

Equality Impact Analysis

This equality impact analysis establishes the likely effects both positive and negative and potential unintended consequences that decisions, policies, projects and practices can have on people at risk of discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The analysis considers documentary evidence, data and information from stakeholder engagement/consultation to manage risk and to understand the actual or potential effect of activity, including both positive and adverse impacts, on those affected by the activity being considered.

To support completion of this analysis tool, please refer to the equality impact analysis guidance.

Section 1 – Analysis Details (Page 5 of the guidance document)

Name of Policy/Project/Decision	New Children's Home Project
Lead Officer (SRO or Assistant Director/Director)	Robert Summerfield/Robert Arrowsmith
Department/Team	BGI
Proposed Implementation Date	Q1/Q2 2025
Author of the EqIA	Roz Catlow-Patterson/Rob Arrowsmith
Date of the EqIA	11/9/24

1.1 What is the main purpose of the proposed policy/project/decision and intended outcomes?

Can embed or link to existing report/document in this section

1. The proposal sets out how an alternative in-house delivery model for children in care needing residential placements can provide a local setting improving the social, education and economic prospects of children in care while enabling them to retain their links to friends, family and the local community and area. This in turn will enable care experienced children and young people to live happy, healthy lives in suitable safe accommodation locally in communities they know and better support their transition into adulthood.
2. The proposal if approved will allow Bury's social work staff and staff across the wider partnership of local agencies to impart Let's Do It! values and contribute to and benefit from council run homes in resilient communities, thereby giving improving the opportunities and outcomes for this cohort of young people.

Section 2 – Impact Assessment (Pages 6 to 10 of the guidance document)

2.1 Who could the proposed policy/project/decision likely have an impact on?

Employees:

Yes – New operational staffing arrangements will be needed to oversee the management of the service, which will be subject to fair and transparent recruitment processes. Existing staff will be given opportunity to apply for such opportunities. It will have a positive impact on social work and support staff who work with the young people in these settings, as it will enable less travelling and support more effective local partnership working to support the young people in the homes.

Community/Residents:

Yes – the new homes (if approved) will be acquired and located in existing established communities following careful identification of suitable locations and property types. It will enable the local community and all public agencies to better support some of the community's most vulnerable members: the young people in public care who would be living in the homes. Consideration will be given to neighbouring residents to the proposed homes, to achieve optimum cohesion and integration.

Third parties such as suppliers, providers and voluntary organisations:

Yes – the proposal and the local proximity of the homes will better enable partner agencies, particularly local Health and Education providers, to fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities and respond flexibly to emerging and presenting needs.

2.2 Evidence to support the analysis. Include documentary evidence, data and stakeholder information/consultation

Documentary Evidence:

[Early-Help-Strategy-Final-2022-25.pdf \(bury-leaders.co.uk\)](#)

[Children-young-peoples-plan-final.pdf \(gs-microsites.net\)](#)

[Bury-Childrens-Services-Improvement-Plan.pdf \(gs-microsites.net\)](#)

Data:

- Bury’s Children and Young people plan 2021-2024 aims to improve the lives of children, young people and families in the borough and sets out a call for action to ensure children and young people live happy, healthy lives in their families and communities. The plan is explicit in setting out a clear priority around Bury’s children and young people getting the support they need local to where they live. The Bury 2030 Strategy around neighbourhood team working and the development of the new Neighbourhood Delivery model, including further development of a preventative approach “at place” means that the proposed locally led residential provision will be supported by neighbourhood-based services. Therefore, children in these placements will benefit from accessing help and support when they need it locally. Outcome 3 of Bury’s Children’s and Young People’s plan stipulates allowing Children, young people and families to get the support they need locally to where they live.
- The number of children in care nationally has been rising every for the past 15 years, increasing by 41% across that period; and by 11% in the past 5 years. The rise in Bury has been less – up by 22% since 2009 and 7% since 2018, but it is still significant. Much national and local activity is seeking to address this ongoing rise, but there is a significant, current and pressing need to diversify the offer and increase the number of placements in residential homes to meet the needs of our children in care within the locality of Bury.
- At present, Bury council is dependent on the private sector to provide all its residential care needs. With the national and local shrinkage in the number of foster carer households, more children in care are living in residential homes and the consolidation of the private residential care market into a shrinking number of providers, together with increasing expectations of those homes has led to substantial increase in unit costs – rising 10-12% a year for the past 4 years. Consequently, a growing proportion of the council’s overall budget is being dedicated to meet the needs of a relatively small number of children. While this is necessary, it has an impact on what other services the council can afford to provide to children and families and the wider community.

