

Equality Impact Assessment

Stage 1 Details of the proposal

Name of service	Barnsley Adoption Service
Directorate	People
Name of officer responsible for EIA	Deborah Mercer
Name of senior sponsor	Melanie John-Ross
Description / purpose of proposal	The Barnsley Adoption Service is to become a part of the One Adoption South Regional Adoption Agency from January 2021
Date EIA started	January 2021
Assessment Review date	January 2022

Stage 2 - About the proposal

What is being proposed?	The Barnsley Adoption Service will join with the Adoption Services in Sheffield, Rotherham and Doncaster to jointly recruit, assess and approve potential adopters and match and place children needing adoptive placements. The joint arrangements will begin from January 2021
Why is the proposal required?	Although the practice and processes for recruiting adopters and placing children will remain essentially the same the new Regional Adoption Agency will be operating on a larger scale across a larger and more diverse geographical area.

What will this proposal mean for customers?

This will mean that the adoption service will be more consistent across the four local authorities and will have increased capacity to engage with customers across a broader area and recruit more adopters to meet the need. For children it will mean greater access to a more diverse pool of adopters.

Stage 3 - Preliminary screening process

Use the Preliminary screening questions to decide whether a full EIA is required

- Yes - EIA required (go to next section)
 No – EIA not required (provide rationale below including name of E&I Officer consulted with)

Stage 4 - Scoping exercise - What do we know?

Data: Generic demographics

What generic data do you know?

Each local authority has access to its own demographic data. Adoption is an area which is well-mapped in terms of OFSTED returns and returns to the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board. All data has been pooled across the Local Authorities to support the design of the new service.

Data: Service data / feedback

What equalities knowledge do you already know about the service/location/policy/contract?

Adoption is open to everyone regardless of background or personal circumstances. However it is an area that many people believe they are automatically barred from. All Adoption Agencies are aware of the need to open up the service and ensure that everyone feels able to apply which means considering where adverts are placed, how the message is delivered, where introduction meetings are held and so on.

Data: Previous / similar EIA's

Has there already been an EIA on all or part of this before, or something related? If so, what were the main issues and actions it identified?

There is an existing EIA for the Barnsley Adoption Service. This EIA extends the same principles across South Yorkshire and links with EIAs in each of the component Local Authorities.

Data: Formal consultation

What information has been gathered from formal consultation?

The planning for the RAA has now continued for a number of years. During that time there has been full consultation with staff and adopters. In respect of an Equality Impact the feedback has been that although adoption is open to everyone the public image of adopters in England is a white, middle-class, heterosexual couple. Efforts are made all the time to dispel this image and in recent years there has been an increase in adopters from more diverse backgrounds particularly an increase in single and same-sex adopters

Stage 5 - Potential impact on different groups

Considering the evidence above, state the likely impact the proposal will have on people with different protected characteristics

(state if negative impact is substantial and highlight with **red text**)

Negative (and potentially positive) impacts identified will need to form part of your action plan.

Protected characteristic	Negative '-'	Positive '+'	No impact	Don't know	Details
Sex		X			One of the explicit aims of the new adoption agency will be to ensure that all suitable candidates are able to adopt regardless of any specific protected characteristics. Equally all children who require and adoptive placement are placed regardless of any specific protected characteristics.
Age		X			One of the explicit aims of the new adoption agency will be to ensure that all suitable candidates are able to adopt regardless of any specific protected characteristics. Equally all children who require and adoptive placement are placed regardless of any specific protected characteristics.
Disabled <i>Learning disability, Physical disability, Sensory Impairment, Deaf People ,invisible illness, Mental Health etc</i>		X			One of the explicit aims of the new adoption agency will be to ensure that all suitable candidates are able to adopt regardless of any specific protected characteristics. Equally all children who require and adoptive placement are placed regardless of any specific protected characteristics.
Race		X			One of the explicit aims of the new adoption agency will be to ensure that all suitable

