

Item 4 - Cambridge City Council's support for people identified as vulnerable by the Covid-19 Social Exclusion Oversight and Co-ordination Group

Background papers:

- Cambridge City Council support for thematic Public Health vulnerable groups as identified by the County Council, during COVID-19 (up to date as at 10th June 2020)

This item will explore the issues experienced groups of people identified as vulnerable during the pandemic by the Covid-19 Social Exclusion Oversight and Co-ordination Group. The vulnerable group categories are:

- Rough Sleepers and those experiencing homelessness
- Gypsies and Travellers
- People experiencing domestic abuse
- Children and young people experiencing criminal exploitation
- Ex-offenders within the community
- People with existing mental health issues
- People with a drug and alcohol addiction
- Sex workers
- Migrant workers
- People at risk of financial hardship (this group includes people with no recourse to public funds)

The presentation will set out the support provided by the Council to people within these groups during the pandemic. Panel members will be invited to ask questions and to provide feedback on any further support the Council may provide for these equality groups.

Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

This tool helps the Council ensure that we fulfil legal obligations of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) to have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Guidance on how to complete this tool can be found on the Cambridge City Council intranet. For specific questions on the tool email Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at equalities@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223 457046.

Once you have drafted the EqIA please send this to equalities@cambridge.gov.uk for checking. For advice on consulting on equality impacts, please contact Graham Saint, Strategy Officer, (graham.saint@cambridge.gov.uk or 01223 457044).

1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service
Cambridge City Council support for thematic Public Health vulnerable groups as identified by the County Council, during COVID-19 (up to date as at 10 th June 2020)

2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)
No applicable

3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

Some groups have been identified as having additional public health challenges which increases their vulnerability to coronavirus. The County Council's Public Health team has identified the following thematic groups within the population as having this additional public health vulnerability during the crisis.

These groups are considered as needing additional measures and support to ensure they can implement the Govts public health requirements to reduce rates of infection e.g. hand washing, minimising social contact, isolating if symptomatic. For many of these thematic groups some normal systems of support have changed, reduced or stopped because of the crisis e.g. family or neighbour help.

Some groups cut across these and need particular consideration within each theme, as they are more vulnerable to coronavirus itself than the general population e.g. BAME residents.

The County's thematic groups with additional public health vulnerability include:

PH Vulnerable Group Theme	City Council Lead person on County Thematic workstream
Rough Sleepers and those at risk of homelessness	David Greening
Gypsies and Travellers	Helen Crowther
Migrant workers (HMO's)	Yvonne O'Donnell
People experiencing domestic abuse	Louise Walker
Children and young people experiencing criminal exploitation	Lynda Kilkelly
Offenders community	Lynda Kilkelly
Mental health issues	Helen Crowther (for time being, tbc)
Drug and alcohol addictions	Lynda Kilkelly

Those at risk of economic hardship (including people with no recourse to public funds)	Naomi Armstrong (suggested, TBC)
Sex workers	Lynda Kilkelly

Some of the groups above are already identified as having a specific protected characteristic (e.g. Gypsies and Travellers, migrant workers and people with no recourse to public funds who are ethnic minorities). For some people, their experiences will differ, or be worse than for other people with some protected characteristics group. This EqlA unpicks this to assess whether people with protected characteristics who are vulnerable are getting the support they need.

There is some information in this EqlA identifies other issues that are exacerbated during Covid-19 separate from the vulnerable groups identified by public health. This information reflects issues that the Council may be able to help people with, and that are more likely to be experienced by people with specific protected characteristics. There include digital exclusion (that is more commonly experienced by older people and disabled people than other equality groups) and language barriers for people for whom English is a second language.

4. Responsible service

Community Services, Corporate Strategy, Customer Services, Environmental Services, Housing Service, and Revenues and Benefits

5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

(Please tick all that apply)

- ☒ Residents
- ☒ Visitors
- ☒ Staff

Please state any specific client group or groups (e.g. City Council tenants, tourists, people who work in the city but do not live here):

6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this?

