

Proposal for Change:

ASC-03 Reduction in funding for Citizen's Advice services (Core Funding, Local Assistance Scheme)

Reference:	ASC-03
Service Area:	Adults Social Care
Director:	Stephen Chandler
Strategic Manager	Steve Veevers
SAP Node	
Decision required	Cabinet decision to approve

1. The proposal is to:	
	Managing Demand - <i>Examine what can be done to influence our demand and reduce service pressures/costs or increase income, including raising fees and charging for services. How could we work across the wider local system with partners, are we picking up costs that should be paid by a different part of the system? Evidence of current and expected future demand will be required as part of future planning.</i>
	Increasing Productivity - <i>Since 2011/12 the Council has made most of its savings through efficiency measures. Like most Councils there is now less scope for traditional efficiency savings. What efficiency/productivity savings are available? What are the biggest expenditure items in your service? Are we getting best value from our contracts? Are we exploring opportunities to negotiate?</i>
X	Service Delivery Models - <i>Are you aware of any alternative delivery models that could deliver services differently? What examples from other authorities could we adopt? E.g. commission from another party, joint venture... recognising that some options will have a long lead in times and would not necessarily impact on the financial gap in 2018/19.</i>
X	Reductions in Services - <i>Are there services which partners could provide instead? Are all your services adding value? Are there any services which could safely and legally be stopped? What would the impact be on residents? Could residents be empowered to do it themselves?</i>

2. Outline of the proposed change:	
<p>For each district's Citizen's Advice services:</p> <p>End Adult Social Care Core Grant and Local Assistance Scheme Administration Grant and Assessment Fee</p> <p>This will consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing 50% (£25k) from the Local Assistance Scheme budget for Assessment Fees from October 2018/19. • Remove all other funds from April 2019: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 100% (£252k) of Adult Social Care Core Grant ○ 100% (£167k) of Local Assistance Scheme Administration Grant ○ Remaining 50% (£25k) of Local Assistance Scheme Assessment Fee <p>Reduce funding for Local Assistance Scheme purchases by 10% (saving of £12k per year) – this funding is supporting by contingencies and is therefore not part of the net change to service budget (therefore not included in section 13a)</p>	

Background

Adult Social Care Core Funding

Core funding is provided to Citizen's Advice bureaux to support their core service of providing free, confidential and independent advice, including:

- Housing advice
- Employment advice
- Money and debt advice
- Legal advice
- Health advice
- Consumer advice

Local Assistance Scheme

This is a discretionary fund. It provides financial assistance to individuals and families undergoing a short-term crisis or emergency. The scheme is available to people who can demonstrate a low income, an existing short term financial crisis, and that other sources of support have been explored and are unavailable.

The scheme is made up of 3 elements: core funding, a fee for each assessment made, and funding for purchases in line with the Council's prescribed criteria.

Public Health Funding

This proposal does not include the annual £135k grant provided to Citizen's Advice from the Public Health budget.

2a. Confidence level

Lead Directors should indicate their level of confidence in delivering the saving identified. This should be expressed as an overall percentage (in units of 10%). Please also provide a brief explanation for the chosen confidence level.

90%

Explanation:

This funding is discretionary and if approved can be delivered.

3. Impact on residents, businesses and other organisations:

Citizen's Advice supports some of the most vulnerable in the county, in particular:

- Older people and people with disabilities who are over represented in low income households so are more likely to be affected.
- Women who are more likely to be the adult in single parent families so are more likely to be at risk from any changes than men.
- The most significant specific group of people supported by the service are those with low incomes and therefore most potentially at risk especially where there is homelessness or a risk of homelessness.
- Residents of the most rural parts of Somerset are more likely to be affected than those in urban areas.

Nature of impact could be unavailability of advice and support provided by the bureaux or delays in provision of that advice and support.

