

maintaining traditional communication methods.

Proposal Type: Non-Budget

Year Of Proposal: 24/25, 25/26

Lead Director for proposal: Alexis Chappell

Service Area: Social CAre

EIA Start Date: 01/04/2024

Lead Equality Objective:

Equality Lead Officer: Ed Sexton

Decision Type

Committees: Policy Committees
• Adult Health & Social Care

Portfolio

Primary Portfolio: People

EIA is cross portfolio: No

EIA is joint with another organisation: No

Overview Summary:

We view advocacy as a fundamental step in bridging the gap and amplifying the voices of marginalised populations in Sheffield. SCC currently have a Statutory duty under the Care Act 2014, Mental Capacity Act 2005, The Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the Mental Health Act 2007 to maintain a stable and sustainable care market. The local authority also has a duty under the Care Act 2014 to arrange an independent advocate for adults as part of assessment and care management including safeguarding enquiries. The expiration of the contract without another in place to follow will mean that we fail to meet our Statutory duty. Advocacy helps people with disability facing complex challenges, people who cannot advocate for themselves, or don't have family, friends or peers who can support them in an informal capacity. Advocacy supports people from BME community to access appropriate high-quality services as early as possible. This need is clearly recognised within the Department of Health action plan Delivering Race Equality in Mental Health Care. Advocacy services in Sheffield offer vital support in preserving older people rights during decision making and is especially relevant in the decision making for older people to move into residential environments. Currently approx. 45% of the referrals to the service are for over 65s with the main criteria being RPR advocacy. The role of a Relevant Person's Representative (RPR) is to maintain contact with the person and to represent and support them in all matters relating to the deprivation of liberty safeguards (DoLS). Advocacy offer essential support to LGBTIQ+ and non-male Sheffield residents, especially in mental health which disproportionately affects this section of the population and in turn increases referrals to mental health services in the city. We are aware from national statistics that In England, in 2014, one in six adults had a common mental health problem: about one in five women and one in eight men. From 2000 to 2014, rates of common mental health problems in England steadily increased in women. According to a research project conducted by Youth Chances, 52% of LGBTQ people reported self-harming, compared to 35% of heterosexual non-trans young people. Furthermore, 44% of the LGBTQ people reported suicidal thoughts, compared to 26% of heterosexual non-trans respondents. Our current advocacy contract offers support in the areas of independent mental health advocacy, independent mental capacity advocacy, independent mental capacity advocacy with

a focus on deprivation of liberty and NHS complaints, amongst other areas. The current Advocacy contract has been awarded to Sheffield Advocacy Hub who are non profit organisation and part of Citizens Advice Sheffield. The organisation sets itself a priority of reducing and eliminating inequality in society via their helpline, advocacy services and other social right campaigning.

Impacted characteristics:

- Health
- Age
- Disability
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Race
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment
- Carers
- Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors
- Poverty & Financial Inclusion

Consultation and other engagement

Cumulative Impact

Does the proposal have a cumulative impact:

Yes

Consultation is in the process of being completed using a variety of methods including 1:1 interviews, group workshops, surveys and benchmarking. Consultation has been carried out with individuals who use advocacy services, individual who will be using advocacy services in the future, general public, referrers to advocacy services, health and social care professionals and advocacy staff who deliver the service current. Consultation has also been carried out with national advocacy organisations, other local authorities, health trusts and recognised national specialists. Consultation has been completed with the contracts team regarding the performance of the provider. Contracts officers have reported that the relationship with the provider is excellent, quality of the advocacy provided is high and that they are receptive

to feedback and take actions in a timely manner. While the volume of the work is much higher than initially anticipated, the provider has implemented a robust triage system to enable the urgent cases to be accommodated. Commissioning officers have stated that the current provider has been forthcoming in engaging with a variety of activities outside of the scope of the contract such as training requests from social care, participation in a provider selection process for a new supported living development and taking on focused work to support social care in resolving complaints. It is clear that the residents of Sheffield are at the heart of the provider's operation and that they are dedicated in improving both user experience of advocacy services and generally social care services across the city.