- ☒ New
☐ Major change
☐ Minor change

7. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick)

- ☒ Yes
☐ No

If 'Yes' please provide details below:

This is a cross-corporate programme for the City Council, and we have been working with a number of partners in order to develop a coordinated PH vulnerability response to COVID-19, including: Cambridgeshire County Council, Peterborough City Council, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CCG, Cambridgeshire Police, other District Councils, and the various organisations from the voluntary and community sector.

8. Has the report on your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service gone to Committee? If so, which one?

Not applicable, although some actions related to this EQIA shall be included in the Anti-Poverty Strategy and Single Equality Scheme annual report that are going to the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee in July 2020.

There may be a future audit of the City Council's response to the COVID-19 crisis to help identify what we did well, where we could/should have responded differently, and how we could be better prepared in future.

9. What research methods/ evidence have you used in order to identify equality impacts of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

Data and intelligence from partner organisations we are working with to coordinate a response, (including the Equality and Diversity Partnership), and from Council Services that have experience of supporting the public health vulnerable groups listed above. Comprehensive desktop research and analysis of data sets held by Cambridge City Council has been completed by Community Services and Corporate Strategy to identify individuals we hold records for whom have an identifiable vulnerability. The Council shall also receive data from the Department for Work and

Pensions and the Home Office.

Further sources of information informing this EqlA from secondary research are included in footnotes below.

10. Potential impacts

For each category below, please explain if the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service could have a positive/ negative impact or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is. Consider impacts on service users, visitors and staff members separately.

(a) Age

Rough Sleepers and those at risk of homelessness

During the pandemic, up to now, we have provided rough sleepers with temporary accommodation, and have needed to ensure strong safeguarding procedures are in place for adults at risk. We need to ensure that people vulnerable to exploitation, and domestic abuse, are provided with adequate support and be alert to avoid housing people near or with abusers.

Children and young people experiencing criminal exploitation

The County Lines drug dealing model in the City is changing, as under lockdown dealing activity has been driven into houses, sometimes taking over the properties of vulnerable people, which may lead to an increase in safeguarding concerns for adults at risk. This has led to an increased number of arrests and incidences of children and young people being driven to private addresses to deal drugs.

Children and young people might also be more vulnerable in this time to criminal exploitation because schools have closed, which would have previously structured a lot of their time. Whilst vulnerable young people (whom social services work with) can go to school during this time, they do not have to so this might not minimise their risk to criminal exploitation. The City Council's Community Safety Team is working with partners in a number of ways to ensure it exchanges information and identifies links within all the services that deal with child exploitation - including Youth Offending Service, Safeguarding Boards, Police and Voluntary organisations. The

Cambridge Community Safety Partnership has received funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to run a project that will deliver a social media campaign delivering appropriate messages in a city context. It will have a project officer who will work closely with partners on the emerging County Lines Model and messaging.

People with existing mental health issues

Prior to lockdown, Mind reported that three in five young people (59%) have either experienced a mental health problem themselves or are close to someone who has¹. Whilst anxiety has been linked to a closer observation of rules relating to lockdown, depression has been linked to an increased failure to comply.

King's College London analysed data from a survey of 2,250 adults carried out by Ipsos Mori in early April on their response to coronavirus lockdown. Found 48 per cent could be classed as “the accepting”, 44% as “the suffering” and 9% as “the resisting”. Young people were most likely to be in the resisting group, which was 64% male, and those aged 55 to 75 were the biggest proportion of the accepting.²

(b) Disability

Rough Sleepers and those experiencing homelessness

Homeless people and rough sleepers are especially likely to have long-term health issues or disabilities. Rough sleeping can either cause or exacerbate health conditions, and obligations of councils to make sure all rough sleepers are accommodated in this time might then have positive impacts on people's health.

Rough sleepers are especially at risk of contracting coronavirus because they are more likely to suffer from respiratory conditions, they can't wash their hands and if someone is sleeping rough or in a crowded night shelter, it's impossible to self-isolate.

