




Somerset Equality Impact Assessment

Before completing this EIA please ensure you have read the EIA guidance notes – available from your Equality Officer or www.somerset.gov.uk/impactassessment

Organisation prepared for (mark as appropriate)	 Somerset Council	X	 NHS Somerset		 NHS Somerset <small>NHS Foundation Trust</small>
Version	1		Date Completed	15/11/23	
Description of what is being impact assessed					
<p>Somerset Council currently commissions an Employment Support service from Discovery. The purpose of this service is to support adults with learning disabilities who would not be able to access universal services (for example, Job Centre Plus) in order them to gain and maintain employment to receive support from a specialist service.</p> <p>The service operated by Discovery utilises the Individual Placement and Support model, which is considered best practice by the British Association for Supported employment (BASE) as well as the Project Seach supported internship model for which Discovery provides job coaching for 6 sites. Once someone has achieved employment ongoing support is funded by an application for Access to Work funding (unless otherwise agreed).</p> <p>It is proposed that the Council’s funding of this service is ended from 31/03/2024.</p>					
Evidence					
<p>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</p>					

Research published by the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi), which emphasises the benefits of Employment Support on individuals and society in general. The research stated that the IPS model used in Somerset, which was originally developed for people with mental ill health and became the commissioned model for people with learning disabilities in Somerset in 2012/13, is the most effective solution to supporting people into paid jobs.

Somerset Council wants people with a learning disability, autism, or both, to have the same opportunities as anyone else to live healthy, satisfying, and valued lives. The Council's aspiration is that people will be supported to progress and gain new skills, with a focus on their individual outcomes, avoiding overly paternalistic approaches. Our Adult Social Care Strategy (2023-26) included as a commitment a desire to support people with learning disabilities to live and/or work more independently within their communities.

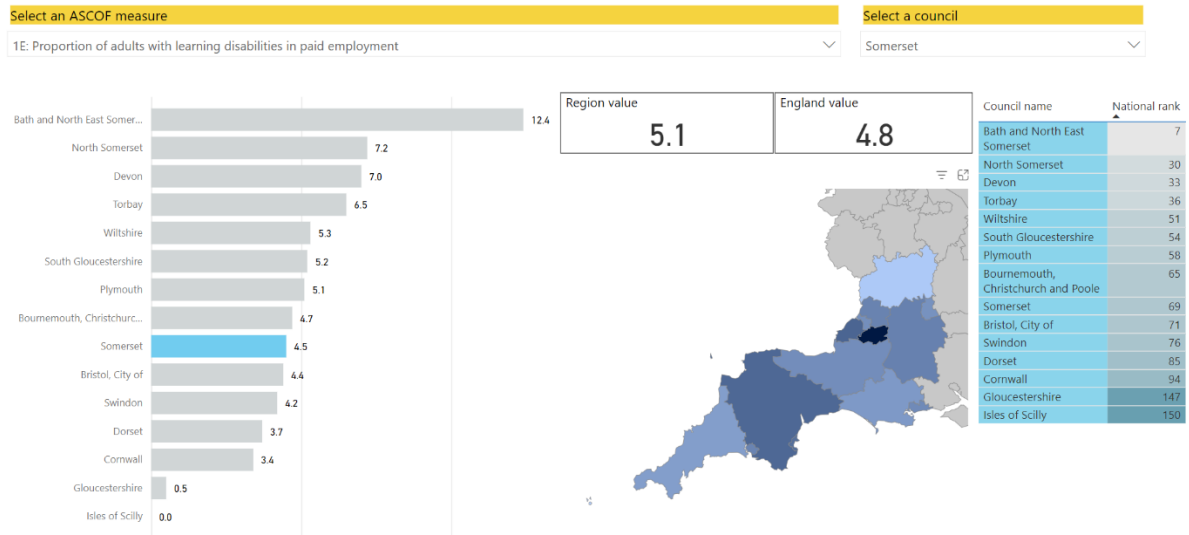
All providers that the Council commissions, including Discovery, have a responsibility to ensure that services are accessible to all and are provided in a way that meets the needs of the local population. Ethnicity must be considered through the protected characteristic of race. Levels of ethnicity are hard to measure due to ethnicity not being a single measure but a composite measure of many different factors that make up an individual or community. Also, the proportions of different ethnic groups in an area can change quickly.

