

Diversity impact assessment

TITLE	Proposed Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements
DATE	15 February 2019
LEAD OFFICER	Simon Plummer, MSCB Business Manager

1 Summary description of the proposed change

- What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed?
- How does it compare with the current situation?

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 introduced a new duty to be placed on three agencies, namely the Local Authority, the Chief Officer of Police and Clinical Commissioning Group (referred to as Safeguarding Partners), to make arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area.

The three safeguarding partners for Medway, Medway Council, Kent Police and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have developed proposals for the new arrangements. It is proposed that the new arrangements will be called the Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership (MSCP) and will replace the Medway Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) in September 2019.

The new arrangements will cover Medway specifically but it has been recommended that within the arrangements there should be some areas of joint working with Kent, particularly where the nature of exploitation, and expertise to combat this is best shared. This will include some shared sub groups.

2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment

- Eg: Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user records etc.
- Eg: Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile

A number of planning meetings have been held to develop the proposals for the new arrangements for Medway. In addition, partners attended the Department for Education (DfE) conference on 22 November 2019 around implementing the new arrangements and learning from the Early Adopter sites. In addition, a joint meeting was held with the safeguarding partners from both Kent and Medway in December 2018. Learning from early adopter sites elsewhere in the country, who have already moved into the new arrangements, have been used to inform the proposals.

The changes are a legal requirement and therefore engagement has been centred on how we put the new arrangements in place.

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Partners were consulted on the proposals at the MSCB Main Board meeting on 25 January 2019. Following this the proposal document was sent to all MSCB Board members with a request for any comments to be provided by 6 February 2019.

An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken by the Department of Education in May 2016 on the Children and Social Work Bill. The Equality Impact Assessment did not identify direct equality impacts to any of the protected characteristics and the introduction of new Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangement would have a beneficial impact on all children engaged with child protection and safeguarding.

3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to :

- Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't?

(insert ✓ in one or more boxes)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age		✓	
Disability		✓	
Gender reassignment			
Marriage/civil partnership			
Pregnancy/maternity		✓	
Race		✓	
Religion/belief		✓	
Sex		✓	
Sexual orientation			
Other (eg low income groups)			

4 Summary of the likely impacts

- Who will be affected?
- How will they be affected?

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The purpose of the proposed arrangements is to ensure agencies work together to safeguard all children in Medway and ensure their welfare is promoted.

Medway's population aged 18 and under has increased from 2011 to 66,789 in 2015 (3.2%). Medway has a younger population compared to statistical neighbours.

National guidance and research studies identify that in addition to the risk of abuse and neglect that children face, those from minority groups (from Black and Minority Ethnic Communities, Disabled children) are overrepresented as vulnerable to abuse.

There are specific circumstances such as Forced marriage, Female Genital Mutilation that affect minority groups.

Children who have parents who are disabled, have mental health needs, misuse substances or are experiencing domestic violence are additionally vulnerable.

5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

- What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?
- Are there alternative providers?
- Can demand for services be managed differently?

This DIA has identified no adverse impacts in respect of any protected characteristic group. The proposed safeguarding arrangements will have a positive impact on all strands of equality and diversity. The focus of the arrangements are to ensure effective arrangements are in place to safeguard all children in Medway.

6 Action plan

- Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date

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7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be:

- to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate
- consider alternatives
- gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

Proceed with the proposed arrangements and seek Cabinet approval.

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that:

- the recommendation can be implemented
- sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned
- the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

Assistant Director

Date

Contact your Performance and Intelligence hub for advice on completing this assessment

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