

# Equality Impact Assessment

## Stage 1 Details of the proposal

<b>Name of service</b> <b>Directorate</b>	Children's Social Care and Safeguarding (Children's Services)
<b>Name of officer responsible for EIA</b> <b>Name of senior sponsor</b>	Interim Head of Children in Care Services (Children's Social Care and Safeguarding)
<b>Description / purpose of proposal</b>	Barnsley MBC as a 'Fostering Friendly' Employer
<b>Date EIA started</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2022
<b>Assessment Review date</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2023

## Stage 2 - About the proposal

<b>What is being proposed?</b>	The proposal for Barnsley MBC to become a ' <i>Fostering Friendly</i> ' employer is to be presented for consideration by Cabinet in September 2022.
<b>Why is the proposal required?</b>	The proposal will encourage employees of the Council, together with those of local partner agencies, to consider becoming a foster carer to children in need of care, by enabling a change to special leave and associated policies and procedures which will help combine the role of the employee at work with that of foster carer.
<b>What will this proposal mean for customers?</b>	The 'Fostering Friendly' employer initiative if successful will lead to an increase in capacity among

Local Authority foster carers' that will result in more children in need of care being placed in stable placements that will enable them to thrive. Such placements will enable children in need of care in Barnsley to be able to stay in their communities and wider family networks. The alternative would be to find costlier placements in independent settings outside of the Borough, potentially within unregistered and unregulated settings. This is a situation which the Local Authority is committed to preventing as far as possible

### 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?

The Service maintains a range of data on the circumstances and profile of children and young people entering the care system, together with information relating to accommodation, health, education as well as any young person who goes missing from care or school. This is to ensure this group of vulnerable children are kept safe from harm, are able to maintain their wellbeing and achieve their potential.

**Data: Service data / feedback**

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

All children and young people in need of help or protection, including those who enter formal care are screened for any specific needs including a protected characteristic which the Service endeavours to meet

**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?

This is the first EIA to have been compiled for this purpose.

**Data: Formal consultation**

What information has been gathered from formal consultation?

As yet no data or information has been gathered as part of the proposal. When matching children and young people with foster parents any specific needs will always be foremost in discussions in order to meet these needs. However, foster carers are subject to the Council's Equalities Scheme and an important part of their role will be to promote equality and eliminate unlawful discrimination.

In recent years, the Local Authority has recognised that it lacks representation from specific sections of the community within its cohort of foster carers and has worked in partnership with the Area Councils and Ward Alliances to increase the percentage of people from specific parts of the community who would like to consider providing foster care and this will continue.

**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			√		There will be no change to the eligibility of couples wanting to provide foster care to children.
Age			√		None anticipated
Disabled <i>Learning disability, Physical disability, Sensory Impairment, Deaf People, invisible illness, Mental Health etc</i>			√		There will be no change in affording care which meets the specific needs of children with complex health requirements including an impairment or disability.
Race			√		There will be no change in affording care which meets the specific needs of children from an ethnic minority

Religion & Belief			√		As above
Sexual orientation			√		Please see Rows 4 and 5
Gender Reassignment			√		Please see Rows 4 and 5
Marriage / civil partnership		N/A			None anticipated
Pregnancy / maternity		N/A			None anticipated

Other groups you may want to consider					
	Negative	Positive	No impact	Don't know	Details
Ex services			√		Supporting the needs of all children in need of care is a universal service which is available to every child in such circumstances
Lower socio-economic			√		Please see above
Other ...					None anticipated-

### 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
Outcomes of national reviews of practice	Head of Children in Care Services	June 2023
Engaging with all groups of young people and their families particularly the Youth Council, Care4Us Council and SEND Youth Forum, together with other specific initiatives including the annual <i>Make Your Mark Survey</i> and National 'Takeover' Challenge	Head of Children in Care Services	June 2023
Annual report of the Virtual School Head teacher for Vulnerable Children and the Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Panel	Head of Children in Care Services	June 2023
Monthly Children's Social Care Performance Reports including data on the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children dispersed and resettled in the Borough	Head of Children in Care Services	June 2023

### 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
Pulse surveys and further consultation	Head of Children in Care Services	June 2023
Identifying, disseminating and introducing best practice	Head of Children in Care Services	June 2023
Implementing the recommendations of the recent independent review of children's social care, including the designation of children experiencing care or leaving care as a protected characteristic.	Head of Education and Partnerships	June 2023

### 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
<b>Not yet live</b>	

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## Stage 8 – Assessment findings

Please summarise how different protected groups are likely to be affected

<b>Summary of equality impact</b>	The proposal will aim to enhance the number and profile of Local Authority foster carers whose skills and training will enable them to care and meet the specific needs of groups of children in need of care.
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<b>Summary of next steps</b>	If approved, the impact of the proposal in enabling Local Authority employees, together with those in local, partner agencies to combine their employment with being a foster carer will be reviewed after 6 months.
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<b>Signature (officer responsible for EIA) Date</b>	
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\*\* EIA now complete \*\*

## Stage 9 – Assessment Review

<b>(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?</b>