The most reliable estimates for ethnicity within Somerset are the 2021 census figures, revealing that the vast majority of the resident Somerset population is White with only 3.6% from all other ethnic groups combined. 8.7% of the Somerset population were from an ethnic group other than White: British. NHS England South West observe that, "*Two decades of literature has acknowledged that the intersection of ethnicity and disability, two marginalised identities in society, results in compounded discrimination. Discrimination exacerbates inequalities in relation to health outcomes and healthcare among people from these groups.*" [‘We deserve better: Ethnic minorities with a learning disability and access to healthcare –summary of findings’ 2023 NHS Race and Health Observatory & University of Central Lancashire]

Census 2021 data informs us that more than 100,000 Somerset residents have their day-to-day activities limited to some extent due to disability or a long-term health condition. This represents 18.7% of Somerset residents, or nearly one in five. These individuals would meet the definition of being disabled under the Equality Act. A further 45,000 Somerset residents (7.9% of all residents) have a long-term health condition which does not limit their day-to-day activities. There were around 50,000 Somerset residents who were providing unpaid care to a friend or relative at the time of the 2021 census. Of those, 26,000 – or 30% - provide more than 50 hours of care each week, although it is reasonably assumed that this is an underestimate due to a decrease in self-reporting following the Covid pandemic. Research published by UCL's Institute of Health Equity in 2018 indicates that people with learning disabilities are more

likely to experience “low incomes, no work, poor housing, social isolation and loneliness, bullying and abuse” (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2018/nov/are-we-failing-people-learning-disabilities>)

Somerset’s provisional 2022/23 data (due to be published 7 December 2023): 4.5% of people the Council supports with a learning disability are in paid employment. By comparison (2021/2 figures): England: 4.8%, South West: 5.1%.



Other data that has been used includes national data extracted from the Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information (www.pansi.org.uk):

People aged 18-64 predicted to have a moderate or severe learning disability, and hence likely to be in receipt of services, by age in Somerset					
	2023	2025	2030	2035	2040
People aged 18-24 predicted to have a moderate or severe learning disability	211	213	240	246	233
People aged 25-34 predicted to have a moderate or severe learning disability	316	308	290	297	322
People aged 35-44 predicted to have a moderate or severe learning disability	393	405	419	410	390
People aged 45-54 predicted to have a moderate or severe learning disability	375	366	368	401	416

People aged 55-64 predicted to have a moderate or severe learning disability	429	438	420	383	386
Total population aged 18-64 predicted to have a moderate or severe learning disability	1,724	1,730	1,737	1,737	1,747

Data on the prevalence of people with learning disabilities on General practitioner registers published by NHS Digital ([Summary - NHS Digital](#)) has also been used:

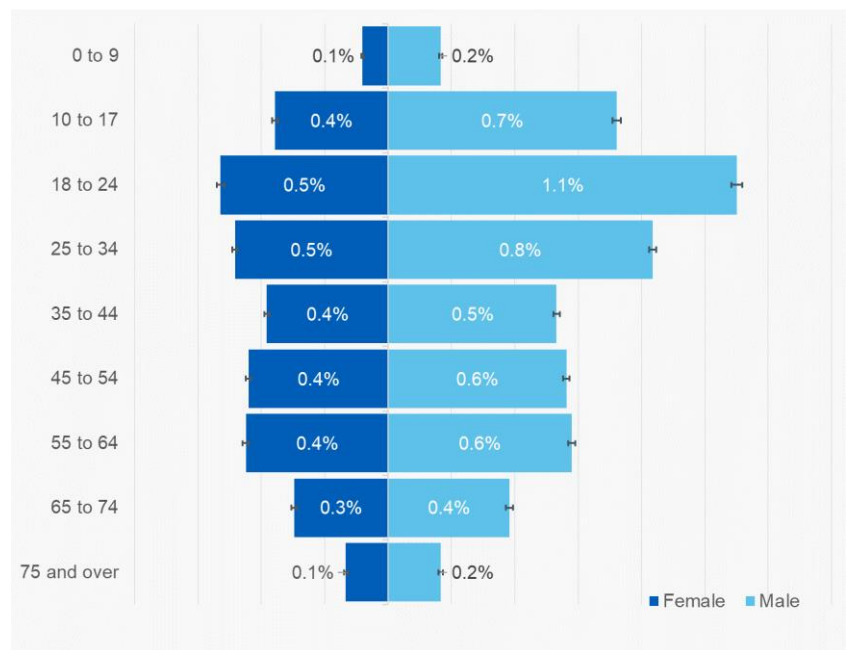


Figure 1: Proportion of the population listed on their general practice's Learning Disabilities Register, by age and gender, 2018-19