Impact areas:

Year on Year

Initial Sign-Off

Full impact assessment required:

Yes

Review Date:

01/04/2026

PART B - Full Impact Assessment

Health

Staff Impacted:

Yes

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

Staff - We feel that the retender will have a positive impact on staff at the Advocacy Hub as it will give them further consistency around their employment. MIND research suggests a link between clarity on employment future and well-being. Customers - We

feel that the proposed retender will benefit the health and wellbeing of Sheffield residents who are currently in receipt of or that may access advocacy services in the future. The consistency and availability of advocacy support will remove barriers and enable the voice of the individual to be consistently heard through the decision-making process. We know from information that Advocacy Hub collect that a large proportion of the individuals who access the service see themselves as having a health difficulty or challenge. The annual reporting shows that 42% of the individuals accessing the service see themselves as having mental health difficulties at the point of referral, 16% of the individuals accessing the services have a learning disability and that 24% have a cognitive impairment, such as dementia, stroke, brain injury.

Name of Lead Health Officer:

Comprehensive Assessment Being Completed:

No

Public Health Lead signed off health impact(s):

Age

Staff Impacted:

Yes

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

Staff - We feel that the retender will have a positive impact on staff at the Advocacy Hub as it will give them further consistency around their employment. This is particularly important to those with protective characteristics approaching retirement age. The University of Hull research via UK government, European Commission, Trades Union Congress comments on the difficulties of those aged 50-69 to find employment in new sectors. Customers - We feel that the proposed retender will benefit the Sheffield residents who are currently in receipt of or that may access advocacy services in the future. From the Advocacy Hub statistics, we can gather that 41% of the individuals who access the hub are over the age of 65, which is far higher than their representation in the

general populi of 18.9%. Peter Scourfield highlights in The British Journal of Social Work that advocacy plays a part in helping older people in residential care remain full citizens.

Carers

Staff Impacted: Yes

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: Staff - We feel that the retender will have a positive impact on staff with protected characteristics at the Advocacy Hub as it will give them further consistency around their employment. As much of the hub staff are part time employees, they may have additional caring roles. Any disruption to their employment may have an impact on their caring role. Customers – We feel that the proposed retender will benefit carers, who are currently in receipt of care themselves to be supported in decision making in relation to health and social care. It would further benefit carers who are caring for individuals known to social care and health services already by supporting to alleviate the weight of sole decision making for the future of the individuals they are caring for. Advocacy support would be of particular benefit for both young carers and older carers. Both groups are more likely to have more barriers to engagement with health and social care such as ill health, education commitments, multiple caring roles, etc.

Disability

Staff Impacted: Yes

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: Staff - We feel that the retender will have a positive impact on staff with disabilities at the Advocacy Hub as it will give them further consistency around their employment. We are aware from the Office of National Statistics that employment within the disabled population of a working age in UK stands at 52% on comparison with a general population which is 76%

which highlights the need around job security for those with disabilities. Customers - We feel that the proposed retender will benefit Sheffield's disabled population who are currently in receipt of or that may access advocacy services in the future. A large proportion of advocacy commissioned through this framework has direct links to the disabled population of the city, other services have an indirect links. Over the past year Advocacy Hub have reported 12% of referrals are from individuals with a learning disability and 22% had a cognitive impairment. There is a specific section of the framework that is classed as generic LD advocacy and other types of advocacies such are Independent Mental Health Advocacy, DOLs and Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy, traditionally have some very strong links to individual with disabilities. We are also looking at extending the scope of the current contract to include non-statutory advocacy support for the deaf community. Which will likely lead to better health and wellbeing outcomes for the community.

Gender Reassignment

Staff Impacted:

Yes

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

Staff - We feel that the retender will have a positive impact on staff with protected characteristics at the Advocacy Hub as it will give them further consistency around their employment. Customers - We feel that the proposed retender will benefit individuals with protected characteristics who are currently in receipt of or that may access advocacy services in the future. We are aware that from the Advocacy Hub referral information that 0.6% of individuals referred, identified as transgender and 0.5% of individuals referred identified as non-binary. Any negative impacts due to changes will affect these individuals disproportionately.

