

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Introduction

This EqIA is for:	Commissioning of Speech, Language and Communication Needs interventions	
Details are set out:	Children's Centre Services - CYP Committee Paper – January 2020	
Officers undertaking the assessment:	Irene Kakoullis – Group Manager Early Childhood Services Fiona Simpson – Project Manager Alison Miller – Contracts and Performance Officer	
Assessment approved by:	Laurence Jones, Service Director Commissioning and Resources	Date: 19.12.19

The Public Sector Equality Duty which is set out in the Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The purpose of carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment is to assess the impact of a change to services or policy on people with protected characteristics and to demonstrate that the Council has considered the aims of the Equality Duty.

Part A: Impact, consultation and proposed mitigation

1 What are the potential impacts of proposal? *Has any initial consultation informed the identification of impacts?*

The purpose of this Equalities Impact Assessment is to understand and mitigate any potential impact on children and families in relation to the commissioning of a speech, language and communication needs service and interventions for preschool children in Nottinghamshire.

The current contract for the Children's Centre Service has been in place since 1st June 2013. The service is provided by Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust who sub contract to Family Action and Rotherham North Nottinghamshire College under the umbrella of Nottinghamshire Children and Families Partnership (NCFP). The contract for these services is in place until 31st May 2020. The service provides early intervention services to families with emerging needs.

NCC recognises that addressing Speech, Language, and Communication Needs (SLCN) is an important part of the Children's Centre Services and is therefore an important part of the strategic plan to 'invest to save' by prioritising families at greater risk of poor outcomes and providing evidence-based interventions to ensure value for money.

The Children's Centre Service currently provides interventions to address speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). The SLCN work delivered by the Children's Centre Service has grown considerably since the start of the Children's Centre contract and the model currently significantly exceeds the requirements of the Children's Centre Service. This service will need further review to establish the Council's future speech, language and communications services requirements. As an interim solution, the Council proposed to award a contract to Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to continue to deliver the

service, prioritising the delivery of evidence-based interventions and early help approaches in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulation Waiver Procedure. The continuation of the service by the same provider will also help avoid disruption for children and families accessing the service.

It is proposed that Speech and Language Therapists and Home Talk Workers will not transfer to the Council but remain with their current employer for the duration of the new contract. This new contract will be subject to rigorous performance and contract management arrangements which will be jointly managed by Public Health and Early Childhood Services commissioners.

The contract value would be reduced to £400,000-£500,000 per annum and the contract would end on the 31st March 2021. This would coincide with Clinical Commissioning Group (CCGs) recommissioning plans for specialist speech and language therapy services, enabling improved value for money by aligning budgets and ultimately establishing an integrated pathway for children with SLCN. This proposal also allows additional time for the council to work with CCGs to specify the service, consider national and local evidence and guidance, as well as an assessment of local needs through consultation, analysis of local data and needs assessments.

This proposal is currently being negotiated with Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

2 Protected Characteristics: Is there a potential positive or negative impact based on:

Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Pregnancy & maternity	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Race including origin, colour or nationality	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Sexual orientation including gay, lesbian or bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact

3 Where there are potential negative impacts for protected characteristics these should be detailed including consideration of the equality duty, proposals for how they could be mitigated (where possible) and meaningfully consulted on:

How do the potential impacts affect people with protected characteristics? <i>What is the scale of the impact?</i>	How might negative impact be mitigated or explain why it is not possible	How will we consult
During the transition of change, there is a risk of some disruption. This will therefore affect families, with children, aged under 5 who use the Speech and Language Therapy intervention.	Resource will be allocated to ensure that any disruption is limited and is shortened. The Council will communicate if there is any disruption and alternative options for the period. By providing a direct award to the current provider of SLCN,	Consultation to support the future commissioning of SCLN interventions is due to commence in 2020 to inform a new specification for 2021.

<p>The procurement of SLCN work aims to ensure that early help interventions are prioritised above clinical services which are also currently provided. This will lead to a reduction in the level of clinical speech and language therapy currently provided.</p>	<p>disruption for service users will be minimised.</p> <p>If any adverse impact is identified, they will be addressed appropriately.</p>	<p>Consultation to support the commissioning of SCLN interventions is due to commence in 2020.</p>
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Part B: Feedback and further mitigation

4 Summary of consultation feedback and further amendments to proposal / mitigation

Consultation for the new service specification for 2021 onwards will commence in 2020 to help shape the service specification for the wider SLCN service. This will leave to one SLCN pathway for children in Nottinghamshire.

There are no plans to consult with the public about this short term 10 month contract which is being progressed as a Direct Award through the council's financial regulations.

If any adverse impact is identified as part of the consultation, this would be addressed appropriately at a later stage and added to this assessment. This equality impact assessment will be refreshed to reflect the feedback from the consultation and if necessary, a more detailed assessment might be required.

Completed EqlAs should be sent to equalities@nottsc.gov.uk and will be published on the Council's website.