4. Impact on other services we provide:

Services and support provided by Citizen's Advice divert potential need from health, local authority services and other public sector services, either directly or indirectly, including:

- Adult Social Care services
- Children's Services
- Police and probation services
- Health
- District councils
- Other community and voluntary sector organisations

5. Impact on staff:

There is a potential increase in workload for some staff if reduced Citizen's Advice capacity increases demand for council services increases .

The number of FTE that might be lost is:
The number of posts that might be lost is:

6. Resources and support needed to make the change:

Minimal Council organisational resource are required to provide these schemes.

7. Timescale to deliver and major milestones:

To include date of implementation, key decision points and governance meetings

<i>Planned accomplishments to track progress [Milestone]</i>	<i>[Date]</i>
End in-year funding support as described in part 2.	October 2018
End 2019/20 funding support as described in part 2.	April 2019

8. Risks and opportunities:

Risks include:

- Reduced capacity of Citizen's Advice, including potential closure owing to financial unsustainability. This could lead to:
 - Unmet demand
 - Increased hardship
 - Greater levels of demand for public / community / voluntary services including statutory provision

Opportunities include:

- Potential to explore alternative methods of funding and delivery with Citizen's Advice and/or other providers.

9. Dependencies:

Interdependencies and dependencies please insert here NB may need to connect with other directorates to test these out.

Interdependencies with:

- Public Health (who also provide funding to Citizen's Advice for public health/health and wellbeing outcomes)
- Children's Services (households with children who would previously have been able to access Citizen's Advice services)

10. Initial Equality Impact Assessment:

The legal team advise that there are issues of legitimate expectation: extent and nature of effect on recipients, which should be understood. An Equality Impact Assessment is required.

11. Consultation and Communications plan:

Engagement to ensure Citizen's Advice are made aware of the changes in funding, and mitigation as per the Equalities Impact Assessment.

12. Legal Implications:

There is no legitimate expectation or statutory responsibility in relation to the Local Assistance Scheme.

CABS – the existing grant arrangements allows for what it proposed

13a. Financial Implications – net change to service budget in each year:

It is expected that savings identified are evidence based. Any supporting information, including analysis to be submitted with the proposal. These proposals will be validated with finance as part of the FIT governance process.

Are the savings evidenced based?		[Yes/No]			
If no, when is evidence expected?		[Enter date]			
Please note: these figures should be cumulative (as per the approach for MTFP and savings)					
£'000's	Savings	Income	Growth/Costs	Total	Ongoing or One-off?
2018/19	£25k	£	-£	£	Ongoing
2019/20	£444k	£	-£	£	Ongoing
2020/21	£0	£	-£	£	
Total	£469k	£	-£	£	Ongoing

13b. One off project costs and income (not included in above):

£'000's		
2018/19	Capital Costs	-£
	Capital Receipts	£
	Estimate of redundancy costs	-£
	Estimate of resource costs to deliver	-£
	Sub-total	£
2019/20	Capital Costs	-£
	Capital Receipts	£
	Estimate of redundancy costs	-£
	Estimate of resource costs to deliver	-£
	Sub-total	£
2020/21	Capital Costs	-£
	Capital Receipts	£
	Estimate of redundancy costs	-£
	Estimate of resource costs to deliver	-£
	Sub-total	£
TOTAL		£

Somerset Equality Impact Assessment

Before completing this EIA please ensure you have read the EIA guidance notes – available from your Equality Officer

Organisation prepared for	Somerset County Council		
Version	V2	Date Completed	31 August 2018

Description of what is being impact assessed

ASC-03

End Adult Social Care Core Grant and Local Assistance Scheme Administration Grant and Assessment Fee

This will consist of:

- Removing 50% (£25k) from the Local Assistance Scheme budget for Assessment Fees from **October 2018/19**.
- Remove all other funds from **April 2019**:
 - 100% (£252k) of Adult Social Care Core Grant
 - 100% (£167k) of Local Assistance Scheme Administration Grant
 - Remaining 50% (£25k) of Local Assistance Scheme Assessment Fee

