

Appendix 3 - Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

Please read EIA guidelines when completing this form

1. Name of Service Area/Directorate

Name of Head of Service for area being assessed: Darryl Freeman (Corporate Director)
Directorate: Children and Young People
Individual(s) completing this assessment: Zoe Richards
Date assessment completed 30/08/23

2. What is being assessed

Activity being assessed (eg. policy, procedure, document, service redesign, strategy etc.)

Options to meet assessed need for residential care home provision in county for children and young people aged 11-18 and to explore options for delivery.

What is the aim, purpose and/or intended outcomes of this activity?

To ensure that we meet our statutory duties and have available sufficient capacity and placement options to meet the assessed needs of children within our care.

To ensure that no child should be placed out of area unless it is specified within their care plan and that any home offered should proactively meet their needs, working towards reunification or alternative family based care when safe to do so.

Name of lead for activity

Zoe Richards

Who will be affected by the development and implementation of this activity?

- Service users
- Patients
- Carers
- Visitors
- Staff
- Communities
- Other:

Is this:

- Review of an existing activity/policy
- New activity/policy
- Planning to withdraw or reduce a service, activity or presence?

What information and evidence have you reviewed to help inform this assessment? (name your sources, eg. demographic information for services/staff groups affected, complaints etc.)

The options appraisal and business case have been developed over the last six months and have been worked up via a group of professionals across finance, housing children social care and commissioning.

Costs associated with purchasing/ renting properties, maintenance and refurbishment were projected using live data. Costs associated with staffing were developed by finance using current staffing costs and were benchmarked against external recruitment adverts.

Demand for provision of residential homes has been projected from published data, spend analysis, and has been ratified through operational deep dive activity by senior operational managers. The aim of this intensive child level review was to understand how permanency could best be achieved and what placement arrangements would be needed to achieve the care plans in place. Significant progress is being made to ensure that all children who can be within their family network or within permanent family based homes are on a pathway to achieve this. For some young people however, this is not yet in their best interest and a quality residential home is what they need. As such operational managers have confirmed the need for a small number of homes that can work collaboratively with local services to promote outcomes in line with Herefordshire`s commitments and duties.

National and regional data was used to benchmark our understanding of sufficiency and to inform options appraisal including risks and opportunities.

Market engagement was undertaken at local and regional level to explore the appetite for procurement and to gain insight into challenges that providers faced.

Summary of engagement or consultation undertaken (eg. who and how have you engaged with, or why do you believe this is not required)

Engagement with young people has not been undertaken locally however the lead for corporate parenting has been able to reflect the feedback made available throughout consultation and engagement events.

If elected members are minded to approve any of the options to deliver new residential home we intend to seek out children and young people 11+ to work with us and inform the following:

- 1) Development of specification to include staffing, training, physical requirements, performance indicators and programmes to support preparation for next steps
- 2) Development of ITT questions to help shape our understanding of the proposal
- 3) Interview – panel membership with support and preparation
- 4) Engagement in ongoing review and monitoring
- 5) Young people who are offered a home within the provision will be enabled to be part of ongoing `home` management and will be encouraged to develop protocols for living within the home. It is expected that young people will be engaged to furnish their rooms and communal areas.

As part of the proposed procurement we would seek engagement from relevant local community networks and the police to inform any specification and location. Questions within ITT will seek to explore considerations for neighbourhood engagement, environmental impact and social value.

Summary of relevant findings

Data reports from Mosaic 1st April-30th June 2023 reported a total of 45 children and young people 11-17 (10.9% of the total CLA) were placed within residential provision. This is a reduction of 25% from 1 July -30 Sept 2022. This number includes disabled children, many of whom are placed in county following a successful engagement campaign with local providers. Other children may be placed in specialist homes out of county due to their specific care needs and would not be a suitable match for the proposed arrangements.

The options appraisal and subsequent business case indicate a need to develop in-house residential care homes for children with social and emotional needs. This would meet the need for some children to live in county, access schools and maintain family ties whilst benefitting from specialist support.

There is a projected need for children with complex trauma, to include multiple placement breakdowns, who cannot yet live in a family home. It is believed that developing an arrangement either as in –house or block procured will enable Children Services to work more effectively, promote outcomes and deliver better value for money.

Despite there being multiple providers in area, Herefordshire have struggled to place children as vacancies arise due to historic reputational concerns, timing of referrals to vacancies and the challenging market position that means authorities across the UK are competing for beds and are willing to pay whatever is asked. As such, prices are sharply increasing, providers are often refusing children with more complex needs and the quality of experience across care, education and health is reduced.

It is recommended that 2x2 bed homes are developed under one provider to offer maximum value and achieve maximum occupancy. Matching becomes more complicated the larger a home is and as such smaller homes are recommended. Modelling has assumed 80% occupancy allowing for effective planning and preparation to take place in order to achieve stability and avoid placement breakdown.

3. The impact of this activity

Please consider the potential impact of this activity (during development and implementation) on each of the equality groups outlined below. **Please tick one or more impact box below for each Equality Group and explain your rationale.** Please note it is possible for the potential impact to be both positive and negative within the same equality group and this should be recorded. Remember to consider the impact on staff, public, patients, carers, partner organisations, etc. in these equality groups.

