

Assessment undertaken by *(please complete as appropriate)*

Director or Head of Service	Head of Service
Lead Officer for developing the policy/activity	Housing Needs Manager
Other people involved in the screening (this may be council staff, partners or others i.e contractor or community)	Supported Accommodation Manager Moray Woman's Aid board and staff members

SECTION 2: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Brief description of the affected service

1. Describe what the service does:

The Council has a contract with Moray Women's Aid (MWA) to provide housing support services for females at risk of domestic abuse. It also provides funding for a telephone helpline operated by Moray Women's Aid for the same purpose. The value of the contract is £171k per annum with £15k of this allocated to the telephone helpline. The funding is not intended for any other purpose.

The Contract is due to expire naturally on 30 June 2020.

Marleon House provides 7 units of accommodation (2 x 1 bedrooms, 3 x 2 bedrooms and 2 x 3 bedrooms). The property is owned by Langstane Housing Association and MWA lease the building to enable them to provide specialist accommodation for females at risk of domestic abuse.

2. Who are your main stakeholders?

- Single females and females with dependent children who are threatened with or become homeless as a consequence of domestic abuse;
- The children of females at risk of domestic abuse.

3. What changes as a result of the proposals? Is the service reduced or removed?

Following discussions with the Board of MWA, a number of proposals have been drawn up by them to reduce their current operating costs. They have submitted an alternative service model which aims to generate a saving of £42k effective from 1 July 2020. They have proposed to reduce the service by:

- No longer providing a localised Out of Hours telephone advice service;
- Removing night time cover at Marleon House; and
- Reducing Management staffing hours.

4. How will this affect your customers?

- Customers will no longer be able to access the local telephone line that provides advice to those at risk of domestic abuse; and
- Customers will no longer be able to access the same level of support from staff out of normal working hours.

5. Please indicate if these apply to any of the protected characteristics

Protected groups	Positive impact	Negative impact
Race		
Disability		
Carers (for elderly, disabled or minors)		
Sex		
Pregnancy and maternity (including breastfeeding)		
Sexual orientation		
Age (include children, young people, midlife and older people)		
Religion, and or belief		
Gender reassignment		
Inequalities arising from socio-economic differences		
Human Rights		

6. Evidence. What information have you used to make your assessment?

Performance data	
Internal consultation	The Supported Accommodation Management Team and Homelessness Staff have been consulted with regards to these proposals. The Council has a statutory duty to provide accommodation to homeless people and these changes will still allow this to continue at Marleon

	House.
Consultation with affected groups	MWA are currently reviewing their service model ahead of 1 July 2020 and consultation will take place with affected groups once their service reconfiguration options are complete.
Local statistics	<p>The Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator for 2018/2019 identifies that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for cases closed in the reporting year, the average length of time in a women's refuge was 2284 days (a reduction of 1001 days on the previous year); • the total number of different households who occupied a women's refuge was 15 (a reduction of 17 from the previous year); • the average length of time spent in the women's refuge was 152 days (an increase of 50 days from the previous year)
National statistics	-
Other	-

7. Evidence gaps

Do you need additional information in order to complete the information in the previous questions?

No

8. Mitigating action

Can the impact of the proposed policy/activity be mitigated? Yes

Removal of the Local Telephone Line

- Clients who telephone the service for advice and support will be signposted to the Scottish National Woman's Aid helpline which can be accessed 24 hours per day.

Removal of Out of Hours staffing at Marleon House

- MWA are currently looking at how they will deal with any issues out of hours. This will be detailed within their own reconfiguration model. Clients who are placed in Marleon House will continue to have access to the Council's services out of hours (social work, housing, etc.) and this can be included within the reconfiguration model (if required).

Reduction in Management hours

- The reduction in management hours can be contained within the service with minimal impact anticipated to service users and/or staff.

9. Justification

If nothing can be done to reduce the negative impact(s) but the proposed policy/activity must go ahead, what justification is there to continue with the change?

What is the aim of the proposal? – The Council's Policy towards Housing First will change the way that homeless people access housing services. The Scottish Government want to move away from a system providing temporary accommodation to one where homeless people access housing at the first point of contact.

Budget savings = A reduction in the Housing Support Contract to MWA will generate a saving of £42k from 1 July 2020. It is proposed that the funding of MWA is reviewed on an annual basis.

Have you considered alternatives?

Moray Woman's Aid are currently investigating funding options from other sources (Lottery funding, Grants, etc.) to establish whether it is possible to continue to fund their services by other means and not be reliant on Council funding.

SECTION 3 CONCLUDING THE EIA

Concluding the EIA

1. No negative impacts on any of the protected groups were found.	√
2. Some negative impacts have been identified but these can be mitigated as outlined in question 8.	
3. Negative impacts cannot be fully mitigated the proposals are thought to be justified as outlined in question 9.	
4. It is advised not to go ahead with the proposals.	

Decision

Set out the rationale for deciding whether or not to proceed with the proposed actions:

The EQIA demonstrates that there are no potentially negative impacts to equality groups resulting from this review.

Date of Decision: ...25../..02./20...

Sign off and authorisation:

Service	
Department	
Policy/activity subject to EIA	
We have completed the equality impact assessment for this policy/activity.	Name: Position: Date:
Authorisation by head of service or director.	Name: Position: Date:
Please return this form to the Equal Opportunities Officer, Chief Executive's Office.	