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

We have consulted Discovery as the provider of this service; however we have not yet had an opportunity to consult with the people who use this service yet. We know from data provide by Discovery that, as at October 2023, the age and breakdown of the people accessing their employment support service was as shown below, however it is important to note that this decision will impact on a wider group that is reflective of people living in our community as the people accessing this service is not static:

Of the 223 people supported by the Supported Employment Team as at October 2023:

Breakdown by gender:

- 2 – transgender
- 1 – other
- 2 – non-binary
- 70 – female
- 148 – male

Breakdown by age

- 17-24 – 158 – 46 are females; 108 are males; 1 is non-binary; 1 is Other; 2 are transgender
- 25-30 – 32 – 12 are females; 19 are males; 1 is non-binary
- 31-35 – 12 – 6 are females; 6 are males
- 36-40 – 7 – 7 are males
- 41-50 – 4 – 2 are females; 2 are males
- 51-58 – 9 – 4 are females; 5 are males

This decision would also impact on the staff who provide this service whose breakdown is as follows:

Breakdown by gender:

- Female – 12
- Male – 2

Breakdown by age:

- 25 & under – 0
- 25-34 – 2

- 35-44 – 5
- 45-54 – 5
- 55-64 – 2
- 65 and over - 0

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"> • A higher proportion of young people access this service, this is primarily young people transitioning/who have recently transitioned to adulthood where the purpose of this service is to increase their independence though enabling to gain and retain real, paid, employment. • People with learning disabilities who are in other age bands usually require additional support to gain employment having either previously triaged and failed to gain employment or have never been in the position to do so. • The decommissioning of this service would therefore directly impact people's opportunities to gain employment and be as independent as possible 	⊗	□	□

Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The employment support service commissioned from Discovery supports people with learning disabilities who are one of the most marginalised groups in society. The decommissioning of this service would therefore directly impact people who have a learning disability to have opportunities to gain employment and be as independent as possible 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impacts identified. The decommissioning of this service would not impact on people with this protected characteristic in a lesser or greater way. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and civil partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impacts identified. The decommissioning of this service would not impact on people with this protected characteristic in a lesser or greater way. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impacts identified. The decommissioning of this service would not impact on people with this protected characteristic in a lesser or greater way. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race and ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People from different backgrounds and of a different race may need to have information and support provided in a range of formats about this decision. In terms of the decision itself, the decommissioning of this service would not impact on people with this protected characteristic in a lesser or greater way. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Religion or belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impacts identified. The decommissioning of this service would not impact on people with this protected characteristic in a lesser or greater way. 	□	⊗	□
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National data on adults with learning disabilities shows that a higher proportion of males have a learning disability compared to females. The decommissioning of this service would therefore be more likely to directly impact on the opportunities of males with a learning disability to gain employment. It would also disproportionately impact on female staff given the make up of the staff group which provides this service. 	⊗	□	□
Sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impacts identified. The decommissioning of this service would not impact on people with this protected characteristic in a lesser or greater way. 	□	⊗	□
Armed Forces (including serving personnel, families and veterans)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impacts identified. The decommissioning of this service would not impact on serving personnel, families and veterans in a lesser or greater way. 	□	⊗	□
Other, e.g., carers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National research indicates that people with learning disabilities as are likely to experience low incomes Where someone with a learning disability is living and/or supported by with family carers they are more likely to be at home if not supported to gain/retain employment therefore likely requiring more support from unpaid carers 	⊗	□	□

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The decommissioning of this service would therefore be more likely to directly impact on those with low incomes and unpaid carers 			
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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
All individuals in receipt of this support and (where applicable) their family carers to have been triaged to identify if they need a Care Act review completed and if so, the prioritisation of that review. All high priority reviews to be completed by 31/03/2024 and all other reviews to be completed by 30/09/2024.	30/09/2024	Stephen Miles	Liaison with operational colleagues to ensure all individuals' needs are triaged, and where identified as necessary, reviewed	<input type="checkbox"/>

If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.

Not all negative impacts can be mitigated. While those people and/or their carers assessed as eligible for support commissioned to meet assessed eligible needs under the Care Act 2014 will be offered alternative support the impact on those who are not eligible for other forms of Council funded support at this time will be that their funded support ceases. In the longer term this decision will result in a reduction in the opportunities, independence, progression and incomes of people with learning disabilities living in Somerset, in particular those young people who become adults in future years.

Completed by:	Stephen Miles
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Date	17/11/2023
Signed off by:	
Date	21/11/23
Equality Lead sign off name:	
Equality Lead sign off date:	
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	
Review date:	

October 2023