

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS (EqIAA)

Breakthrough Mentoring Service Review June 2017

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

Breakthrough Mentoring (BM) is a mentoring service for vulnerable people in South Gloucestershire. The service that started in 2002 currently turns over in the region of £500,000 a year. BM is a traded service and has to cover all costs through income generation. BM sits in the Public Health & Wellbeing Division as part of the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing programme area.

Over the past three years Breakthrough has been running with an overspend which is unsustainable. Additionally, the leadership model (of three equal posts) has not been effective and there is strong consensus it needs simplifying. To address these issues the Director of Public Health and Public Health Senior Leadership asked for a service review to achieve the following aims:-

1. To continue delivering high quality outcomes for the vulnerable people who use the service.
2. To ensure the service is financially sustainable in the long term.
3. To ensure the leadership of the service is functioning in the most effective way to deliver outcomes for Breakthrough mentees.

A report was put together for staff consultation that proposed the most effective staff structure for Breakthrough to secure the service in the long terms but also mitigate the impacts for both staff and service users.

This structure and the rationale is outlined in the decision report signed off by the Director of Children, Adults and Health.

SECTION 2 –RESEARCH AND CONSULTATION

Breakthrough staff

We have undertaken formal staff consultation that has provided staff with opportunities to feedback their views on the proposed model including its personal impact on them. Feedback came via a mix of written responses, group meetings and individual meetings.

The proposed new structure has recommended one point four posts are made redundant (point four is currently vacant) and we are aware the two staff in the ring fence for a single Specialist Health Improvement Practitioner post in the new structure both have a disability. Therefore the proposed model would result in one disabled member of staff at high risk of redundancy.

Breakthrough service users

The very nature of Breakthrough as a service means that all mentees have some level of vulnerability. Previous analysis of Breakthrough mentees show that mental ill health and anxiety are the biggest reasons for referral. However large numbers of mentees also have disabilities while issues such as family breakdown, domestic violence and children in care are also very common. Breakthrough has a higher level of males than females attending sessions. Most mentees are under 18, with teenagers the biggest group.

Data of race and sexual orientation is less clear but there is no indication that either group is either over or underrepresented in terms of Breakthrough service users.

SECTION 3 – IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS OF EQUALITIES ISSUES AND IMPACTS

The proposed new structure would result in a reduced service which would mean fewer mentees (vulnerable people) receive support.

Considering the data in respect of mentees, the following Protected Characteristics have been identified as being negatively impacted:-

- Sex – i.e. there are proportionately more Male service users;
- Disability – i.e. a high proportion of service users have declared a disability;
- Age – i.e. the majority of service users are younger people (under 18).

In mitigation of this, we have worked hard to keep the reduction to a minimum and we estimate the number of placements would reduce from 150 to 120 (equivalent to a reduction of just over 13%).

The work conducted to ensure 120 placements would ensure that the equivalent level of service quality would be maintained.

In addition, managing the reduction of the number of placements carefully over a period of time would mean that no current mentee would experience a cessation of current service.

It should be noted that these changes are vital to sustain the service in the long term and if the service is not viable, no vulnerable people would be supported.

In respect of staff, it is clear the Protected Characteristic of Disability would be impacted should the review recommendations be implemented.

In mitigation of this, the Workforce Change Procedure, which itself has undergone EqIAA, has been followed - both at risk members of staff have been offered a series of support opportunities via Workforce Development in terms of training and helping them to apply for other opportunities. Both staff members are also prior consideration candidates for any vacancy that comes up within South Gloucestershire Council.

It is noted that there would be a slight reduction in pay due to reduced admin time but that has been kept to the minimum of reduction. Also, the new service would have less placements but this would be managed over time meaning that no mentors will have any current work stopped. It is also noted that our intention would be to stop recruiting new mentors for a period thereby allowing current mentors to sustain current levels of work.

It is important to note that without the proposed reduction in staff the whole service is not viable and therefore the whole staff team would be at high risk of redundancy with a much greater negative equality impact.

SECTION 4 - EqIAA OUTCOME

Outcome	Response	Reason(s) and Justification
Outcome 1: No major change required.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Outcome 2: Adjustments to remove barriers or to better promote equality have been identified.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Outcome 3: Continue despite having identified potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>It is acknowledged that negative impacts have been identified in respect of both staff and service users as a result of the proposed service reduction. In particular, the Protected Characteristics of Sex, Disability and Age have been identified.</p> <p>In respect of these negative impacts, actions have been identified and taken which provide some mitigation of impacts. However, it is particularly acknowledged that a reduction in placements would clearly result in a negative impact.</p> <p>Negative impacts should be balanced against the service information which shows that the service has been overspent for several years and the proposals would sustain its provision, albeit at a reduced level, in the longer term.</p>
Outcome 4: Stop and rethink.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

SECTION 5 - ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AS A RESULT OF THIS EqIAA

We will monitor the impact of any reduced service on staff and mentees.

We will do further work to understand the demographic make-up of service users in order to ensure no community is struggling to access the service provided.

We will do further work to understand the outcomes for service users in order to ensure that all communities continue to receive an equally high quality of service.

SECTION 6 – EVIDENCE INFORMING THIS EqIAA

- Workforce Change Procedure
- Workforce data
- Service user data