Equality Group	Potential <u>positive</u> impact	Potential <u>neutral</u> impact	Potential <u>negative</u> impact	Please explain your reasons for any potential positive, neutral or negative impact identified
Age	X			Children and young people aged 11-18 will have increased options available to them if their assessed need is for residential care. Their education will be less disrupted and they will maintain local connection to access services such as housing post 18. Living locally will maintain friendship group and contact with family where appropriate.

Equality Group	Potential <u>positive</u> impact	Potential <u>neutral</u> impact	Potential <u>negative</u> impact	Please explain your reasons for any potential positive, neutral or negative impact identified
Disability		X		Analysis has indicated that there is no requirement to source additional residential care for disabled children and young people, as there is sufficient provision of quality and value locally.
Gender Reassignment	X			Recent permanency work has identified a number of children who are identifying as gay, lesbian, non-binary or transgender. As such, this provision would enable Herefordshire to meet their needs and provide support more effectively through clear expectations, specification and monitoring. We will ensure that all documentation is developed appropriately and training is in place.
Marriage & Civil Partnerships		X		This is for single children and young people under 18
Pregnancy & Maternity		X		This is for single children and young people under 18. Should any young person become pregnant or become a parent their needs would be assessed and appropriate support be given.
Race (including Travelling Communities and people of other nationalities)	X			This proposal seeks to develop sufficient provision in area to meet the assessed needs of children and young people who are in care. As such, this provision would enable Herefordshire to meet need and provide support more effectively through clear expectations, specification and monitoring. We will ensure that all documentation is developed appropriately and training is in place to reflect cultural and religious diversity. Provision will allow transition into, through and between services according to care plans.
Religion & Belief	X			This proposal seeks to develop sufficient provision in area to meet the assessed needs of children and young people who are in care. As such, this provision would enable Herefordshire to meet need and provide support more effectively through clear expectations, specification and monitoring. We will ensure that all documentation is developed appropriately and training is in place to reflect cultural and religious diversity. Provision will allow transition into, through and between services according to care plans.
Sex (including issues of safety and sexual violence)	X			This proposal seeks to develop sufficient provision in area to meet the assessed needs of children and young people who are in care. As such, this provision would enable Herefordshire to meet need and provide support more effectively through clear expectations, specification and monitoring. We will ensure that all documentation is developed appropriately and training is in place to reflect cultural and religious diversity. Provision will allow transition into,

Equality Group	Potential <u>positive</u> impact	Potential <u>neutral</u> impact	Potential <u>negative</u> impact	Please explain your reasons for any potential positive, neutral or negative impact identified
				through and between services according to care plans.
Sexual Orientation	X			This proposal seeks to develop sufficient provision in area to meet the assessed needs of children and young people who are in care. As such, this provision would enable Herefordshire to meet need and provide support more effectively through clear expectations, specification and monitoring. We will ensure that all documentation is developed appropriately and training is in place to reflect cultural and religious diversity. Provision will allow transition into, through and between services according to care plans.
Other Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Groups (eg. carers, care leavers, homeless, social/ economic deprivation, etc)	X			This strategy seeks to develop sufficient provision in area (where this is appropriate) to meet the assessed needs of children and young people who are in care or care leavers. Provision will allow transition into, through and between services according to care plans.
Health Inequalities (any preventable, unfair & unjust differences in health status between groups, populations or individuals that arise from the unequal distribution of social, environmental & economic conditions within societies)	X			<p>This strategy seeks to develop sufficient provision in area (where this is appropriate) to meet the assessed needs of children and young people who are in care or care leavers. Provision will allow transition into, through and between services according to care plans.</p> <p>Provision of support in area will enable young people to access consistent support i.e. from CAMHS avoiding cross boundary challenges.</p> <p>Children with EHCP will have oversight locally and will be able to access the range of educational arrangements including additional resource provision where appropriate.</p>

What actions will you take to mitigate any potential negative impacts?

Potential negative impact	Actions required to reduce/ eliminate negative impact	Who will lead on action?	Timeframe
NA			

Where an impact on any of the Equality Groups is realised after the implementation of the project/service/policy, the commissioners and/or providers of the project/service/policy will seek to minimise the impact and carry out a full review of this EIA.

4. Monitoring and review

How will you monitor these actions?

Ongoing monitoring of the service will be undertaken across Commissioning and Operational managers. KPI will be established and will inform improvement plans and the wider sufficiency report.

When will you review this EIA? (eg in a service redesign, this EIA should be revisited regularly throughout the design & implementation)

In line with any future procurement or contract extension

5. Equality Statement

- All public bodies have a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to set out arrangements to assess and consult on how their policies and functions impact on the nine protected characteristics.
- Herefordshire Council will challenge discrimination, promote equality, respect human rights, and design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, and population, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others.
- All staff are expected to deliver services and provide services and care in a manner which respects the individuality of service users, patients, carers etc, and as such treat them and members of the workforce respectfully, paying due regard to the 9 protected characteristics.

Signature of person completing EIA

Zoe Richards

Date signed

30/8/23