

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

This document demonstrates how the council is meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010, by giving due regard to the requirement to: eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and promote good relations.

### 1. Background

Directorate	Children's Services
Service area	Integrated Children and Families Commissioning Hub
Title of the activity being assessed i.e., the strategy, plan, policy, or service	<b><i>28 Day Fostering and Fostering PACE Bed and Remand Bed provision</i></b>
Brief outline of the proposal(s)	<p>This paper outlines Gloucestershire's ambition to build on the success of the 28 Day Fostering and fostering PACE bed provision, by proposing plans to re-commission an expanded service to young people. The re-model is based on two elements with a contract for each:</p> <p><b>28 Day Foster Homes: for Children in Care</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The aim will be to provide 12 short term foster homes within Gloucestershire, on an emergency basis for up to 28 days</p> <p><b>Fostering PACE BEDs</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">To provide 3 Emergency PACE beds for young people who are being investigated by the Police</p> <p><b>REMAND Fostering Beds</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">To provide 3 Remand Fostering beds for young people who remanded by the courts</p>
Who is affected by the proposals?	<p>Service users <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workforce <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other, please specify:</p>
Decision to be taken and decision maker	Cabinet to approve the two contracts proposed for Emergency 28 Day Fostering Placements and for 3 Emergency PACE fostering beds and 3 Remand

	Foster Beds. A paper is due to go to Cabinet in November 2022.
Person(s) responsible for completing this assessment	Christopher Bush Head of Service, Placements Commissioning Team
Date of this assessment	11/04/2022 revised 04/10/2022

## 2. Information Gathering

Briefly outline your approach to consultation and engagement, together with details of any other information and data sources you have utilised:

Research, Consultation and Engagement	
Service users	<p>This proposal is based on the outcome success of the 28 Day Emergency Fostering pilot programme which has been provided by the Independent Fostering Agency Five Rivers. They have provided this service which has offered security and stability for some young people who have only recently been admitted to care, or who have needed stability in their placement history.</p> <p>The in-house Fostering Service and the Independent Fostering Agency Service are both under pressure from demand. The high number of children starting to be looked after, and the number of moves has added to the volume of requests being dealt with by the fostering services and the Placement Team. This has inevitably made it harder to match children to appropriate homes with short-term arrangements often used which inevitably bring a subsequent move.</p> <p>Emergency and same day requests pose a particular challenge to the Placements Team. During the calendar year 2020 there were 254 such requests, around one in four of the total, and equivalent to around 5 per week on average. It is for this reason that a contract which provides local fostering provision when young people are new to care, or a placement will be very beneficial</p> <p>Many children are placed in foster care outside Gloucestershire and we intend that through the provision of this fostering service in Gloucestershire the children will be able to remain in contact with their families and friends, having provision in county allows them to preserve strong community connectedness.</p> <p>We will use some children's care experienced Ambassadors to inform and advise on the project to develop the new contracts</p>

Workforce	The successful provider that is awarded the contract for the running of the 28 Day Emergency Fostering provision, the Remand Fostering and the PACE bed service will be expected to provide evidence of their organisation's commitment to equality within the workforce. This can be demonstrated through evidence of appropriate staff professional development and training.
Partners	N/A
Other	N/A

### 3. Equality Assessment

Briefly explain your assessment of the impact of the proposed activity on the protected characteristics below. This section evidences how the council is giving due regard to the three aims of the general equality duty, which are to: eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and promote good relations.

Protected Characteristic	Service Users	Workforce
Age	<p>This accommodation will be for young people aged 0 - 18 years old. The intended age range of service users will be reflected in the tender documents and provider's responses will need to consider this.</p> <p>The proposed procurement of the service will work with the provider to address the key messages which were identified as part of the consultation exercise undertaken in 2021 with young people in care, in relation to their views being heard. These include the need to address the key messages which young people in care have voiced which about the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feel valued,</li> <li>• Feel Safe</li> <li>• Understand what is happening</li> <li>• Develop the right skills for their journey</li> <li>• Ensure there is better matching between themselves and foster carers</li> <li>• Reduce the need to move foster carers.</li> </ul>	The required workforce will need to be highly skilled in working with this age group.

