

Appendix 2

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

This form:

- Can be used to prompt discussions, ensure that due regard has been given and remove or minimise disadvantage for an individual or group with a protected characteristic
- Involves looking at what steps can be taken to advance and maximise equality as well as eliminate discrimination and negative consequences
- Should be completed before decisions are made, this will remove the need for remedial actions.

Note – An Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A) should be completed prior to this form.

When completing this form consider the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc. – see page 11 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: Recommissioning of Domestic Abuse Refuge Service.	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 12/11/2024	
Directorate: Adult Care, Housing and Public Health	Service area: Strategic Commissioning
Lead Manager: Lisa Elliott	Contact: Lisa.Elliott@rotherham.gov.uk
Is this a:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service / Function
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
If other, please specify	

2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Name	Organisation	Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)
Laura Kirby	RMBC	Commissioning Officer
Lisa Elliott	RMBC	Strategic Commissioning Manager
Rachel Copley	RMBC	Public Health Practitioner

3. What is already known? - see page 10 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known)

This may include a group/s identified by a protected characteristic, others groups or stakeholder/s e.g. service users, employees, partners, members, suppliers etc.)

The Cabinet report sets out recommendations related to the proposed recommissioning of the Domestic Abuse Refuge Services.

The service currently supports Adults and their families who have fled domestic abuse to be supported in safe supported accommodation. The proposals maintain continuing the core refuge provision including a minimum of 8 units in a single building (core refuge), plus an additional 2 dispersed properties.

What equality information is available? (Include any engagement undertaken)

Data is collected relating to the profile of people using the services, including protected characteristics. Additionally, the provider for the Domestic Abuse Refuge Service completes an Equality Impact Assessment annually as part of contract monitoring

Information has also been collected via:

- Questionnaire to DSAPG
- Capturing lived experience from refuge service users
- Focus group with RMBC homeless team
- Focus group with Refuge Staff

Are there any gaps in the information that you are aware of?

The current contract monitoring process only allows information around service users who have left the service and doesn't provide information on those that are currently in service.

What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

The current contract requires reporting on the protected characteristics: Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity

Additionally, the monitoring also includes disability, long term health conditions, economic status and whether support is required with immigration and recourse to public funds.

The current service is required annually to complete an equality impact screening which analyses the current service in response to protected characteristics and any actions needing to take as a result of the screening.

These requirements will be included in the future specifications and contract.

<p>Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)</p>	<p>Service Users of Refuge – 18/09/2024</p> <p>Key themes included service users having an incredibly positive experience with both the support from the staff and the accommodation. Residents are made to feel welcomed, supported and safe. The service goes above and beyond to improve the experience of residents accessing service, including celebrating different cultural events as well as day trips outside of the refuge.</p>
<p>Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)</p>	<p>Refuge Staff- 18/09/2024</p> <p>Staff who currently work in the commissioned service stated that the current refuge and dispersed properties are fully furnished to a high standard. The Refuge building location is close to a wide range of amenities including supermarkets, bus routes, parks, GP Practices, Pharmacies, and schools.</p> <p>The Refuge staff fed back on tender processes including how this can be unsettling and that longer contracts offer more stability to the voluntary community sector organisations.</p> <p>RMBC Homelessness Team- 06/08/2024</p> <p>RMBC homeless team have fed back that there needs to be more properties available and that a clearer referral route needs to be established. When they do get in touch with the service, they are responsive and help search for free refuge spaces across the country if there are no suitable spaces in Rotherham. Homeless team find it difficult to find a Refuge that caters for Males, Older People, spaces that are disability friendly and those who have dogs, please note this is not specific to Rotherham service and a more general option when trying to access refuges across the country including Rotherham.</p>

	<p>DSAPG Survey – Collected throughout June-September 2024</p> <p>Online survey which asked a variety of questions was produced. When asked about barriers to asking support for domestic abuse this included child/ family related concerns, Immigration related concerns e.g., No recourse to public funds and language barriers and access to timely interpreters.</p>
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4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)

How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups? (Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance)

There is no likely change or impact to different communities or groups and the service with the exception of the potential to change service provider which is as a result of entering into a competitive procurement process.