The King's Fund released a report earlier in March that revealed serious barriers to

¹ Mind (2019) Three in five young people have experienced a mental health problem or are close to someone who has: <https://www.mind.org.uk/news-campaigns/news/three-in-five-young-people-have-experienced-a-mental-health-problem-or-are-close-to-someone-who-has/>

² Kings College London (2020) The three groups reacting to life under lockdown: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/the-three-groups-reacting-to-life-under-lockdown>

healthcare for people living on the streets, with the number of rough sleepers being admitted to hospital surging by 130 per cent in five years³. This cohort often struggles to access services due to practical barriers such as not owning a phone, as well as the belief among some staff that patients need a home address to register for GP services. This can lead to health issues not being picked up until they are much harder to treat.

Gypsies and Travellers

Gypsies and Travellers are more likely to have long-term health issues and disabilities, which can put them at greater risk of coronavirus and due to poor health, their life expectancy is 10 to 12 years lower than for the settled population⁴.

Many Gypsy and Traveller people visit Cambridge and stay with family or in unauthorised encampments to gain access to Addenbrooke's Hospital. This is because it is often the case that Gypsies and Travellers encounter barriers relating to proving a permanent address that many GPs continue to ask them for. So far there has been one unauthorised encampment in Cambridge since the pandemic, but the welfare assessment undertaken did not identify the Travellers as having health issues.

People experiencing domestic abuse

Disabled people are especially likely to experience domestic abuse. They also experience more severe and frequent abuse than non-disabled people. They may also experience domestic abuse in wider contexts and by greater numbers of significant others, including intimate partners, family members, personal care assistants and health care professionals. Many abusers have used lockdown as a tool for coercive and controlling behaviour, and survivors who live with abusers have fewer opportunities to seek external help to prevent abuse. Cambridge City Council has developed an action plan for supporting people experiencing domestic abuse during this time to help address needs relating to communication, co-ordinating local services, and continuation of services. With regards to communication, Cambridge City Council circulates a hard copy of Cambridge Matters magazine to every city household, which includes information about services. The Police have also circulated posters to supermarkets, food banks, GP surgeries and pharmacies and Boots Pharmacy offers a safe space instore.

³ The King's Fund (2020) Health and care services for people sleeping rough: <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/projects/health-care-services-sleeping-rough>

⁴ Women and Equalities Committee (2019) Tackling inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmwomeq/360/360.pdf>

People with existing mental health issues

Increased stress and anxiety experienced as a result of the epidemic is especially impacting on people with existing mental health problems as they cope with being cut off from friends, family and other sources of support in their communities, including mental health services. Depression has been linked to a lack of willingness to comply with public health messaging keeping people safe.⁵

On 7th May Mind reported that nearly a quarter of people had not been able to access mental health services in the preceding two weeks. Mind spoke to more than 8,200 people who shared that coronavirus is taking on their mental health. Almost a quarter of people who tried to access mental health support in the past fortnight had failed to get any help – facing cancelled appointments, difficulty getting through to their GP or Community Mental Health Team, being turned away by crisis services and issues accessing digital alternatives.⁶

Ashley Fulwood, of OCD UK, said the charity had received an increase in calls and emails from people with obsessive compulsive disorder who were developing a new fixation on the coronavirus. Around a quarter of people with OCD experience compulsive cleaning, such as handwashing over a fear of contamination, according to Fulwood.⁷

There are also concerns that relate to impacts of coronavirus, people will develop long-term mental health problems, particularly caused by anxiety and depression around financial concerns.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust has continued to support people in the community with their mental health and have increased staffing in inpatient and crisis services. They are also offering therapy online using video or telephone calls, where appropriate. They launched their 'Now We're Talking' campaign on 27th April to encourage people to stay in touch with one another to reduce loneliness and ensure people get support they need.⁸ (Loneliness, in itself, has been identified by the Campaign to End Loneliness as a public health issue and is one very closely linked to mental health.) Cambridge City Council

⁵ Kings College London (2020) The three groups reacting to life under lockdown: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/the-three-groups-reacting-to-life-under-lockdown>

