverse or potential impact that is high, medium or low significance, in advance of a full equality impact analysis? Explain how.
C3	Does the policy or function actively promote equal opportunities and good community relations? Or could changes be made so that it does so? Yes
C4	Consider any further information, qualitative or quantitative that does not fit into the questions but you feel has a likely impact on this analysis. Data collected to measure long term outcomes will be used to highlight/evidence the impact over the life of the contract

D. CONCLUSIONS		Leave check box clear if answer different to preceding column	
D1. Was there sufficient data to complete the stage 1 analysis?	Yes?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CheckBox11	If “ NO ”, what arrangements are in place for evidence gathering and continuing with the analysis? Please use the Action Plan to highlight relevant actions.
	No?	<input type="checkbox"/> CheckBox12	
D2. Is the outcome of the initial analysis outlined in section C that the impact of the policy or function would be adverse with a medium or high impact on one or more target group?	Yes?	<input type="checkbox"/> CheckBox13	If “ YES ”, proceed to a full Stage 2 analysis? If so, what arrangements are in place to carry out the full analysis? Please use the Action Plan to highlight relevant actions. Stage 2 Full Equality Analysis available here Template
	No?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CheckBox14	
D3. Is the outcome of the initial analysis in Section C that the policy or function would have a neutral or positive impact on equalities?	Yes?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CheckBox15	If “ YES ”, please include proposals in the Action Plan to further improve the impact of the policy, practice, function or project on equalities. Taking account of sections C2, C3 and C4 do you plan to review the service or policy again in future to assess whether there has been any change? If so, when? Please use the Action Plan to highlight relevant actions. Has the functional D&E Steering Group reviewed the analysis? If so what were their comments?
	No?	<input type="checkbox"/> CheckBox16	
D4. Do you have any other conclusions/outcomes from the initial analysis?			

ACTION PLAN for enhancing existing practice/identify key personnel for Stage 2 analysis if required

Recommendation/ issue to be addressed	Planned Milestone	Review date	Planned completion of milestone (date)	Officer Responsible	Progress

RESOURCES: Does the above action plan require any additional resources?

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ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING

Please think about your plans for monitoring the achievement of the actions you have set out and record them here.

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SIGN OFF: The officers below confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately with the Council's guidance

Signature of Tier 3: Lead Officer		Date:
Signature of Accountable Officer:		Date:

Please retain an electronic copy for your records and forward a copy to your D&E steering group representative and the Head of Diversity and Equality for monitoring purposes. Please upload a copy on Essex Insight for publishing.

**CALL IN – CHANGES TO FUNDING FOR HOUSING
RELATED SUPPORT FUNDED OLDER PEOPLE'S
SERVICES**

**Informal meeting held on Wednesday, 28 November 2015 at 10.30 a.m. in the
Room C120**

Present

Councillor Dick Madden (Cabinet Member for Adults and Children), Councillor Michael Danvers

Contributing Officers: Dave Hill, Executive Director for People Commissioning
Officers present: Adam Boey, Robert Fox, Peter Randall

Introduction

Councillor Danvers outlined the reasons for the call-in. This decision FP/221/08/15 had been called in on Tuesday, 20 October 2015. Within the template Councillor Danvers raised the following four issues:

1. The decision does not clearly identify the way in which additional costs are apportioned to individuals;
2. It states categorically that it is not possible for Essex County Council to decide the impact of the reduction of funding will be
3. It falls disproportionately on certain districts and in particular Harlow District which sees its funding cut by over half
4. It was stated at the Cabinet meeting by the Portfolio holder that there can be no account for indirect costs of people going to hospital or being taken into care because of this policy.