Stakeholder information/consultation:

- High level consultation has taken place with neighbouring authorities to understand the opportunities and risks of establishing and running children’s homes.
- Discussion within Children’s Services between subject matter experts concerning the proposal and the approach, including consideration of the relationship of the proposal to the GM ‘Project Skyline’ proposal and learning from work on that project to date.

- Review of Ofsted requirements of LA run Children’s Homes has taken place

2.3 Consider the following questions in terms of who the policy/project/decision could potentially have an impact on. Detail these in the impact assessment table (2.4) and the potential impact this could have.

- Could the proposal prevent the promotion of equality of opportunity or good relations between different equality groups? No, it would support it.
- Could the proposal create barriers to accessing a service or obtaining employment because of a protected characteristic? No, conversely being placed in borough should enable a more seamless pathway into local learning and employment opportunities.
- Could the proposal affect the usage or experience of a service because of a protected characteristic? The proposal aims to benefit the experience of the most vulnerable cared for children, who as a group are recognised by the council as having a protected characteristic.
- Could a protected characteristic be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by the proposal? Not disproportionately. The proposal will seek to provide greater equity in providing residential placements in the locality (as opposed to out of borough) which is known to disadvantage children in care socially, educationally, economically and in health outcomes.
- Could the proposal make it more or less likely that a protected characteristic will be at risk of harassment or victimisation? The location of properties will take in to account the make-up and composition of existing communities/residents and ensure a sensitive approach is taken based on set criteria, namely to ensure the properties are located in a spacious plots in semi urban environments in order to minimise the prospect of any tensions developing.
- Could the proposal affect public attitudes towards a protected characteristic (e.g. by increasing or reducing their presence in the community)? Yes – though the proposal is limited to 3 placements per property in separate location so public attitude to the provision is likely to be tempered by the size of the provision.
- Could the proposal prevent or limit a protected characteristic contributing to the democratic running of the council? No

2.4 Characteristic	Potential Impacts	Evidence (from 2.2) to demonstrate this impact	Mitigations to reduce negative impact	Impact level with mitigations Positive, Neutral, Negative
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Age				
Disability		Not applicable – the scheme is for able bodied children.		
Gender Reassignment				
Marriage and Civil Partnership				
Pregnancy and Maternity				
Race				
Religion and Belief				
Sex				
Sexual Orientation				
Carers				
Looked After Children and Care Leavers	The council's proposal to acquire its own properties for Bury's CEC will ensure that more children in care living in residential homes can remain within Bury, supported by local services..	Data from Children's Homes Association (the voice of residential care) and within the GM Children's Sufficiency Strategy evidences the disadvantages to CEC of rising numbers of children placed in privately run homes or out of borough potentially weakening socio and educational links to their home borough and their wider kinship and friendship groups, which	Introducing in-house Bury based residential provision which will help anchor CEC in a community they know with social, education, economic and employment opportunities in an area they already know.	Positive