⁶ Mind (2020) Mental health charity Mind finds that nearly a quarter of people have not been able to access mental health services in the last two weeks: <https://www.mind.org.uk/news-campaigns/news/mental-health-charity-mind-finds-that-nearly-a-quarter-of-people-have-not-been-able-to-access-mental-health-services-in-the-last-two-weeks/>

⁷ OCD UK (2020) Comment by Ashley Fulwood Chief executive of OCD-UK and someone with lived experience of OCD: <https://www.ocduk.org/oed-and-coronavirus/>

⁸ CPFT (2020) Now we're talking - coming together in isolation: <https://www.cpft.nhs.uk/Latest-news/Now-were-talking---coming-together-in-isolation.htm>

contains information on its website on where people can get support with mental health during the crisis and has raised awareness of 'Now We're Talking' on social media, including the virtual community centre. The Council has also signposted people to support and made referrals to CPFT when:

- Making calls to individuals who are identified as vulnerable after having had a recent adult social care referral that did not meet threshold for receiving support
- Receiving calls into the Community Resilience Hub from community mutual aid groups supporting their wards during coronavirus and from individuals needing support

People with a drug and alcohol addiction

Addiction to drugs and alcohol is often related to poor mental health⁹, so many issues explored above may also impact on those with addictions.

There are also different threats to health of people with addictions during coronavirus. The supply of drugs is going down, which will push up costs and means the purity will decrease so they will often be mixed with dangerous chemicals. This may cause people long-term health issues. Moreover, some people who have alcohol addictions who lost their jobs because of how many businesses are struggling due to coronavirus may not be able to afford to buy alcohol. This brings increased health risks related to withdrawal.

The council has worked with its partners, particularly in the Drug and Alcohol Teams, to share Cambridge data with support workers and the outreach team to help ensure residents receive support they need. In addition, Cambridge City Council has been working with services across the Council and the police on addressing aggressive begging, which can often be linked to drug and alcohol addiction, through the Street Life Community working group and Problem Solving Group with enforcement and support.

People with no recourse to public funds

There is much complexity within the law around in relation to who has no recourse to public funds and treatment they can receive from the NHS that is free of charge. People still fear being charged and lack of clarity about the rules means many may not be seeking support urgently need with coronavirus and health conditions that can put people at greater risk if they were to get coronavirus.

⁹ Rethink Mental Illness: <https://www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/about-mental-illness/learn-more-about-conditions/drugs-alcohol-and-mental-health/>

(c) Gender reassignment

Cambridge City Council is in regular contact with The Kite Trust and The Encompass Network to help identify issues experienced by people they are supporting and if we can provide further help, including related to some of the issues explored below. The Council also funds these two organisations through Community Grants.

Rough Sleepers and those experiencing homelessness

National statistics indicate that one in four trans people (25 per cent) have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives, compared to one in six LGB people who are not trans (16 per cent)¹⁰. There are no local statistics on this.

People experiencing domestic abuse

The Albert Kennedy Trust has warned young people not to come out as trans or LGB during coronavirus to family as would make them at greater risk of abuse¹¹. The LGBT Foundation has seen a huge increase in the number of calls to its helpline since the coronavirus pandemic started¹². Many LGBTQ+ people are seeking support as they are stuck self-isolating with abusive family and partners. At the same time, many LGBTQ+ people living with abusers are unable to seek support they normally would be able to from local charities or even national helplines/ websites as they lack privacy from abusers.

Moreover, Cambridge City Council has developed an action plan for supporting people experiencing domestic abuse during this time to help address needs relating to communication, co-ordinating local services, and continuation of services. With regards to communication, Cambridge City Council circulates a hard copy of Cambridge Matters magazine to every city household, which includes information about services. The Police have also circulated posters to supermarkets, food banks, GP surgeries and pharmacies and Boots Pharmacy offers a safe space instore.

