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**Ref No:** EQ614069305

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**Officer Name:** Gavin Fisk

**Email Address:** gavin.fisk@ipswich.gov.uk

**Title of report:** Procurement of Single Person Accommodation

**Report :** Report request authority to commence a procurement process to support Ipswich Borough Council obtaining accommodation with support for individuals in need, following reductions in Housing Related Support Services within Suffolk.

**What evidence/data is being used to support this equality analysis? Please select all that apply.:** SCC Data on the existing use of Housing Related Support Accommodation and Ipswich's own homelessness data

**Service area:** Housing Advice

**Corporate Manager:** Gavin Fisk

**Corporate Manager email:** Gavin.Fisk@ipswich.gov.uk

**Links to supporting documents where available:**

**Please upload any supporting documents:**

**What is proposed?:** To commence a procurement process to support Ipswich Borough Council obtain accommodation with support for individuals in need, following reductions in Housing Related Support Services within Suffolk.

The proposal would look to consider purchasing approx. 60 units of accommodation with approx. five hours of support to assist individuals that need to develop their skills, experience and abilities to maintain their own tenancies, accommodation in the future.

**Why are the changes being introduced?:** Suffolk County Council (SCC) has made the decision to decommission Housing Related Support (HRS) services except for those to whom it owes a duty to provide support. A £1 million reduction needs to be achieved in the financial year 2024/25. Whilst a further £2 million by the end of 2024/25.

If IBC does nothing it is likely to lead to significant increased budget pressures and been seen in increased levels of homelessness and rough sleeping within the Borough and long term more homelessness as a result of evictions for failing to sustain tenancies.

**What evidence is being used to support this Equality Impact Assessment, and how is it being used?:** We are using data SCC has on the use of HRS - and the people that access the service between 2017 - 2024

**How will this change be implemented?:** SCC will negotiate with providers to reduce their existing contracts to enable them to deliver their statutory responsibilities within their cost envelope. Ipswich will design and procure their own providers to supply accommodation with support. This would commence from Apr 25 when existing scc contracts may reduce/end

**Age:** Positive

**Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.:** Ipswich has a duty to accommodate 16/17-year-olds if they approach the council as homeless. Following the approach, a multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) referral is made to request that a statutory assessment is carried out to determine the young person's needs. This is an agreed protocol across Suffolk. Our existing approach is to encourage SCC to accommodate or to use East Villa as a suitable location.

Of those households who presented as homeless to IBC in 2022/23 owed a Prevention or Relief duty (detailed Local Authority level homelessness figures: GOV.UK website), the majority were single male households (46% and 54% respectively). Most applicants were in the 25-34 age range (32%), and 48% of applicants were unemployed. The majority would not be in priority need and are highly likely to have been referred into a service such as HRS.

The proposal as set out would support these individuals to obtain accommodation or accommodation with support

**Disability:** Positive

**Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.:** We know that of those living in Housing related Support accommodation currently 367 individuals have some low level of Mental Health support need. Any model designed by Ipswich would look to ensure it has consideration to those with a mental health need being able to utilise the service, where possible.

The County Council have a statutory responsibility to support and provide accommodation solutions for individuals that are eligible with care and support needs

**Marriage & Civil Partnership:** No impact

**Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.:** The service is for only single households made up of one individual and not couples including those married or in a civil partnership.

**Race:** No impact

**Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.:** The service would be open to everyone and there would be no impact, positive or negative of an individual persons race

**Pregnancy & Maternity:** No impact

**Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.:** The service being designed is for single households only. For individuals that are pregnant the County Council has a statutory responsibility for young mothers.

**Religion or Belief:** No impact

**Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.:** The service would be open to everyone and there would be no impact, positive or negative of an individual persons religion or beliefs

**Gender Reassignment:** No impact

**Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.:** The service would be open to everyone and there would be no impact, positive or negative of an individual persons gender reassignment

**Sex:** No impact

**Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.:** The service would be open to everyone and there would be no impact, positive or negative of an individual persons sex

**Sexual Orientation:** No impact

**Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.:** The service would be open to everyone and there would be no impact, positive or negative of an individual persons sex orientation

**I can confirm the report does meet Ipswich Borough Council's equality objectives:** I can confirm the report does meet Ipswich Borough Council's equality objectives

**The report helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment & victimisation' in the following way(s):** By providing an accommodation solution with support that prevents individuals being homeless or rough sleeping where they may be more likely to be the victims of unlawful discrimination, harassments and victimisation

**The report helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s):** For those individuals that are in need of housing and may have not had the opportunities to progress their lives in the way others have which has resulted in them losing a place to call home or imprisonment, or being a care leaver or an unaccompanied alyssum seeker. This service would potentially offer them a housing solution which may minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their relevant protected characteristics as well as taking steps to meet the different needs of people who share a relevant protected characteristic encourage participation in public life or any other activity by underrepresented groups

e.g. having the skills to maintain a tenancy/home, becoming a good citizen, accessing employment and training etc

**The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s):** The provision will allow individuals from different backgrounds including those with a protected characteristics and those that don't to build relationships whilst living in the same accommodation setting and being supported by a provider suitable for their needs.

**The new provisions will be reviewed in the following way(s):**Contract Management of any services procured and an annual review of the service and its performance.

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