	<p>As part of the procurement we will be exploring options to achieve better outcomes for matching young people and their foster carers to find the right placement.</p> <p>We will also work with the children's care experienced Ambassadors to inform and advise on the project to develop the new contracts to meet the needs of young people.</p>	
Disability	<p>These placements are for young people who have experienced complex trauma, therefore the foster carers ability to identify and support these children in short term placements is essential. It is imperative that the needs of the individuals will be catered for by the provider.</p> <p>The cohort of young people that may use the 28 Day Emergency Fostering Service will have varying needs, emotional well-being and mental health needs. The foster home will be able to access the relevant support to meet needs</p> <p>The PACE Bed contract is very short term (usual 24 Hours) and will need to be sensitive to trauma and distress of the young person and access support to meet needs</p> <p>Remand Foster care can go on for some weeks or months and supportive foster carers when a young person cannot be at home with their family will be very supportive</p>	<p>The provider will need to demonstrate a clear track record of working with young people who have experienced extreme and complex Trauma</p> <p>Also, the provider will need to provide any training for Trauma informed care.</p>
Sex	<p>The overall population split by sex in Gloucestershire is slightly skewed towards females, with males making up 49.1% of the population and females account for 50.9%.</p>	<p>The successful provider will be expected to adhere to GCC anti-</p>

	<p>This situation is also reflected at district, regional and national levels. It is recommended that specific consideration is given to the design of the fostering service to reflect and be sensitive to the gender profile of service users.</p>	<p>discriminatory policies and not employ staff on the basis of their sex.</p>
Race	<p>In 2017 there were approximately 20% of children from minority ethnic backgrounds which is an increase from around 12% in 2013. This is a 67% increase over 5 years and is an over representation compared to the local population.</p> <p>A key determinant for fostered children in each home will be achieving the most appropriate match of young people rather than the race of the individual. As part of the specification there will be an expectation of an openness to of the whole fostering service to reflect the sex and race of the young people accessing the service.</p>	<p>The successful provider must demonstrate their commitment to anti-racism. GCC will require evidence that the Provider's anti-racism policy. GCC Commissioning will also require evidence of the provider's efforts to actively reduce bias through training along with embedding processes, policies and expectations that help create a culture rooted in diversity and inclusion and have clear robust disciplinary policies for any violations. The provider will be expected to demonstrate their commitment to recruiting a staff team that reflects the cultural diversity of our Children in care.</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>Children's services do not collect data against certain protected characteristics of young people, for example sexual orientation or gender reassignment status. There are no official estimates of gender reassignment at either national or local level.</p> <p>However, the provider must create an environment that recognises all forms gender identity.</p>	<p>Managers must create an environment that is accepting of all gender identities and recognise that some young people and employees may have different needs.</p>

<p>Marriage &amp; civil partnership</p>	<p>Children's services do not collect data against certain protected characteristics of young people, for example marriage and civil partnership.</p>	<p>No significant impact identified</p>
<p>Pregnancy &amp; maternity</p>	<p>Children services do not routinely report the number of young people who are pregnant given the possibility of that information being used to identify the young person concerned. The needs of individual children and young people will be reflected in the service specification for the tender and on placement.</p>	<p>The successful provider must demonstrate a track record of working with young people who are pregnant or who have maternity status.</p>
<p>Religion and/or belief</p>	<p>As this strategy covers all young people those with all religions and beliefs will be represented at population levels. According to the 2011 Census, 63.5% of residents in Gloucestershire were Christian, making it the most common religion. This was followed by no religion which accounts for 26.7% of the total population. Those aged 0-18 are more likely to report no religion than older age groups. This trend is reflected at a regional, national and district level. The needs of individual children and young people will be reflected in the service specification for the tender and in the fostering placements as part of matching where appropriate.</p>	<p>The successful provider will be expected in their tender to evidence successful provision of services for young people and staff with differing religious beliefs.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation</p>	<p>Children's services do not collect data against certain protected characteristics of young people, for example sexual orientation or gender reassignment status.</p> <p>The needs of individual children and young people will be reflected in the service specification for the tender and on placement. The successful provider will be expected to support and promote LGBTQ+ work as part of the core equality principles that are shared throughout GCC.</p> <p>A key determinant for fostered children in each home will be achieving the most appropriate match of young people rather than the sex of the individual.</p>	<p>The successful provider will be expected to provide a working environment that is conducive and supportive of LGBTQ+ equality principles. The provider must assure equal rights to paternity leave, adoption leave, parental leave, shared parental leave, the right to request flexible working rights and the right to time off work to care for dependants.</p>

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#### 4. Completed Actions

Set out how the proposed activity has already been amended following the equality assessment, to maximise the positive impact or minimise the negative impact:

Change	Reason for Change
We will use some children's care experienced Ambassadors to inform and advise on the project to develop the new contracts. This will enable them to provide suggestions/ comments at all stages of the project.	Representatives of care experienced young people will convey the views and opinions of the young people based on their real-life experience of fostering. This is expected to be instrumental in further improving the service.