¹⁰ Stonewall (2017) LGBT in Britain - Trans Report: <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/lgbt-britain-trans-report>

¹¹ Pink News (2020) LGBT charity tells young people to 'hit pause' on coming out while in lockdown with parents <https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2020/04/05/albert-kennedy-trust-coming-out-hit-pause-coronavirus-lockdown-parents/>

¹² Pink News (2020) LGBTQ+ domestic abuse victims are staying with perpetrators in lockdown because no refuge spaces are available: <https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2020/05/03/lgbt-domestic-abuse-victims-stay-with-partners-coronavirus-lockdown-lgbt-foundation/>

People with existing mental health issues

Trans people are more likely to have mental health issues. In a 2017 Stonewall report for instance, almost half of trans people (46 per cent) had thought about taking their own life in the previous.¹³ Mental health issues for trans people could be exacerbated during lockdown. For instance, Gender Identity Clinics have frozen their waiting lists and other services, such as gender affirming surgeries, have been cancelled. This will be very distressing for many, especially considering that under normal circumstances the average waiting time for a first appointment with a Gender Identity Clinic is 18 months and can be as long as two and a half years. Many have had surgeries delayed, and some are struggling to access hormone therapy and counselling services.¹⁴

Sex workers

According to international statistics, trans women disproportionately likely to be sex workers. Some sex workers are breaking lockdown rules to keep working to make ends meet. Cambridge Women's Resources Centre (CWRC) is part of a Sexual Exploitation and Sex Work Partnership Board based in Peterborough. Currently, if the City Council front line workers become aware of sex workers in need of support, then we will pass the information to CWRC.

(d) Marriage and civil partnership

People with no recourse to public funds

Rules around who has recourse to public funds and who does not are incredibly complex. Sometimes whilst a person has recourse to public funds from being in the UK for 5 years, their spouse may not. This means that whilst they may claim benefits as a couple, they are recommended to get immigration advice because claiming benefits might impact on the spouse's immigration status. Nevertheless, not many organisations in Cambridge are able to offer free immigration advice. Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum can provide level 2 immigration advice but has reduced capacity to do so.

¹³ Stonewall (2017) LGBT in Britain - Trans Report: <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/lgbt-britain-trans-report>

¹⁴ LGBT Foundation (2020) The Essential Briefing on the Impact of COVID-19 on LGBT Communities in the UK : <https://lgbt.foundation/coronavirus/impact>

(e) Pregnancy and maternity

Gypsies and Travellers

On unauthorised encampments across the UK, access to clean water during coronavirus has been identified as a key issue. This is especially the case where people are self-isolating or shielded because Gypsies and Travellers often need to go off site for access to water: in Cambridge, the Newmarket Road Cemetery and garages have previously been a main source for water. The County Council has developed a formal arrangement with water companies across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to help unauthorised sites access clean water. However, solutions identified to provide water will need to ensure it is clean enough to sterilise milk bottles for babies. Infant mortality for Travellers is 4 times that of the general population.¹⁵ The Cambridge City Council lead on the Covid-19 response for Gypsies and Travellers is exploring implications (including any risks) of the Council purchasing a water bowser that could help speed up water provision for unauthorised encampments needing it.

People experiencing domestic abuse

Pregnant women or those who have recently given birth are more likely to experience domestic abuse. Whilst antenatal clinics are open, they are aiming to provide virtual antenatal clinic services as much as possible¹⁶. This means they have fewer opportunities to seek face-to-face advice about their pregnancy and any concerns they have like domestic abuse. Cambridge City Council has developed an action plan for supporting people experiencing domestic abuse during this time to help address needs relating to communication, co-ordinating local services, and continuation of services. With regards to communication, Cambridge City Council circulates a hard copy of Cambridge Matters magazine to every city household, which includes information about services. The Police have also circulated posters to supermarkets, food banks, GP surgeries and pharmacies and Boots Pharmacy offers a safe space instore.

¹⁵ Women and Equalities Committee (2019) Tackling inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmwomeq/360/360.pdf>

¹⁶ Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (2020) Coronavirus (COVID-19) infection and pregnancy <https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/guidelines/coronavirus-pregnancy/>

(f) Race – Note that the protected characteristic ‘race’ refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Gypsies and Travellers

Key concerns for the community during the pandemic have included:

- Access to information where many Gypsy and Traveller communities are isolated, may not have a permanent address and where literacy issues are common. The Enforcement Officer has visited the recent unauthorised encampment regularly when it moved to a new location to undertake welfare assessments and share public health information.
- How can people self-isolate if need to, given that many are living with families live close to one another on pitches?
- Access to clean water, rubbish disposal and toilets for unauthorised encampments has been an issue across the UK.