<p>Looked After Children and Care Leavers</p>	<p>Impact of potential adverse attitudes and perceptions from neighbours</p>	<p>in turn can negatively impact their long-term life chances. At recent meetings of the Corporate Parenting Board, the Children In Care Council (CICC) often report that Bury Council could do more to take a proactive approach for our looked after children.</p> <p>Objections to recent planning applications shows public concern/uneasiness towards such provision which is echoed in Bury Times and other news publications. Such concerns are also logged via member casework.</p>	<p>Relaying the role of the council as corporate parenting and duty of care to provide provision as locally as possible. In addition, the proposal is limited to 3 placements per property in separate locations so public attitude to the provision is likely to be tempered by the size of the provision. The location of properties will take in to account the composition of existing communities/residents and ensure a sensitive approach is taken based on set criteria, namely that properties are located in a spacious plots in semi urban environments in order to minimise the prospect of any tensions developing for both the existing community and</p>	<p>Neutral</p>
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			ensure effective resettlement of the children.	
Socio-economically vulnerable				
Veterans				

Actions required to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts or to complete the analysis

2.5 Characteristics	Action	Action Owner	Completion Date
Care Experienced Children (CEC)	The property acquisition process will be supported by advice from senior leaders within Children’s Services with experience of setting up and running Children’s Homes, estates, planning policy and GMP colleagues to identify the most suitable properties and appropriate location for the new homes in localities with close access to services. This collaboration will help the property acquisitions team identify optimal locations in safe and inclusive communities. Such an approach will help mitigate the potential for negative impact and harm and to optimise cohesion and effective integration.	Robert Arrowsmith	Q1/Q2 2025
	Staff are recruited at the right level and expertise to manage the facility in line with Ofsted standards of care and social work practice, thereby managing the homes appropriately cognisant of the needs of existing communities.	Karen Barrick	Q1/Q2 2025
	Compliance with Ofsted standards – putting in place service plans and effective supervision to ensure compliance with Ofsted regime and rating of good as a minimum is secured.	Karen Barrick	

Section 3 - Impact Risk

Establish the level of risk to people and organisations arising from identified impacts, with additional actions completed to mitigate/reduce/eliminate negative impacts.

3.1 Identifying risk level (Pages 10 - 12 of the guidance document)

Impact x Likelihood = Score			Likelihood			
			1	2	3	4
			Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Very likely
Impact	4	Very High	4	8	12	16
	3	High	3	6	9	12
	2	Medium	2	4	6	8
	1	Low	1	2	3	4
	0	Positive / No impact	0	0	0	0

Risk Level	No Risk = 0	Low Risk = 1 - 4	Medium Risk = 5 – 7	High Risk = 8 - 16
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3.2 Level of risk identified	Likelihood: possible 2 x impact: medium 2 = 4
3.3 Reasons for risk level calculation	The key risk to the children in care is mainly from the potential friction with householders in the wider community in which the homes would be based. However, as noted above, intelligent choice of location and the type of home used, together with good management of the home once it is in operation should mitigate this risk.

Section 4 - Analysis Decision (Page 11 of the guidance document)

4.1 Analysis Decision	X	Reasons for This Decision
There is no negative impact therefore the activity will proceed		
There are low impacts or risks identified which can be mitigated or managed to reduce the risks and activity will proceed	x	
There are medium to high risks identified which cannot be mitigated following careful and thorough consideration. The activity will proceed with caution and this risk recorded on the risk register, ensuring continual review		

Section 5 – Sign Off and Revisions (Page 11 of the guidance document)

5.1 Sign Off	Name	Date	Comments
Lead Officer/SRO/Project Manager	Roz Catlow-Patterson Rob Arrowsmith	15/10/24 15/10/24	EQUIA was written in partnership between officers on BGI and CYP to ensure a thorough assessment of risk, impact and mitigations of the proposal on CEC and its wider communities.
Responsible Asst. Director/Director	Rob Summerfield	15/10.2024	
EDI	Lee Cawley	15/10/2024	QA complete, one positive impact and one negative impact identified. Negative impact has been mitigated to raised this to a neutral impact

EqIA Revision Log

5.2 Revision Date	Revision By	Revision Details

