

APPENDIX 3 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)

POLICY/PROPOSAL:	Provision of Independent Reviewing Officer for Children Looked After and annual Foster Carer reviews
DEPARTMENT:	Children and Young People
TEAM:	Commissioning and Resources, Forward Planning, Performance and Partnerships Service
LEAD OFFICER:	Sonya Kalyniak, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Kelli Eboji, Head of LAC and Permanency Michelle Gwyther, Head of Forward Planning Performance and Partnerships
DATE:	08/3/2024

NB: Please ensure you have read the accompanying EA guidance and instructions in full.

SECTION A – INITIAL SCREENING

1. Please provide a description of the policy, proposal, change or initiative, and a summary its objectives and the intended results.

This EIA is in relation to the procurement of a contract Provision of statutory Children Looked After Reviews - Independent Reviewing Officer and annual Foster Carer reviews.

The current provision is a mixture of both in-house consisting of 2 in-house IROs and commissioned services from Aidhour Limited to support the Local Authority deliver the statutory responsibilities as required under the Children Act 1989, the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations (2010) and Guidance April 2011. The Council's intention is to recruit two further in-house IROs in house and tender for a service to deliver the remaining reviews.

The National Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Handbook sets out the expectations of the role. The Independent Reviewing Officer's (IRO) primary function is to provide expert and independent quality assurance on the Local Authority's care planning and reviewing process for children and young people looked after (CLA) by Brent. This duty is executed through highlighting when positive outcomes are achieved for the CLA and challenging drift or delay in a child's care plan.

The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 outline how fostering service providers must review the approval of each foster parent annually. The Foster Carer Reviewing Officer (FCRO) will conduct reviews with foster carers once a year, with a view to ascertaining the suitability of the Foster Carer and their capacity of demonstrating competence in meeting the

needs of looked after children, in line with the Fostering Regulations and Fostering national minimum standards.

2. Who may be affected by this policy or proposal?

Children and Young People
 Parents/Carers/guardians/
 Foster carers
 Practitioners working with Children Looked After

3. Is there relevance to equality and the council's public sector equality duty? If your answer is no, you must provide an explanation.

Yes

4. Please indicate with an "X" the potential impact of the policy or proposal on groups with each protected characteristic. Carefully consider if the proposal will impact on people in different ways as a result of their characteristics.

Characteristic	IMPACT		
	Positive	Neutral/None	Negative
Age	x		
Sex	x		
Race	x		
Disability	x		
Sexual orientation	x		
Gender reassignment	x		
Religion or belief	x		
Pregnancy or maternity	x		
Marriage	x		

5. Please complete **each row** of the checklist with an "X".

SCREENING CHECKLIST		
	YES	NO
Have you established that the policy or proposal <i>is</i> relevant to the council's public sector equality duty?	x	
Does the policy or proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?	x	
Would the policy or proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?	x	

Has the potential for negative or positive equality impacts been identified with this policy or proposal?		X
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**If you have answered YES to ANY of the above, then proceed to section B.
If you have answered NO to ALL of the above, then proceed straight to section D.**

SECTION B – IMPACTS ANALYSIS

1. Outline what information and evidence have you gathered and considered for this analysis. If there is little, then explain your judgements in detail and your plans to validate them with evidence. If you have monitoring information available, include it here.

As of 29 February 2024, the total number of Children Looked After was 298 of which 106 were in Borough and 192 were out of Borough. On average 800 Children Looked After reviews are carried out each year

As of 29 February 2024, the total number of current approved Brent Foster Carers is 86 of which 52 approved Brent carers are in Borough and 34 out of Borough. Reviews take place once a year and on average 90 fostering reviews are undertaken and expected annually.

2. For each “protected characteristic” provide details of all the potential or known impacts identified, both positive and negative, and explain how you have reached these conclusions based on the information and evidence listed above. Where appropriate state “not applicable”.