We do not have any council-managed or private Gypsy and Traveller sites in the city. We do have two private campsites Kerry's Yard and Riverview that are occupied – mainly by single person households. The last check Environment Health made of the sites for licencing purposes was November and there were no issues related to access to water, waste disposal or toilets, or related to overcrowding. East Chesterton Mutual Aid Group has leafletted Kerry's Yard and Riverview and has been actively supporting a couple of households from these sites. They are about to leaflet the households again in order to signpost them to the Council if they have any accommodation issues that may include access to water, overcrowding and so on.

For unauthorised encampments during the pandemic or if people needed to move from Fen Road to self-isolate or distance from people with coronavirus, we have no designated sites people can temporarily stay at in the city with access to water and toilets. The County has identified farmland to be used temporarily during the pandemic for these purposes (off A14) but only for people with coronavirus. The City Council has been exploring implications of designating a small patch of land we own that is not currently being used, such as King's Hedges Learner Pool Carpark.

Migrant workers and HMO's

A key issue that the City Council may be able to help support people with is overcrowding in HMOs, which is especially likely to be experienced by migrant workers in the county. Overcrowding would increase the chances of coronavirus spreading. The Council has produced a leaflet, and made this available in five different languages, with information and support for people living in shared

accommodation to help them understand public health guidance for this area.

People with no recourse to public funds (NRPF)

During the pandemic councils have obligations to house people with NRPF. Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum is supporting people with NRPF in providing food and other support during coronavirus. As mentioned, laws around who has no recourse to public funds are especially complex and there is a shortage of legal advice on this.

If one of the following circumstances applies, recourse to public funds may be granted:

- The person has provided satisfactory evidence that they are destitute (homeless or unable to meet essential living needs)
- The person has provided satisfactory evidence that there are particularly compelling reasons relating to the welfare of a child on account of the parent's very low income
- The person has established exceptional circumstances relating to their financial circumstances¹⁷

People would need access to immigration advice at level 2 at least to determine if the changes to the law apply and there is a shortage of free immigration advice in the city at this level. Government guidance on support that is available for people with NRPF during this time, who are not allowed access to public funds is here:

<https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2020/05/05/no-recourse-to-public-funds-nrpf/>.

Risks for BAME people of dying from coronavirus

A government-ordered inquiry has found that death rates from Covid-19 in England have been higher among people of black and Asian origin than any other ethnic group. There are a range of factors that may have contributed to this, which could include language barriers for people with English as a second language hindering public health messages getting through or access to support. Cambridge City Council has an interpretation and translation service that has been used during the pandemic to help share public health messaging and can be used to communicate better with individuals for whom English is a second language. There have been very few requests made to the community resilience team for interpretation support so far. Cambridge City Council also maintains regular contact with the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum to identify any issues experienced by people they support

¹⁷ NRPF Network (2020) Leave to remain with NRPF - change of conditions:
<http://www.nrpfnetwork.org.uk/information/Pages/change-of-conditions.aspx>

that the council might help with.

Implications of George Floyd's death and Black Lives Matter protests

On 25 May 2020, George Floyd was killed by a police officer in Minneapolis. Following Mr Floyd's death, Black Lives Matter protests were held across the world, including in the UK, to draw attention to racism and discrimination and call for change. These protests highlighted a range of issues, including the fact that death rates from Covid-19 in England have been higher among people of black and Asian origin than any other ethnic group. Cambridge City Council, alongside some other Councils, lit up its main council building, the Guildhall, on 2nd June in remembrance of George Floyd. The Council also carries out a range of activities to address racism, discrimination and harassment. The Council promotes and is a signatory of the Cambridgeshire-wide [Equality Pledge](#), is a hate crime reporting centre, and [runs a racial harassment service](#). The Council works in partnership with local organisations to provide a programme of events to mark Black History Month each year, and in 2020 is helping to coordinate South Asian History Month (being marked in Cambridge for the first time this year). Moreover, Cambridge City Council provides funding to [Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum](#) to help support refugees not part of the formal Home Office resettlement schemes, for their capacity building service for groups supporting BAME people in the city, for race equality services, and for their [CHESS Service](#).

