

Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA)

Front Sheet: Children's Social Care

Directorate and Service Area:

Children Education and Families (CEF) – Children's Social Care

What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change):

The assessment has been prepared to consider the proposed changes to a range of services provided to children and young people through a service redesign in Children's Social Care

These proposals are made up of a range of changes within the Children's Social Care Service for CEF. The changes are being implemented to deliver improved services to all vulnerable children and young people and those in need of early help services. The proposals will also deliver financial efficiencies as set out within the MTFP.

Responsible owner / senior officer:

Hannah Farncombe – Deputy Director Children's Social Care

Date of assessment:

10th December 2018

Summary of judgement:

The impact of these changes will be upon all children and young people who receive services and support from the early help and social care teams within CEF. The changes have all been driven primarily with the intention of reducing unnecessary delay in service provision, providing the most appropriate and timely assessments and care planning, reducing change and disruption of care planning and enhancing the ability of the Council to provide the appropriate support and services to safeguard vulnerable children and young people.

All of the proposed changes to practice and service provision will all be conducted to meet the Council's requirements as set out within the Children Act 1989 and all related statutory guidance for children's services. The impact of the proposed service changes will be reviewed following feedback from staff and partner agency consultation and in preparation for the submission of final proposals to Cabinet in early 2019.

It is not intended that the changes will result in any detrimental impact upon vulnerable children and young people. On the contrary the changes and improvements are intended to provide a better service for this service user group.

Detail of Assessment:

Purpose of assessment:

This assessment has been undertaken in order to understand the impact on the appropriate service groups in Oxfordshire of the proposals to implement a service re-design within children's social care, while at the same time making budget efficiencies up to £2.74 million over a three-year period. The purpose of the assessment is to ensure that the proposed review and changes to services to vulnerable children and young people do not have any unintended adverse effects to the relevant service group and that the Council continues to provide good services to them. Services will continue to meet the statutory requirements of the Council as set out within the Children Act 1989 and associated statutory guidance and regulations which include *Working Together 2018*.

In undertaking this assessment, the Council has given due regard to Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 in exercising its functions.

Social Value

Under the Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012 the Council also has an obligation to consider how the procurement of services contracts with a life value of more than £173,934¹ might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the area affected by the proposed contract, and how it might act to secure this improvement. However, it is best practice to consider social value for all types of contracts, service delivery decisions and new/updated policies. In this context, 'policy' is a general term that could include a strategy, project or contract. In this case the proposals will enhance the social value by improving the choice and quality of services provided to LAC.

Context / Background:

A demographic pressure exists within Oxfordshire Children's Social Care Services due a significant increase in demand for the service in recent years. This increase is in line with national increase in demand but means that the service needs to re-think how all services to vulnerable children and young people are delivered.

Children's Services takes a lead role in the planning and delivery of early help and statutory social work services to vulnerable children and young people. The purpose of these services is to intervene as early as possible to minimise harm to the child and prevent an escalation into more intrusive and costly specialist social care. Initial work to improve the efficiency of early help services in Oxfordshire have been successfully completed and more work now needs to be delivered in relation to all social work services delivered to children and young people.

Earlier improvements have included the review and development of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) which now provides a strong and secure 'front door' to all services for vulnerable children and young people. This has resulted in more effective identification and allocate of work within children's social care.

Further work has been undertaken over the summer of 2018 to consult with staff and managers to review and identify more effective and efficient ways of delivering children's social care within Oxfordshire and a series of improvements and changes are now being proposed. A set of proposals are therefore being considered that can reduce all unnecessary delay and that will make the best use of the staffing resource available to the Council. The service is regulated by Ofsted, so all changes will be implemented in line with statutory requirements and to meet the criteria for a good service as set out in the statutory guidance.

Proposals:

This proposal contains a number of plans and changes to the ways of working within children's social care that support demand management across the whole of the service and are contained and manged within the CEF Transformation Programme.

Initial activity has been undertaken which included a full-service review, to capture the current 'As is' model of the service. This was done by carrying out staff consultation activity to consider the provision of a leaner service, through process re-design, better ways of working, resource planning and allocation, and service delivery models based on best practice. All of these initiatives are now being considered to design a more effective way of working which will create a more robust streamlined/efficient service operating model. The Council has developed a range of service changes and improvements related to the provision of services to vulnerable children and young people that will reduce the need for expensive interventions; will reduce unnecessary delay in care planning; will expand local service provision; and offer more effective and timely interventions to meet the individual needs of children and young people.

The proposal involves completing a service re-design across the whole of children's social care services. A whole service redesign will deliver efficiencies following a full review of the current service delivery model which will include the review of resource allocation, staff establishment, budget allocation, ways of working, staff turn-over, support services and workflow. The current service has been fully mapped and early assumptions are that up to £2.74 million will be acquired through service re-design and managing demand, over a 3-year period.

Evidence / Intelligence:

The proposals and service developments have been considered as part of a wide range of evidence gathering, consultation and advice from across the service, service users and service providers.

The proposals are all informed by a wide range of ongoing reviews and work that have been coordinated by the CEF Transformation programme.

The proposals have therefore been subject to close monitoring and scrutiny as part of the Children’s Transformation Programme governance structure. This ensures that appropriate risk management and regulatory guidance is considered in relation to the different proposals.

All of the proposals are overseen by the CEF senior management team to ensure that they are in accordance with the statutory framework that the Councils work within as set out in the Children Act 1989 and appropriate statutory policy and guidance.

Alternatives considered / rejected:

A range of service options have been considered for each of the service proposals in line with the statutory requirements as set out within the Children Act 1989. The options have been considered alongside the current service provision which will be maintained as the new service are developed and implemented. Where appropriate the service proposals have outlined option appraisals as part of the Transformation Programme documentation which detail benefits and risk associated with them.

Impact on Individuals and Communities:

Community / Group being assessed (as per list above – e.g. age, rural communities – do an assessment for each one on the list)

Risks	Mitigations
The proposals include the provision of targeted and specialist services to children, young people and families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The re-designed service options will be developed to provide an improved service offer. • All of the service options will be tested to ensure that they meet the statutory requirements as set out within the Children Act 1989 and associated practice guidance. • Service will be developed to provide greater likelihood that LAC will be placed nearer to their home community.
Children, young people and families in rural communities will struggle to access family support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All options propose targeted service delivery to support families in rural locations. These vary in volume depending on the proposed model. • Children’s Social Care will continue to be located in larger conurbations that are well served

	by public transport, providing various modes of access for rural communities to centre based services.
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Impact on Staff:

Risks	Mitigations
Staff morale may be negatively impacted due to the impact of changing working practice and environments	Staff will be fully engaged in the re-design of identified services and in any new practice models which will be based on nationally recognised social work practice.

Impact on other Council services:

Risks	Mitigations
Increase cost to other Council services	Without savings in CEF other services would need to take a greater share of financial pressure to balance the budget. Better placement outcomes in childhood will help to reduce demand/need in adult services

Impact on providers:

Risks	Mitigations
Service providers will be affected by the The service re-design and possible change in the use of their services.	Ongoing plans are in place to consult with voluntary sector and other providers on any material changes to engagement with their services.

Action plan:

Action	By When	Person responsible
The proposals form part of the	Monthly through the Children’s Transformation	Hannah Farncombe

Children's Transformation Programme which includes detailed action plans and monitoring arrangements to progress them	Board.	
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Monitoring and review:

Person responsible for assessment:

Version	Date	Notes (e.g. Initial draft, amended following consultation)
1	30 November 2018	Initial Draft
2	10 December 2018	Amended following consultation with service