AGE	
Details of impacts identified	The service will provide statutory Children Looked After Reviews and annual Foster Carer reviews and will impact equally on all Children Looked After and Brent approved Foster Carers irrespective of age.
DISABILITY	
Details of impacts identified	The service will provide statutory Children Looked After Reviews and annual Foster Carer reviews and is intended to support positive outcomes for Children Looked After irrespective of disability.
RACE	
Details of impacts identified	The service will provide statutory Children Looked After Reviews and annual Foster Carer reviews and is intended to support positive outcomes for Children Looked After irrespective of race.
SEX	
Details of impacts identified	The service will provide statutory Children Looked After Reviews and annual Foster Carer reviews and is intended to support positive outcomes for Children Looked After irrespective of sex.
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	
Details of impacts identified	The service will provide statutory Children Looked After Reviews and annual Foster Carer reviews and is intended to support positive outcomes for Children Looked After irrespective of sexual orientation.

PREGANCY AND MATERNITY	
Details of impacts identified	The service will provide statutory Children Looked After Reviews and annual Foster Carer reviews and is intended to support positive outcomes for Children Looked After irrespective of pregnancy and maternity
RELIGION OR BELIEF	
Details of impacts identified	The service will provide statutory Children Looked After Reviews annual Foster Carer reviews and is intended to support positive outcomes for Children Looked After irrespective of religion or belief.
GENDER REASSIGNMENT	
Details of impacts identified	The service will provide statutory Children Looked After Reviews annual Foster Carer reviews and is intended to support positive outcomes for Children Looked After irrespective of gender reassignment.
MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	
Details of impacts identified	The service will provide statutory Children Looked After Reviews annual Foster Carer reviews and is intended to support positive outcomes for Children Looked After irrespective of marriage and civil partnership

3. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010?

No

4. Were the participants in any engagement initiatives representative of the people who will be affected by your proposal and is further engagement required?

Consultation has been undertaken with internal stakeholders including Children and Young People services, Care in action, foster carers via the foster carers forum, feedback from Independent Reviewing Officers, Social Workers and Managers

Young people will be trained to participate in the formal tender evaluation process and this will inform the outcome of contract award.

Service user feedback about the current provider has been reviewed and incorporated into service development.

5. Please detail any areas identified as requiring further data or detailed analysis.

N/A

6. If, following your action plan, negative impacts will or may remain, please explain how these can be justified?

This service will align with other support services to ensure positive outcomes for Children Looked After and if any negative impacts are identified, these will be collectively addressed.

7. Outline how you will monitor the actual, ongoing impact of the policy or proposal?

Robust contract monitoring processes will be in place to monitor outcomes and impacts. This includes regular feedback from service users, monitoring complaints and compliments received, service data analysis and contract monitoring meetings.

SECTION C - CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis above, please detail your overall conclusions. State if any mitigating actions are required to alleviate negative impacts, what these are and what the desired outcomes will be. If positive equality impacts have been identified, consider what actions you can take to enhance them. If you have decided to justify and continue with the policy despite negative equality impacts, provide your justification. If you are to stop the policy, explain why.

Any provider will be required to maintain diversity monitoring information which will be reviewed as part of the quarterly contract monitoring processes and will inform the future planning of services.

Approaches to consultation and engagement will continue to be reviewed with the provider to enhance local services.

SECTION D – RESULT

Please select one of the following options. Mark with an "X".

A	CONTINUE WITH THE POLICY/PROPOSAL UNCHANGED	X
B	JUSTIFY AND CONTINUE THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
C	CHANGE / ADJUST THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	
D	STOP OR ABANDON THE POLICY/PROPOSAL	

SECTION E - ACTION PLAN

This will help you monitor the steps you have identified to reduce the negative impacts (or increase the positive); monitor actual or ongoing impacts; plan reviews and any further engagement or analysis required.

Action	Expected outcome	Officer	Completion Date
Establish a clear implementation plan and contract review plan, working with the stakeholders	To mitigate any identified negative impacts	Sonya Kalyniak, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Kelli Eboji, Head of LAC and Permanency Yasin Patel Commissioning and Market Insight Service Manager	July 2024

SECTION F – SIGN OFF

Please ensure this section is signed and dated.

OFFICER:	Tanuja Saujani Commissioning Manager
REVIEWING OFFICER:	Yasin Patel Service Manager
HEAD OF SERVICE:	Sonya Kalyniak, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Kelli Eboji, Head of LAC and Permanency