Reduce funding for Local Assistance Scheme purchases by 10% (saving of £12k per year) – this funding is supporting by contingencies and is therefore not part of the net change to service budget (therefore not included in section 13a)

Adult Social Care Core Funding

Core funding is provided to Citizen’s Advice bureaux to support their core service of providing free, confidential and independent advice, including:

- Housing advice
- Employment advice
- Money and debt advice
- Legal advice
- Health advice
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Local Assistance Scheme

This is a discretionary fund. It provides financial assistance to individuals and families undergoing a short-term crisis or emergency. The scheme is available to people who can demonstrate a low income, an existing short term financial crisis, and that other sources of support have been explored and are unavailable.

The scheme is made up of 3 elements: core funding, a fee for each assessment made, and funding for purchases in line with the Council's prescribed criteria.

Evidence

What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups? Sources such as the [Office of National Statistics](#), [Somerset Intelligence Partnership](#), [Somerset's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis \(JSNA\)](#), Staff and/ or [area profiles](#), should be detailed here

- Regular on-going meetings with Advice Bureau managers and their Chairs.
- Close collaboration and support between the Advice Bureaux with additional information from District Councils
- Analysis of activity, spend, patterns of spend and patterns of demand.
- Data from Citizen's Advice on numbers and demography of clients, their needs, and how they were assisted.

Most common issues supported by Citizen's Advice in Somerset

Mendip (16/17 Annual Report) - approximate numbers	Benefits and Tax Credits	Debt	Housing Advice	Employment Advice	Relationships and Family Issues
<i>Over 5000 clients assisted</i>	7200	5100	1500	1200	900
South Somerset (17/18 Annual Report)	Financial issues	Money Advice	Housing Advice	Consumer Issues	Family Issues
<i>5784 clients helped</i>	8308	1194	533	351	282
Sedgemoor (17/18 Annual Report)	Local Assistance Scheme	Specialist Welfare Benefit Cases	Money Advice	Wessex Water Cases	Specialist Housing Cases
<i>6889 clients assisted</i>	797	519	220	78	58

Taunton (17/18 monitoring and outturn data)	Benefits Advice	Debt Advice	Financial Advice	Employment Advice	Relationship Advice
<i>3345 clients</i>	3378	1780	926	770	
West Somerset (16/17 Annual Report)	Benefits and Tax Credits	Travel and Transport	Grants and Pastoral Support	Benefits and Universal Credit	Employment Advice
<i>4238 households advised</i>	684	253	103	61	43

Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups? If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?

Elected Members

- Cabinet.

Citizen's Advice

- As our providers, the advice bureaux have been continually involved in the review and redevelopment of the LAS. They are on board and are closely involved in developing the funding model and providing feedback and expertise on the scheme and its future.

Partners

- District Council officer representatives.

Analysis of impact on protected groups

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. Consider how this policy/service will achieve these aims. In the table below, using the evidence outlined above and your own understanding, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Based on this information, make an assessment of the likely outcome, before you have implemented any mitigation.

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older people are over represented in low income households (see Other, below) so are more likely to be affected. Nature of impact could be lack of assessment or support provided by the bureaux, delays in provision 	☒	☐	☐

	<p>of that assessment / support, or closure on one or more bureaux.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These impacts will be minimal during 2018/19 			
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled people (regardless of age) are over represented in low income households (see Other, below) so are more likely to be affected. Nature of impact could be lack of assessment or support provided by the bureaux, delays in provision of that assessment / support, or closure on one or more bureaux. • These impacts will be minimal during 2018/19 	☒	☐	☐
Gender reassignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no issues specific to this group 	☒	☒	☐
Marriage and civil partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no issues specific to this group 	☐	☒	☐
Pregnancy and maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This group, combined with being on low income has potential to be in acute financial need and therefore could be impacted by the removal of this scheme. Nature of impact could be lack of assessment or support provided by the bureaux, delays in provision of that assessment / support, or closure on one or more bureaux. • These impacts will be minimal during 2018/19 	☒	☐	☐

