

## Hostel Service Equality Impact Assessment

### **1. Introduction**

This report briefly summarises how the Equality Impact Assessment on the Hostel Service moving office space to Lent Hill Court Hostel was undertaken, its scope and the key findings.

The assessment focussed on the creation of office space (which would normally be staffed by 2 people) on the first floor of 1 Lent Hill Court with the downstairs area being converted for use as a space in which service users could be seen by staff individually or in groups and to house information displays. This space could also be used by other agencies.

The assessment was undertaken by 1 officer and 1 manager from the Hostel Service, and a 'critical friend' (Janette Palmer) from another council department and facilitated by an Equality & Inclusion Consultant (Dr Ian Barrett). The assessment required 1 2.5 hour meeting where all aspects of the office move were discussed.

The Hostel Service aim is to accommodate the following service users:

*"The clients in the hostel are those who have made a homeless application and are awaiting a decision. They also include those who the authority owes a homelessness duty under The Housing Act 1996 (amended 2002). The client group accepted are determined by the legislation"*

### **2. Process.**

A description of the service was given in detail and each area of the service was looked at to ensure there would be no negative impact if staff were based at Lent Hill Court.

The group used the questions and table in Template 1 of the EIA Guidance Manual to consider whether the move to Lent Hill Court Hostel would have an impact on each customer group listed. Evidence from monitoring shows this to be the case.

In deciding if a customer group would or might be disadvantaged by the move based our conclusions on the following:

- How the Alteration/conversion of 1 Lent Hill Court to office space might affect residents.
- How would resident's access staff and services at 1 Lent Hill Court?
- What improvements would be created by the move?
- What benefits would the move create for the Hostel residents?

### **3. Findings**

The assessment team agreed that the Hostel Service was relevant to all the customer groups as accommodation is a fundamental requirement for everyone and monitoring data shows that a very wide range of people use the service. As it currently operates, the service is able to meet the needs of all eligible customer groups.

The team did not find any evidence to suggest that any of the customer groups would be negatively impacted by establishing an office base at Lent Hill Court. The proposed move was considered to have a positive impact on most groups.

The team concluded that a detailed assessment was not required, but a number of minor additional improvements were identified.

## **4. Key Recommendations**

The action points set out in the improvement plan apply mainly to physical alterations to different areas around Lent Hill Court. The key action points are:

- To ensure ramps are fitted to the doorsteps of the new communal area at 1 LHC and also the laundry room.
- To ensure a bell or attention device is fitted by the door to allow residents to access staff located on first floor.
- To ensure communal area has sufficient space to display leaflets and information of other local services etc which would be relevant to the residents
- To ensure there is a privacy area for confidential meetings or interviews.
- Identify and mark a disabled parking space in Lent Hill Court car park.
- Provide computer to allow residents to bid on Hampshire Home Choice site.

## **5. Monitoring**

- The Improvement Plan will be monitored on a quarterly basis and reported to senior officers within the council.
- Extensive monitoring is undertaken by Supporting People who provide some funding for the Hostel Service.

## **6. Conclusions.**

### **6.1 Detailed Assessment**

No detailed assessments are required.

### **6.2 Improvement Plan**

Key Actions were identified to address the issues that arose during the assessment are set out section 4 above.