					<p>candidates are able to adopt regardless of any specific protected characteristics.</p> <p>Equally all children who require and adoptive placement are placed regardless of any specific protected characteristics.</p>
Religion & Belief		X			<p>One of the explicit aims of the new adoption agency will be to ensure that all suitable candidates are able to adopt regardless of any specific protected characteristics.</p> <p>Equally all children who require and adoptive placement are placed regardless of any specific protected characteristics.</p>
Sexual orientation		X			<p>One of the explicit aims of the new adoption agency will be to ensure that all suitable candidates are able to adopt regardless of any specific protected characteristics.</p> <p>Equally all children who require and adoptive placement are placed regardless of any specific protected characteristics.</p>
Gender Reassignment		X			<p>One of the explicit aims of the new adoption agency will be to ensure that all suitable candidates are able to adopt regardless of any specific protected characteristics.</p> <p>Equally all children who require and adoptive placement are placed regardless of any specific protected characteristics.</p>
Marriage / civil partnership		N/A			
Pregnancy / maternity					

Other groups you may want to consider					
	Negative	Positive	No impact	Don't know	Details
Ex services		X			One of the explicit aims of the new adoption agency will be to ensure that all suitable candidates are able to adopt regardless of any background.
Lower socio-economic		X			One of the explicit aims of the new adoption agency will be to ensure that all suitable candidates are able to adopt regardless of their socio-economic circumstances.
Other ...					

Stage 6 - BMBC Minimum access standards

If the proposal relates to the delivery of a new service, please refer to the Customer minimum access standards self-assessment (found at)

If not, move to Stage 7.

Please use the action plan to be taken to ensure the new service complies with reasonable adjustments for disabled people.

Not yet live

- The proposal will meet the minimum access standards.
 The proposal will not meet the minimum access standards. –provide rationale below.

Stage 7 – Action plan

To improve your knowledge about the equality impact . . .

Actions could include: community engagement with affected groups, analysis of performance data, service equality monitoring, stakeholder focus group etc.

Action we will take:	Lead Officer	Completion date
The new Agency will cover a far greater range of communities than the current Barnsley Adoption Service. We will bring together data from across the Local Authorities to inform recruitment and marketing of the adoption service	Stephanie Evans/Jon Banwell	January 2021
There are adopter stakeholder groups across the new geographical area. These will be used to generate ideas for engaging with diverse groups and expanding the range of adopters available	Stephanie Evans/Jon Banwell	January 2021

To improve or mitigate the equality impact . . .

Actions could include: altering the policy to protect affected group, limiting scope of proposed change, reviewing actual impact in future, phasing-in changes over period of time, monitor service provider performance indicators, etc.

Action we will take:	Lead Officer	Completion date
The equality impact should be positive and we will use our combined knowledge to improve	Stephanie Evans/Jon Banwell	April 2021

the marketing and awareness raising across South Yorkshire		

To meet the minimum access standards . . .(if relevant)

Actions could include: running focus group with disability forum, amend tender specification, amend business plan to request extra ‘accessibility’ funding, produce separate MAS action plan, etc.

Action we will take:	Completion date
Not yet live	

Stage 8 – Assessment findings

Please summarise how different protected groups are likely to be affected

Summary of equality impact	<p>Across the Regional Adoption Agency we will be aiming to increase the number of adopters from across the range of protected groups but particularly from different races and with differing religious beliefs to meet the needs of children requiring new families. We will also be seeking to increase the number of single or same sex couples wanting to adopt.</p> <p>We will seek to ensure that all children requiring an adoptive family are placed regardless of any specific protected characteristics</p>
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Summary of next steps	<p>Establish the Regional Adoption Agency and combine knowledge and experience from across the 4 local authorities to ensure that we achieve access to a wider range of adopters.</p>
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Signature (officer responsible for EIA) Date	Deborah Mercer
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**** EIA now complete ****

Stage 9 – Assessment Review

(This is the post implementation review of the EIA based on date in Stage 1 if applicable)

What information did you obtain and what does that tell us about equality of outcomes for different groups?

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