Race and ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This group makes up a higher proportion of Citizen’s Advice clients than in district’s populations as a whole. Different languages, cultures and backgrounds can require specific capabilities from organisations providing advice and support. • These impacts will be minimal during 2018/19 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no issues specific to this group 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are more likely to be the adult in single parent families so women are more likely to be impacted than men. • These impacts will be minimal during 2018/19 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no issues specific to this group however long-term migrant workers are historically more likely to be on a low income. • These impacts will be minimal during 2018/19 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, e.g. carers, veterans, homeless, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Low Income</u>: The most significant specific group of people supported by the service and therefore those potentially at most risk are those on low incomes, in debt or at risk of being in debt and those seeking legal advice. Nature of impact could be lack of assessment or support provided by the bureaux, delays in provision of that assessment / support, or closure on one or more bureaux. • <u>Rurality</u>: Residents of the most rural parts of Somerset are more likely to be affected by any changes in service provision as they may find it more difficult to access other services. • <u>Homeless</u>: or at risk of homelessness 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Mental health</u>: Vulnerability of clients, and their response to being unable to access services and/or assessment. • <u>In general</u>: any protected group unable to access services otherwise provided by Citizen’s Advice, should these proposals result in closure of one or more bureaux: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Benefits and Tax Credits advice ○ Housing advice ○ Employment advice ○ Money and debt advice ○ Legal advice ○ Relationships advice ○ Consumer advice • These impacts will be minimal during 2018/19 			
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Negative outcomes action plan
Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
Mitigation against the negative outcomes of withdrawing the funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with bureaux to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify numbers of people likely to be affected, in particular in terms of protected characteristics, where and to what degree to identify alternative sources of provision, ○ Identify and share good practice to reduce cost and improve productivity: in general and by location and protected group • Working with stakeholders and other providers (including Children’s Social Care, Adult Social 	Under way from review To begin asap	Adults and Health Commissioners Commissioning Development Team Advice Bureaux	Regular monitoring of spend Feedback and data returns / annual reports from Advice Bureaux Annual review	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>Care, Public Health, District Councils, DWP / JobCentrePlus, health, police, probation) to identify sustainable solutions and new ways of providing support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and review of impacts and potential responses. <p>Regarding Local Assistance Scheme, there has already been liaison with advice bureaux through the original service review (looking at reducing overall cost rather than elimination of the scheme).</p> <p>Use of demographic data and that collected by Council services and Citizen's Advice to further inform planning.</p>			Bureaux staff management	
<p><u>Risk of closure</u> Working with Citizen's Advice (and other providers/groups/initiatives) to identify (amongst other client groups) those with protected characteristics and how their needs can be met in other ways and with different approaches.</p> <p>Working with other public-sector providers (including health, District Councils) to identify alternative sources of funding</p> <p>Working with Citizen's Advice bureaux to identify alternative structures for Somerset's.</p> <p>Use of demographic data and that collected by Council services and Citizen's Advice to further inform planning.</p>	To begin asap	<p>Adults and Health Commissioners</p> <p>Partners</p> <p>Commissioning Development Team</p> <p>Advice Bureaux</p>	<p>Feedback and data returns / annual reports from Advice Bureaux</p> <p>Annual review</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">□</p>

If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.

Ending funding support could render one or more bureaux financially unviable. This would be more likely if other partners were unable or disinclined to provide additional financial / in-kind support. However, the proposals do allow a 6 month period to develop new approaches to delivery of services provided by Citizen's Advice, for example through alternative structures and/ or providers.

It may also be possible for other community resources or facilities to provide some or all of these services, however these organisations and groups may require support – and time - to develop their capacity and capability.

Completed by:	Alastair Higton
Date	31 August 2018
Signed off by:	Stephen Chandler
Date	3 September 2018
Equality Lead/Manager sign off date:	3 September 2018
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	Alastair Higton
Review date:	3 March 2019