



Equality Impact Assessment

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and why does the County Council do them?

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) is an obligation within the [Equality Act 2010](#) ("the Act"), which asks public authorities, like Hampshire County Council, to give 'due regard' to equality considerations, in particular to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This includes assessing the impact of policies and practices on individuals and communities with a protected characteristic, as defined in the Act and some other specific groups. The County Council uses EIAs to ensure it has paid 'due regard' to equalities considerations when there are changes to a service or policy, a new project or certain decisions.

EIA author	Position & Department	Contact
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Title:	Children's residential care framework re-procurement
Related EIAs:	EIA Number: NA

EIA for Savings Programme:	No
Service affected	Children's Residential Care: Commissioned from the external provider market through a contractual framework mechanism.
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	<p>Hampshire County Council's Children's Services Directorate has a statutory duty to provide or procure placements for Children Looked after (Children in Care). This is set out in the Children Act (1989). This has since been strengthened by the introduction of Sufficiency Statutory Guidance (2010) and the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations (implementation was April 2011) This project is specifically in relation to residential care which is commissioned from the external market. Residential care provided by the County Council's in-house provision is not in scope of this project. Hampshire currently has c.1,900 children who are looked after, with approximately 180 of these children accommodated in external residential care homes. The percentage of children who are looked after has remained at a consistent 0.6% of the 0 – 19 population since 2018 indicating a direct correlation between children looked after and the total population. On this basis the expectation is that the number of looked after children will continue to increase, on the same trajectory of the total population numbers. The project will commission residential care, for children and young people, up to the age of 18, who are cared for by the County Council, this may include children with challenging behaviour or who have disabilities with complex healthcare needs, who may have experienced placement breakdowns, abuse, neglect, and loss and will be emotionally vulnerable. Providers must be able to provide specialist placements for step down from Residential placements or reunification (with family); staff must be experienced and skilled and able to provide additional support to ensure successful transitions and build resilience of children and young people and their family where relevant.</p>
New/changed service/policy/project	<p>Due to the expiration of the current framework which will terminate at the end of its 6-year term, in September 2024, the County Council will need to establish a new framework for the provision of children's residential care placements, which incorporates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 hours care and accommodation • Initial and ongoing assessment of needs • The provision of appropriate care and treatment as prescribed by health care professionals, including any sight, hearing or physical aids. • Clothing, equipment,

resources and toiletries • Support in accessing, participation and resources for schooling • Contact to promote, strengthen and sustain positive relationships • Pocket money, birthday and festival gifts • Transport requirements • Life skills and preparation for independence. The new children's residential framework will enable effective call off contracts for the provision of residential care placements from suppliers who have bid to join the framework; meet the minimum service requirements; who have had the appropriate due diligence checks undertaken and signed up to the relevant terms and conditions. The new residential framework will be subject to a full procurement exercise and will be compliant with the Public Contract Regulations (2015) and the County Council's Contract Standing Orders. It is anticipated that the new framework will have a term of up to 8 years. The new mechanism will operate in the same way as the current model, with each placement agreement called off from the framework and continuing until the need for those individual placements end, therefore there will be no impact on staff through this change.

Engagement

None

Equalities considerations - Impact Assessment

Age

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	The project will have a positive impact for both the children we care for and the staff who support them. The re-procurement of a children's residential care framework will ensure the continued availability of access to Residential Care Homes for the identification of the most

	<p>suitable, age appropriate, placements for the children we care for. These placements will be commissioned to deliver outcomes that are specific to the child's needs, including their educational outcomes, health and wellbeing. Residential care staff will act as advocates for the child(ren) and will ensure that any communication used with the child(ren) is appropriate to their age and ability. The provision of children's residential care is available to children we care for, up to their 18th birthday.. Placing a child through the framework means that the placement can be secured more quickly than spot purchasing, and therefore benefits the child.</p>
Mitigation	