In summary Councillor Danvers stated:

- With regard to the NHS Better Care Fund he was unclear whether there had been any consideration to re-finance the programme as there are considerable monies being transferred to local authorities from this fund. Has there been any examination whether such monies can be re-directed? Hampshire County Council has done this particularly for people within sheltered accommodation. There has also been evidence that some local authorities are already cutting back on community alarms
- He is concerned that at the Cabinet meeting on 20 October 2015 Councillor John Spence stated that elderly people are generally better-off now due to the triple-lock guarantee on pension income. However, a study by the Nuffield Trust *Focus on Social Care for Older People* indicates that in excess of 10,000 nationally are affected negatively. In Harlow, for example, 43% of people receive additional benefits compared to the neighbouring local authority Epping Forest where it is 28%

- Point 2.1.2 of the Cabinet paper acknowledges the cap on the level of support in sheltered housing. However, Councillor Danvers argued that Harlow is a special case due to the number of people living as tenants of the District Council
- A news article on the BBC website based upon an Age UK study states that the squeeze on services disproportionately affects older people, and makes specific reference to telecare and community alarms
- The Cabinet report shows negative feedback following consultation and this is not acknowledged in the decision
- The Cabinet report in 3.8 states that it is not possible for ECC to decide what the impact of the reduction of funding will be. Therefore, consideration could have been given to delaying the decision until more is known

General response by Councillor Dick Madden and Dave Hill

In response to Councillor Danvers the following points were made:

- The HRS is discretionary – ECC chooses to do it. However, in the current financial climate resources are finite. Providers receive the monies from the County Council and then it is up to them how they provide it as a financial package
- In total there are 53 providers which include all District/Borough/City Council and sheltered housing providers. The criteria for use of the funds is made known to all providers. They can use it to supply alarms, or get the resident to contribute. The local authority can also contribute
- ECC is not aware of how providers use the funds. The subsidy is passed on for them to manage the process
- At present the County Council does not believe distribution of the funds is equitable. Therefore, there is a proposal to extend the contract from April 2016 until March 2017 and the County Council will engage with all providers to find a fairer system
- ECC has reduced the funding but is aware that monies might not be being targeted as the most vulnerable. ECC wants a fairer system, through liaison with all providers, and there is also the corporate responsibility to get value for money

Councillor Danvers interjected that if the County Council was aware that the system was unfair it would have been better for the Authority to undertake a study first prior to the decision being made. Additionally, any cut means that service is still not being run equitably

Councillor Madden and Dave Hill continued:

- We are accountable for public money but when we know that monies are not going to the right places we have a duty to recognise this. Therefore, had the County Council decided to go another year distributing the monies to providers this would have meant another year of monies being used inappropriately
- There are other routes for vulnerable people to get social care – and those that need it receive the full care package they need
- There are two parts to the scheme: the first is community alarms in sheltered housing and people within these environments all receive an alarm, whether they require one or not. This happens at a local level and the County Council subsidises this alarm system and this is not a great use of public monies if the residents don't wish to have the alarm. The second part is dispersed alarms for people living within their own homes whether they be rented or owned. This explains the disproportionate effect upon Harlow as the district has the highest number of dispersed alarms. The District Council provided the dispersed alarms
- The methodology used for distribution of funds is proportionate to need
- The County Council has no direct contact with any people receiving community alarms unless they receive other care packages from the Council. The second-tier local authorities make the decisions on where the alarms are provided
- There are differences in the subsidies each local authority provides. One charges in advance of £5 a week whereas others charge as little as £1.20. The County Council provides the grant that allows the scheme to be subsidised at local level. Currently the Council subsidises c. £4m and the Cabinet paper proposed a reduction of c. £1.5m
- It is recognised there are three possible responses to this:
 - I. the second-tier authority could pick up the additional costs themselves and not pass this on to the end-user
 - II. the service is no longer provided as it is a discretionary service for the second-tier authorities
 - III. the cost is passed on to the end-user and this would be disproportionate based upon the amount different authorities charge
- The core issue is that it is a discretionary service, and, therefore, difficult to see what effect it will have on end-users as it is the second-tier local authorities who subsidise the service following the County Council grant