#### 5. Planned Actions

Set out improvements that will be undertaken, following the equality assessment, to further maximise the positive impact or minimise the negative impact:

Potential impact (positive or negative)	Action	By when	Owner
Positive	Significant positive outcomes of the 28 Day/Emergency Pilot Scheme with Five Rivers have been identified. These elements will be replicated in the new contract.	Ongoing	Wendy Williams
Positive	The PACE Bed service is under constant demand. We plan that the expansion of the service will allow young people to remain in the community where appropriate	Ongoing	Wendy Williams
Positive	The Remand Foster bed service will offer a model of family support for young people being processed by the courts who cannot remain in their family home. This may be to protect them from risks ( ie gang membership or county lines)	ongoing	Wendy Williams


Positive	The successful provider must be able to demonstrate and implement from the contract commencement the expected equalities expectations as set out in this EIA by GCC.	Ongoing	Wendy Williams
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## 6. Monitoring and review

The following processes/actions will be put in place to keep this 'activity' under review:
<p>There will be regular project meetings to monitor the progress of the project.</p> <p>Feedback will be given at Senior Leadership Meetings.</p> <p>Comments from young people and staff will be used to monitor the success of a) the 28 Day Emergency Fostering Provision and b) the Emergency PACE Fostering Provision.</p>

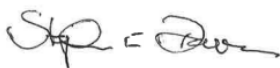
## 7. Officer / Decision-maker Sign off

Officer: By signing this statement off as complete you are confirming that 'you' have examined sufficient information across all the protected characteristics and used that information to show due regard to the three aims of the general duty. This has informed the development of the activity

Signature of Senior Officer	
Name of Senior Officer	Wendy Williams
Date	10/11/2022

Decision maker: I am in agreement that sufficient information and analysis has been used to inform the development of this 'activity' and that any proposed improvement actions are appropriate, and I confirm that I, as the decision maker, have been able to show due regard to the needs set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.



Signature of decision maker	
Name of decision maker	Cllr Stephen Davies for Children's Safeguarding and Early Years
Date	14.11.22

## 8. Publication

If this document accompanies a Cabinet report or an Individual Cabinet Member (ICM) decision report it will be published, as part of the report publication process, on the GCC website. If this statement is not to be submitted with a Cabinet report or an Individual Cabinet Member (ICM) decision report, please maintain a copy for your own records that can be retrieved for internal review and also in case of future challenge.

## Appendix 1 – Service User Data

Details of service users affected by the proposed activity

Protected Characteristic	Service User Data and Information
Age <i>percentage/profile of service user ages</i>	Service users accessing this accommodation will be between 0-18.
Disability <i>percentage/profile of service users who have a disability</i>	Some of the most complex children and young people are those with a disability. At present Children Services does not routinely report on the number of Children Looked After with a disability.

<p>Sex <i>percentage/profile of service users who are male and who are female</i></p>	<p>The overall population split by sex in Gloucestershire is slightly skewed towards females, with males making up 49.1% of the population and females accounting for 50.9%.</p>
<p>Race <i>percentage/profile of service users who are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds</i></p>	<p>In 2017 there were approximately 20% of children from minority ethnic backgrounds which is an increase from around 12% in 2013. This is a 67% increase over 5 years and is an over representation compared to the local population.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment <i>percentage/profile of service users who have indicated they are transgender</i></p>	<p>Children's services do not collect data against certain protected characteristics of young people, for example sexual orientation or gender reassignment status. There are no official estimates of gender reassignment at either national or local level.</p>
<p>Marriage &amp; civil partnership <i>percentage/profile of service users who are married or in a civil partnership</i></p>	<p>Children's services do not collect data against certain protected characteristics of young people, for example marriage and civil partnership.</p>
<p>Pregnancy &amp; maternity <i>percentage/profile of service users who are female and who are pregnant or on a maternity leave</i></p>	<p>Children services do not routinely report the number of young people who are pregnant given the possibility of that information being used to identify the particular young person concerned. The needs of individual children and young people will be reflected in the service specification for the tender and on placement.</p>
<p>Religion and/or belief <i>percentage/profile of service users' religious beliefs</i></p>	<p>As this strategy covers all young people those with all religions and beliefs will be represented at population levels. According to the 2011 Census, 63.5% of residents in Gloucestershire were Christian, making it the most common religion. This was followed by no religion which accounts for 26.7% of the total population. Those aged 0-19 are more likely to report no religion than older age groups. This trend is reflected at a regional, national and district level. The needs of individual children and young people will be reflected in the service specification for the tender and on placement. Potential providers will be asked in the tender process to evidence successful provision of services for young people and staff with differing religious beliefs.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation <i>percentage/profile of service users who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual</i></p>	<p>Children's services do not collect data against certain protected characteristics of young people, for example sexual orientation or gender reassignment status. The needs of individual children and young people will be reflected in the service specification for the tender and on placement.</p>

	Potential providers will be asked in the tender process to evidence successful provision of services for young people and staff with support around sexual orientation within placements.
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## Appendix 2 – GCC Workforce Data

Details of Gloucestershire County Council staff affected by the proposed activity

Protected Characteristic	Total number of GCC staff affected:
Age	N/A
Disability	N/A
Sex	N/A
Race	N/A
Gender reassignment	N/A
Marriage & civil partnership	N/A
Pregnancy & maternity	N/A
Religion and/or belief	N/A
Sexual orientation	N/A

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