(g) Religion or belief

Currently no impacts specific to this equality group have been identified.

(h) Sex

Rough Sleepers and those experiencing homelessness

Homeless Link shares that women are more likely to be 'hidden homeless' (their homelessness often linked to domestic abuse), and not as easy to identify if needing support¹⁸. In housing people experiencing homelessness, the Housing Service reports that it has supported a number of people who before would have been hidden homeless.

¹⁸ Homeless Link (2018) Women's Hidden Homelessness:
<https://www.homeless.org.uk/connect/blogs/2018/feb/27/women's-hidden-homelessness>

People experiencing domestic abuse

One in four women and one in six men experience domestic abuse in their lifetimes¹⁹. Self-isolation is likely to shut down routes to support and safety for people, who may face even greater barriers to finding time away from the perpetrator to seek help. Perpetrators will use infection control measures as a tool of coercive and controlling behaviour.

Cambridge City Council has developed an action plan for supporting people experiencing domestic abuse during this time to help address needs relating to communication, co-ordinating local services, and continuation of services. With regards to communication, Cambridge City Council circulates a hard copy of Cambridge Matters magazine to every city household, which includes information about services. The Police have also circulated posters to supermarkets, food banks, GP surgeries and pharmacies and Boots Pharmacy offers a safe space instore.

Measures to decrease social contact are likely to have significant mental health impacts on the population, and this could be acute for survivors coping and recovering from trauma. Cambridge City Council has been helping to raise awareness on what support is available for people to look after their mental health during the Covid pandemic.

Sex workers

Sex workers are more likely to be women than men. Some sex workers are breaking lockdown rules as a means to keep working in order to make ends meet. Cambridge Women's Resources Centre (CWRC) is part of a Sexual Exploitation and Sex Work Partnership Board based in Peterborough. If City Council front line workers become aware of sex workers in need of support we will pass the information to CWRC. A project has provided outreach work to provide condoms, food and drink as well as advice in Peterborough and it is expected that CWRC will link with known clients locally. A potential gap would be identifying and supporting male sex workers, apart from them accessing the national Men's Advice helpline.

¹⁹ Living Without Abuse <https://www.lwa.org.uk/understanding-abuse/statistics.htm>

Migrant workers and people with no recourse to public funds

The Women's Budget Group warns that despite being disproportionately represented in 'key worker' occupations, most migrant women have no recourse to public funds.²⁰

(i) Sexual orientation

Cambridge City Council is in regular contact with The Kite Trust and The Encompass Network to help identify issues experienced by people they are supporting and if we can provide further help, including related to some of the issues explored below. The Council also funds these two organisations through Community Grants.

Rough Sleepers and those experiencing homelessness

LGBTQ+ young people are especially at risk of homelessness (often related to being asked to leave by family members when they come out to their family).²¹

People experiencing domestic abuse

Albert Kennedy Trust has warned young people not to come out as trans or LGB during coronavirus to family as would make them at greater risk of abuse.²² The LGBT Foundation has seen a huge increase in the number of calls to its helpline since the coronavirus pandemic started. Many LGBTQ+ people are seeking support as they are stuck self-isolating with abusive family and partners.²³

Moreover, the council has developed an action plan for supporting people experiencing domestic abuse during this time to help address needs relating to communication, co-ordinating local services, and continuation of services. With regards to communication, Cambridge City Council circulates a hard copy of Cambridge Matters magazine to every city household, which includes information about services. The Police have also circulated posters to supermarkets, food

²⁰ Women's Budget Group (2020) Latest Report: Migrant Women and the Economy: <https://wbg.org.uk/analysis/latest-report-migrant-women-and-the-economy/>