The bidders to the tender opportunity will be required to demonstrate their commitment to Equality and Diversity, including understanding and meeting the needs of those with protected characteristics. This will be included in the contract documentation and quality monitoring processes and made clear throughout the procurement process.

By maintaining a minimum of 2 dispersed properties this create opportunities for people of all genders to access, as the refuge is a dedicated space for women.

Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups?

Gender:

The main refuge building is a dedicated single sex space for Women only, therefore Male clients fleeing domestic abuse cannot access the main core refuge building, however male clients can be accepted into dispersed properties. Across the country, there are less refuge provision across the country which will accept male clients.

Disability:

If the existing refuge building is utilised by the future providers there are two flats in the building which are accessible for someone with limited mobility (e.g., lowered counters, lower access, shower and wet room). Due to the confidential location of the refuge the service may not be able to accept someone with needs requiring care from others as the site isn't manned 24/7 the resident would need to be able to evacuate themselves in the event of a fire.

Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers?

As part of the proposed service specification the successful provider will be required to develop a dedicated referral pathway with RMBC homeless team to help those that present as homeless to the council as a result of feeling their home to due domestic abuse.

The contract will have a have a single provider framework alongside the core contract which will enable the ability to enter call of contracts if any additional funding arises. This provides greater flexibility if additional funding is identified for innovation through increasing the number of dispersed properties across the borough.

What affect will the Policy/Service have on community relations? (may also need to consider activity which may be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another)

There are no perceived impacts on community relations from the proposals.

Please list any **actions and targets** that need to be taken as a consequence of this assessment on the action plan below and ensure that they are added into your service plan for monitoring purposes – see page 12 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

If the analysis is done at the right time, i.e. early before decisions are made, changes should be built in before the policy or change is signed off. This will remove the need for remedial actions. Where this is achieved, the only action required will be to monitor the impact of the policy/service/change on communities or groups according to their protected characteristic - See page 11 of the Equality Screening and Analysis guidance

Title of analysis: Recommissioning of Domestic Abuse Refuge Service
Directorate and service area: Strategic Commissioning, Adult Care, Housing and Public Health
Lead Manager: Lisa Elliott
Summary of findings:
<p>The proposal to recommission the Domestic Abuse Refuge Service via a competitive tender process under procurement regulations 2015, maintains the current core contracts provision. Therefore, the impact on equality and diversity is expected to be minimal. Data relating to protected characteristics are already embedded into the current service specification and this will be translated into the new contract service specification and monitored through contract regulation.</p> <p>Due to the nature of the service, only women fleeing domestic abuse can be placed in the core refuge building as this is a dedicated single sex space as recommended by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Therefore, people with other agendas can access the dispersed properties, but nationally there is a shortage of refuge spaces for males. If any additional funding was utilised, the new contract would have a single provider framework alongside the core contract which would allow calls offs to be entered for further dispersed properties. These properties have no exclusion criteria and therefore can accept people from any gender.</p>

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Review current specification to ensure E&D is covered	All	December 2024
Equality and Diversity standards agreed and embedded into contract service specification, quality standards and contract monitoring requirements, including accessible services	All	January 2025
Successful provider to share Equality Impact Analysis annually and Equality Policy as part of annual data returns	All	July 2026

***A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups**

6. Governance, ownership and approval		
Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.		
Name	Job title	Date
Ian Spicer	Strategic Director, Adult Care, Housing & Public Health	02/12/2024
Councillor Baker-Rogers	Cabinet Member, Adult Social Care and Health	04/12/2024

7. Publishing

The Equality Analysis will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this Equality Analysis relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date Equality Analysis completed	18/11/2024
Report title and date	Recommissioning of Domestic Abuse Refuge Services
Date report sent for publication	04/12/2024
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	04/12/2024