

## Equality and Safety Impact Assessment

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

<b>Name or Brief Description of Proposal</b>	Review of SCC Sheltered Housing and 60+ Support Service
<b>Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)</b>	
<p>Housing related support to people over the age of 50 living in the community. An average of 1,500 people in receipt of the service at any one time. This includes residents of SCC owned sheltered housing (including extra care housing) and residents living in the wider community (including private tenants and home- owners)</p> <p>SCC owns and manages 3,315 sheltered housing homes. The older persons housing related support service is delivered by a team of Housing Support staff, who have a dual function of delivering housing management services at this type of accommodation. The service is well established (over 30 years), with residents being accustomed having easy access to a Housing Support Worker during normal working hours.</p> <p>The ‘60 Plus’ floating support element of the service is delivered by the team of Housing Support Workers who are based locally in the community.</p> <p>The service delivers tailored support that promotes independence, focusing on outcomes that support people to sustain a tenancy, reduce social isolation, maximise income, improve safety and overall health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Support is broken down into short term, medium term and long term.</p>	

Some individuals require a short- term intervention, perhaps during a period of significant change in their life such as moving home, following a sudden change in their need such as a deterioration in health or following a change in family circumstances such as a death.

Others require a level of ongoing support that enables them to sustain a tenancy and remain living independently in the community. Without this support they may be at risk of homelessness, self-neglect/abuse, financial hardship, loneliness, falls etc...

Long term support tends to be delivered within SCC sheltered housing accommodation and short- term support tends to be delivered within the floating support service.

The service currently delivers in excess of 1025 hours of support every week.

Customer Breakdown:

The service is primarily based on delivering services to the older population, but there are exceptions to this when an individual's needs can be best met by the service and the accommodation provided.

**TYPE A:**

1544 individual tenancies within 25 complexes:

Currently defined as 'Specified accommodation'. Among other things, this means that tenants of this accommodation are entitled to claim Housing Benefit (as opposed to the housing element of Universal Credit).

Manston Court – Extra Care over 60

Rozel Court – Extra Care over 60/sheltered housing over 60

Graylings – Extra Care over 60/sheltered housing over 60

Erskine Court – Extra Care over 55

Potters Court – Extra Care over 55

Ventnor Court, Orpen Road sheltered housing over 55

Milner Court, Kinloss Court, Lundy Close, Neptune Court, Sarnia Court, Toronto Court, Vellan Court, Bassett Green Court, Bellamy Court, Challis Court, James Street, South Front, Bishops Cres, Bisley/Bowman Court,

Fairfax Court, Meon Court, Medwall Green/Tatwin Close/Cres, Weston Court – sheltered housing over 60

Most residents have support needs and benefit from the level of support offered at this type of accommodation. Residents in the extra care schemes have care and support needs, and in most cases are in receipt of a package of care from the on-site care provider.

**TYPE B:**

37 small blocks sheltered housing over 60s

52 small blocks sheltered housing over 50s

A significant proportion of these residents have little or no support needs

**TYPE C:**

Customers of the 60 Plus service

People over the age of 60 living in privately rented or owned accommodation

These are people who live in the wider community, often with out support networks from family/neighbours. They may need support to access more suitable housing or to access services to support them to maintain independence.

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**Summary of Impact and Issues**

List of Proposed Changes

1. Discontinuation of 60 Plus service
2. Introduction of support service standards
3. Rationalisation of support service charges across TYPE A SCC sheltered housing accommodation
4. Change of service offer in TYPE B accommodation – removal of requirement for all tenants to receive support and telecare services and implementation of new optional support/telecare offer for tenants of TYPE B accommodation

**Change 1: Discontinuation of 60 Plus service**

What's changing?

ASC Commissioning made the decision in December 2023 to discontinue

funding for the Older Person's Housing Related Support Service (£807K pa).

The 60 plus service is entirely funded through this grant and so the service will end.

Existing clients will continue to be supported through 2024/5, with a view to either exiting them from the service or referring them to other suitable support services for ongoing support.

The ASC ICU are in the process of designing and commissioning a new support service, and it is envisaged that any remaining 60 Plus clients will be handed over to the new support service once it is commissioned.

#### What's the impact?

Subject to ICU funding continuing until the new support service is up and running, the impact is likely to be minimal to existing customers of the 60 Plus service. However, the exact impacts will not be known until there is a clearer understanding of what the new service will look like (e.g. will it offer a similar package of support, will it be a chargeable service)

Some of the current customers have short term support needs and so they will no longer need more long- term support.

The 60 Plus service will stop receiving new referrals from 2025 onwards.