²¹ Albert Kennedy Trust (2015) <https://www.akt.org.uk/campaigning>

²² Pink News (2020) LGBT charity tells young people to 'hit pause' on coming out while in lockdown with parents <https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2020/04/05/albert-kennedy-trust-coming-out-hit-pause-coronavirus-lockdown-parents/>

²³ Pink News (2020) LGBTQ+ domestic abuse victims are staying with perpetrators in lockdown because no refuge spaces are available: <https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2020/05/03/lgbt-domestic-abuse-victims-stay-with-partners-coronavirus-lockdown-lgbt-foundation/>

banks, GP surgeries and pharmacies and Boots Pharmacy offers a safe space instore.

People with existing mental health issues

LGB people are more likely to have poor mental health so have existing conditions. According to 2018 Stonewall research, half of LGBT people (52 per cent) said they had experienced depression and 13% of LGBT people aged 18-24 said they had attempted to take their own life in the past year.²⁴

(j) Other factors that may lead to inequality – in particular, please consider the impact of any changes on low income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty

Rough Sleepers and those experiencing homelessness

District councils have been directed by national government to ensure rough sleepers are placed in temporary accommodation for the duration of the pandemic. Cambridge City Council is also exploring what support could then be provided following the pandemic.

Gypsies and Travellers

More likely to be unemployed so experience poverty and on low incomes²⁵. Large proportion are self-employed and receive cash-in-hand but have lost work during the pandemic.

Ex-offenders within the community, especially those recently released from prison

Difficulties finding work after release exacerbated by pandemic. If a lot of people get coronavirus in prison, the government may look to undertake early releases, which might put pressure on our Housing Service if need to house larger numbers of people.

²⁴ Stonewall (2017) LGBT in Britain - Trans Report: <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/lgbt-britain-trans-report>

²⁵ Women and Equalities Committee (2019) Tackling inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmwomeq/360/360.pdf>

Sex workers

Many people who rely on sex work to make ends meet, could financially struggle during lockdown.

People with no recourse to public funds

Complexity of the immigration and benefits systems can make it very difficult for people to understand what they are entitled to. Organisations that advise on this will need to be qualified to at least Level 2 in Immigration advice. Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum is but may be lacking in capacity would normally have to help people in this time.

11. Action plan – New equality impacts will be identified in different stages throughout the planning and implementation stages of changes to your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service. How will you monitor these going forward? Also, how will you ensure that any potential negative impacts of the changes will be mitigated? (Please include dates where possible for when you will update this EqIA accordingly.)

- Update the EqIA (and date new version) periodically as new government guidance is issued and new impacts identified.
- All risk assessments to be carried out in relation to response in supporting each vulnerable group.
- Identify further opportunities for providing translation and interpretation advice in further communications with the public.

12. Do you have any additional comments?

Some other inequalities make particular protected characteristics more vulnerable during the COVID-19 crisis, including:

- **Digital exclusion** issues related to how increased reliance on digital as a means contact. Most likely to be experienced by older people and disabled people. Especially an issue for low-income people who may be struggling financially so not have equipment they need/ broadband (and single parent households headed by women make up disproportionate proportion of households experiencing poverty). Will exacerbate inequalities in educational outcomes between richest and poorest students. The Council has been providing advice and referrals to support the voluntary and community sector

(VCS) organisations that are helping to tackle digital exclusion. It is supporting the VCS organisations to set up a 'digital alliance' to help further ensure technology gets to people who need it the most and The Guildhall has been identified as a drop off point for people to donate their old technology to support these efforts.

- Some people with protected characteristics were more likely to experience **poverty** before pandemic such as BAME people, disabled people, 18 to 24 year olds, women (especially lone parents) and LGBTQ+ people.

13. Sign off

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: Helen Crowther [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date of EqlA sign off: 10/06/2020

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted:

Allison Conder. Ariadne Henry, Debbie Kaye, Harriet Morgan, David Kidston

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: To be reviewed as risk assessments for groups are updated or government advice changes

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website: 16/06/2020

All EqlAs need to be sent to Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer. Ctrl + click on the button below to send this (you will need to attach the form to the email):

Send