Poverty & Financial Inclusion

Staff Impacted:

Yes

Customers Impacted:

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Description of Impact:

Staff - We feel that the retender will have a positive impact on staff with protected characteristics at the Advocacy Hub as it will give them further consistency around their employment. As much of the hub staff are part time employees, there is a risk to those individuals who fall into low-income bracket. Any negative impacts due to changes to the Advocacy framework may affect them disproportionately.

Pregnancy / Maternity

Staff Impacted:

Yes

Customers Impacted:

No

Description of Impact:

Staff - We feel that the retender will have a positive impact on pregnant staff at the Advocacy Hub as it will give them further job security. A study conducted by IFF Research on behalf of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Equality and Human Rights Commission comments on the difficulty for pregnant individuals in seeking employment once made redundant from their current roles.

Race

Staff Impacted:

Yes

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

We feel that the retender will have a positive impact on staff from BAME backgrounds at the Advocacy Hub as it will give them further consistency around their employment. As seen from the table below, overall there is more BAME representation in Sheffield Advocacy Hub's workforce than in the population of Sheffield. We are aware from Office for National Statistics that employment rate for the BAME community stand nationally at 66% in comparison with White British at 78%. It would be correct to assume on that basis that the risk is higher around regaining employment for BAME workers if Sheffield Advocacy Hub were to give notice to their workforce. Sheffield advocacy hub staff 2023 Sheffield 2011 population

| | | |
|-------------------|-----|-------|
| White British | 6% | 1% |
| Black African | 3% | 2.60% |
| Other | 4% | 4.40% |
| Asian | 13% | 8% |
| Prefer not to say | 8% | NA |

White Asian 3% 0.60% White British 62% 84%

Customers - We feel that the proposed retender will benefit Sheffield's BAME population who are currently in receipt of or that may access advocacy services in the future. The Sheffield Advocacy Hub have told us that 12% of referrals made to the service are for individuals who self-identify in the BAME community. We are aware from research that Rethink, mental health charity has carried out that the BAME community are disproportionately affected by mental health difficulties. In turn the need for advocacy is essential and in particular advocacy support such as Independent Mental Health, Independent Mental Capacity, Care Act and NHS Complaints. Advocacy supports people from BAME community to access appropriate high-quality services as early as possible. This need is clearly recognised within the Department of Health action plan Delivering Race Equality in Mental Health Care.

Sexual Orientation

Staff Impacted:

Yes

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

Staff - We feel that the retender will have a positive impact on staff with protected characteristics at the Advocacy Hub as it will give them further consistency around their employment. The Stonewall LGBT in Britain Work Report tells us that almost one in five LGBT people (18 per cent) who were looking for work said they were discriminated against because of their sexual orientation or gender identity while trying to get a job in the last year. Customers - We feel that the proposed retender will benefit individuals with protected characteristics who are currently in receipt of or that may access advocacy services in the future. The Women and Equalities Committee commented that a Government survey of 108,000 LGBT people found that many had difficulties accessing healthcare service. National representative data from the NHS tells us that 16% of LGBT adults said they had a mental, behavioural or neurodevelopmental disorder as a longstanding condition. The proportion of heterosexual adults reporting the same was lower at 6%. We can see from that research that the proportion of individuals from the LGBT community accessing health services is high and they are reporting difficulties in access health and

social care services. Advocacy services are essential in narrowing the gap in these areas, giving a voice and support to individuals who access health and social care services.

Voluntary / Community & Faith Sectors

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: Staff: Advocacy services in Sheffield currently operate in a hub model uniting 3 smaller voluntary organisations. All staff would be eligible for TUPE. We feel that the tenderer will have a positive impact on staff giving them long term stability of employment. If the current advocacy partnership are successful in the tender this will further strengthen the voluntary organisations who are part of the hub from a financial and organisational point of view.

Action Plan & Supporting Evidence

Outline of action plan: NA

Action plan evidence: ONS data Sheffield Advocacy Hub employee data Stonewall research and reports NDTi research and reports

Changes made as a result of action plan:

Mitigation

Significant risk after mitigation measures: No

Outline of impact and risks:

Review Date:

01/04/2026