### **Change 2: Introduction of support service standards**

#### What's changing?

A clearly defined set of standards will be developed, in consultation with existing customers. These standards will offer clarity and transparency for residents and others and will enable customers to measure the performance of the service in terms of a set of published service standards.

#### What's the impact?

The support service will be more focused on delivering measurable outcomes for customers (e.g. supported to keep safe and reduce likelihood of falling through telecare, given advice on welfare benefits to maximise income)

Improve overall customer satisfaction with the service

Be able to measure performance and set KPIs – improving performance

Provide customers with the tools to be able to hold the service to account

Provide evidence to justify the charges for support services

There are no negative impacts for customers. This change will assist the service to focus on activities that make a positive impact on people's lives.

### **Change 3: Rationalisation of support service charges across TYPE A SCC specified sheltered housing**

#### What's changing?

ASC funding that up to the end of 2024/5 covered some of the cost of delivering support to SCC tenants will be coming to an end. The HRA cannot cover the cost of delivering support as it is not a housing management function. So in the absence of any other funding streams the cost of providing the support service must in future come entirely from tenants themselves. The current support charges are not sufficient to cover the cost of the service.

There is no rationale to the current support and service charges across all sheltered housing. These charges have not been reviewed for several years and are based on being a contribution towards the overall costs plus the systems and rationale that sits behind them are either out of date or no longer exist.

There are currently two support service charges that a tenant may be charged, a support charge and a telecare monitoring charge. Both charges are ineligible for housing benefit/housing element of universal credit as they are person related and not property related. Whilst both are listed on the tenancy agreement, not all tenants are currently being charged for the service that they are receiving.

Approximately 60% of tenants are currently being charged a 'support' charge and this does not include any of the costs associated with providing a telecare monitoring or emergency response service. The remaining 40% currently have no support charge.

The proposal is to amalgamate the two charges into one single 'support' service charge that covers support, telecare monitoring and emergency response support.

Customers will be provided with a clear explanation and rationale for this

charge, showing what services it covers.

The charge will be reflective of the cost of delivering the service.

What's the impact?

For 40% of tenants this will be the first time they have been required to pay for the support service they receive. And for the 60% who currently pay a contribution towards the overall support services they receive; this change will result in an increase in the weekly charge payable.

This charge is ineligible for Housing Benefit/housing element of UC and so will be payable by each tenant in addition to any other charges (rent and other service charges)

The impact for all tenants of TYPE A sheltered housing is that they will be required to pay for the support service that they receive, and there is no ability to cover the cost through the welfare benefit system.

The impact will be most felt by those on the lowest income who have not previously paid a support charge.

The State Retirement Pension is currently payable from the age of 66, so not all customers will qualify.

The basic state pension is currently £169.50 per week

The full state pension is currently £ 221.20 per week

To minimise financial impact, the report recommends a phased introduction of the new support charge over a 3- year period (subject to a phased withdrawal of ASC funding over this period):

	2025/6	2026/7	2027/8
<b>Support</b>	£6.00	£9.00	£12.50 (marginally less than Careline as does not factor in equipment costs/maintenance)

This level of charge would represent a 3.5% of income of a resident in receipt of basic state pension initially, increasing to 7.5% of income at year 3.

By comparison, the commercial 'Careline' service charges for telecare monitoring and response are as follows:

	2025/6	2026/7	2027/8	Service
Careline	£7.50	£8.20 (approved)	£8.50 (estimated)	Telecare monitoring  Emergency response  Equipment costs
TYPE A support service	£6.00	£9.00	£12.50	Telecare monitoring  Emergency response  Routine and planned support

Whilst the services are not the same (i.e. TYPE A includes the additional support services being provided by the housing support team) this gives a reasonable comparison, and shows that the proposed support charges for TYPE A accommodation are reasonable and equitable in relation to the comparison between the telecare elements of the service and Careline - that is reasonably priced and lower than other telecare providers locally (e.g. Portsmouth City Council)

For the service charge to be reduced, without funding being made available from other sources, significant reduction in support service level would be required. This in turn would impact a number of other areas:-

- The specified accommodation status of the accommodation (e.g. Right to Buy protections removed, Concessionary TV Licenses, Welfare Benefit issues)
- Ability of residents to maintain a level of independence that they might otherwise enjoy should the support levels be reduced
- Safeguarding risks
- Increase in move onto residential care
- Increase in homelessness through tenancy sustainment issues
- Reduction in staffing/redundancy costs

Therefore the financial impact on the residents must be balanced against

the impacts of reducing the service level.