Disability

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	<p>The project will have a positive impact for both the children we care for, and therefore, the staff who support them. The re-procurement of a children's residential care framework will ensure the continued availability of access to Residential Care Homes for the identification of the most suitable placements in meeting the individual physical, mental, learning, and emotional needs of the children we care for. Where children have complex needs arising from their disability, the residential care provider will work with the Council and other key professionals, including Adult Services to ensure that the young person's needs are being met as effectively as possible, whilst maximising opportunities for the child or young person to gain independence as they approach adulthood. This could include supporting the young person to use Technology Enabled Care (TEC) applications where they will promote independence.</p>
Mitigation	

Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Positive

Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	The project will have a positive impact for both the children we care for and therefore the staff who support them. The re-procurement of a children's residential care framework will ensure the continued availability of access to Residential Care Homes for the identification of the most suitable placements in meeting the individual needs of the children we care for, including any needs that arise from gender reassignment.
Mitigation	

Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	<p>The project will have a positive impact for both the children we care for and therefore the staff who support them. The re-procurement of a children's residential care framework will ensure the continued availability of access to Residential Care Homes for the identification of the most suitable placements in meeting the individual needs of the children we care for. Any child in residential care that was or became pregnant would be supported to ensure they accessed appropriate health and support pathways.</p> <p>The Framework will include a 'lot' specifically for residential parenting assessments for parents and their children requiring a placement for the purpose of conducting an assessment and monitoring of parenting capacity to respond to the child(ren)s needs and to safeguard their welfare. Parenting assessments including both support and education through a range of tools and techniques. A parenting assessment usually lasts 12 weeks however, there may be exceptions where a longer period is required.</p>
Mitigation	

Race

Impact on public	Positive
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Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	The project will have a positive impact for the children we care for and therefore the staff who support them. The re-procurement of a children's residential care framework will ensure the continued availability of access to Residential Care Homes for the identification of the most suitable placements in meeting the individual and cultural needs of the children we care for, particularly in the case of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
Mitigation	

Religion or Belief

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	The project will have a positive impact for the children we care for and therefore for the staff who support them. The re-procurement of a children's residential care framework will ensure the continued availability of access to Residential Care Homes for the identification of the most suitable placements in meeting the individual needs, including the religion or beliefs of the children we care for.
Mitigation	

Sex

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	

	The project will have a positive impact for the children we care for and therefore the staff who support them. The re-procurement of a children's residential care framework will ensure the continued availability of access to Residential Care Homes for the identification of the most suitable placements in meeting the individual needs of the children we care for, including any gender specific needs, requirements, or preferences.
Mitigation	

Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	The project will have a positive impact for the children we care for and therefore the staff who support them. The re-procurement of a children's residential care framework will ensure the continued availability of access to Residential Care Homes for the identification of the most suitable placements in meeting the individual needs of the children we care for, including their sexual orientation. Supplier of residential care are required to take account of individual needs and provide appropriate advocacy and support where required.
Mitigation	

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	This is not applicable to children's services as the legal age for marriage and civil partnerships is 18 years of age; Adulthood.

Mitigation	
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Poverty

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	<p>The project will have a positive impact for both the children we care for and therefore the staff who support them. The re-procurement of a children’s residential care framework will ensure the continued availability of access to Residential Care Homes for the identification of the most suitable placements in meeting the individual needs of the children we care for. Research suggests that children in poverty may be more likely to become children we care for and are less like to achieve their full education potential. Through establishing contractual arrangements which are outcomes focused residential placements suppliers will be monitored on their ability to nurture and support the progress of the children within their care.</p>
Mitigation	

Rurality

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	<p>The project will have a positive impact for the children we care for and therefore the staff who support them. The re-procurement of a children’s residential care framework will ensure the continued availability of access to Residential Care Homes for the identification of the most suitable placements, including locations, in meeting the individual needs of the children we care for. When finding the right residential placement for children, where appropriate, the council aims to commission services that reduce the number of children in care who are placed far from their home areas, thus reducing the impacts of children needing to travel excessively to access essential services and to maintain their established networks. Location assessments are completed by children’s residential homes to consider location vulnerabilities and appropriate access communities.</p>

Mitigation	
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Geographical Impact:All Hampshire

Equality Statement

Additional information:

None

Overview Statement:

A summary assessment to show that due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been paid, which is undertaken when a full EIA is not needed:

EIA reference number: 00486

Date of production of EIA for publication: 15/11/2023