- Vulnerable people can approach the County Council to provide a care package if they believe they are affected by the funding cut. Personal budgets can be used for the purchase of community alarms
- The alarm service has been in operation since 2003 under the Supporting People programme. Technology has since moved on and monitors are used for people assessed for particular services. If any individual were to require an assessment for a targeted service this is arranged through the County Council
- The Better Care Fund is an agreement between the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and the County Council. Almost all of this fund is used on targeted reablement. An agreement has been reached with each individual CCG on how this money is spent – this was achieved through negotiation over a year ago. There is not a Better Care Fund 'pot' to dip into
- With regard to the remarks made by Councillor Spence at the Cabinet meeting the suggestion was that he was making this in relation to the prioritisation of the increases in the state pension which will go up by 2.5% per year. Depending upon which area of the county you live this means the highest increase anybody will have to face to pay for their community alarm will be offset, by some degree or other, by the rise in the state pension
- The consultation garnered 20 responses with some positive and some negative feedback. The County Council has been holding conversations with the second-tier authorities for over a year, and a number of these have made provision to cover the costs. However, it is recognised that Harlow will only be able to do this for council housing tenants
- The scheme is a historical legacy and the County Council has to reconcile continuing to provide the grant for this service and the provision of services to those most in need

Councillor Danvers stated he did not accept that social services be traded off in such a way; and that social services and education in the county should be protected. He continued that council's cannot subsidise the entire scheme and that any work on equitability of the scheme should have been done in advance of any cuts to the service. He stated he was concerned that vulnerable people would be affected by blindly imposing the cuts.

Councillor Madden and Dave Hill continued:

- The County Council wishes to extend the contract until March 2017 for work to be done to ensure the service is equitable across the whole county. The extension of the contract allows the County Council to ensure future fairness

- The Residential and Domiciliary Care Task and Finish Group of the People and Families Scrutiny Committee have been asked to consider Housing Related Support as part of its review
- The evidence the County Council receives is that public funding is not being used appropriately. There is evidence that funding is not going to the most deserved cases. If any of the end-users are put at risk the County Council will ensure that they are provided for through social care assessment processes

Cabinet Member Response to the Reasons for Call-in

1. The service is provided on a block contract basis and the second-tier authorities provide the subsidy. The County Council, therefore, is unaware of which individuals receive the service
2. The change of funding sees three possible routes to future funding of the service:
 - i. the provider pays
 - ii. the user pays
 - iii. Essex County Council assesses end-user and supports them

The County Council will set up a process whereby those affected will be assessed and we can consider meeting those in need of support, This means we can be more targeted in our approach

3. District-by-district costs are simply driven by different volumes in different areas. However, this has been applied proportionately according to the number of units per district. In the case of Harlow the reduction is two-fold in that funding for dispersed alarms (alarms in general purpose housing, arguable for people without significant need) has been removed completely – this amounts to £90,000 as Harlow has more dispersed alarms than other areas. Secondly funding reduction by volume accounts for the remainder, which is not significantly more than in other areas
4. There is no evidence that sheltered housing has any impact itself on hospital admissions. There is some evidence, principally from the national Whole System Demonstrator trial, that Telehealth and Telecare can reduce mortality, and rates of hospital admissions and bed days, but that is not as cost-effective compared to usual care. The contribution to this reduction by Telecare in general, and community alarms in particular, is unclear. Previous reductions in funding to sheltered housing did not result in any noticeable impact on social care services. In fact, in one district where there were

particular concerns, the County Council put in place measures to meet the expected increase in demand which never materialised.

Councillor Madden asked Councillor Danvers if it would help if the County Council were to communicate to providers to emphasise that those that are in need should be communicated to the County Council. James Bullion, Director for Adult Operations would act as a direct point of contact for anybody who requires a social care assessment. This message will clearly be communicated with all providers of the service.

Outcome

Councillor Danvers stated there are new areas causing him concern as a result of this informal meeting; the main one being the work that could have been done in advance of the decision. If the decision were delayed for a year the funding should remain in place for the year until the evidence is known. Also he stated, in his opinion, that the decision is inequitable from the Harlow perspective as the District Council could only identify and support people through the housing account and this to those in District Council housing or sheltered accommodation. Given that he decided that the call-in be referred to the People and Families Scrutiny Committee special meeting to be held on **Monday, 2 November 2015 at 11.00 a.m.** in **Committee Room 1, County Hall**

Robert Fox
28 October 2015