#### **Change 4: Change of service offer in TYPE B accommodation – removal of requirement for all tenants to receive support and telecare services**

##### What's Changing?

Removing the current telecare alarm system that is provided to every tenant regardless of need.

Instead of this, give the residents choice and control over the level of support that they need, making the service flexible to meet the needs of all residents.

Many residents in this type of accommodation have no support needs and do not need or want a telecare alarm system, neither do they want to pay for a service that they receive no benefit from.

For those who have a need or a wish to have a telecare alarm system, there will be an option to offer a stand- alone alarm, offering all the features of a warden call system, but with the flexibility of opting in/out at any time and only paying for a service that they need.

This will be complemented by an optional support service, available to any resident as and when they need it.

##### What's the Impact?

Approximately 50% of tenants currently pay an 'alarm monitoring' service charge. The remaining 50% have an alarm system, but there is no service charge on their account.

As and when the current system is removed, people who have no need for an alarm will no longer have a support service charge.

Those who choose to opt into services will be able to have a telecare alarm and an optional support package, opting in and out as their circumstances change.

There will be a financial impact to those who opt into support services, but this will be equitable to other similar services and accommodation.

The new service will be fair and equitable to all.

#### **Potential Positive Impacts**



- Clear and easy to understand service standards
- Fairness and equity in charging across supported housing
- Choice and control for customers
- Long term financially sustainable model
- Opportunity to re-design services to maximise outcomes in line with SCC Corporate Priorities

Note: This document will be developed further as a result of the findings of the public consultation and further discovery work to be carried out during the consultation period.

<b>Responsible Service Manager</b>	Lisa Haynes – Supported Housing
<b>Date</b>	9/1/25
<b>Approved by Senior Manager</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

### Potential Impact

<b>Impact Assessment</b>	<b>Details of Impact</b>	<b>Possible Solutions &amp; Mitigating Actions</b>
<b>Age</b>	This proposal has a significant impact on people over the age of 60. The service currently delivers support to a small number of people aged between 50 and 60 (those who's needs can be best met by the service)	<p>Phased approach to implementation will spread the financial impact on residents</p> <p>Clear communication and consultation with residents</p> <p>Re-focussing on support outcomes for customers, tailored to individual needs rather than based on where the person lives.</p>
<b>Disability</b>	Impact on people living independently in the community with long term conditions and disability. This includes physical and mental disability who may	Retaining a locally based support service, focussing on need, will enable support to be brought to the person in

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	not find it easy to access support services.	their own home with a person that they know and trust
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	N/A	
<b>Care Experienced</b>	Could lead to more people presenting at ASC front door for services if support service reduced	
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	N/A	
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	N/A	
<b>Race</b>	Low impact – the support service plays a role in supporting communities and promoting/celebrating difference and tolerance. This is particularly important in accommodation with shared community facilities	
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	Low impact – the support service plays a role in supporting communities and promoting/celebrating difference and tolerance. This is particularly important in accommodation with shared community facilities	
<b>Sex</b>	N/A	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	N/A	
<b>Community Safety</b>	<p>Reduction in local knowledge (monitoring) of high risk individuals living in the community</p> <p>Reduction in perception of safety from a resident perspective – less officers visible in the community</p> <p>Support staff are able to assess risk within the home by building trusted relationships with</p>	Regardless of support package, the housing support service also delivers housing management services and these issues will be addressed via this route

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	people that other professionals do not always have	
<b>Poverty</b>	<p>Economic wellbeing of people will be negatively impacted.</p> <p>Those living in TYPE A accommodation will have an increase in service charge</p> <p>Those living in TYPE B accommodation may make decisions based on affordability rather than need</p>	<p>Phased implementation of charges</p> <p>Off set of charges for those who meet ASC eligibility criteria/financial assessment???</p>
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>		
<b>Other Significant Impacts</b>	<p>Loss of independence, increase in need and as a consequence requiring more expensive service provision (residential care, respite, domiciliary care, homelessness issues, deterioration in health, increased ASC and Health needs including emergency admission to hospital and increased mortality rates in the elderly.</p> <p>Increase in social isolation of the most vulnerable people living in the community</p> <p>Impact on Housing Service resources when housing management issues increase and escalate in seriousness as a result of the reduction in support to people with support needs</p>	<p>These impacts relate to those who are able to opt in/out of the service.</p> <p>Those who are most in need of support may not be able to afford to pay for the service – mitigated by the service engaging positively and supporting the resident in maximising income etc.. and re-prioritising personal finances so support becomes affordable.</p> <p>Other support services are available, some do not charge. (New ICU service?)</p>